A QUALITATIVE GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF SECONDARY EDUCATORS' PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES AND PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE READINESS IN A CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

by

Amanda Grace Stirgwolt

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

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APPROVED BY:

Jose Arturo Puga, Ed.D. Committee Chair

Daphne Washington, Ph.D. Committee Member

Katherine Brophy, Ph.D. Committee Member

ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of the educator on the success of concurrent enrollment programs. Concurrent enrollment (CE) programs provide students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. This study aimed to understand the past success of CE programs by identifying the pedagogical strategies of the teacher. Through a qualitative grounded theory approach, 16 high school CE teachers from different high schools in Connecticut were studied to explore their teaching perceptions and pedagogical strategies. Data were collected through self-perception questionnaires, a semi-structured teacher interview, classroom observation, and document analysis. Data were analyzed through constant comparative analysis, including open and axial coding. Themes emerged into a theory explaining the teachers' pedagogical practices and process of teaching CE courses. The study resulted in the discovery that CE teachers go through a process of pre-planning, understanding students, designing learning activities, college-going activities, and pedagogical reflections. The teacher's personality is a key factor in the process of teaching. The theory of teaching CE courses can be used for identifying future educators and as a framework for future educational initiatives. More qualitative research from a students' perspective is needed to understand what pedagogical strategies students view as most effective in enabling them to be successful in CE courses.

Keywords: concurrent enrollment, dual enrollment, pedagogical strategies, transition to college

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my Lord and Savior, who gave me the desire and ability to reach my potential. Secondly, I recognize Benjamin W. Stirgwolt and Lorraine I. Langlais for their unwavering support and encouragement through the many trials that I faced during the research process. Finally, I dedicate this work to my children, Lydia Jane and Ezra William, may you learn as I have that God is faithful in the journey.

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List of Abbreviations

Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory (ACEI)

Advanced Placement (AP)

Concurrent Enrollment (CE)

English Language Learner (ELL)

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS)

International Baccalaureate (IB)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)

Self-Perceptions Inventory (SPI)

Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Concurrent enrollment programs are currently an option for high school students to become acclimated to college-level academic work and earn valuable college credits. Concurrent enrollment programs are defined as high school programs that allow students to take collegiate coursework while still enrolled in high school. Currently students are transitioning to college unprepared for the academic endeavors that they will face. Rising college costs, increasing need for remedial courses once in college, and poor retention rates are causing educational stakeholders to look toward concurrent enrollment as a viable option for student success. Thus, concurrent enrollment programs are growing in popularity as a feasible model for preparing high school students for college. This chapter will further discuss the need for concurrent enrollment programs and how they differ from other accelerated learning options for high school students. A brief overview of accelerated learning options will enable the reader to understand the scope of concurrent enrollment programs in the broader context of preparing students for college. The purpose of this study will be explained; overall, this study sought to examine the role of the teacher in preparing students for college in concurrent enrollment courses. The teachers' pedagogical strategies and self-perceptions are examined to reveal how concurrent enrollment teachers balance the coursework with college preparation activities to ultimately prepare students for the college transition. The need for a grounded research study will be discussed in conjunction with the gap in concurrent enrollment literature.

Background

Historical

Educational legislation to improve the K-12 experience is continually evolving. Since the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a more systematic approach to measuring school success has shaped the focus of education. Rigorous requirements for employment and economic changes have increased the need for a college education (Louie, 2007; Radcliffe & Bos, 2011). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2009), the number of students pursuing higher education has risen significantly since the 1980s and continues to rise. As a result, secondary schools have an increased responsibility to prepare students for college. In 2015, the United States Department of Education reported that, "more than 1.4 million high school students took courses offered by a college or university for credit through dual enrollment." Concurrent enrollment (CE) or dual enrollment courses allow high school students to take college credit-bearing courses. This accelerated learning option is growing in popularity as a feasible option for bridging the academic gap between high school and college (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2008).

The changing landscape of secondary education has increased the need to examine learning options that allow students to seamlessly transition into higher levels of academic work. Since the implementation of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, national and state initiatives to prepare students for success included provisions for college preparations. As a result, states are looking for programs that will help link the K-12 experience with postsecondary education. The United States Department of Education's (2009) Race to the Top Education Fund allocated funds for states to implement programs that will "increase student participation in rigorous advanced courses such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual

enrollment in postsecondary credit-bearing courses" (U.S. Department of Education, 2009, p. 3). As a result, school systems are examining methods to expand current college-credit bearing programs at the high school level to meet the requirements of national educational initiatives.

Concurrent enrollment (CE) programs are an approved method of meeting national college preparation goals. Initially created to address first-year college-retention issues, CE programs successfully link high school educators and students with collegiate academics. CE programs offer students the opportunity to take structurally similar, collegiate-level classes while still in high school. CE programs allow students to be taught by a secondary educator that has been trained in the college curriculum. The educator is qualified as both a high school educator and college professor. In most CE programs, the instructor must hold at least the minimum qualifications as those required for college" (Maken, Gray & Lewis, 2013, p. 3). The high school student is dual-enrolled in the course, which offers them both high school and college credit. Most CE programs offer coursework that is consistent with general education requirements for first-year college freshmen.

Social

Student achievement in college impacts the individual and family. Costs for college and the amount of time to complete a college degree are challenges for students unprepared for collegiate academics. The need for successful college preparation is growing as the cost for college and the educational requirements for specialized jobs rises. Therefore, concurrent enrollment programs offer a solution to the current population of students needing preparation for advanced academics. The overall purpose of CE programs is to create a fluid transition into college academics. According to Hoffman, Vargas and Santos (2008), "dual enrollment can serve as a powerful impetus for integrating high school and postsecondary education to a

continuous system spanning grades nine through sixteen" (p. 2). The need for high schools and colleges to work together toward the same goal of providing all students with a "smooth transition to college" (W. Smith & Zhang, 2009, p. 655) has been met through CE partnerships. Students taking CE courses benefit from exposure to challenging academic curriculum and access to college resources. Students participating in college-level work while still in high school increase "positive effects on first-year academic performance in college" (Allen, Robbins, Casillas & In-Sue, 2008, p. 657). The effectiveness of CE programs varies due to differing requirements, curricular expectations, support from the college and methods of evaluation. Currently, Florida, Georgia, and Washington, D.C. require colleges to provide CE options to high school students (Lerner & Brand, 2006). Further educational initiatives are seeking to align curriculum from kindergarten through college through regional alliances (Klein, 2006). The Obama administration changed the application to the Pell Grant, allowing underprivileged high school students to apply for the grant, thus allowing the students the ability to pay for up to twelve college credit courses while still enrolled in high school (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The line between secondary and postsecondary academics will continue to fade as more initiatives seek to help students gain access to collegiate academics.

The remarkable success of CE students in college has increased efforts to expand the number of CE program course offerings. Students participating in CE programs are more successful than peers that do not take CE courses in high school (Swanson, 2007) and are more likely to earn a high school diploma (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2007). Students in CE programs are more likely to go to college (North & Jacobs, 2010; D. Smith, 2007), achieve higher grades (North & Jacobs, 2010), and stay in college longer (Karp et al., 2007; Peters & Mann, 2009). In addition, students that take CE courses in high school are more likely to

graduate with a college degree (Shapiro, Dunda, Ziskin, Yuan, & Harrell, 2013). The past success of CE programs gives rise to possible expansion opportunities across the nation. According to the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), a national forum for understanding concurrent enrollment issues, "concurrent enrollment is one of the most effective, scalable models available to prepare large numbers of high school students for college and increase their chances of earning postsecondary degrees" (Mobley, 2011, p. 1). The model of preparing students for college by allowing them to take college courses while still in high school is currently gaining popularity as a viable model for increasing college readiness, college retention, and college graduation rates across the nation.

Theoretical

Social constructivism and self-efficacy theories of education shaped the background of this study. Education in its purist form is a social experience. Vygotsky (1978) enumerated that relationships during the learning process can help individuals reach new, higher levels of learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), "learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally, organized, specifically human, psychological functions" (as cited in Gauvain, M. & Cole, M., 1997, p. 38). Teachers play a vital role in the learning of students through teaching and building relationships with the students. Bandura (1994) stated in self-efficacy theory that social relationships and having a positive role model positively influences the students' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy in learning enables the student to achieve (Bandura, 1994). In CE courses, self-efficacy is needed for both the teacher and the student during the learning process. This study aimed to address the process of the teacher building rapport, supporting learning, and building social relationships to teach college readiness skills and rigorous content in CE courses.

Situation to Self

After benefitting from CE courses as a high school student, I was committed to giving students a similar experience once I became a teacher. Shortly after becoming a teacher in Connecticut, I was trained as an adjunct professor in human development and family studies as part of a CE program. I taught a CE course for eight years. I since have moved school districts and do not currently teach the course. The participants in this study were all colleagues from the statewide CE program. To reduce bias, I did not include myself or my previous school in the study. Since I have a close relative that taught the CE program in Connecticut, I excluded this school to reduce personal bias. Epistemologically, this grounded theory study sought to understand how CE educators perceive and create appropriate college readiness learning environments for students. I am influenced by the constructivist paradigm of education that emphasizes that knowledge is shaped through social experience (Vygotsky, 1978). I was motivated to do this study since I personally have seen the benefits of being a CE student and teacher. I also sought to improve the educational experience for all high school students in CE courses by exploring the pedagogical practices that are utilized to create college-ready students.

Problem Statement

Concurrent enrollment programs are expanding as educational leaders seek to provide programs that will successfully prepare students for college academics. Unprepared college students and unsettling retention rates have created a need for more rigorous curriculum options at the high school level (Acker & Halesek, 2008; Jolliffe & Harl, 2008). Previous research on CE has focused on program evaluations, grade point average (GPA) increases, and college matriculation (Leonard, 2010; Morrison, 2008; North & Jacobs, 2010). Although CE programs exist in some form in every state (Andrews, 2004), little is known about the instructional

strategies of CE teachers (Leonard, 2010). Furthermore, CE teachers are required to meet certification requirements and attend professional development opportunities, but actual methods of implementing college readiness skills are unknown due to the focus on growing programs to meet the need for students to be prepared for college (Leonard, 2010; Mobley, 2011). Previous research focused mainly on student success rates and program outcomes rather than the individual teachers that are responsible for shaping student success (Karp et al., 2008; Mobley, 2011). According to Karp et al. 2008, the current available research lacks "comprehensive data" to demonstrate the link of concurrent enrollment programs to students' success since large-scale studies have not been completed.

In order to understand how CE programs produce high achieving students who are prepared for the academic transition to college, more research is needed that examines the teacher's role in decision-making, use of motivational strategies, and pedagogical practices. Since each CE program is unique in program capacity, design, and curriculum, comparing curricula will not result in a greater understanding of how CE teachers produce college-ready students. Consequently, there is a lack of knowledge of how CE teachers implement college readiness skills and challenge their students to achieve college level academic work. Concurrent enrollment teachers are given course syllabi, curriculum materials, and college grading guidelines from the participating higher education institution. Coupled with the high school state curriculum requirements, the CE teacher is responsible for meeting both high school college curricular goals. Since the coursework timeline differs from a traditional college class, the CE teacher can spend more time on content and incorporate skill-building activities. According to Leonard (2010), within the parameters of a CE course there is more "time available for project-based work and collaborative learning" (p. 15). The teacher essentially amalgamates the high

school and college curricula, allowing the student to transition seamlessly into more rigorous coursework.

Although prior research has established that CE programs are successful in preparing students for college coursework (Ashburn, 2007; Leonard, 2010; Morrison, 2008; North & Jacobs, 2010), an understanding of how the CE teacher successfully implements the curriculum to prepare students for the college transition is unknown. According to Leonard (2010), more research needs to be conducted to understand the type of support that is given to students that succeed in CE programs. The Education Commission of the States 2009 study of college access identified that future research needs to put a strong emphasis on understanding the teacher's "capacity to align instruction across the K-16 system" (Kirst, 2009, p. 3) to academically prepare students for smoother transitions. Therefore, an understanding of CE teachers' implementation styles, pedagogical practices, and motivational techniques can aid in the future expansion of quality, accelerated programs. The problem is that there is a gap in the literature surrounding the pedagogical strategies utilized by CE teachers to produce college-ready students.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to describe the process that effective CE teachers use to develop college readiness skills while maintaining academic rigor in concurrently enrolled students in Connecticut. To create an atmosphere for teachers to communicate how the classes are taught, a qualitative grounded theory design was implemented. A grounded theory research design was used to focus on the themes that were common among the 16 participants to better understand the process of teaching CE courses. The qualitative design of a grounded theory study allowed for constant comparison between the participants to allow themes that were most important to the process of teaching CE courses to emerge (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Ultimately, the purpose of this study was to create a theory to understand the process of teaching CE courses from the perspective of the secondary educator.

The purpose of this study was to have an in-depth understanding of CE teachers and their ability to cohesively connect content with college readiness skills. College readiness was defined as "the level of preparation a student needs to enroll and succeed—without remediation—in a credit-bearing general education course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree or transfer to a baccalaureate program" (Conley, 2009, p. 5). College readiness skills are multifaceted. Students need to develop a psychological awareness of themselves as learners in addition to content acquisition. Therefore, college readiness skills were defined as academic behaviors, cognitive strategies, confidence acquisition and the development of understanding of collegiate procedures (Conley, 2009; Jordan, Cavalluzo & Corrallo, 2006). The ultimate purpose of this study was to understand the process a CE teacher develops to successfully incorporate college readiness skills in the CE classroom while maintaining the academic rigor of collegiate coursework. Currently there is not a theory or accepted model explaining the process of teaching CE classes. Understanding the process utilized by teachers to incorporate academic requirements and study skills will enhance the understanding of the entire CE experience as an accelerated learning option in secondary schools.

Significance of the Study

Examining the process of implementing college readiness skills in a college course taught to high school students will clarify the understanding of student achievement resulting from taking CE courses. Having a greater understanding of how teachers execute the curriculum requirements and expand the coursework to include college readiness skills is significant for the future of CE programs. Since CE programs are an option for schools to meet the requirements of

federal education mandates, CE programs need to focus on accountability and the establishment of program quality. Thus, the study of CE teachers' motivational behaviors, instructional strategies and development of academic rigor in the classroom will explain the process of producing students that will succeed in their transition to college. Additionally, the understanding of the pedagogical strategies of CE teachers will enhance the understanding and emerging definition of good teaching for the transition between high school and college level academics. In addition, understanding pedagogical practices will allow educational leaders to identify individuals that may be suited to teaching CE courses as programs expand in the United States. Pedagogical best practices in CE courses can be utilized to reshape professional development for both current and future CE teachers.

Nationally, understanding the role of the CE teacher in the process of bridging the gap between high school and college academics will aid the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP) in meeting strategic goals. Founded in 1999, NACEP is a consortium of professionals seeking to create quality CE programs (Scheffel, Mclemore & Lowe, 2015). The results of this grounded theory study could assist NACEP in promoting national initiatives to create "seamless education through secondary and post-secondary collaborations" (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships [NACEP], 2011, para. 1). Supporting seamless educational initiatives enables a more streamlined educational experience for students finishing high school and moving toward postsecondary opportunities. This study is significant because it fills the gap in the literature for qualitative research related to the success of concurrent enrollment programs (Leonard, 2010; Tobolowsky & Allen, 2016).

Practically, this study can apply to broader educational initiatives and add to the understanding of the art of teaching. Understanding pedagogical practices of CE teachers will aid

in other initiatives focused on creating a better academic transition to college. The P-16 initiative to connect the standards for preschool through college will benefit from this study since the transition between grade 12 and the freshmen year of college is a huge academic transition. In addition, this study aligns with the 2007 America Competes Act which "authorizes federal grants to states in order for them to better align secondary school graduation requirements with the knowledge and skills need to succeed in postsecondary education" (Davis & Hoffman, 2008, p. 123). More recently in 2015, the Every Child Succeeds Act reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act. This new legislation requires states to "raise academic achievement through accelerated learning programs" (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015, p. 9). This study can give understanding to how teachers can make accelerated learning programs like concurrent enrollment classes more successful, ultimately helping more high school students seamlessly transition from high school to college academics.

Research Questions

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to discover the process of teaching CE courses. Prior research has focused on the success (Dutkowsky, Evensky, & Edmonds, 2006; Leonard, 2010; Speroni, 2011) and growth of CE programs (Dodge, 2012; Mokher & McLendon, 2009; Wright & Bogotch, 2006). The journey that the teacher takes to bridge the high school student's current academic abilities to meet the rigor of collegiate academics has not been studied (Charlier & Duggan, 2010; Leonard, 2010). The following research questions enabled a theory to be created to explain the process of teaching CE courses. Each question in this section is described with an explanation of theoretical background. Overall, grounded theory is shaped by social constructivism that "the world is socially constructed, but not in any arbitrary

or ad hoc fashion" (Bryant & Charmaz, 2010, p. 37). The research questions seek to create an opportunity to understand the social and pedagogical experiences of CE courses.

Research Question One

How do concurrent enrollment teachers determine what college readiness skills should be taught and how do they determine mastery?

The process of teaching college readiness skills within the curriculum is vital to preparing students for college (Bell, Rowan-Kenyon & Perna, 2009; Conley, 2008). Determining mastery of college readiness skills demonstrates the teacher's ability to assess student learning to ensure academic success. Assessment is a key component of determining student success and comprehension (Carless, 2015; Jiang, 2014).

Research Question Two

How do personal perceptions of college readiness impact the educator's motivational behaviors in the concurrent enrollment classroom?

An educator's view of what college readiness skills are important will shape their interactions with students. The teacher communicates their views on what is important to students during the teaching process, allowing the students to understand what information is important (Vagle, 2009).

Research Question Three

How do concurrent enrollment teachers develop college readiness skills?

CE courses focus on academic learning requirements but are understood to include college readiness skills. College readiness skills are often not explicitly stated to be included in the curriculum; therefore, educators determine how to develop the college readiness skills with their students. Theoretically, this question focuses on the pedagogical strategies utilized by

teachers in the CE classroom. Pedagogical knowledge can be described as, "a special body of knowledge that exceeds content knowledge" (Park & Chen, 2012, p. 922).

Research Question Four

How are the motivational behaviors and instructional strategies of the concurrent enrollment teachers executed in the concurrent enrollment classroom?

Teaching is a social experience between the student and the teacher. The motivational behaviors of the teacher influence the students learning. According to Deci & Ryan (2000), social experiences motivate individuals to "exercise one's capacity to explore and learn" (p. 70). The purpose of this question was to discover the teacher's ability to utilize motivation and instructional strategies together to enable students to learn.

Research Question Five

How do concurrent enrollment teachers balance academic rigor and the development of college readiness skills?

The CE teacher has to bridge the high school students' current level of academic functioning with the rigor of the college academic content. The teacher plays a significant role in the success of CE programs (Wright & Bogotch, 2006) since he or she is able to bring students into college academics.

Definitions

1. *Concurrent enrollment* - Concurrent enrollment is defined as a college course or series of courses that are offered to high school students (Lewis & Overman, 2008). The high school student is dual enrolled at the college and the high school. The student earns both high school credit and college credit for the course. Some concurrent enrollment programs transport students directly to the college campus

to take the course (Haag, 2015). These programs are sometimes called dual enrollment (Haag, 2015).

2. *College-going activities* - College-going activities are defined as activities that involve going to college campuses, teaching academic skills needed for college, (Conley, 2010) and participating in fieldwork or internships.
3. *College readiness* - College readiness is defined as, "the level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed without remediation in a credit-bearing course" when they transition to college (Conley, 2010, p. 4). Students that can succeed on their own in college by using the skills acquired in their prior educational experiences are college-ready.
4. *Pedagogical strategies* - Pedagogical strategies are defined as the techniques and practices utilized by the teacher to aid in student learning. Pedagogical strategies are a "type of teacher knowledge developed by the teacher" (Halim, Abdullah & Meerah, 2014, p. 227) that contributes to student understanding.

Summary

Concurrent enrollment programs allow high school students the opportunity to build college readiness skills and gain college credits. These programs are a viable option for educational stakeholders that wish to give access to college preparation to all students. Therefore, understanding CE programs from the context of the teacher will fill the current gap in literature and provide insight to perceptions and pedagogical strategies (Leonard, 2010). This study utilized a qualitative, grounded theory design to enable the participants to openly share their experiences in order to elicit rich data on the process of teaching CE courses. Theoretically, social constructivism and self-efficacy theories have foundational concepts that shape the context

of this study. Sixteen high school concurrent enrollment teachers in one CE program in Connecticut participated in this study. Data were collected through interviews, classroom observations, questionnaires, and a document analysis. Open and axial coding was completed to generate themes that shaped the creation of a conditional matrix and theory to explain the process of teaching CE courses.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative grounded theory study was to develop an understanding of the process of implementing college readiness skills and maintaining academic rigor in a CE classroom. A brief history of the transition to college will provide a historical context to the rise in the number of accelerated programs for high school students in this chapter. Concurrent enrollment is defined in the context of other similar accelerated learning options to prepare students for collegiate work. Social cognitive and self-efficacy theories shape the discussion of the implementation of college readiness strategies. The skills needed for a successful college transition are discussed to shape the framework for the data collection procedures.

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this grounded theory was to understand the process of curriculum development and the use of motivational and implementation strategies used by CE educators to create a class experience that both prepares and enhances students' understanding of college and the curricular content. Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social constructivism supports the ideals of CE courses. Social constructivism focuses on the role of the teacher in the learning process. According to Vygotsky (1962), "school instruction induces the generalizing kind of perception and thus plays a decisive role in making the child conscious of his own mental processes" (p. 92). In CE programs, teachers socially interact with students, creating a learning scaffold between the high school and college coursework. This study examined how the scaffold was created while examining the implementation of college readiness skills. According to Vygotsky (1978), the zone of proximal development is "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as

determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 33). CE courses take the high school student from their primary learning zone to reach a goal of successfully completing college-level work independently. The use of social interaction among peers as a learning strategy will be explored in the process of understanding the CE teacher's classroom teaching strategies.

In addition, teachers socially interact with peers and college faculty to augment their understanding of the curricular content during CE professional development workshops. For the current sample of CE teachers, maintaining CE teaching certification includes biannual professional development workshops at the university. University faculty and staff conduct the professional development workshops to assist in aligning the course objectives and maintaining the authenticity of the collegiate class. During the workshops, CE teachers often become the student, gleaning information and strategies from the university presenters. Thus, the CE teacher experiences social constructivism and provides social learning opportunities for the student in the classroom.

The CE teacher's execution of the college curriculum in the high school classroom depends on the teacher's level of self-efficacy. Therefore, Bandura's (1982) social cognitive theory underpinned the need to explore the CE teacher's self-perceptions of their own teaching. According to Bandura (1982), perceived self-efficacy is "concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (p. 122). Self-efficacy is important to understand how teachers make choices in the classroom and shape the school experience. According to Evans (2009), teachers share a part of creating the collective self-efficacy of the entire school community. Evans (2009) described a teacher's self-efficacy as "an individual's belief in their own capacity to teach" (p. 68). The educator's belief in their own

ability helps them to exude confidence in the classroom. Self-efficacy also includes the belief that the teacher can "generate the actions or implement the strategies with the necessary vigor to achieve the goal" (Evans, 2009, p. 71). The teacher's self-efficacy determines the structure of the classroom activities. Teacher self-efficacy is linked to student achievement (Evans, 2009; Ross & Gray, 2006). Therefore, the teacher's perceptions of their own ability to accomplish goals within the classroom have an impact on the student's achievement.

When teaching a CE course, high school teachers are thrust into teaching more rigorous course material. College courses more frequently expect different outcomes than high school courses. College professors present large quantities of information while emphasizing the synthesis of ideas in writing assignments that are longer than typical assignments (Simmons, 2005). Reid and Moore's (2008) qualitative study of college freshmen revealed that high school teachers readily give answers while college professors expect high levels of writing that expound on deeper understandings of the subject. College courses require students to deduce main ideas independently from data sources and apply theoretical concepts. College courses are more heavily based in independent reading and writing activities. College texts are "works characterized by dense meaning, elaborate structure, sophisticated vocabulary and subtle authorial intentions…" (Bauerlein, 2011, p. 29) that often confuse unprepared students (Bauerlein, 2011). High school students are not accustomed to spending extensive time outside of the classroom preparing independently for reading or writing assignments (Jolliffe & Harl, 2008). Differing learning expectations require the CE teacher to transition the high school student into more rigorous coursework. The teacher's efficacy, individual qualities, and strategies to accomplish curricular goals in the CE classroom can reveal pedagogical patterns that impact student learning outcomes.

As a result of the dichotomous expectations between high school and college courses, CE teachers are challenged with creating an educational environment that emphasizes college rigor, builds students' academic skills, and motivates students toward meeting higher expectations. Therefore, teachers must meet the pedagogical challenges that are presented when teaching a CE course. According to Bandura (2001), "people motivate and guide their actions through proactive control by setting themselves challenging goals and then mobilizing their resources, skill, and effort to fulfill them" (p. 268). Teachers are in a constant process of developing goals and curricular strategies to increase student achievement. The teacher is the driving force of curricular development and modeling in the classroom. Bandura (1994) emphasized that self-efficacy and goal setting is a constant process as individuals are introduced to new challenging situations. Self-efficacy theory and social learning theory emphasize the teachers' role in developing personal self-efficacy in pedagogical skills and transferring self-efficacy in learning to students through social interaction. Goal setting, motivation, and self-efficacy have been identified as predictors of academic success in students (Allen & Robbins, 2010; Harackiewicz, Barron, Linnenbrink-Garcia & Tauer, 2008). Therefore, the transfer of self-efficacy and goal setting in the learning process from the teacher to the student is vital to understanding the process of producing academic success in CE programs. The purpose of this grounded theory study was to understand how CE teachers perceive the process of teaching a CE course and integrate strategies to help high school students accomplish college coursework to create a foundation for future collegiate academic success

Related Literature

College Degree Attainment

Obtaining a college degree has a variety of direct and long-term benefits for the individual. College degree attainment is a traditional marker of marketability for employment. Four-year college enrollment, resulting in degree completion, produces "long-standing implications for attainment and mobility in adulthood" (Hill, 2008, p. 66) for the student. According to Louie (2007) A baccalaureate degree is "the key to higher earnings" (p. 2233) and access to competitive job markets in the United States; therefore, it is critical that high schools prepare students to be successful in college (Collier & Morgan, 2008). A college education solidifies higher wages and a better quality of life throughout adulthood (Autor, 2010; Zhan & Sherraden, 2011). According to the 2010 national study of degree attainment by the College Board Advocacy and Policy Center, "The median hourly wage gain attributable to the first year of college, adjusted for race, gender, and work experience, increased from an estimated 8% in 1973 to about 10% in 1989, and 11% in 2007" (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2010, p. 4). Even having some college experience without obtaining a degree is economically beneficial to the student (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006). College degree attainment increases wages over time and results in more employment opportunities.

Obtaining a college degree increases personal well-being. College graduates are more likely to have an increased personal satisfaction with life and a better level of general health (Conti, Heckman, & Urzua, 2010; Cutler, Deaton, & Lleras-Muney, 2006). College graduates are more likely than non-graduates to have health insurance, which influences a longer lifespan (Baum et al., 2010). College graduates have more access to healthcare since employers hire college graduates to fill specialized roles within the labor market that offer health benefits (Baum

et al., 2010). In addition to health care, college graduates experience positive, job-related assets such as "pension contributions and pleasant working conditions" (Autor, 2010, p. 5). Subsequently, higher wages because of a college degree indicates greater personal happiness (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2008). Thus, obtaining a college education contributes to better health and positive life experiences.

From an economic and political lens, the attainment of a college degree has broader implications. Degree attainment is linked to a more competitive job market that increases America's competitiveness in global markets (United States Department of Education, 2006). The United States job market demands highly-skilled workers. According to the United States Department of Education (2006), "future economic growth will depend on our ability to sustain excellence, innovation, and leadership in higher education" (p. 1). Within the next decade, the number of jobs that require a high level of education will increase, and the number of well-paying jobs in the middle of the job sector will decline (Autor, 2010). Thus, a college education will continue to be a driving force in the ability of an individual to get a job (Autor, 2010). The instability of the U.S. economy has heightened the awareness of being prepared to enter the workforce and maintain a job that provides financial security.

Rise in College Attendance

The benefit of future employment has influenced many students to pursue college degrees. The number of high school students going directly to college after graduation has risen (Autor, 2010; Gelber, 2007; Goyette, 2008; Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2012). According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, the "percentage of 18 to 24 year olds enrolled in college rose from 36% in 1999 to 41 percent in 2009" (Synder & Dillow, 2010, p. 281). There is a distinct gender gap in the number of students enrolling in college (Combs et al., 2010). More

female students are attending college than males (Combs et al., 2010; Kleinfeld, 2009). Currently, females comprise "the majority of college undergraduates and of students who earn postsecondary degrees" (Kleinfeld, 2009, p. 172). The increase in the number of students attending college and the distinctive gender gap defines the college transition period in the United States.

Despite the rising numbers of students going to college, students are not persisting toward degree completion. The lack of persistence toward degree completion is specifically significant for males. Historically, "between 1970 and 2008, four-year college attainment among white male young adults ages 25 through 34 rose only modestly, from 20 percent in 1970 to 26 percent in 2008" (Autor, 2010, p. 6). Adelman's (2006) analysis of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 dataset that included over 12,000 students found that

> Roughly a third of traditional age students who start in a four-year college will earn a bachelor's degree from the same school in the traditional four year period, and that between 54 and 58 percent will earn the degree from the same school in which they began within six years of entry. (p. 87)

When taking into consideration school transfers, degree completion rates rise to 62-67 percent (Adelman, 2006). College students are taking longer to obtain a baccalaureate degree and some are not graduating. Although attending some college is beneficial (Attewell et al., 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2006), graduating with a degree has greater long-term rewards (Hill, 2008). Thus, starting and finishing a college degree is the ultimate educational goal.

College as a Developmental Experience

From a developmental perspective, students may not be persisting toward degree completion since college is viewed as a step in a developmental sequence toward adulthood.

Culturally, college attendance is more than an educational endeavor. According to Arnett (2004), "attending college has become a typical experience for young people in American society" (p. 120). The college experience is a step toward achieving independence, understanding personal identities, and exploring interests. High school students see college as the next step in their personal journey into adulthood (Domina, Conley, & Farkas, 2011). The rise in the number of students going to college instead of entering the workforce directly after high school created new behavioral norms. Developmental psychologists coined a new developmental period entitled "emerging adulthood" to describe the period after high school through college (Arnett, 2004). Emerging adulthood was first conceptualized by Arnett (1998, 2003, 2007) and refers to the time in an individual's life trajectory in which they are not fully independent but consider themselves somewhat established in adulthood. According to Hawkins, Letcher, Sanson, Smart, & Toumbourou (2009), emerging adulthood is now "recognized as a distinct developmental stage" from ages 18 to 25 when there is a semblance of both adolescent and adult behaviors (p. 89). Emerging adults, during this time, both admit they are adults but recognize a personal lack of independence. Emerging adults are often college students (Arnett, 2004). Therefore, the transition to college is a point in the individual developmental trajectory on the path to adulthood. College attendance is as much of an academic venture as a social and developmental experience.

First-Year College Experience

A student's ability to succeed in the first year of college is a predictor of success in the rest of his or her academic journey toward obtaining a degree. Allen et al. (2008) identified the first year of college as a critical entry point to future success after analyzing retention rates and degree completion of 6,872 college students in the Southeast and Midwest. According to Allen

et al. (2008), "first-year academic performance" (p. 659) was the leading indicator of whether the student persisted toward a degree or dropped out. The first year of college is a time of major adjustment in academic and social capacities (Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews, & Nordstrom, 2009; Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2007). The first-year experience includes a psychosocial transition for students (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Students must adjust psychologically to separation from family and friends (Crede & Niehorster, 2012; Hicks & Heastie, 2008). Changes in the student's home environment creates stress as he or she learns to adapt to new surroundings and living conditions (Hicks & Heastie, 2008). Students in the first year of college are often taking on new roles in their personal life including managing finances and personal time. Students have autonomy in areas of social and academic realms that can influence the ability to transition successfully into collegiate academics.

During the first year of college, students must navigate coursework requirements and the postsecondary educational structure. The college system is often difficult for students to understand given the differences from secondary education. At the college level, the student accepts responsibility for their education for the first time. Students are accustomed to having influence from parents, school counselors, and teachers in high school setting. At the college level students must learn to advocate for themselves in the areas of academic help, course registration, and financial aid. All high schools provide some form of college preparation for navigating the college admissions process; however, there is not a common method of addressing student needs at the high school level (Bell et al., 2009). Thus, the students' transition into their first year of college is done with varying skill levels and abilities to navigate academic decisions on the college campus.

Academic Unpreparedness

Students are entering their first year of college unprepared for entry-level courses. Underprepared students are a widespread concern among both secondary and postsecondary educators (Balduf, 2009; Brinkworth et al., 2009). The higher education sector has revealed concern about the quality of academic preparation in writing, math, and academic studies skills upon entering college for the first time (Beil & Knight, 2007; Conley, 2009; VanDeWahe, 2006). Recently, attention has been given to students that enter college lacking academic skills needed for academic learning (Conley, 2008; Kelly, Kendrick, Newgent, & Lucas, 2007). According to students, the skills needed for a successful transition to the first year of college include: "study skills, time management skills and general coping skills" (Kelly et al., 2007, p. 1032) to deal with academic challenges. Balduf's (2009) study of 83 freshmen students on academic probation after their first semester found that students reported the lack of academic success was due to a lack of "study skills, motivation, time management, level of course challenge and environmental factors" (p. 293). Students must attain the ability to think critically, make academic decisions, and manage coursework to be successful in the college academic arena. The academic transition to college may even continue into the sophomore year as the student enters discipline specific courses (Kelly et al., 2007). Research has yet to reveal how long the transition to college academics lasts and at what point in the process negative outcomes occur if a student has not adjusted to new academic responsibilities (Crede & Niehorster, 2012).

Rise in College Remediation Courses

The lack of academic preparation and acquisition of academic skills needed to be successful in the classroom can result in the need for remediation. Academic unpreparedness leads to the need for remedial courses and decreases the chances of the student achieving degree

completion (Calcagno & Long, 2008; Horn, McCoy, Campbell, & Brock, 2009). A college remedial course is defined as an intermediary course that is "below the college level offered at a postsecondary institution" (Calcagno & Long, 2008, p. 1). According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2003) analysis of public and private post-secondary institutions, "the number of colleges requiring students to take remedial courses has risen from 1995 to 2000" (p. 5). Postsecondary institutions often admit academically unprepared students to increase enrollment (Gelber, 2007). Colleges and universities have been forced to offer courses that prepare students to take the entry-level college courses since students come to college unprepared (Boyer, Butner, & Smith, 2007; Howell, 2011). Remedial courses are most commonly taken in writing, reading, and mathematics, which contain foundational knowledge that is needed for success in other courses. According to the U.S. Department of Education, "In 2007-08, about 36 percent of undergraduate students considered to be in their first year reported having ever taken a remedial course, while 20 percent had actually taken one in that same year" (Aud et al., 2011, p. 70). Remedial courses are the postsecondary response to receiving large numbers of students unprepared for the rigor of collegiate academics.

Enrolling in remedial courses after transitioning to college creates unique challenges for the student beyond academics. Remedial education reduces the students' self-esteem and overall academic confidence (Calcagno & Long, 2008). In addition, taking remedial courses lengthen the time toward degree completion and increase the financial burden for the student (Calcagno & Long, 2008; United States Department of Education, 2006). Financing a college degree is a paramount issue for students. The cost of remedial education exacerbates the financial burden of a college education. Taking remedial courses lengthens the time to graduation. Thus, many students that take remedial courses are not able to graduate within four to five years. According

to the U.S. Department of Education (2016), "only sixty percent of those enrolled in a bachelor's degree program complete their education" (para. 1). Students that do finish their college coursework take approximately "a third take longer than expected to graduate, forcing them to carry additional costs and leave school with higher debt burdens" (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, para. 1). Therefore, students need to be academically prepared for pursuing a baccalaureate degree to ensure future success and reduce overall debt.

Collegiate Transitional Programs

Institutions of higher learning responded to the unpreparedness of college freshmen by offering college success courses and transitional programs. College transition classes can be found at "95 percent of four year institutions in the United States" (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006, p. 26). The basic goal of college success courses is to "orient students to the various services offered at the college, help them acclimate to the college environment, and give them the tools they need to be successful in postsecondary education" (O'Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009, p. 197). College success courses are typically taken during college orientation or as part of the first-year experience. These courses are typically taught by faculty in a small-group formats (Clark & Cundiff, 2011). College transitional programs are often credit-bearing, pass or fail courses that emphasize giving the student information about campus "safety, policies, registration, technology, campus activities, and recreation" (Mayhew, Vanderlinden, & Kim, 2010, p. 338). College transitional programs ultimately serve to acclimate the student to the university policies and provide access to other campus services.

College transitional programs have the social role in providing first-year students an opportunity to meet faculty and develop friendships with peers (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006). The success of college transition programs is varied (Crede & Niehorster, 2012; W. Smith &

Zhang, 2009). College transitional programs help students become accustomed to the resources available at the institution and can help in developing the students' study skills (O'Gara et al., 2009). In addition, college transition programs can help freshmen have positive interactions with faculty and greater participation in college activities (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006). College transition programs vary widely between institutions; therefore, there is little empirical evidence that college transition programs increase motivation to succeed toward degree completion. In a comparative study of 109 students that took a college transitional course and students at the same university that did not enroll in the course, Clark and Cundiff (2011) found that a college success course does not impact GPA or aid in further retention of students. As a result of these findings, critics of college transition programs argue that providing college readiness skills earlier can more aptly benefit the student (W. Smith & Zhang, 2009). Also, college transition programs are short-lived and may not aide the student in developing the academic skills to navigate harder coursework in subsequent college years.

Risk Factors for College Success

Through prior research, several identifiable groups have emerged as at-risk for not entering college and persisting toward completing a college degree. These groups include: first generation college students, African American students, Latina/o students, economically disadvantaged students, and academically unprepared students. When a student or group of students displays more than one of these risk factors, the path toward degree completion is formidable. Students that are at-risk upon college entrance are more likely to need remediation (Howell, 2011; Wiley, Wyatt, & Camara, 2010). Understanding the characteristics of at-risk groups can broaden the understanding of the transition to college, reduce the need for remediation, and ensure success for all students (Holland & Farmer-Hinton, 2009; Reynolds, 2012).

First generation college students. Students that are growing up in homes that lack a college-educated parent are at a greater risk to be unsuccessful in the transition to college. A college-educated parent is more likely to understand the need to meet deadlines for admission, emphasize financial planning, and understand components of the overall college experience (Alon, Domina & Tienda, 2010). Parents are vital stakeholders for influencing the child's decision making and providing access to educational information (Nuñez & Kim, 2011). Throughout the parenting experience, educated parents are more likely to emphasize the importance of education for their child's future success as an adult. Parental involvement in the student's educational process is positively linked to achievement levels (LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). First-generation college students are more likely to be African American or Hispanic in origin (Fischer, 2007; Pino, Martinez-Ramos, & Smith, 2012).

African American students. African American students are less likely to transition to college successfully (Walpole, 2008). African Americans are underrepresented in many postsecondary institutions (United States Department of Education, 2006; Walpole, 2008) and are less likely to persist to degree completion. African American males are more at-risk for not being successful in the first year of college, which leads to a high dropout rate (Schmidt, 2008). According to U.S. Department of Education, only 39% of full time African American students graduate with a degree within 6 years; which is the lowest among all other ethnic groups (Aud et al., 2012, p. 108). African Americans remain an ethnic group that is at-risk for not succeeding in college level academics.

Latina/o students. Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States (Nuñez & Kim, 2011). However, Latinos are less likely to persist toward degree attainment (Boden, 2011; Oliva & Nora, 2004; United States Department of Education, 2006). According to

the 2010 Census, “Hispanics were less likely to have a bachelor’s degree or higher (13 percent) compared with the non-Hispanic population (30 percent)” (Ogunwole, Drewery & Rios-Vargas, 2012, p. 2). The rising Latina/o population in the United States creates a continued need to focus on improving Latina/o achievement to college degree completion (Boden, 2011; Radcliffe & Bos, 2011). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “the Hispanic population accounted for over half of the growth of the total population in the United States between 2000 and 2010” (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011, p. 15). Growth for the Latino population is projected to continue, causing an increase of Latinos in both secondary and postsecondary educational venues.

The reason behind the Latino achievement gap is complex; however, researchers identified family factors, cultural beliefs, and language barriers that impact the lack of academic success. Since many Latinos are English Language Learners (ELL) in their early school years, this can impact their confidence in pursuing advanced courses and college degree attainment (Nuñez & Kim, 2011). Latinos are more likely to attend high schools that are underperforming and have fewer options for advanced coursework (Pino et al., 2012). Latinos are more at risk for not completing high school. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000, “Eighty percent of the total population 25 years and older had completed at least high school, compared with 53 percent of the total Hispanic population” (Niner & Rios, 2009, p. 8). If Latinos graduate high school and explore college options, they are more likely to enroll in less selective schools (Nuñez & Kim, 2011). In addition, Latino students who arrive on campus have a different cultural perspective that influences his or her learning style, and they may lack academic skills (Pappamihiel & Moreno, 2011). Overall, Latinos are more likely to be unprepared for college coursework and less successful at accessing a college education.

Economically disadvantaged students. The educational process is significantly impacted

by socio-economic components (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Wolniak & Engberg, 2010). The influence of socioeconomic status is continuous throughout the educational process from kindergarten through college. In the transition to college literature, a low socioeconomic status continues to put students at risk for underperformance. Wolniak and Engberg (2010) added to the understanding of socioeconomic status through their quantitative study of 3,750 students from a variety of socioeconomic and racial backgrounds using the National Longitudinal Survey of College Freshmen data set. They found that students from a low socioeconomic background had a negative effect on academic achievement in the first year of college (United States Department of Education, 2006; Wolniak & Engberg, 2010). Conversely, students from more advantageous socioeconomic backgrounds had higher grades in the first semester of college (Wolniak & Engberg, 2010). Students coming from low-income families are statistically more likely to need remedial courses in college (Attewell et al., 2006; Howell, 2011).

Socioeconomic status during the formative years can impact the development of skills needed for academic success. Students from a low-socioeconomic status are more likely to lack cultural capital needed for academic success. Cultural capital is the learned behaviors of a society that help individuals to navigate social roles and resource attainment (Dumais & Ward, 2010). Students that grow up in families and communities that lack cultural capital have a deficit in the knowledge of how to access appropriate resources to improve educational outcomes (Kyburg, Hertberg-Davis, & Callahan, 2007). The lack of economic resources coupled with poor cultural capital exacerbates students' achievement in secondary and postsecondary education.

Academically unprepared students. Academically unprepared students are students that lack academic content and academic skills to be successful in college courses after graduating high school. Academically unprepared students are more likely to be placed in remedial courses,

lengthening their time toward degree completion (Calcagno & Long, 2008). Brock (2010) identified underprepared students as having access to the college campus but academically divided from acquiring the knowledge toward obtaining a degree. The lack of academic skills and foundational knowledge inhibits the student from being successful in the first semester of college and sets up the student for subsequent academic instability for the rest of the college experience. Academic unpreparedness is the only risk factor for college success that can be changed through educational initiatives and teaching practices.

Political Initiatives

Historically, the importance of national educational success has influenced political policies. Since the National Commission on Excellence in Education's (1983) report, *A Nation at Risk*, a focus on improving educational outcomes has become a high priority. The report emphasized the need for the United States to improve educational excellence to remain competitive in global markets and increase individual wellbeing. According to the National Commission for Excellence Report (2008) that revisited the *A Nation at Risk* report, the United States has made efforts but has not succeeded in improving education for all individuals. Throughout the last two decades, significant changes in policy and teacher accountability has changed the landscape of education in the United States.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 addressed the accountability of schools for providing an appropriate education to all students. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 made testing a requirement for public schools. As a result, "we are able to see how well each of the approximately 96,000 public schools in our country is performing" (National Commission on Educational Excellence, 2008, p. 8). The No Child Left Behind Act further established the national government as an authority for current and future educational initiatives. The No Child

Left Behind Act emphasized the quality of teachers, individual schools, and districts.

Nationally, legislative advances have made efforts to increase completion of high school and college degrees. The 2009 Race to the Top Educational Fund allocated money for rigorous high school courses. According to the United States Department of Education, funds were specifically earmarked for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment in postsecondary credit-bearing courses (U.S. Department of Education Race to the Top, 2009). Supporting collegiate degree attainment, the American Graduation Initiative of 2009 created a goal of having five million more community college degrees awarded by the year 2020 (Kotamraju & Blackman, 2011). In addition, President Obama proposed the America's College Promise Act of 2015, which emphasized the need for federal initiatives to aid students in paying for and completing college degrees. The initiative funded the National Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness to continue to study the best strategies for preparing students for college (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2015). Federal initiatives are focusing on postsecondary preparation because of the projected jobs that will require college degrees in the future. In 2020, "an estimated 35 percent of job openings will require at least a bachelor's degree and 30 percent will require some college or an associate's degree" (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2015, para. 4). Specific to human development courses in this study, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 supported concurrent enrollment to help students get prepared for college (Lewis & Overman, 2008). These federal initiatives exemplify the understanding that increasing educational attainment will bring national economic benefits.

Defining College Readiness

In order to be prepared for college, students must have developed an academically rigorous

body of content knowledge, understand college culture, and be able to apply study strategies to different disciplines. The definition of college readiness is different for different states. Recently, educational leaders have increased the focus to have a common core of learning and well-defined college readiness standards for high schools through college (Haycock, 2010). Currently, 45 states have implemented a definition of college readiness and a plan to create a common core of learning to create a pathway to college success (American College Testing [ACT], 2011). According to ACT's 2011 report, college readiness can be defined as

> Students having a 50% chance of earning a grade of B or higher or about a 75% chance of earning a grade of C or higher in first-year college English Composition; College Algebra; Biology; or History, Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, or Economics. (p. 21)

ACT utilizes the ACT college preparation test to determine the probability of a student being successful in their first year of college. The success of the student in college needs to include a well-developed foundation in core academics.

College readiness is typically determined by examining the students' prior academic achievements and rigor of high school course participation (Wiley et al., 2010). Conley (2009) redefined the meaning of college readiness by emphasizing that students need to have more than just content knowledge. According to Conley (2009), students need to have a variety of academic skills for success in the classroom and an understanding of the college process. Addressing content knowledge and academic behaviors, college readiness is "defined as the level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed, without remediation, in a credit-bearing general education course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree or transfer to a baccalaureate program" (Conley, 2008, p. 4). Students need to have the ability to utilize self-efficacy skills in order to advocate for their individual needs in academic settings. In

a 2010 study of 597 undergraduate students from a large mid-western university, it was found that self-efficacy had the greatest correlation to student success in college (Kim, Newton, Downey, & Benton, 2010). The students' academic self-efficacy in the classroom produces a deeper understanding of the concepts (Linnenbrink-Garcia, Pugh, Koskey, & Stewart, 2012). Thus, students need to be supported in the high school classroom and be given opportunities to develop self-advocacy skills, study skills, and a psychological awareness of themselves as learners (Conley, 2009). Schools need to provide a rich environment of academic excellence and create a "college-going culture" to create a sense of readiness in all students (Conley, 2009; Holland & Farmer-Hinton, 2009). According Kelly et al. (2007), college students' perceptions on their high school academic preparation include a lack of college readiness skills. High schools need to focus on "providing programs that focus on self-efficacy, decision-making and coping skill strategies" (Kelly et al., 2007, p. 10). College readiness includes content and a broader group of academic skills that help the student access and understand the college material. Academic skills needed for college readiness can be summarized as "behaviors directly related to productive class performance" (Robbins et al., 2004, p. 274). A foundation in core academic knowledge is not useful to the student in a collegiate setting without academic skills to navigate a new educational environment.

College readiness is closely related to the students' self-efficacy as a learner. The postsecondary academic tradition is filled with new experiences and new settings that challenge the students' prior understanding, and students', "academic self-efficacy involves an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in pertinent school behaviors" (Weiser & Riggio, 2010, p. 378). Self-efficacy is critical in the academic transition to college since the student is thrust into an academic environment that has different social cues and a higher level of autonomy. The

transition to college academics has "much to do with the student's intrinsic assessment of his or her relative success in navigating a new academic environment" (Hurtado et al., 2007, p. 844). Students that have the ability to self-advocate and the confidence to communicate with peers and faculty in an academic setting are more successful in college (Ferkany, 2008; Hurtado et al, 2007; Weiser & Riggio, 2010). Academic self-efficacy and achievement are reciprocal experiences (Marsh & O'Mara, 2008); therefore experiencing academic success early in the transition to college may produce self-efficacy that will promote further action toward degree completion. Thus, the development of the students' academic self-efficacy prior to the college transition can positively impact future academic endeavors (Conley, 2008; Hurtado et al., 2007; Kelly et al., 2007).

High School as a Preparation for College

As a result of the benefits of having a college degree, the rise in college enrollment and the frequent use of remedial courses at college, high schools are becoming accountable for college preparation. High school achievement is a better indicator of college academic success than standardized tests (Wolniak & Engberg, 2010). Therefore, high schools are instituting more rigorous coursework and college preparation standards to prove accountability for preparing students for postsecondary options (Roderick, Nagaoka, & Coca, 2009). According to Hoffman et al. (2009), "providing college level coursework in high school is one promising way to better prepare a wide range of young people for college success" (p. 43). Nationally, state level secondary leaders are discussing the implementation of exit exams or universal college readiness standards to ensure the preparation of all students for a college experience (Haycock, 2010).

P-16 alignment. Nationally, the emphasis on creating standardized learning goals from preschool through college, entitled the P-16 policy, has influenced the rise of accelerated

programs (Mokher & McLendon, 2009; Yamamura, Martinez, & Saenz, 2010). The P-16 initiative focuses on preparing students for education through strategic collaborations between otherwise fragmented groups of educational stakeholders (Chamberlin & Plucker, 2008). Educational leaders are interested in providing rigorous academic experiences to high school students believing that, "with the appropriate preparation and a well-designed program, high school students can successfully complete college work at an earlier age" (Fischetti, MacKain & Smith, 2011, p. 52). Promoting college level courses within the high school curriculum helps high schools align to national initiatives to improve student learning and school-wide success. Emphasizing P-16 alignment essentially creates a new realm of collegial collaboration between high school educators and postsecondary faculty. Currently, higher education is not required and "has little incentive to collaborate with K-12 schools" (Goldrick-Rab, Carter & Wagner, 2007, p. 2449) on curriculum alignment strategies. The P-16 alignment initiatives are criticized for lacking the ability to implement strategies to achieve meaningful alignment between K-12 and college education (Chamberlin & Plucker, 2008).

Emphasis on academic rigor. Adding accelerated classes at the secondary level is part of a larger emphasis on increasing the rigor of the high school academic experience. In the last 25 years, increasing student success and productivity of the high school experience has been a national educational priority (Fischetti et al., 2011; Wellman, 2006; Wolniak & Engberg, 2010). The quality of high school coursework and exposure to challenging academics is the "biggest predictor of college access and degree attainment" (Wellman, 2006, p. 3). The process of increasing the rigor of high school academic experiences emphasizes high expectations for all high school students and helps to create a focus on the need for postsecondary learning.

Rigorous academic experiences prior to college entry have a positive correlation with

future academic success in the postsecondary sector (Hoffman et al., 2009; Louie, 2007; Speroni, 2011; Swanson; 2007). In Adelman's (2006) longitudinal report on secondary and postsecondary achievement, high school academic performance in rigorous courses was the best indicator of subsequent college success. Adelman (2006) expounded by stating, "The academic intensity of the student's high school curriculum still counts more than anything else in pre-collegiate history in providing momentum toward completing a bachelor's degree" (p. xviii). High schools offer accelerated courses to reinforce basic skills and strengthen students' preparation for college.

Acceleration programs. The rise in college attendance has illuminated the possibility of students starting college courses earlier. Acceleration programs offered in secondary schools are important to understanding the preparedness of first year college students. Students that enroll in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum in high school are more likely to succeed in college and less likely to need remedial education (Contreras, 2011). High schools offer various accelerated learning options for students to gain rigorous content knowledge and preparation for college including: Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, enrichment programs, and CE programs. Acceleration programs are available to a wide range of high school students but differ in equity and program style. According to the Educational Commission of the States 2009 report, "more than 85 percent of America's public high schools have the opportunity to gain college credit prior to graduation" (Fischetti et al., 2011, p. 52). In the past decade, educational leaders have looked more closely at accelerated programs due to rising economic costs and national emphasis on accountability for high schools to prepare students for work and school endeavors (Conley, 2008; Karp et al., 2007; Mokher & McLendon, 2009).

Advanced placement. The Advanced Placement (AP) program allows high school students to take academically rigorous courses that adhere to a set of curricular standards linked to a

summative test. AP courses culminate in an "end-of-year exam, which is criterion-referenced and for which students earn a grade on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, with each score corresponding to 1—no recommendation, 2—possibly qualified, 3—qualified, 4—well qualified, or 5—extremely well qualified" (Chajerwski, Mattern, & Shaw, 2011, p. 1). Upon receiving a three or better on the AP exam, most colleges and universities will award students credits toward a degree or advance the student to a higher-level course (Chajerwski et al., 2011). Even participation in an AP course during high school is predicted to help with the academic transition to college. Participation in AP courses often increases students' predicted measure of success in college on college-readiness indexes (Wiley et al., 2010). More high schools are allowing open access to AP classes, which does not ensure passing the AP test or subsequent academic success. According to the College Board (2012) data, there is a "gap between participation and performance" (p. 11) that many AP teachers and program directors are trying to close. The gap in enrollment for AP programs is most notable for students in the ethnic minority (Corra, Scott-Carter, & Carter, 2011). In the 2010-2011 school year, "903,630 public high school graduates took at least one AP exam" (The College Board, 2012, p. 3). Minority students that do have access to AP programs and the examination have lower scores than their White counterparts (Moore & Slate, 2010).

The AP program provides high schools with a method of increasing rigorous course offerings for high school students. However, the AP program does not ensure that all students are able to take a class that prepares him or her to take the exam. The AP program coordinators recognize that students eligible to take an AP course in an area of interest are sometimes not able to access the course at their school due to the lack of a certified teacher or inability of the high school to offer the course (The College Board, 2012). There are significant gaps in at-risk

students taking advantage of AP courses. According to the College Board's 2012 report, "underserved minorities appear to be disproportionately impacted: 74 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native students, 80 percent of black/African American students, and 70 percent of Hispanic/Latino students did not take the recommended AP subject" (p. 17). Although the AP program offers a variety of subjects, the equity and access of courses to all high school students varies depending on location and school population.

International baccalaureate. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is an internationally recognized program for early childhood through high school. The IB program was started in Geneva, Switzerland in the 1960s (Digiorgio, 2010; Tarc, 2009). The IB program was designed to "be an internationally recognized, secondary school diploma and university entrance examination for the expatriate students studying in predominantly private international schools" (Tarc, 2009, p. 235). IB programs have been on the rise in the United States due to recent efforts to increase the rigor of high school education (Chmelynski, 2005; Kyburg et al., 2007; Mayer, 2008, 2010). Proponents of IB programs identify that a "paramount goal of education should be promoting attitudes that reflect not only tolerance and respect, but also knowledge and understanding of, and the ability to communicate and work with people of other countries and cultures" (Brunold-Conesa, 2010, p. 259). Therefore, the IB program focuses on academic and social-political awareness through service learning. The IB program curriculum includes the study of "languages, mathematics, experimental sciences, arts, computer science, individuals and societies, and a second language" (Shaunessy, Suldo, & Friedrich, 2012, p. 65). In addition to academics, students must participate in creative implementation of their knowledge through service to others in a 150-hour internship over the course of two years (Gazda-Grace, 2002; Shaunessy et al., 2012). Finally, students in an IB diploma program must

"pass terminal examinations in all six subjects and complete three additional core activities" (Mayer, 2010, p. 86) to earn an IB diploma. The IB college preparatory program is recognized as the first year of college at "more than 100 universities" (Mayer, 2010, p. 86) in the United States. The distinguishing characteristic of IB diplomas is that the curriculum is standardized to meet internationally-accepted core content requirements for postsecondary learning (Suldo, Shaunessy, Michalowski, & Shaffer, 2008). In theory, students should be able to enter postsecondary learning in any country. However, most IB programs are limited to the United States and other Westernized nations (Mayer, 2010). Students completing IB programs in the United States "enroll directly in somewhat selective or more selective four-year institutions, and generally graduate at higher rates than the institutional averages" (International Baccalaureate, 2011, p. 2). However, there is a lack of comprehensive, empirical data on the academic success of IB diploma students in their college transition and progress toward degree completion.

Although IB programs promote a high degree of academic rigor for high school students transitioning to college, it is not a suitable choice for all students. Currently, IB program participants are typically children from privileged backgrounds (Bunnell, 2009; Digiorgio, 2010). In the United States, IB programs are offered at a "diverse set of institutions, serving a variety of constituents," (Bunnell, 2009, p. 63) but represent a group of students in the schools that are described as the "academically prestigious" (Bunnell, 2009, p. 63). IB programs can be implemented in high schools as part of a gifted and talented program that selects specific students to participate (Kyburg et al., 2007; Shaunessy et al., 2012). Students are often tracked into IB programs in ninth or 10th grades and have atypical class schedules compared to the rest of their high school peers (Digiorgio, 2010; Mayer, 2010). The rigorous coursework and isolation from similar peers can cause increased stress for high school students (Suldo et al., 2008).

The research of the success of IB students once attending postsecondary education is very limited (Kyburg et al., 2007). The perceived benefits of IB programs include the ability of the student to attain a broad global perspective on learning, obtain beneficial college access opportunities, and earn scholarships for postsecondary learning (Kyburg et al., 2007). The success of IB students is thought to be from the conglomeration of both academically rigorous content and the service-learning component. The success of IB students after graduating high school may be due to the economic and social support of their parents and not solely the academically-rigorous curriculum (Digiorgio, 2010). Despite criticisms, IB programs continue to be an option for accelerated learning at the high school level for academically talented students.

Early college. In an early-college acceleration model, academically talented students leave high school and fully enroll in college. Students receive social and emotional structured support from program administrators due to their young age. Early college programs can be day programs or residential programs and cater to students between the ages of 14 and 16 (Heilbronner, Connell, Dobyns, & Reis, 2010). Early college programs are selective if the student is entering as a full-time college student or if the program is separate from the high school setting. Typically, early college programs are small, serving 100 or fewer students to ensure that students receive needed support from program staff (Hoffman & Webb, 2010). Students in early college programs typically allow students to complete an associate degree and a high school diploma at the same time (Jacobson, 2005). Students benefit from academically-challenging high school coursework and college courses taken at the same time.

The number of early college programs has risen dramatically since 2002 when the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation began funding the educational model (Hoffman & Webb, 2010; Zehr, 2011). Since many early college programs are funded through grants, economic stability of the

programs is a high priority. Early college programs often have a career focus such as science- or math-based early college programs or focus on a demographically at-risk group of students (Hoffman & Webb, 2010; New Early College STEM Programs, 2012). Since students entering early college programs need to be emotionally mature and exhibit high levels of academic competence to be successful, programs are often highly selective (Heilbronner et al., 2010). The early college program model is not designed to reach all high school students. In addition, all students eligible for early college programs may not take advantage of the opportunity due to level of commitment that is required. Early college programs often require traveling to the supporting university and sacrificing typical high school experiences such as sports (Samuels, 2011). Therefore, educational stakeholders recognize early college programs as an opportunity for college access but recognize the structural and funding limitations of the programs (Hoffman & Webb, 2010).

Enrichment programs. To address the specific needs of a particular demographic group or school, college preparation enrichment programs are implemented to strengthen the skills of students preparing for college. College enrichment programs are typically funded through government or private grants. College enrichment programs such as Gear up and Success for All are available in some locales but are not accessible to all students. The benefit of college enrichment programs is their ability to cater to the deficits of specific groups of students through programmatic initiatives.

Concurrent enrollment. The distinguishing factor that identifies CE programs from other accelerated student learning options is the connection to the supporting university. The high school, teachers, and student all gain access to university through the CE program partnership. From a student perspective, CE courses are different because college credit can be gained

through successful course completion in lieu of summative standardized testing. Supporting universities determine the requirements to earn college credits and "determine whether the student should receive college recognition in the form of credit, placement or exemption" (Dutkowsky et al., 2006, p. 477). Students can experience the exact college course content in their own high school while gaining a valuable head start on their college pathway.

Student Success in Concurrent Enrollment Programs

Concurrent enrollment programs allow students to be enrolled in a collegiate class while still in high school. Nationally, CE programs vary in instructional design, student eligibility, implementation styles, and teacher preparation requirements (Krueger, 2006). In most CE programs, the high school teacher is trained as collegiate "adjunct faculty who teach college-level courses" (Charlier & Duggan, 2010, p. 94) in the high school setting. However, all CE programs are similar in allowing high school students the opportunity to earn college credit from a supporting postsecondary institution (Boecherer, 2016; Charlier & Duggan, 2010; Krueger, 2006). Courses are structurally similar to the courses at the college campus but are implemented in an environment that is familiar to the students.

Concurrent enrollment is successful in preparing students for college. According to D. Smith's (2007) study of a Kansas CE program, "there is a significant relationship between participation in dual-credit enrollment and increased educational aspirations" (p. 383). High school students taking in a CE course are "4.3% more likely to receive a high school diploma" (Peters & Mann, 2009, p. 637). After transitioning to college, students that enrolled in a CE course had higher first-year grade point averages in college compared to similar peers that did not take a CE course (Karp et al., 2007). Intertwined in the academic benefits of CE are the skills and understanding of the college process that the students gain. Students taking CE classes

develop confidence in their ability to achieve rigorous coursework and develop an understanding of the amount of education needed for future career paths (Leonard, 2010). Concurrent enrollment classes help to prepare students academically by providing access to college content within the familiar setting of high school. Therefore, CE programs provide an opportunity for students to succeed in both high school and college while learning valuable skills for future success.

Benefits of Concurrent Enrollment

Specifically, CE programs offer both core general education requirement courses and career-focused courses. Typical core academic courses mirror the first-year general education requirements for most college freshmen. Career-focused concurrent enrollment courses may include human development, engineering, or business courses. For courses that do not have a related AP test, CE programs can be an option for increasing the high school rigor and creating a college pathway for high school students. According to Dutkowsky et al. (2006), the CE program in economics was superior to the AP/ honors economics students in achievement on the Test of Economic Literacy. From a sample of 254 CE students compared to similar peers in an AP/ honors economic course, students in the CE course scored higher in "five out of the six categories" (Dutkowsky et al., 2006, p. 480) of fundamental economics. The superior performance of the CE students demonstrates the academic benefits of the concurrent enrollment model.

The variety of CE course offerings can aid in the development of student interest in a college major. Although no current studies exist to examine the connection between CE courses and declaring a college major, developing an interest in a collegiate area of study is beneficial to future academic pursuits. In a longitudinal study of 471 undergraduate students through their

college experience, Harackiewicz et al. (2002) discovered that academic success in college was dependent upon a combination of past performance and interest in the subject area. Since CE programs allow high school students to take a discipline specific college course while still in high school, researchers suggest that students could increase their career interest in a unique area of study. Academic interest can be a powerful motivator toward future academic endeavors (Allen & Robbins, 2010; Bye, Pushkar, & Conway, 2007). Developing a student's interest in a specific subject area is believed to have a long-lasting impact on academic decision-making (Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2012). Therefore, CE programs may be an avenue to expose students to courses that could help to define curricular interests and future academic majors.

Concurrent enrollment programs have benefits for the student while still in high school. Enrollment in a CE program is "positively related to students' likelihood of earning a high school diploma" (Karp et al., 2007, p. 4). During the process of taking a CE course, students are exposed to other students with similar educational motivations and interests. Educational research has identified the positive impact peers can have on an individual's motivation to continue academic pursuits (Contreras, 2011). The intrinsic academic benefits of concurrent enrollment classes are immediate, and academic skills can be applied to other high school courses.

In postsecondary academic achievement, students that took a CE course in high school have higher college grade point averages. According to a quantitative study of New York and Florida CE programs, students taking CE courses in high school had higher grade point averages in the first year of college, higher cumulative averages in their junior year of college, and made more progress toward college degree completion than their non-participating peers (Karp et al., 2007). Subsequent studies on the college achievement of students taking CE courses in high

school demonstrated higher student career aspirations and higher grade point averages (GPA) than similar peers that did not take CE courses in high school (Ashburn, 2007; Leonard, 2010; North & Jacobs, 2010; D. Smith, 2007). Therefore, students taking CE courses benefit academically and develop interests that impact lifelong learning goals.

Concurrent enrollment programs have economic benefits for the students, high schools, and individual states (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). Students benefit from having the opportunity to take a college course for free or a minimal fee compared to the identical course when taken as a college student (Boecherer, 2016; Hunt & Carroll, 2006). CE courses allow students to shorten their time toward degree completion, allowing the student to save money on campus housing and other college related expenses (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). In many cases, CE programs are free for students having free or reduced lunch status (Boecherer, 2016; Hunt & Carroll, 2006). By offering college courses to students, states and individual high schools have access to national and nonprofit grant money for providing college preparation programs to students.

Concurrent enrollment programs provide opportunities for greater educational equity (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). By allowing high school teachers to instruct college-level courses in their specific high school settings, CE courses can be offered in rural areas that would otherwise be isolated from accelerated learning options (Hoffman et al., 2009). The structure of CE courses allows teachers instead of the students to travel to the university setting for training. The teacher is the nexus between the high school and the college. Typically, students in rural areas have limited access to college preparation opportunities compared to urban counterparts (Griffin, Hutchins, & Meece, 2011; Provasnik et al., 2007). According to the U.S. Department of Education's 2007 report on rural schools, students have fewer options for accelerated learning (Provasnik et al., 2007). Compared to urban and suburban locales, "college enrollment rates for

18 to 24 year olds […] were generally lower in rural areas" (Provasnik et al., 2007, p. 5). Therefore, CE programs are an accelerated learning option for schools in a variety of locations.

In addition, CE programs can provide more opportunities to access college materials and learning resources. The hosting college or university often provides discipline-specific curriculum resources, access to technology and opportunities for campus visits (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships [NACEP], 2011). Access to high quality learning resources is directly linked to higher academic performance. According to Wolniak and Engberg (2010), high quality resources during the high school experience had a "significantly positive effect on first year grades in college" (p. 462). The ability of the high school to attain access to the university campus and resources complements any existing programs the high school has implemented to aid in the students' college planning process. Concurrent enrollment programs give access to the university to all participating students, which is significant for at-risk students that may not have the same opportunities (Contreras, 2011).

The unique structure of CE programs offer more time to expand on college-level concepts. CE programs commonly offer college courses in a two-semester format for the same three credit course that is offered in one semester at the university (Leonard, 2010). The elongated format allows for greater expansion of class discussion topics, an ability to address student concerns, and the possibility of embedding college readiness skills. In a study of preliminary outcomes after the first year of implementing a CE program in Amesbury, Massachusetts, the ability of the CE teacher to expand on the college curricula given the extra class time was beneficial. The Amesbury CE program identified the CE course in the high school as offering, "content, material, assignments and assessments that are equal to or superior to those in the campus class" (Leonard, 2010, p. 17). The Amesbury CE program research data is limiting due to the

limitations of the small sample size and because the program was newly established. However, despite the limitations, this study identified the unique role of the CE teacher in developing and expanding college curriculum to mirror the educational needs of the high school student (Leonard, 2010). Concurrent enrollment programs allow students to study more difficult college-level content at a slower, more manageable pace within the high school setting.

Concurrent enrollment programs foster peer and teacher interaction. Peer and faculty interaction develops academic skills that are positively correlated to academic achievement. In a 2010 study of CE programs in rural Virginia, teachers utilized a variety of instructional strategies to implement collegiate curriculum in the classroom. The strategies included, "lecture, small and large group discussion, and unstructured self-paced learning" (Charlier & Duggan, 2010, p. 104). Most significantly, the CE classes provided a substantial portion of class time for peer and faculty interaction using small group formats, collaborative discussion groups, and work time for educators to interact with students (Charlier & Duggan, 2010). As a result of this format of teaching college curriculum, students "reported a statistically significant increase in feeling prepared; [however], the effect size was only moderate" (Charlier & Duggan, 2010, p. 105). Access to college curriculum allows students to develop a familiarity with the content and rigor of college coursework.

Limitations of Concurrent Enrollment Programs

Nationally, CE programs are lacking in a cohesive definition, implementation process, and quality standards requirement. Since CE programs are often state or institutionally based, there is a lack of aggrandizement that AP and IB programs possess. Since the establishment of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), there has been an increased focus on improving the quality of CE programs (Dutkowsky et al., 2006). NACEP developed a

certification protocol for identifying quality program components. As a result of meeting the quality indicators, CE programs can apply for nationally recognized NACEP accreditation.

Rise of Concurrent Enrollment Programs

Nationally, CE programs "have expanded considerably over the past three decades" (Mokher & McLendon, 2009, p. 250). There has been a 35% increase in state adoption of CE policies since 1990. California, Connecticut, and Florida lead the nation in dual enrollment policies and implementation strategies (Boecherer, 2016; Hunt & Carroll, 2006; Mokher & McLendon, 2009). Since 2007, Iowa, Arkansas, Indiana, and Colorado have implemented state-wide legislative policies that require colleges to aide high schools in creating concurrent enrollment programs (NACEP, 2011). Since the implementation of the United States Department of Education's Race to the Top Education Fund of 2009, schools are seeking to improve educational offerings and gain access to funding for postsecondary preparation programs. Policy makers and researchers are supporting the expansion of CE programs to reach a broader audience of students to prepare them for the college transition (Contreras, 2011; Dodge, 2012; Karp et al., 2007; Wright & Bogotch, 2006). Therefore, CE is a current educational phenomenon that seeks to redefine the postsecondary transition of high school students.

Need for Further Research

The transition from high school to postsecondary education is complex. There is a need to understand the transition to improve education in both high school and college (Crede & Niehorster, 2012; Wolniak & Engberg, 2010). Educational researchers from a variety of domains have emphasized the need to look for opportunities to improve education at the high school level in order to improve performance in college and ultimate student degree attainment (Adelman, 2006; Allen & Robbins, 2010; Autor, 2010). Many factors leading to student achievement in

college and persistence to degree completion cannot be changed such as race, parental education, and socioeconomic status. Therefore, focusing on preparing students for the rigors of college through acceleration programs at the high school level can lead to more equitable educational opportunities. Concurrent enrollment programs are on the verge of national expansion; however, there are still large gaps in understanding about the process and outcomes of CE programs (Karp et al., 2007). Research on CE programs has focused on student outcomes from a quantitative approach. There are no research studies that focus on the teacher as a stakeholder in the concurrent enrollment program implementation from a qualitative approach. The lack of comprehensive data from high school to college hinders researchers from analyzing the student transition. As secondary institutions work toward tracking students taking CE classes in high school and their achievement in college and beyond, there will be more research opportunities to analyze outcomes (Speroni, 2011). Since current studies have focused on student achievement as a result of CE program enrollment, examining the role of the teacher in motivating and implementing students to achieve mastery of college coursework is lacking (Charlier & Duggan, 2010). Understanding the role of the teacher in the process of teaching a CE course will add to the growing body of literature and popularity of CE courses to successfully prepare students for postsecondary education. In addition, more research is needed in the overall understanding of teaching CE courses, as state and national initiatives favor the CE model to improve college preparation strategies at the secondary school level.

Summary

Concurrent enrollment can provide access to college level academics while supporting the development of skills that will enable the student to successfully transition into collegiate academics. Concurrent enrollment programs commonly provide opportunities to understand the

college culture, structured academic support, and motivation from the teacher. Although CE programs differ in their course design, teachers implement a "variety of strategies that appear to increase motivation, self-esteem, and academic success" (Jordan et al., 2006, p. 747). Although CE programs have been successful in both transitioning students into college (Swanson, 2007) and keeping students in college after the freshmen year (North & Jacobs, 2010), there has not been an examination of how teachers implement strategies to ensure successful completion of the CE course and development of college preparation skills. This qualitative grounded study filled the gap in understanding the process of educating students in CE classes from the perspective of the teacher from a qualitative approach. Sixteen teachers from different high schools offering the same CE courses were studied to understand their approach to teaching content and college preparation skills. Data were collected through questionnaires, an interview, a classroom observation and document analysis. Through the process of constant comparative analysis, data were coded through open and axial coding methods. The themes that emerged created a five-step theory to understanding the process of teaching CE courses.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This qualitative, grounded study generated an understanding of the process effective CE teachers use to promote college readiness skills while maintaining academic rigor. Prior studies in the emerging literature on CE programs were purely quantitative, focusing on student achievement as a result of CE programs (Jordan et al., 2006; D. Smith, 2007). Therefore, a qualitative approach, focusing on the teacher's role as a gatekeeper to the success of the student, enhanced the understanding of CE programs and their success. Through a comparative analysis approach, data from the CE teachers were analyzed to reveal "conceptual categories" (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 23) that were used to explain the process of combining rigor, college study skills and meeting core curriculum requirements in the CE classroom (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). A conceptual theory and conditional matrix of the teaching process in CE programs was created as a result of this study (Creswell, 2007). The qualitative design of this study can be coupled with the quantitative research that already exists to provide a more substantial understanding of CE teaching. This chapter focuses on the research design, participants, data collection, and analysis procedures.

Design

Current research on CE programs utilized quantitative research designs and large samples (Allen et al., 2008; North & Jacobs, 2010; D. Smith, 2007), creating a broad overview of the impact of CE on student success. Prior studies have focused mainly on the student outcomes, program design and student transitions to college (Hughes, 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008; Speroni, 2011). The depth of the data collected during the qualitative study augmented the current quantitative literature, giving a complete view of the impact of CE programs. According

to Creswell (2007), qualitative research design is effective when there is a need for a "complex, detailed understanding of the issue" (p. 40). Concurrent enrollment teachers have a complex duty to integrate high school and college course requirements. The understanding of how teachers strategically integrate varying methods of teaching and motivational techniques to prepare students for the transition to college cannot be grasped through a quantitative study. Therefore, the qualitative research design enhanced the understanding of the teacher's actions and generated a broad understanding of the process of preparing students for the transition to college.

A grounded theory approach enabled rich data to be collected from CE educators and facilitated the construction of "an original analysis" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 2) of the data explaining the teaching process. The grounded theory approach enabled the process of balancing academic rigor, college readiness skills, and course requirements by CE teachers to emerge from the data, thus facilitating the development of a framework. The development of understanding about the teaching process in CE classrooms was developed through the process of collecting rich data. The grounded theory approach "offers a foundation for rendering the processes and procedures of qualitative investigation visible, comprehensible and replicable" (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 33). Thus, the results of this grounded theory study provided a foundation for understanding the CE teaching process for future research endeavors. A systematic grounded theory design was followed. The systematic methods of data collection and coding provided a reputable framework for developing the grounded theory.

Research Questions

The research methodology and population sampling ensured that the data collected answered the research questions. The research questions included:

RQ1: How do concurrent enrollment teachers determine what college readiness skills should be taught? And how do they determine mastery?

RQ2: How do personal perceptions of college readiness impact the educator's motivational behaviors in the concurrent enrollment classroom?

RQ3: How do concurrent enrollment teachers develop college readiness skills?

RQ4: How does the concurrent enrollment teacher utilize motivational techniques to encourage the development of college readiness skills in the classroom?

RQ5: How do concurrent enrollment teachers balance academic rigor and the development of college readiness skills?

Setting

Data were collected at various school sites in the State of Connecticut participating in one of Connecticut's CE programs. The research was gathered through interviews and classroom observations at each individual CE teacher's school. Due to the demographic diversity of Connecticut, as many demographic areas as possible were represented in the study. The five demographic distinctions included: extreme wealth, suburban, rural, urban periphery, and urban core (Connecticut State Data Center, 2004). The schools participating in this study were part of America's oldest CE partnership with a state university (Boecherer, 2016). As the oldest CE program in the nation, Grand Oak University provided a solid foundation for research. Conducting this grounded theory study in Connecticut maximized the variation of demographics, which increased the applicability of the generated theory to other programs and states.

Connecticut has a unique demographic layout that impacts the educational system. According to the Connecticut State Education Resource Center's 2011 report, Connecticut is "one of the most racially and economically segregated states in our nation" (p. 4). Although

Connecticut is a small state, the racial and economic disparities are vast. Since Connecticut has high performing students, the educational gaps are often overlooked. According to the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement (2010), "public school students perform extremely well on national tests. However, Connecticut has the largest achievement gap among all 50 states" (p. 7). The experience teaching in Connecticut schools is varied based on the unique challenges of each of the five demographic areas (see Table 1). According to the Connecticut State Data Center's 2004 report, "the state has too much concentrated disparity to be viewed in average terms. There were five distinctly different groups of towns in Connecticut—wealthy, suburban, rural, the urban periphery, and the urban core" (p. 30). Since Connecticut is comprised of drastically different populations, CE programs in different parts of the state reach different student populations and have differing levels of educational resources. Therefore, to address the different demographic populations, participants were sampled from each type of demographic distinction. By studying CE teachers from each of the five demographic distinctions, the process of teaching CE courses emerged regardless of the racial and socioeconomic makeup of the student population.

Table 1

Connecticut's Five Demographic Descriptions

Demographic area	Income level	Poverty level	Population density
Urban core	Lowest	Highest	Extremely high
Urban periphery	Below average	Average	High
Suburban	Above average	Low	Modest
Wealthy	Exceptionally high	Low	Moderate
Rural	Average	Below average	Lowest

Note. Adapted from Connecticut State Data Center (2004).

Participants

Concurrent enrollment teachers in Connecticut participated in this study. The sample size included 16 educators in order to develop a "well-saturated theory" (Creswell, 2007, p. 120). The participants were chosen using a criterion sampling procedure. Participants were delimited to educators currently teaching a Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) course in conjunction with Connecticut's largest CE university partnership, Grand Oak University. The criterion to participate in the study was that the CE teacher must have been teaching a CE course at the time of the study, and they must have been active in the professional development programs offered by the host university. Concurrent enrollment teachers that were teaching the course for the first time were not included in the study.

After criterion sampling, effective teachers as determined by recommendations by CE supervising program director, were chosen from the criterion sample group. Finally, the eligible participants contact information was downloaded from the Grand Oak University database with permission from the CE supervising program director. The eligible CE educators were asked to

voluntarily participate through an email or personal phone call to describe the purpose of the study. Stratified sampling procedures were used to select volunteer CE teachers from each of the five demographic areas of Connecticut. A participant from a wealthy demographic area volunteered but was not able to gain permission from their administration. Therefore, no participants from a school in a demographically wealthy area were able to participate. The final group of participants were notified by email after all sampling procedures were completed and school district permissions were obtained.

Stratified sampling procedures were used to further narrow the participant sample. From the volunteer participant group, participants were chosen from schools in four of the five demographic areas of Connecticut. Since the educational experience is different in rural, suburban, urban periphery, and urban schools, maximizing the variety of participating schools was vital to creating a reliable grounded theory. The educator's demographic designation was determined using the Connecticut Strategic School Profiles reported by the Connecticut Department of Education and the Connecticut State Data Center demographic reports.

To maintain the validity of this study, the CE participant sample included only effective educators. In addition to the high expectations for professionalism and education by the Connecticut Department of Education, CE teachers are held to postsecondary standards. Educators participating in Connecticut's largest and oldest CE partnership must apply to teach in the program (Boecherer, 2016). The application process includes rigorous academic and professional standards. According to the Instructional Certification Requirements (2011), educators must have a master's degree in education or a related content field, have three to five years teaching experience, and be recommended by a principal. In addition, each educator must

maintain Connecticut teaching professional development requirements and supply a second professional reference letter before applications are considered.

In Connecticut, teachers are not considered experienced until three years of successful teaching and the teacher mentoring program has been completed. The Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM) is a three-year, structured support program for new teachers. The TEAM mentoring program requires teachers to develop professional competencies, demonstrate effective classroom pedagogical techniques and become reflective practitioners about their teaching. After completion of this program and 10 months of teaching, educators can apply for the Provisional Educator Certificate which gives the educator credibility as a Connecticut teaching professional. The Professional Educator Certificate is awarded to educators after five years of successful teaching and commitment to the teaching profession, which is the "third and highest level of certification" (Connecticut Department of Education, 2011a, p. 7) in the state of Connecticut. Commitment to the teaching profession is demonstrated through completion of professional learning experiences equaling "90 contact hours every five-year period" (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2011b, p. 4). Thus, by Connecticut Department of Education standards upheld by university CE qualifications, the CE teachers in this study are recognized as experienced teachers in the Connecticut public schools.

Once CE teachers are accepted into the program, the teacher must attend a new instructor certification program. The new instructor certification program introduces the high school teacher to university instructors, curriculum requirements, and technology practices. Concurrent enrollment educators are required to attend two professional workshops run by university personnel each subsequent year of teaching a CE course. The partnering university adheres to the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships standards for CE programs. As

a result, high school CE educators must adhere to professional guidelines for CE teachers. By maintaining all the professional and curricular requirements, the CE teacher is considered an adjunct faculty member for the host university. The teachers in this study are esteemed as individuals with high professionalism and teaching skills by both high school and university standards.

Procedures

Approval for the study was requested and given by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A). After the approval of the IRB, informed consent was obtained from the participating university. Then an introductory email was sent to teachers identified by the participating university's CE program director as expert teachers (see Appendix B). Each Connecticut school district differs on the paperwork and procedures for research studies. Therefore, the 16 participating districts were contacted in the appropriate manner to obtain consent through the CE teacher. After school district consent was obtained, informed consent forms were obtained from the teachers participating in the study (see Appendix C). An initial contact was set up with each participant via phone or email to discuss the data collection timeline and to complete introductory data inventories.

First, participants completed an introductory questionnaire addressing their demographics, teaching experience, basic perceptions of CE, and teaching practices (see Appendix D). The introductory questionnaire was utilized to understand the professional background of each participant. Secondly, the Self Perceptions Inventory (SPI) by Soares and Soares (2008) helped to address Research Question 2 on perceptions of college readiness. Teachers took the SPI specific to adjunct university instructors. This inventory collected information on the participants' self-concept as a person and their self-concept as an adjunct

university professor. The SPI for adjunct professors is a "forced choice type of semantic differential containing four categories maintained along a continuum between two terms (expressed as adjectives or sentences) opposite in meaning" (Soares & Soares, 2008, para. 1). The SPI was tested for reliability during a pilot test including 210 teachers (Soares & Soares, 2008). The reliability range was .88 for the test and re-test after eight weeks (Soares & Soares, 2008). According to prior research (Evans, 2009; Vagle, 2009), teacher perceptions and teacher efficacy impacts the educational experience for the student. Also, understanding the teacher's self-concept enhanced the understanding of his or her classroom procedures and implementation strategies during the classroom observation. Understanding the CE teacher's level of self-concept as a university instructor helped to augment subsequent data.

Thirdly, each participant completed a second questionnaire during the initial meeting. The Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory (Soares & Soares, 2008) was used to gather data on how the teacher implemented their perceptions into the classroom environment. This questionnaire comprised of 40-paired words for identified categories of the teaching experience. The final score comprised of a holistic number from -80 to 80 representing the participant's educational views on a spectrum (Soares & Soares, 2008). The Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory (ACEI) gathered data on the teachers' implementation strategies, problem solving strategies, and attitude toward students. The teachers took the ACEI for self-attributions in the classroom. The ACEI for self-attributions requires participants to choose out of four choices on a continuum the attitude or action that most exemplifies their teaching. The data from the SPI and ACEI were utilized to support the interview questions and for descriptive purposes during the data analysis. The participants' responses in the ACEI questionnaire revealed that there are similarities in teaching styles in CE classrooms.

After the initial contact with each participant, scheduled interviews were conducted at each school site. Each one-on-one interview lasted approximately one hour each. The purpose of the interview was to elicit specific information about teaching the CE class. The interviews were important to understand the total experience of the CE teacher and elicit rich responses from the participants. During the interviews, the participants' responses were recorded to create research transcripts. The recording allowed the participants' "interpersonal interaction," (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 179) body language, and facial expressions to be noted, which further solidified their verbal answers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). A second interview of each participant was not needed since data saturation was fulfilled during the first interviews.

For a complete triangulation of the data, classroom observations were conducted. One classroom observation was completed for each participant. Additional classroom observations were not conducted since saturation was reached. Classroom observations were used to examine how the CE teacher implemented college readiness skills, utilized motivational techniques, and used methods of balancing academic rigor. The classroom observations were recorded to create transcript data. Overall, the purpose of the classroom observations was to observe how the teachers' perceptions of college readiness, pedagogical strategies for content, and college readiness skills were manifested in a classroom setting.

Finally, a document analysis culminated the data collection procedures. The high schools' course requirements handbooks and university curriculum policies were analyzed for background information. Copies of the class syllabus, student handouts, and teacher lesson plans were analyzed for strategic college readiness components and for evidence of academic rigor. The document analysis provided tangible data to support the verbal data collected during the interview process.

Researcher's Role

I took on the role of a human instrument in this study since I conducted the data collection procedures and analysis. I did not utilize any outside help for data analysis and completed all research steps independently. I took a non-participative role in the data collection process to allow the teachers to expound on their experience as CE teachers. I am a family and consumer science educator employed in a Connecticut public high school for the past twelve years. I have been active in the educational community through participation in various high school mentoring programs and student internship programs. As a result, I was recognized as an outstanding educator and community asset builder in May 2011. I hold a Connecticut professional educator certificate and an impeccable teaching record. From 2006 to 2015, I taught a human development CE course. During those nine years, I developed collegial relationships with several of the teachers in Connecticut's CE program. Concurrent enrollment colleagues recognized me as an innovator in curriculum development. I was nominated for the CE educator of the year award in 2010.

I have a commitment to the success of CE programs and the larger goal of providing exceptional educational opportunities for all students. I have presented curricular presentations at both the high school and collegiate level. I presented at the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships in October 2011. As a result of my varied professional experiences with CE programs, I can effectively analyze the experience of CE teachers during the data collection process. Over the past nine years, I developed a professional rapport with some of the study participants at professional development seminars. The professional rapport with the participants coupled with my teaching experience established my skill level to conduct qualitative interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Data Collection

Interviews

I interviewed 16 CE teachers using an intensive interviewing technique at a school site or mutually agreed upon location. The interviews were recorded by video when allowed to capture the inflections and body language of the teachers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The interview process started with a briefing of the purpose of the study (see Appendix E). After the briefing, I asked open-ended questions to discuss the process of teaching CE courses (see Appendix F). Through an intensive interviewing technique, I proceeded to ask the teacher outlined questions to understand the experience of teaching CE (Charmaz, 2006). I asked clarifying, open-ended questions in the process of the conversation to explore deeper issues as the teachers responded to the initial outlined questions (see Appendix F).

The interview questions were designed to capture the teachers' strategies for implementing college readiness skills and their reflections on teaching CE classes. In the introductory questions, I asked teachers about their overall perceptions of college readiness. According to Charlier and Duggan (2010), the teacher's understanding of strategies for teaching CE classes impacts their level of implementation. The perception of the teachers' college readiness and their perceptions of their own college experiences were important to understanding implementation strategies in the classroom. The introductory interview questions related to college readiness and personal perceptions were:

1. Do concurrent enrollment classes help to prepare students for college? How?
2. Do you feel a personal responsibility to prepare students for college? Why?
3. How do you address college readiness skills in your concurrent enrollment class?
4. How do you address the students' level of college readiness in your classroom?

5. How have your personal experiences influenced your view of college readiness?
6. Describe personal and professional experiences that have influenced your perception of college readiness?
7. Describe how your experiences and understanding of college readiness influence your interactions with students.

Questions eight through 22 were organized based on the Education Policy Improvement Center's "four dimensions of college readiness" (Conley, 2010, p. 32). College readiness can be described in four dimensions that include: "key cognitive strategies, key content knowledge, academic behaviors, contextual skills and awareness" (Conley, 2010, p. 32). The pedagogical interview questions focused on cognitive strategies that are important aspects of college readiness. Cognitive strategies include academic time management skills, note-taking strategies, test taking strategies, and the development of vocabulary. In addition, contextual skills and awareness of self as a learner are important for students to persist in college after the first year (Robbins et al., 2004). Questions 12 through 15 addressed the CE teacher's ability to create a college going culture in the classroom (Conley, 2010). Students need to be supported in developing self-advocacy skills, coping skills, and the ability to access college resources (Brinkworth et al., 2009; Conley, 2010). According to O'Gara et al. (2009), "students need to know how to access a service and feel comfortable doing so" (p. 210). College reading, writing, and research skills are an important aspect to college readiness (Conley, 2010; VanDeWeghe, 2006). Therefore, questions 16 through 22 addressed the development of critical thinking skills and college literacy skills (Conley, 2010). In summary, the pedagogical set of questions explored how the CE teacher addressed each aspect of college readiness in the CE classroom. The interview questions related to pedagogical strategies were:

8. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of time management skills.
9. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of note-taking skills.
10. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of test-taking strategies.
11. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to strengthen student vocabulary.
12. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of self-advocacy.
13. Beyond the college curriculum you are required to teach, describe other college-related information you impart to your students.
14. Describe collegiate experiences you provide for your students.
15. How do you encourage students to access college resources?
16. How do you encourage students to examine topics from multiple perspectives?
17. How do you facilitate discussions of complex topics in your classroom?
18. How do you encourage students to identify their own personal biases?
19. How do you engage students in developing intellectual curiosity about human development?
20. Describe how you integrate college level research skills in your class.
21. Describe how you integrate college level writing skills in your class.
22. Describe how you integrate college level reading skills in your class.

The last set of interview questions focused on the teacher's motivational strategies and ability to balance college academic rigor in the high school setting. Questions 23-26 examined the teacher's role in supporting the student's learning through positive reinforcement, constructive criticism, and motivation. According to Radcliffe and Bos (2011), the development of a motivationally-based relationship between students and college-preparation mentors can promote positive academic behaviors in students. In addition, students that have an individual at school that is knowledgeable about the college-going process will be more likely to apply to colleges (Bell, Rowan-Kenyon, & Perna, 2009). The motivational strategies questions, 23-26, addressed the teacher's ability to gain a positive rapport with students and motivate them to adapt to college academics. Questions 27 and 28 addressed the balance of academic rigor. Since concurrent enrollment classes at Grand Oak University were taught in a two-semester design instead of a one-semester layout that is common at the college campus, teachers have the ability to slow the pace of the course. Understanding the process of pacing the course revealed the process of teaching and planning CE courses. The interview questions related to motivation and rigor were:

23. How do you motivate students to do college-level work?
24. How do you utilize positive reinforcement in your concurrent enrollment class?
25. How do you utilize constructive criticism in your concurrent enrollment class?

The interview questions related to balancing academic rigor between high school and college level academics were:

26. How do you balance the academic rigor of college academics with the fact that the students are still in high school?

27. What strategies do you use when planning homework assignments and classroom activities to bridge the gap between high school level work and college level work?

I completed research memos on any information that was revealed informally through conversation after the formal interview was completed (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). After the interviews, I transcribed the recorded data and sent it to the teacher for member checking.

Questionnaires

Participants were given two questionnaires to explore their self-perception of teaching college courses. The Self Perceptions of Adjunct Professors questionnaire was utilized to compare the participant's self-concept as a whole person to their self-perception just within the domain of being an adjunct professor. All of the CE teachers in this study were considered adjunct professors by the host university despite the fact that they taught the college course only on their high school campuses. The questionnaire data were scored using the scoring protocols of Soares and Soares (2008). The participants' perceptions of their approach to teaching and classroom interactions were represented in one holistic number after the scoring process was completed. The holistic number represented the teacher's perceptions on a continuum. The self-perception questionnaires revealed that the participants have a high self-concept of their ability to teach a college course.

Additionally, a second questionnaire was given to the participants to explore their teaching style. The Soares and Soares (2008) Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory (ACEI) was given to participants. In the ACEI questionnaire, the holistic number represented the teacher's style of teaching. The three styles of teaching were leading, guided, and integrated. A leading teaching style was described as when the "instructor defines and clarifies the objectives of the lesson, selects and organizes the learning activities, provides the models and examples,

monitors the practice and designs the evaluation procedures" (Soares & Soares, 2008, p. 4) to analyze the growth of student learning. The leadership style emphasized the teacher's role in organizing, implementing, and reflecting on teaching rather than the student influencing the course of the learning. The Soares and Soares (2008) guidance model is an "interactive, student-centered approach" that emphasizes more fluidity in the lesson to allow the student to set the course for learning. The teacher takes on the role as a facilitator rather than a leader in this model (Soares & Soares, 2008). The integration model is "an information-processing approach in which the instructor assists students to process sensory data efficiently, organize information and develop concepts" (Soares & Soares, 2008, p. 7). In the integration model, the teacher focuses on helping the student learn strategies to improve learning and emphasizes student creativity as a positive component to the learning process. The ACEI questionnaire enabled the participants to be sorted into teaching categories. The participants were sorted into the leadership model, guidance model or integration model for various aspects of their teaching practices. The data collected from the introductory questionnaire and the two perception inventories were utilized to provide depth to the interview data.

Document Analysis

To give a holistic view of the teacher's process of teaching CE courses, a document analysis was completed (Creswell, 2007). Lesson plans, student worksheets, and digital teaching resources were collected. The CE teachers were asked to share the documents on the day of the observation. The CE teacher was given the opportunity to share other pertinent documents related to planning and implementing college preparation activities. The documents were analyzed for evidence of college readiness skills by looking for the themes that emerged during open and axial coding of the interview and classroom data. The syllabi from the CE teachers

were most similar in format and content due to the requirements by the host university. Classroom documents related to learning activities in the classroom showed the diversity of activities implemented to help students gain college academic skills. The document analysis demonstrated that participants emphasized time management and ideas for managing a large academic workload both verbally and in writing to students. The document analysis supported the findings in the interviews and classroom observations.

Observations

From a non-participative standpoint, data were collected in teachers' classroom to understand their process of teaching. Subsequent observations were not needed to reach theoretical saturation. Observations were planned and organized ahead of time with the permission of each school. Permissions were obtained from the school districts and participants to take notes and audio record the lesson for transcription purposes. Research memos were recorded prior to the class and after lesson ended to capture any interactions of the teacher prior to the start of the class and after the class (see Appendix G). During the class, the sequence of the teacher's lesson and interactions with students were documented in a chart (see Appendix H). During the classroom observations evidence of college readiness skills, motivational strategies, and implementation of strategies to balance academic rigor were recorded. After descriptive observations were documented during the observation, reflective notes were taken. The observations provided an understanding of how the CE teacher interacted with students and how lessons were presented to students. The observational data brought depth to understanding the interview data since the concepts discussed in the interviews were brought to life through the teacher's personality and implementation styles in the classroom.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the introductory survey and the two perception questionnaires were utilized to provide depth to the interview data. The introductory questionnaire, Teaching Background Survey, was analyzed and categorized for similarities in the participants (see Appendix D). This survey revealed the number of years of experience each participant had in the field of education. In addition, the participants' prior job experience and professional activities were documented. The self-perceptions questionnaire data were scored using the scoring protocols of Soares and Soares (2008). The participants' perceptions were represented in one holistic number after the scoring process was completed. These holistic numbers were organized on a continuum to examine the average score and any outliers. This data revealed the self-perceptions of the CE teachers in relation to their overall understanding of themselves and their role as a CE educator.

The interview and classroom observation data were analyzed using qualitative coding methods. I transcribed and coded the interview and classroom data. Open coding identified thematic categories that were similar for each interview transcript (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Initially, open codes were in-vivo codes that described teaching strategies and class activities related to college preparation. For example, I coded evidence of the teachers' emphasis on study skills and verbal statements about the academic rigor of college classes. During open coding, I noted the specific in vivo codes that served "as symbolic markers of participants' speech and meanings" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 55). Secondly, axial coding was completed to identify the commonalities between the themes that emerged in each interview and classroom observation. To provide a framework for organizing data, the themes were organized under headings that aligned with Conley's (2010) definition of college readiness. According to Conley

(2010), college readiness can be described in four dimensions that include: "key cognitive strategies, key content knowledge, academic behaviors, contextual skills and awareness" (p. 32). The codes that were discovered during axial coding were organized under the headings of cognitive strategies and academic behaviors. In addition, six other headings were utilized in axial coding which included: confidence acquisition, college going activities, pedagogical strategies, attitude of the teacher, rapport with students, and CE challenges. These themes emerged throughout the open coding process and during axial coding, the themes were compared to identify the importance of each aspect of teaching CE courses. I then completed selective coding to further reduce the data into an understandable process of teaching CE courses.

Throughout the data analysis process, I used constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I analyzed the data repeatedly to identify themes. Themes emerged from the data in the first round of interviews; therefore, additional interviews were not needed to reach theoretical saturation. Sub-themes emerged after the first interview process, which allowed for the themes and subthemes to form a cohesive explanation of how CE courses are taught. The coding process provided an understanding of the frequency and continuity of certain teacher behaviors in the classroom. I utilized axial coding methods and the process of classification to organize the large list of themes into eight major themes. I utilized the major themes to describe the overall experience of concurrent enrollment programs. Selective coding helped to identify the common meaning behind the process of concurrent enrollment teaching. To understand the teachers' experience as a concurrent enrollment educator, values coding culminated the coding procedures (Gable & Wolf, 1993). Values coding was important to expose the underlying "conceptual values, attitudes, and beliefs" (Saldana, 2009, p. 92) of the participants. Finally, I created a conditional matrix and additional charts from the data to visually explain the process of using

perceptions of college readiness and instructional strategies to teach a concurrent enrollment class.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, triangulation was accounted for in the research design. The data collection methods included: personal perception inventories, interviews, classroom observations of the teachers, and a document analysis. Multiple data sources were used to increase the quality and validity of the data. According to Creswell (2007), "persistent observation in the field include building trust with participants" (p. 207). Due to my experience in CE programs for over seven years, trust was established prior to the start of the study and continued throughout the study. The trust and rapport built between the participants and myself increased the trustworthiness of the data. In addition, the personal interviews and classroom observations provided "prolonged engagement" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301) with the participants, increasing the trustworthiness of the data.

Once the data were collected, member checking and an audit trail (see Appendix I) were done to increase the trustworthiness of the study's conclusions. Member checking occurred once interview and classroom observation data were collected and transcribed. The participants were notified via email or in person that the data transcript had been completed and were asked to verify the data. I completed an audit trail to ensure that the study could be repeated by future researchers.

Credibility

I maintained the credibility of this grounded theory study by upholding professionalism and neutrality. During data collection, I followed the policies and procedures of each individual school district to maintain professionalism. Also, during the data collection procedures, I

completed all coding processes. Since I completed all coding and analysis processes myself, I increased the credibility of the data since it reduced bias that could have occurred with multiple researchers. Also, according to Creswell (2007)," triangulation of data sources" (p. 204) creates credibility. Thus, multiple data sources were utilized to establish credibility in this study. Data sources included interviews, classroom observations, questionnaires, and a document analysis.

Member checking of the transcripts was completed after data collection. According to Stake (1995), member checking is important since participants "play a major role in directing as well as acting" in a qualitative study (as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 208). I used member checking to allow the participants to verify that the data collected was a clear representation of their views on teaching CE courses. Member checking solidified the credibility of this study.

Dependability

According to Creswell (2007), "both dependability and confirmability are established through an auditing of the research process" (p. 204). Therefore, I created an audit trail for this research study (see Appendix I)**.** The audit trail documented the steps taken to initiate contact with participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures. Member checking confirmed that the data were an authentic representation of the participants' viewpoints. In addition, participants completed a post-study debriefing form to ensure they were aware of all research procedures (see Appendix J).

Transferability

To increase the transferability of the findings of this study, a large concurrent enrollment program was studied. Concurrent enrollment programs with small colleges and community colleges were not considered. Grand Oak University is the oldest concurrent enrollment program in the state of Connecticut. The experience of the staff and the size of the overall concurrent

enrollment program enabled the data to be transferable to other large CE programs. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), including thick descriptions of the data increases the transferability of the data. The interview and classroom data provided thick descriptive data that describes the process of teaching CE courses. The thick descriptions were coded to uncover the theory of teaching CE courses. In addition, the inclusion of a stratified sample of schools in the participant group increased the transferability of the final theory. Barriers to teaching and learning often involve finances, supplies, and access to certain resources. By including a wide range of schools from different demographic distinctions, the data could be examined to fit a variety of school demographics.

Ethical Considerations

I upheld ethical standards during the process of planning, collecting data, and analysis. Since the 16 participants were each from a different school district, school policies and procedures were followed to maintain professionalism. I followed visitor policies during the day of the interview and classroom observations. Since students were present during the classroom observations, I obtained permission from all necessary parties in order to observe the teacher in the classroom. I gathered school consent forms prior to any data collection procedures.

After data collection, the participants' identities were hidden using pseudonyms to protect their professional identities. This consideration was taken to ensure that their privacy was held in the highest regard during the data collection process. In addition, the names of the individual school districts and the university were mentioned using pseudonyms to uphold their privacy in the research study. All printed research data were kept in a secure locked location during the research process and will be kept for three years after the research project has culminated. All digital research data were password protected to ensure security. Finally, I did not include any

educators that were currently teaching at my school, educators under my supervision, or educators that are family members in the study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the pedagogical strategies and self-perceptions of CE teachers in high school concurrent enrollment programs. A qualitative research design was utilized to fill the gap in the literature for qualitative research and to gather rich data on the participants' experiences teaching CE courses. Sixteen participants, each from a different school in Connecticut, participated. To triangulate the data, interviews and classroom observations were conducted. In addition, participants completed two questionnaires to examine their self-concept and teaching styles related to CE courses. Finally, a document analysis of course materials culminated the data collection. From a Straussian grounded theory design, data were analyzed using constant comparative analysis. Open and axial coding procedures were conducted to examine the emerging themes. A conditional matrix to describe the process of teaching CE courses was created to visually explain the CE teacher's pedagogical practices. Commonalities in the teacher's personalities and approach to teaching were revealed through analysis. The teacher's attitude toward teaching CE courses was just as important as the pedagogical strategies implemented. Finally, the steps to uphold the trustworthiness, transferability, confirmability, dependability, and ethical research practices were discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore educators' perceptions of college readiness and their pedagogical strategies utilized to enhance the student's understanding of collegiate academics. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data retrieved from the questionnaires revealed that participants view themselves as capable adjunct professors that have the ability to inspire students to achievement in college-level classes while still in high school. The participants viewed their adjunct status as a privilege that enhances their overall experience as an educator. Participants had a more positive self-concept of themselves as adjuncts compared to their overall self-concept as a person according to the Soares & Soares (2008) Self-Perceptions of University Instructors Questionnaire. The Assessment of Classroom Environments Questionnaire (Soares & Soares, 2008) revealed that educators have specific pedagogical strategies that are used on a more frequent basis in their concurrent enrollment classrooms. These strategies included gradually giving students more rigorous academic work, establishing clear routines at the beginning of the school year, and teaching with a positive attitude toward the academic topics to be covered in the class.

Interviews with each participant revealed that although pedagogical strategies vary by participant, there are similarities that exist. Sharing personal stories about college experiences was a common pedagogical strategy for all educators. Explaining the college-going process, college expectations, and giving verbal reminders that the concurrent enrollment class has rigorous assignments since it is college-level were frequent teaching strategies. Since educators share their personal experiences, it creates a sense of rapport with the students that allows the

educator to form bonds that exist beyond just the classroom academics. Having guest speakers in the classroom, organizing field trips, and college visits helped the participants create authentic connections to the text for the students. Although participants personally found organizing the guest speakers and field trips difficult to manage, all participants recognized that the experiences outside of the classroom were most advantageous for helping the high school student understand difficult collegiate academic material and for making personal connections to the content.

Classroom observations made evident the importance of focusing on the development of academic behaviors in the process of preparing students for collegiate academic work. Educators spent the most time during their classes emphasizing academic behaviors including time management, test-taking tips, and note-taking strategies. In addition, classroom observations revealed that educators emphasized vocabulary development for test and not-text vocabulary and required students to expand their answers both verbally and in writing. The emphasis on vocabulary and verbal and writing skills demonstrated the educators' ability to increase the rigor of the concurrent enrollment course compared to their high-school level courses. The most utilized pedagogical strategy within the classroom observations was the participant's use of verbal praise and encouragement for the class as a whole. In addition, sharing real-life stories related to the college-going process either from personal experience or from family members created a uniquely original but relevant experience in each classroom. The ability of the high school educator to embed college readiness skills with the college academics by utilizing personal and familial stories engaged students in the reality that college requires hard work but is within reach. Educators included rigorous vocabulary and college-going discussions into hands-on activities that were familiar to the high school student. Thus, educators created a college academic atmosphere within the typical high school experience.

The document analysis revealed that participants gave both college assignments and high school assignments within the concurrent enrollment class. Each syllabus mirrored the college course at the host university due to articulation requirements. As a result, educators explained in detail on the high school version of the syllabus that the course was college-level and rigorous. The document analysis revealed that college assignments were combined with more simplistic assignments scattered throughout the course to build the students' self-confidence and basic skills as students worked toward meeting collegiate academic requirements. Educators added assignments that were authentic, laboratory-based, and hands-on. The document analysis demonstrated the participants' commitment to student success and a keen ability of the educator to bridge the college rigor with the high school students' current academic abilities. The syllabi and class documents stated the participants' availability to help students on a regular basis. Many participants listed strategies for student success and how to find personal and academic help during the course.

The data collected affirmed that concurrent enrollment educators utilize constant formative assessment coupled with positive motivational strategies to bridge the gap between college academic requirements and the students' current level of academic functioning. The educators' use of positivity coupled with the emphasis on rigor clarified to students that the concurrent enrollment course was different and serious. The addition of authentic experiences related to the content of the course added a unique element to the course that enabled students to recognize possible career pathways and have fun within the course.

Participants

The participants were all part of one CE program hosted by a large university in Connecticut. Pseudonyms were utilized to protect the privacy of the participants, school districts,

and host university. All participants were interviewed and observed from 2012 to 2013. The participants were all sole CE educators in their subject area in each school. All participants taught a human development course and held a teacher's certification in family and consumer sciences. All participants were female. Fourteen of the educators were age 40 or older. All the participants have been part of the education field for more than 10 years. The educators were all identified as being qualified educators. All the educators worked at schools that were demographically labeled as rural, suburban, urban periphery, or urban core (see Figure 1). A participant from an affluent district could not participate. The participants represented 41% of the schools participating in this CE program in human development in the state of Connecticut.

Table 2

Participants' School Demographic Distinctions

Participant number	Participant name*	School demographic designation
1	Karen Cain	Rural
2	Laurie Jenkins	Rural
3	Abbey Rothschild	Rural
4	Francine Rogers	Rural
5	Donna Smithton	Rural
6	Jane Rutherford	Suburban
7	Marybeth Jameson	Suburban
8	Elaine Watson	Urban periphery
9	Lydia Roy	Urban periphery
10	Angela Rodriguez	Urban periphery
11	Irene Richards	Urban periphery
12	Elizabeth Williams	Urban periphery
13	Grace Reiter	Urban core
14	Benita McEntee	Urban periphery
15	Anna Avery	Suburban
16	Susan Lang	Urban periphery

Note. *pseudonyms were used

Karen Cain

Karen Cain is a Caucasian female teacher in an independent, rural high school that has approximately one thousand students. The high school has students from six surrounding towns as well as a large international student population. According to the Connecticut Strategic School Profile for 2014, the student body is comprised of 90% Caucasian and 10% Asian backgrounds. College preparation courses are emphasized for upperclassmen. Fifty-nine percent of high school seniors were enrolled in a college-preparatory, credit-bearing course in the 2014-15 school year. Mrs. Cain has taught the CE course for more than five years. This was the only school in the

study that teaches the course in one semester instead of two. Ms. Cain stated that she wishes she had more time like the other teachers in the study. She finds that the course feels rushed, but she is still confident that she gets all the important content and college preparation skills covered in the time that she has.

Ms. Cain has been teaching for 21 years. She received her bachelor's degree in design and resource management in 1981. Then she went back to graduate school to get her teacher's certification. Shortly after starting her teaching career, she completed her Master's of Education. She continued to pursue her education and was granted her sixth year in educational leadership and administration in 2011. She holds an administrative teaching license. Over the course of her teaching career, Ms. Cain has taught a wide range of family and consumer science courses to high school students in grades nine through 12 including textiles, fashion design, foods and nutrition, and child development. She has helped to create partnerships with two colleges and one university to allow her students to earn college credit while still in high school.

She is committed to professional development and has attended a variety of local and state professional development activities. According to Ms. Cain, she enjoys interacting professionally with other colleagues since it allows her to "adapt ideas" to her own programs. Mrs. Cain revealed that one of the greatest personal challenges to teaching the concurrent enrollment course is that "some students are smarter than me." She is highly qualified to teach the course but often is not confident in herself. Therefore, she works hard to provide a wide-variety of experiences in the class that "work for everyone" and inspire students to think of career opportunities. Ms. Cain's concurrent enrollment classes are small, ranging from about nine to 12 students each year. The small class size allows her to personally engage students in activities that they are truly interested in. Mrs. Cain has a higher self-concept for herself as an

adjunct on the Soares and Soares (2008) Self-Assessment than her score for her overall self-concept. Her scores demonstrated that she is more confident as a teacher than she realizes. She felt that the most rewarding aspect of teaching the course is seeing students become successful learners and transitioning well into college in the subsequent years. In addition, she stated that teaching the concurrent enrollment course was rewarding since it allowed her to "teach students that really want to learn."

Laurie Jenkins

Laurie Jenkins is a Caucasian educator in her late thirties in a rural high school in Connecticut. The high school has an enrollment of approximately 800 students, of which 80% are Caucasian (Connecticut Strategic School Profiles, 2014-15). The high school boasts that most students are taking college credit bearing courses by the 12th grade. In addition, according to the Connecticut Department of Education, 64% of students are accepted and plan to attend college after high school (Connecticut Strategic School Profiles, 2014-15). Ms. Jenkins is one of the many teachers at the school that teaches and advocates for concurrent enrollment courses as an educational opportunity for high school students.

Ms. Jenkins is talkative and has a vibrant personality. She is a mother of two children and is currently a graduate student. Her experiences as a mother and graduate student strongly influence her interactions with the concurrent enrollment students. She started her career as a health educator and then fell in love with teaching students about the importance of childhood as an influence for later life. As a result, she transitioned into teaching human and child development courses. She has been a teacher for seven years and has been teaching concurrent enrollment courses for five years. She teaches a variety of courses in child development.

Ms. Jenkins is able to easily provide hands-on experiences for her high school students since the high school has a Head Start program located on-site. Therefore, Ms. Jenkins frequently collaborates with the Head Start teachers to allow her high school students to observe, interact, and play with children age three to five. The Head Start program on-site allows Ms. Jenkins to have authentic examples daily to connect to the human development curriculum. Ms. Jenkins has found that high school students are drawn to take her courses since they are given the ability to interact with young children as part of the class. As a result of the Head Start being in the school, Ms. Jenkins works hard outside of the classroom to collaborate with local and statewide early childhood groups to understand the current policies, procedures, and curriculum changes.

Ms. Jenkins is a confident and well-rounded educator. She aspires to earn a Ph.D. in human development in the next three years. She enjoys teaching at the high school level but yearns to possibility have the opportunity to work at the collegiate level someday. Since she desires to work on a college campus and she currently is experiencing graduate work, Ms. Jenkins is able to seamlessly explain collegiate academic requirements to her students. She emphasizes proper citation, research, and academic professionalism in the classroom on a consistent basis. She requires students to complete mini-research studies in the course by using the other students in the school as the population to study. Ms. Jenkins believes that “students can do research while they are in high school” and “researching can be a viable career option” for some students. Ms. Jenkins looks forward to continuing to teach the concurrent enrollment course in years to come.

Abbey Rothschild

Abbey Rothschild is a Caucasian educator in a rural, coastal town of Connecticut. The school system is very remote, causing it to be difficult for the teacher to plan internships for students that do not have access to transportation. According to the Connecticut Department of Education, the school has approximately 700 students. Demographically, the students were 67% Caucasian, 8.7% Latino and 11 % Asian (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Approximately 30% of students were identified in the 2014-15 school year as being eligible for free or reduced lunch (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Students that apply and attend college from this school district represented 64% of the graduating class (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15).

Although many of the college course offerings at the high school are linked to the Advanced Placement program, Mrs. Rothschild is proud to provide a concurrent enrollment program experience for her students. Mrs. Rothschild has been teaching the course for over a decade. She serves as the department chairperson for the Art and Vocational Careers departments. In addition, she is an author of educational literature related to student assessment strategies. She has spoken at a variety of local and state conferences about the importance of helping students succeed through assessment strategies in the classroom.

Mrs. Rothschild has a deep commitment to continuing education. In addition to her bachelor's degree, Mrs. Rothschild holds a master's degree, sixth year administrative degree, and an educational doctorate. She is always eager to give back and share her expertise with others. According to the Soares and Soares (2008) Assessment of Adjunct Professors, Mrs. Rothschild is a confident teacher that understands what is necessary to help students understand college work. However, she was just as confident about herself outside of the classroom. Mrs. Rothschild

enjoys speaking to her students about her own experiences and how they connect to human development theories. She shared that "I am an ADD," referring to her own struggle with attention deficit disorder. She shares with students to help them understand that everyone has educational hurdles to overcome but success can come to those who persist.

Francine Rogers

Alma Rogers is in her 33rd year of teaching. She holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in home economics as well as a Master's in home economics and a sixth year degree in educational leadership and administration. She has been teaching the concurrent enrollment course for over 10 years. She finds that teaching the concurrent enrollment course "keeps me excited about teaching and helping students get college ready." She values the opportunity to teach the course since it "gives [students] a jump start for college and if they have enough college credit in high school they may graduate early or double major." She finds the course takes a lot of time to prepare but is worth it. Her greatest challenge as an educator is that she teaches five different classes throughout the school day. The variety of classes that she has to teach often reduces the amount of time that she has to fully devote to each course to make sure she is offering current information. She often finds that teaching the concurrent enrollment course is difficult because students are "unprepared for the amount of work" that college classes require. She enjoys collaborating with professionals around the state that teach the same course because it helps her "remain current with information" and provides her a way to connect with others in similar educational situations.

Mrs. Rodgers teaches in a suburban school that has approximately 800 students enrolled. The student population is 96 percent Caucasian (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Twenty-two percent of students in 11th and 12th grade were enrolled in a college-credit bearing

course in the 2014-15 school year (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). The school boasts a 83% graduation rate with 76% of graduates going on to college (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Mrs. Rodgers teaches the concurrent enrollment course in individual and human development as a full year. She believes that the course offers students the chance to practice college academic skills since the coursework is more rigorous than a typical high school course. She believes that "many students are ready to accept college level work" and need to have the chance to do so while still in high school. She has two children of her own that are almost finished with college. She often recites personal experiences from her children to enhance her students' understanding of college level work. She told the students about the immense use of technology in collegiate classrooms and how her daughter needed to purchase a signaling device for one of her lecture classes so the teacher could record their responses to class questions. Mrs. Rodgers uses teachable moments to verbally encourage and emphasize the reality of making the transition from high school academics to college academics.

Donna Smithton

Donna Smithton is a teacher at a high school in central, rural Connecticut. The high school she teaches at has a student population of 88% Caucasian students comprising a total population of 900 students (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). The school is historically known for academic excellence. According to the Connecticut Strategic School Profile Report (2014-2015), the high school had 95% of its students persist to complete college degrees. The school has a variety of electives that include college preparation activities and bear college credit opportunities. Mrs. Smithton's class is highly supported by administration and school personnel.

Mrs. Smithton has been a teacher for 13 years. She is passionate about teaching family and consumer sciences. She teaches a variety of courses in addition to the concurrent enrollment course. She teaches courses focused on middle childhood, exceptionalities in development, and issues in aging populations. She utilizes her career experience prior to becoming a teacher to enhance her ability to teach. Prior to teaching, she studied speech pathology and worked with special needs students. She feels that teaching the concurrent enrollment course is exciting and brings her "job satisfaction and fulfillment." Mrs. Smithton wishes to continue to teach the concurrent enrollment course since she believes it helps students grasp college rigor and be able to explore job experiences while still in high school.

Jane Rutherford

Mrs. Rutherford teaches in central Connecticut in a suburban school district with 1500 students in the high school. According to the Connecticut Strategic School Profile (2014-2015), this high school is comprised of 82% Caucasian students, 9.6% Asian students, and a variety of other ethnicities. The school has 95% of students enrolled in a college- or career-ready course by 12th grade (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Mrs. Rutherford's class is one of the concurrent enrollment options for 11th or 12th grade students. Mrs. Rutherford teaches only human development courses. She teaches a variety of half-year electives relating to child development, adult roles and responsibilities, and human development. She has been teaching for 14 years. In addition to holding a Bachelor's of Science in family studies, she holds a master's degree in adolescent counseling. She has earned her K-6 teacher certification as well. Her understanding of multiple age groups and varied educational experiences contributes to her success as an educator. She has taught the concurrent enrollment course for six years. She

"enjoys knowing that [my] students have the opportunity to earn college credit and the experience of a college level classwork."

Marybeth Jameson

Ms. Jameson teaches in a suburban school in northern Connecticut. The school is comprised of approximately 1500 students. The student body is made up of 97% Caucasian students and one percent Asian students (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). The district is known for its academic rigor and ability to prepare students for college. In the 2014 school year, 90% of high school seniors were accepted into college. The district is comprised of established and knowledgeable teachers. In the Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 99% of educators met the "highly qualified" distinction (2014-15). The school facility is in a central location in the town that allows for students to have easy accessibility to businesses and other schools.

Marybeth Jameson is a young teacher in a suburban school district that has a deep commitment to the teaching profession. In addition to her certification as a family and consumer science educator, she holds two undergraduate degrees in English and health. She completed her master's degree and quickly looked for an opportunity to bring concurrent enrollment courses to her high school as a means of allowing students an opportunity to earn college credit. Ms. Jameson knows the importance of concurrent enrollment credits since she benefitted from having college credits completed prior to entering college herself. She seeks to help students understand college requirements as part of the course. She stated that "Students have higher expectations for me and I have higher expectations for them." She knows how challenging it can be to pay for college and reach career goals. She is currently in graduate school seeking to obtain a sixth year

degree in educational leadership. In addition to teaching her courses, she is actively involved in school-related activities.

Elaine Watson

Elaine Watson works in a high school in the urban periphery of a major Connecticut city with approximately 550 students. The student body is made up of 73% African American, 10% Hispanic, and 11% Caucasian ethnicities (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Over 50% of the study body is recognized as receiving free or reduced lunch (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). Mrs. Watson teaches a variety of courses at the high school. She teaches human development and a variety of fashion courses. She has been a teacher for 10 years. She has been teaching the concurrent enrollment course for seven years. She enjoys teaching the concurrent enrollment course because it allows her to develop relationships with students and really get to know them. According to Mrs. Watson, "another benefit is the satisfaction that I get from taking the students on their internships and I feel like I am making a difference." She holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in education. She is currently enrolled in courses to work toward her sixth year in educational leadership. She feels that her own educational experiences help her to relate to students. She works hard to find a "balance of presenting material in a way that will engage students." Ms. Watson passed away unexpectedly shortly after the data were collected for this study.

Lydia Roy

Mrs. Roy teaches at a high school in the urban periphery of a major Connecticut city. The school has approximately 1100 students. The district is comprised of 50% African American students, 10% Asian students, and a variety of other ethnicities (Connecticut Strategic School Profiles, 2014-15). Mrs. Roy has been teaching for over 25 years. She has been teaching the

concurrent enrollment course for eight years. She promoted the course and built up the student enrollment in her school. As a result, Mrs. Roy teaches more than one section of the course each day. The course has become a favorite for seniors because it gives college academic experience while giving hands-on experiences through a variety of fieldwork experiences. Mrs. Roy believes in the power of allowing a student to try CE courses in high school. Her passion for teaching the course comes from the success she has seen from students. Students still come back to see her and state that the course helped them develop an understanding of college academics. Mrs. Roy holds a bachelor's degree, master's degree, and sixth year degree. She is actively involved in planning professional development experiences for the cohort of teachers in Connecticut that teach the CE course.

Angela Rodriguez

Angela Rodriguez is a teacher in an urban periphery in central Connecticut. The school enrollment is approximately 1400 students. The school body is made up of 56% Caucasian, 10% Black, and 12% Asian students (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). The student body has approximately 24% of students that are eligible for free or reduced lunch (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). Mrs. Rodriguez finds the ethnic diversity a benefit to teaching her concurrent enrollment course since it allows students from different backgrounds to learn from each other. Mrs. Rodriguez is a mother herself and has two grown children. She utilizes her own experiences as a mother to enhance her conversations with students. She utilizes her children's experiences in college and her own educational experiences to help students understand the challenges of the transition to college. Mrs. Rodriguez has been teaching the concurrent enrollment course for six years. She enjoys the camaraderie of being a part of a group

of educators around the state that teach the same course. She teaches a variety of elective courses relating to child development and human relationships.

Irene Richards

Irene Richards teaches in an urban periphery school in central Connecticut. The school has an enrollment of 1400 students and is comprised of 64% Caucasian, 10% Asian, and nine percent Black (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). The school is one of two high schools in the town. The school is known for its athletic program and ability to prepare students for post-secondary education. Approximately 81% of students enrolled in college after graduating in 2014 (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Mrs. Richards' concurrent enrollment course is the capstone course for juniors or seniors interested in human development-related careers. Students are required to take two prerequisite courses in child development. In addition, students gain experiential knowledge in the child development prerequisite that runs a preschool for young children in the high school. The students in the concurrent enrollment course come in with a desire to know more about human development from their previous coursework but do not always understand collegiate academic rigor.

Mrs. Richards has a background in early childhood education. She holds a bachelor's degree and master's degree in education. In addition, she holds her Child Development Associate credential. She previously worked in the field of early childhood education and can give her students a firsthand understanding of early childhood educational related jobs. She also is the mother of two children that had very different educational experiences. She enjoys talking about the life course of each of her children in the concurrent enrollment course. She emphasizes that educational decisions need to fit the person's interests and personality. She enjoys teaching the

course since it allows her to teach college-bound students and it allows her to share her own life experience.

Elizabeth Williams

Elizabeth Williams teaches at a semi-public school in Connecticut. The school is a public school option for local students but accepts regional and international students as well. The school has an enrollment of 2,300 students (Connecticut Strategic School Profiles, 2014-2015). The ethnic background of the student body is 62% Caucasian, 10% Latino, 15% Black, and eight percent Asian (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). The school is set up with an upper school and lower school model. The campus is comprised of multiple buildings, which makes the school feel more like a college campus than other high schools in the area.

Mrs. Williams has been teaching for 29 years and has taught the concurrent enrollment course for nine years. She holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Education. She teaches a variety of courses in addition to the concurrent enrollment course. She also teaches culinary arts courses and introductory child development courses. She struggles with balancing the amount of fieldwork with the intense rigor of the course. She wants students to be able to "organize time" and be successful in college upon completing the course. She diligently tries to communicate an "awareness of the amount of work necessary to earn college credit" in the course. She is an intense advocate for concurrent enrollment courses and upholds rigorous standards in her classroom.

Grace Reiter

Grace Reiter has been teaching over 20 years in the urban core in a public high school. The school follows an American School Model and has the grade levels separated into a lower school and upper school. The 11th and 12th grade classes have an enrollment of approximately

375 students (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). The ethnicity of the student body is comprised of 64% Caucasian, 26% Latino and 10% Black (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). In the last few years the school has undergone restructuring of the academic departments. The school has career strands that allow students to focus on one area of study while preparing for college and careers. Mrs. Reiter serves as a department head for the education career strand. Ms. Reiter enjoys her role as a department head because it allows her the opportunity to make decisions that impact the success of students. She enjoys teaching the concurrent enrollment course because it allows her the opportunity to teach students that are truly interested in pursuing a college degree. In addition, the course material is interesting and has challenged her to become a better teacher. Mrs. Reiter is considering retirement and hopes to continue to teach the course after her retirement.

Benita McEntee

Benita McEntee works in a high school in central Connecticut geographically designated as urban periphery. The diverse student population is comprised of 43% Caucasian, 23% Latino, 21% Black, seven percent Asian, and three percent of students identifying as being two or more races (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). In addition to being racially diverse, the student body is economically diverse. Over 51% of students have economic difficulties and are eligible for free or reduced lunch (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Mrs. McEntee believes that the racial and socioeconomic diversity allows her students to build tolerance for one another while learning about different aspects of human development.

Benita is in her late 50s and has been teaching for 25 years. She has a bachelor's degree and master's degree in home economics education. In addition, she holds a sixth year certificate in educational leadership and administration. She is the department head for the career and

technical education department at her school. She is actively involved in grant development and the financial aspects of running career preparation courses. Outside of school, she is active in the American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences local chapter and has attended many national events. She has been teaching the CE course for six years. In addition to the one CE course, she teaches an introductory child development course and an advanced child development course that does not hold a college credit option.

Anna Avery

Anna Avery works at a suburban high school in central Connecticut with approximately 2,000 students enrolled (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). The school district is less ethnically diverse than the surrounding towns. The student body is comprised of 85% Caucasian, six percent Latino, and three percent Asian (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-2015). Mrs. Avery serves as the family and consumer science chairperson for her school. She is actively involved in curriculum development and grant proposal development. She works hard to bring 21st century skills into the curriculum. She enjoys teaching the CE course because it allows her to utilize her experience as a mother and teacher to develop students' understanding of life. She enjoys seeing students succeed after taking the CE course and transitioning well to college. Students frequently come back and talk to her about their college transition after they graduate. She also utilizes experiences from her own children to add anecdotal stories to her lessons. She feels that students get to know her and she gets to know the students, which creates a unique experience in the classroom as they learn about college material.

Susan Lang

Susan Lang teaches at a rural high school in Northwest Connecticut with approximately 1000 students enrolled (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). Demographically, the

student body is composed of 67% Caucasian, 20% Latino, 5.3% Black, three percent Asian, and three percent identifying as being two or more races (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). According to the Connecticut Strategic School Profile for 2014-15, 40% of the student body is eligible for free or reduced lunch. The school has a lower college-acceptance rate than schools in the surrounding areas with 62% of students enrolling in a college after high school graduation (Connecticut Strategic School Profile, 2014-15). The school has a variety of courses offered with college preparation but few courses that offer concurrent enrollment with a major university. The CE course taught by Mrs. Lang is the only college-credit bearing option for students interested in working with children and families in the future.

Susan Lang has been a teacher for 28 years. She believes that teaching the CE course has been a privilege and has allowed her to grow professionally. She holds bachelor's degree in home economics. She has two graduate degrees in liberal arts and in early childhood development with a specialization in special education. She teaches a variety of other courses including child development and culinary arts. She describes teaching the CE course challenging since it takes so much preparation time but rewarding to see the students learn so much.

The 16 participants of this study represented highly qualified teachers in the state of Connecticut. All participants held a master's degree or higher and met the qualification requirements to teach CE courses with the host university. Fourteen of the 16 participants were over the age of forty and admitted that their life experiences allowed them to add depth to their CE courses. Fifteen out of 16 participants were parents and stated that their parenting experience helped them to add stories and make connections to human development theories in their CE courses. All the participants were actively involved in extracurricular and professional activities at their schools.

All participants found teaching CE courses a valuable and rewarding experience. The professional development experiences at the host university for the CE teachers is rewarding since it allows teachers to socially and professionally connect. Since each teacher was the sole CE teacher that taught human development in their schools, the professional development opportunities allow them to connect socially, share teaching ideas, and discuss challenges. Overall, all the CE participants were committed, experienced teachers that found teaching CE courses a unique privilege as part of their professional educational journey.

Results

Through constant comparative analysis, the data from the interviews, classroom observations, and documents were examined. The results demonstrated that there are key pedagogical strategies that are used by CE educators to ensure that students understand the college content. The CE educators used a variety of hands on strategies coupled with motivational strategies to ensure that students understand expectations and that a rigorous academic experience is upheld in the classroom. The CE teachers artfully blend the high school experience with the college experience in the CE classroom, thus enabling students to safely take risks while doing college-level work.

Theme Development

Through open and axial coding, themes developed to understand how teachers approach teaching and learning in CE courses. Similar themes emerged within the interview and classroom observations that were physically evident in the document analysis. Eight axial codes emerged from the data. These codes included:

1. Academic Behaviors
2. Cognitive Strategies

3. Developing Student Confidence
4. College-going activities
5. Pedagogical Strategies
6. Teacher's Attitude
7. Development of Rapport with the Student
8. Teaching Challenges

Each theme reached saturation within the data and represents a key quality that is part of teaching a CE course. The themes helped to shape the understanding of the process that CE educators take to maintaining a quality, collegiate academic experience while teaching students that are developmentally at a high school level.

Academic Behaviors

Participants regularly emphasized the development of academic behaviors that will set students up for success in the CE course, in high school, and finally once they transition to college. Academic behaviors were defined by Conley (2010) as the "habits necessary for students to meet the challenges of college workload and rigor" (Conley et al., 2010, p. 7). The academic behaviors that the participants implemented were not part of either the high school or college curriculum. However, the academic behaviors were necessary for students to succeed in the college coursework. The academic behaviors that were implemented by the participants were necessary components of their own success pursuing their own educational degrees. For example, Mrs. Rodrigues stated she included the development of academic behaviors in her course because "I remember what my college experience was like and the rigor that I went through." In addition, participants recognized patterns of what academic behaviors were necessary for students to have from previous years in order to be successful in the course. Irene

Richards mentioned that she has to work with students in the course to develop their writing skills. She stated that she personally works with some students "because their writing is not good [and …they need to] know about meeting deadlines." The three highest occurring academic behaviors that were emphasized by educators were time management, vocabulary, and test-taking strategies. Participants utilized modeling, direct instruction, and positive encouragement as strategies to teach these academic behaviors.

Time management. Participants gave frequent reminders about deadlines, helped students chunk assignments into manageable parts, and taught how to tackle projects. The document analysis revealed that assignments were often graded with a portion of the points for students to earn going toward the quality of their time management. Participants also gave reminders about time management when students were asked to use their class time to complete group activities.

Vocabulary. Participants emphasized the use of collegiate vocabulary in class discussion by defining words and concepts that were in the college text. More importantly, participants defined words that were not found in the text but were related to having a well-developed academic vocabulary. Mrs. Reiter has students write vocabulary words that are unfamiliar down when reading or doing assignments, and she goes over them at the beginning of class. She feels that emphasizing vocabulary is important to be ready for college and because many of her students come from diverse backgrounds and do not know English as their first language.

Test-taking strategies. Participants emphasized test-taking strategies as an important academic behavior because of their own experiences in college and graduate school. Mrs. Richards completed a graduate degree in 2008 and frequently tells her students about the need to study in advance for exams. She also describes to the students how exams in college are

cumulative and may reflect information that the teacher did not verbally go over in class but is only found in the course texts. Mrs. Rogers emphasized to her students that test-taking in college is not mere regurgitation of facts but to "check for your level of understanding." Mrs. Smithton specifically gives more support to students in test taking at the beginning of the year and then slowly releases more ownership to the student. All the participants mentioned some form of test review to help the students identify themes and key vocabulary prior to test taking.

Cognitive Strategies

Another theme that emerged was the use of cognitive strategies in enabling students to learn how to be an effective learner with collegiate academic rigor. Cognitive strategies referred to the occurrences within the data in which the participant emphasized to the student how to learn and how to think about the material being presented. Three main sub-themes emerged including: modeling metacognitive thinking, requiring critical analysis, and encouraging creative thinking.

Modeling metacognitive thinking. Participants emphasized how to think about the learning process within the CE course. Participants did not disguise to the students how to tackle the academics, rather they overtly broke down how to think about abstract concepts within the human development content. Francine Rogers focused on helping students learn how to identify themes that could be used to understand development when studying human development theorists. The concepts presented by human development theorists are challenging for students to learn since high school students are not familiar with research styles or theories. Mrs. Rogers focused on asking why and how questions when presenting information about theorists. When students responded to questions she posed she followed up by asking, "Why did you choose that?" and required students to explain how they arrived at their answer. At one point a group of

students had mixed up two theories and Mrs. Rogers used the opportunity to help students metacognitively understand where they arrived at an incorrect answer. The ability of the participants to model metacognitive strategies for thinking about complex concepts builds their academic skill set for all future educational endeavors.

Confidence Acquisition

Participants utilized strategies to help the high school student acquire confidence in the academic rigor of the course and build confidence that individual success in collegiate academics is possible. Participants mentioned that students that have never taken an advanced course in high school often had the greatest time overcoming their lack of self-esteem for difficult academic work. In addition, participants mentioned that students with family members that did not go to college, students experiencing low socioeconomic status, and students that did not speak English as their first language often struggled to believe they could actually succeed in the course (Mrs. Reiter, Mrs. Rothschild, Mrs. McEntee, and Mrs. Watson). Participants utilized constant verbal encouragement to emphasize small successes to build student confidence. Also, participants created a safe environment for learning that emphasized that mistakes were part of the learning process. Mrs. Rogers verbally encourages students to talk through their responses and builds their confidence. She stated during a lesson on how lifestyle contributes to an individual's development, "Come on. Why lifestyle? You can be honest. We are learning here. We learn when we make mistakes as well as successes." Participants gave frequent verbal, positive feedback to the class as a whole and to individuals that demonstrated growth or understanding during the class. Building the students' confidence as learners was identified by the participants as part of their daily activities in the classroom. Confident learners are willing to

take academic risks that lead to academic growth and understanding of themselves as an integral part of the class.

College-going Activities

Participants included college-going activities as part of their courses. College-going activities in this study were defined as activities that prepare students for college life both academically and socially. College-going activities included fieldwork, emphasis on developing professionalism, independence, and self-advocacy. College-going activities also included the participant talking about the college academic requirements, application process, financial aid, and the structure of college campuses. Some participants had financial means to bring their students to college fairs, college tours, or attend one of the classes at the host university. Fifteen of the 16 participants revealed that the only way they are able to incorporate the college-going activities is due to the fact that the course is offered over two semesters. Ms. Cain did not have a whole year class and struggled to offer college-going activities due to the short semester course. Having a whole year course allowed participants to have time to incorporate college-going activities and build students' skills without compromising the academic rigor.

College-going discussions frequently were a result of a teachable moment. Participants wove college discussions into the fabric of their lesson when students were interested about financial costs of college, the admissions process, or how to choose the right college. Participants could give specific examples about the differences between high school and college academic structures and expectations. Specifically, all participants went over add/drop policies, grade point averages, and accessing transcripts with students. Since the students were dual enrolled in high school and Grand Oak University, participants could not access the students' transcripts or help them with certain aspects of registration and add/drop. Students were naturally thrust into the

process of how college works because they were college students for the semester. Additionally, many participants had former students come back and discuss college-going topics.

Pedagogical Strategies

Pedagogical strategies within the CE classroom emerged as a major theme within both the interview and classroom data. Each participant had their own unique pedagogical strategies for managing the college content with high school students. However, similarities emerged to describe the best pedagogical practices utilized in the CE course. The pedagogical strategies that emerged as best practices were not only the most frequently occurring, but they were described verbally by the participant during the interview process and were demonstrated in the classroom observations. Below are the 10 most highly occurring pedagogical strategies that emerged from the data.

Table 3

Highest Occurring Themes related to Pedagogical Strategies

Occurrence	Interview Data	Classroom Data
1	Gives clear expectations	Asks key questions and makes students expand
2	Uses high school resources	Gives clear & concrete examples
3	Verbally tells students work is or is not college level/ this is a college class	Uses verbal praise
4	Uses concrete, specific examples	Allows students to share stories & personal connections
5	Shares personal experiences and stories	Restates students' responses for clarification--expands more & adds vocabulary
6	Gives outlines & notes	Teacher uses family experiences to explain concepts
7	Group work	Rephrases and defines concepts/ vocabulary
8	Discussions	Asks students to analyze by thinking about hypothetical scenarios/ & real world problems
9	College-going discussions	Makes interdisciplinary connections for students during discussions
10	Gives verbal reminders	Gives verbal reminders

Clear expectations. Participants regularly gave students clear academic expectations for assignments and classroom protocols. Participants identified exactly how students could earn points toward their grade and what exactly was the expected learning outcome for the day. Specifically, Mrs. Rutherford and Mrs. Reiter verbally went over the class expectations and the points that could be earned for the day during the classroom observation. Mrs. Jenkins utilized both analytical rubrics and grading checklists to help students earn points for small steps. Breaking down assignments into small, clear steps allows the student to identify their success and areas of weakness in manageable chunks. Verbally, participants stated and repeated the expectations for the class many times. Expectations were stated to the entire class and then repeated to struggling students and clarified to small groups of students once the learning tasks

began. Setting clear expectations was a part of every aspect of the class. Participants had expectations for quality of work, time management, and for work completion outside of class. Mrs. Rutherford stated to her students, "You need to gather more information so that you are ready next class to continue working on the project." She further clarified what each group of students was supposed to complete outside of class by making a quick chart on the board that identified what needed to be done and what was already completed. This demonstrates that participants are not merely stating expectations but visually documenting the expectations to students.

Concrete examples and inclusion of personal stories. Participants utilized concrete examples to enhance the students understanding of very complex topics. Participants utilized concrete examples from their own lives, the lives of their families, and the lives of their acquaintances. The participants were experts in taking a complex, college-level concept and giving basic, specific examples that a high school student could understand. Many of the concrete examples utilized by the participants were examples from the students' own developmental stage. Participants used examples of high school events, other high school classes, and community examples to describe difficult concepts. This allowed the students to have a concrete example that was meaningful to them.

Participants were willing to share their life experiences with the students as concrete examples. For example, when describing the human development concept of role addition, Mrs. Rogers stated, "My brother and sister-in-law became grandparents this summer. You know, so it was a new role for them. Not just that they have a new name now […] they have a new role in the sense of caring." She connected the human development concept of role addition to her own family. Many participants shared so many personal examples during the course that students

were familiar with their family structure, children's names, and family background. Participants vocalized that they enjoyed teaching the course because the content allowed them to bring their personal experiences into the class in a meaningful manner.

Participants allowed students to share concrete examples in the form of personal stories during class discussion. Students could share how their life experiences demonstrated human development concepts. Mrs. Watson and Ms. Rodriguez mentioned that the students' stories help other students understand the concepts more than they actually could. The diversity of the students' experiences added a unique depth to the class discussion that could not be created by the participant alone. The concrete examples and personal stories enabled students to see connections to the complex concepts.

Teacher's Attitude

The participants' attitude toward learning and the course emerged as an important factor in developing college readiness skills. The classroom observations revealed each participants' enthusiasm for teaching the CE course. In addition, participants admitted in the interviews that the course was a positive addition to their course load despite that it was more work than other courses taught. Participants had a positive view of the course because they believe it does prepare students for college. All participants stated that the course was a valuable experience for the students and did give them a great preparation for college academics. Participants were enthusiastic about teaching the course since it allowed them to give life advice to students as they prepared for the new chapter of college life.

The positivity that was shown by the teachers in the interview and classroom data is supported by the survey data. In the Soares and Soares (2008) Self-Perception of Adjunct

Professors scale, participants had scores that revealed that they have a positive self-perception of themselves as an adjunct professor compared to their scores as an individual.

Table 4

Self-Perceptions Survey Results

	Participant Name	SPI as an Adjunct	SPI as Self
1	Karen Cain	40	29
2	Laurie Jenkins	50	53
3	Abbey Rothschild	52	48
4	Francine Rogers	52	43
5	Donna Smithton	72	70
6	Jane Rutherford	61	62
7	Marybeth Jameson	68	58
8	Lydia Roy	65	49
9	Angela Rodriguez	54	35
10	Elizabeth Williams	59	67
11	Grace Reiter	63	32
12	Benita McEntee	50	25
13	Anna Avery	34	57
14	Susan Lang	33	31
15	Elaine Watson	Not Available	Not Available
16	Irene Richards	Not Available	Not Available

Seventy-five percent of the participants that responded scored higher on the adjunct professor self-perception scale. Only 14 of the 16 participants' results were available for this survey. This is because one participant died during the course of this study and the other individual refused to complete the forms. Overall, the self-perceptions survey demonstrated that participants felt more confident with themselves as a person teaching the CE course than they did as a whole outside of the classroom. Participants felt confident as adjuncts demonstrating that they feel they have a

handle on the college academics and feel capable in the classroom. Their self-confidence contributed to their ability to have a positive attitude in the classroom when interacting with students.

Development of Rapport with Students

All participants utilized strategies to build rapport with students in the CE course. All the teachers made themselves available to students before and after school. In addition, many teachers utilized the time before class to listen to student conversations and look for opportunities to talk about fieldwork, college planning, or other teachable moments. For example, Mrs. Watson utilized the time before class to ask students about their college acceptance status and encouraged students to apply to multiple colleges to keep their options open.

Participants built rapport with students by using informal communication styles with students before and after class. Participants seemed genuinely interested in the students' personal lives. Mrs. Jameson asked students about the upcoming school dance and replied to a student about some social issues with friends. Similarly, Mrs. Rutherford talked to the students about the upcoming football championship. The participants utilized humor to help students feel more at ease in the classroom. All the teachers commented that they utilize humor when referring to their own mistakes to help students to learn that perfection is not attainable. The rapport that is built with the students allows the participants to utilize strong constructive criticism when needed. Students that were not meeting the college requirements are at risk to lose high school credit and college credit. Participants admitted that they use constructive criticism coupled with encouragement to get these students to succeed. Mrs. Jenkins used a one-on-one conferencing strategy to talk to students about their progress. She stated that if students are not performing to

the college level of rigor, she demands that they work harder. She stated, “I don’t present it as optional.” She allows students the opportunity to rework their assignments until they are acceptable. Many participants stated that they tell students that the CE course is a college class. Simply stating the fact reminds the students that they are held to a higher standard and motivates them to work harder academically to meet the higher standard.

Teaching Challenges

The interview and classroom data revealed that there are many challenges that CE teachers must overcome. The challenges that emerged through the data analysis were not expected but were significant. Each participant mentioned challenges to their teaching process along with the positive outcome of their courses. The challenges to teaching the course can be categorized into two themes: support and technology issues.

Support. The most commonly mentioned challenge was lack of support from administrative staff. Participants felt that the administration at their schools did not understand the rigor of the course or how much work it was for the participant to teach. Mrs. Jenkins stated that she wanted her administration to understand “how important [the class] is,” referring to the opportunity for a high school student to earn college credit. Although many participants work hard at educating the administration about the course, few feel supported; therefore, they focus on their students. Mrs. Rutherford stated, “I’m not doing it for anybody else. I’m doing it for my students because I think it helps them, benefits them to have that rigor and to be able to think critically, differently than in a regular class.” Additionally, participants mentioned they do not feel accepted by other colleagues that teach Advanced Placement courses or other CE courses. The participant mentioned that this is probably due to the stigma that is associated with them since they teach many lower level courses in the high school.

Technology issues. The technology issues experienced by the participants represent a dichotomy. Two schools had one-to-one personal devices for their students. Mrs. Jenkins and Mrs. Smithton taught in districts that provided either an iPad or a laptop to each student. Mrs. Watson and Mrs. Rutherford had computers in their room. These participants stated that getting students to focus on the learning task instead of being distracted by social media was an issue. Also, students had devices that commonly ran out of battery, did not work, or the device was not brought to class. These issues commonly interrupted the learning process.

Conversely, other participants struggled to find technology to use. Some participants had to sign up to utilize computer labs months in advance. These participants relied on technology only for large research projects. They did not have the ability to utilize technology in the classroom on a regular basis to access research. In addition, teachers admitted they spend class time fixing issues with the Smartboard and school network issues. Mrs. Rogers spent time trying to retrieve student homework assignments from the school computer. Similarly, Mrs. Cain had to spend time adjusting a Smartboard. The frustration and lack of equitable access to technology was a reoccurring theme within the research data.

Teaching College Readiness Skills

Interviews with each participant revealed how CE teachers determine what college readiness skills should be taught and how the skills are incorporated into daily classroom activities. Through the interviews, teachers commented that college readiness is influenced by their own experiences in college and graduate school. Participants mentioned their memories of studying college texts and how students today need to be "exposed to a college textbook—which they haven't seen before." Five participants were enrolled in graduate classes or had recently finished a graduate degree (Laurie Jenkins, Karen Cain, Elaine Watson, Irene Richards, and

Marybeth Jameson) and knew the amount of reading and writing college classes require. Participants emphasized that reading and writing skills are paramount in being successful in college courses. Lydia Roy stated that students "have a really good handle on the amount of work that is involved, the level of reading and students do a lot of writing as well." The participants included reading college textbook strategies, formatting in APA style, note-taking assignments, and vocabulary development activities as part of the student coursework. Determining how to teach college readiness skills in the classroom was unique for two of the participants in the study because they taught college courses in addition to teaching on the secondary level. Laurie Jenkins, Abbey Rothschild, and Lydia Roy taught college classes. These participants were able to bring in first-hand stories of students that were unprepared for college academics. The stories were used to challenge students to take college preparation seriously and to learn the skills in the CE course. Mrs. Rothschild utilizes these stories to help her current high school students understand that there are always challenges and to learn "how they are overcoming them."

All participants embedded the college readiness skills into the daily class activities. The participants admitted that academic skills are developed slowly throughout the course. Laurie Jenkins stated that embedding college readiness skills is "one of those things that is done in the class throughout the entire school year." Participants most frequently focused on teaching reading, writing, research, and self-advocacy skills. Karen Cain stated, "I encourage them to take notes from the enormous amount of reading they do for the class." She requires students to write journals and formal observations from fieldwork experiences. Mrs. Rutherford described student assignments by stating, "They write a lot. And they write for lots of different purposes." Using a variety of assignment types allows students to gain a variety of reading and writing skills.

Mrs. Jenkins had each student take on the role of a researcher and complete a mock research study using the school population. She stated, “I don’t think there is anything more powerful than being in that role [role of the researcher].” Students can learn self-advocacy skills and critical thinking skills through the process of creating their own research study. Also, Mrs. Jenkins can describe the role of research on college campuses and get students excited about college academics. Mrs. Rutherford echoed many participants when she stated what she commonly stated to students about college readiness, “Let’s learn to succeed here so you can take that outside of the classroom.” The participants embedded college readiness so that students slowly develop college academic skills that can be used in their transition to college.

CE teachers embedded the college readiness skills and utilized a variety of assessment strategies to identify student growth. Many teachers gave a summer assignment to read and analyze either a case study or a chapter in the textbook. Participants that did not give a summer assignment wanted to but were limited in their capabilities since the guidance department did not generate class lists until last minute. Participants that did give a summer assignment found it helpful to identify which students were going to need help with self-advocacy, time management, and writing. Mrs. Rogers used the beginning of the year assignments to talk to students about communicating with professors in the future. She stated to her students “to be adult you would come to me ahead of time” if you have questions or if you cannot get the assignment in on the deadline.

Assessing students’ college readiness skills is an on-going process. CE teachers utilized long assignments to help students practice time management skills, learn to chunk their work into manageable pieces and to assess student understanding at each step of the project (Lang, Jenkins, Rutherford, Rothschild, Williams, Avery, Jameson). CE educators were not thwarted by

short term setbacks of student progress. Mrs. Rothschild used introductory assignments to see where the students currently are academically. She stated, "I can tell from the first assignment how well they are understanding the vocabulary." Instead they looked for growth and maturity over the course of the entire class. Mrs. Cain stated, "I look for growth over time" with the students' ability to write.

Classroom observations demonstrated that CE educators uphold rigor whether the student is ready for the rigor or not. Students were sometimes placed in the CE course due to scheduling issues or due to a positive experience in a prerequisite course rather than true readiness for the college course material. CE educators commonly stated, "this is a college course" and "you are a college student." These statements reminded students of their commitment to the course and emphasized the importance of hard work. The CE teachers spoke with college level concepts and vocabulary. For example, Mrs. Roy described a lesson on human development theories to the students by stating, "You will be applying what you have learned to a real person and then analyzing them from a psychosocial perspective." She followed up on the topic by using questioning strategies to check for mastery. She asked the students, "Can you think of an example of where a role that you engaged in might be giving structure to what you are doing?" She thoughtfully challenged students to take the college concept and apply it to their own lives. CE teachers openly discussed college concepts by discussing the content.

The classroom observations revealed that CE teachers determine mastery of college skills through thoughtful and consistent formative questioning. The CE teachers constantly made students expand on their comments during class discussions. During a discussion on the impact of China's One Child Policy on family development, Mrs. Reiter asked a student "Why?" and shortly after asked, "What about child labor?" A few minutes later she asked a different student

to expand on their discussion comments by asking the student, "Why?" The constant and consistent prodding that the students received to expand their answers causes the student to be more mindful when answering. Thus, the CE teacher is checking for mastery of college concepts in the content area while building the skill of critical thinking. The CE teacher is also modeling the appropriate behaviors of a student participating in an educational discussion on the college level.

Personal Perceptions of College Readiness

The CE educator's personal perception of college readiness does impact their motivational behaviors in the CE classroom. All 16 participants vocalized that they believe the CE course prepares students for college. In addition, all 16 participants stated that they feel a personal responsibility to prepare students for college. The reasons behind their commitment varied, but all share the common belief that college is necessary and that students need to be prepared for the college academic transition. For example, Grace Reiter stated, "I always feel strongly that students should be prepared for their future and college is one of the options that we highly want to prepare them for." Mrs. Rodriguez similarly stated, "Yes, I do feel personally responsible because I do want to see them [students] be successful when they go on to the next level of their education." Each participant felt responsible for preparing students for college because they felt that it was a privilege to teach a college class. Participants taught the college academic material but also felt responsible for preparing students for the college-going skills they would need such as time management, prioritization, reading, writing, and understanding the research process.

Their beliefs on why college is important stems from their own experiences in college and their subsequent advanced degrees. All participants had a master's degree or higher. In

addition, all participants were either actively pursuing other degrees or certificates or were active in professional development opportunities through various educational organizations. Marybeth Jameson was pursuing her sixth year degree in educational leadership and stated, "I like to think that [being in grad school] gives me some insight to kind of what college is like now […] I try to prepare students for the level of work that they would have to do independently." Laurie Jenkins declared, "I feel like being a grad student is so helpful in the sense that you can bring in those current skills into the high school to our students as college readiness skills." She brought her grad school experiences with new technology and new methods of teaching into her class regularly. She also shared her interactions with professors with her students, including how much work professors expect students to do in a short amount of time. The participants' commitment to lifelong learning shaped their understanding of college readiness. All participants stated that meeting deadlines, reading, writing, and being able to communicate effectively were important to college readiness.

Participants were motivated to embed college readiness skills in their CE classrooms due to the college experiences of their immediate family members. Many of the participants are mothers to college-age students (Rothschild, Rogers, Smithton, Watson, Roy, Rodrigues, Richards, Williams, Reiter, and Avery). These participants regularly shared recent experiences of their children. Mrs. Watson shared about how her daughters dealt with the challenges of different roommates. Mrs. Richards explained how her children had very different personalities and motivations so their college choices were very different. She emphasized to her students that the choice of college should reflect your personal preferences and be the right fit for your personality. Several of these participants had their children or a family member come speak to their classes about their college experience. The recent college experiences of the participants'

children helped them to stay relevant to current issues in the college application process and college transition. The personal trials of their family members shaped the participants' personal commitment to prepare their students for college in the CE course.

Participants held a commitment to preparing students for college because they realized the importance educational attainment can have on career advancement and life satisfaction. Participants understood how education could result in higher pay and more opportunities from their own experiences. Laurie Jenkins emphasized that college is necessary and important in her class. She exclaimed, "I feel like high school is clearly not enough in terms of anything for a career. It's just your stepping off point." Elaine Watson and Elizabeth Williams utilized their educational attainment to describe to students how their lives are better now that they can earn more money and have better jobs compared to their parents. Participants believed that college attainment is necessary for entering the competitive job market of the 21st century.

The expense of college influenced the participants' commitment to preparing students for college. Since the CE course is at a reduced rate or sometimes free for students based on if their secondary school district pays for it, it allowed high school students to save time and money as they transition to college. All the participants mentioned that they talk to their students about the cost savings of taking CE courses in high school compared to the expense of one college course at the university level. Mrs. Jenkins stated, "But in terms of affordability I think it is so important for them [students] to start those skills here [at high school] and now before they are in college." Mrs. Jenkins further discussed the growing trend of high school students transitioning to college without having college readiness skills and being forced to take remedial courses, thus, increasing the time and cost to finish with a bachelor's degree. CE educators also talked about the costs of textbooks, fees, and living on your own during the course.

Overall, CE educators believe that college is a necessary step to career attainment. They believe that college skills can be taught and should be taught in CE courses. They have a personal commitment to teaching the course because they believe that the skills students learn in the class will save students time, money, and prepare them for life. CE educators are influenced by their own educational journeys, the experiences of their immediate family members, and their commitment to lifelong learning. Paramount is the educators' belief that the CE course does prepare students for college and gives the student a unique opportunity to learn college-going skills while learning academic content.

Developing College Readiness Skills

With the CE educators committed to the importance of college readiness, how are college readiness skills taught? The pedagogical strategies of CE educators were examined through the personal interviews, classroom observation, and document analysis. Through open and axial coding, themes emerged that showed what college readiness skills were being taught in the CE classroom. These themes were also evident in the document analysis. The manner of which the participant wrote assignments and utilized difficult vocabulary merged the high school paradigm of academics with collegiate coursework. The document analysis also showed that authentic learning was combined with college rigor to make weighty, collegiate concepts more accessible to a younger audience. College readiness skills were taught throughout the course, especially when a student had a question. The CE teacher utilized the student's question to provide a learning experience for the entire class. Mrs. Richards stated, "I'm trying to get them into the thinking of how college works." College readiness skills implemented by the CE teachers included academic behaviors, college-going skills, and self-advocacy skills. CE educators were ultimately working toward preparing students for adulthood.

College readiness skills are taught over time. Fifteen out of the 16 participants taught at a school that offered the typical one-semester course over two semesters as a CE course. All the participants teaching the course over two semesters admitted that the length of the course positively impacted their ability to incorporate college readiness skills and conversations. Mrs. Cain's school only offered the course in a one-semester option. She mentioned that the she would have been able to incorporate more college readiness skill-building activities if she had more time. Participants mentioned the additional time of two semesters allows the CE teacher to gradually slow down the pace of the course, enabling students to build the academic behaviors they need to be successful. In addition, it allows the CE teacher to utilize authentic learning experiences to demonstrate the college concepts in a more tangible manner. For example, participants visited elderly care facilities during their study of development in old age. Students were able to see the college concepts come to life, such Erik Erikson's psychosocial crisis of integrity versus despair. The CE teacher utilized experiences to enhance the students' ability to comprehend the college level concepts. Time allowed the CE teacher to build college readiness skills.

Finally, college readiness skills were embedded in the curriculum through projects and teachable moments. CE teachers strategically assigned projects that forced students to build college readiness skills. For example, Mrs. Rutherford created projects that demanded that students learn how to collaborate with each other electronically to create a final project. Students were required to utilize some form of digital communication and then demonstrate how that communication allowed them to successfully complete the group project. In addition, she wove in writing skills by requiring students to write a thesis statement for each topic within the project. Thus, she was preparing students for the writing and collaborative learning they will be required

to do once they attend college. Similarly to other participants, Mrs. Rutherford prepared the topics and class materials ahead of time for projects. She stated, "I prepare the different topics for them so they can choose. They [students] have some choice because kids at this age like to have choice." The CE teacher understood the nuances of each topic, so when students struggled or needed help with broadening their understanding of the topic, the CE teacher was able to support the student in their learning of the topic and college readiness skills.

CE teachers utilized teachable moments to teach college readiness skills. The two-semester format of the course allowed participants the opportunity to embrace the teachable moment instead of ignoring a learning opportunity that arises. Participants mentioned giving lessons on resume writing, professional email writing, scholarship essays, and behavior during college visits. As students asked questions or talked about the process of college-going, the CE teachers jumped at the opportunity to incorporate a whole-class learning experience that addressed what the students were interested in at that exact moment. For example, Mrs. Roy has students every year that become interested in the local scholarships offered by the community in the spring. Mrs. Roy stated, "I will always remind them […] to get their scholarship folders ready and then [I] offer to help them and so them how to write a resume and that sort of thing. So that is not part of our curriculum per se." She continued by stating that she goes over how to get an individual to "write you a letter of recommendation, don't just hand them a piece of notebook paper with this is what I need. You make it look professional." Mrs. Roy stated that by focusing on what is important to the student for college going skills at the time that they truly need it allows her to grab the attention of the students. CE teachers utilized teachable moments to infuse their lessons with relevant, college-going information that enhanced the students' understanding of college.

Motivational and Instructional Strategies

Since the college readiness skills are taught by the CE teacher, how are motivational behaviors and pedagogical strategies implemented? This question sought to understand how the CE educator delivered the instruction to students. Classroom observations and the Assessment of Classroom Environments Questionnaire data helped to bring light to this research question. The classroom observations revealed that the ability of the teacher to build rapport with students had an impact on the teacher's ability to utilize positive and constructive criticism. CE teachers stated that they personally pull students aside to talk to them about their lack of academic performance. According to the participants, students accept their constructive criticism since the CE educators include constant positive reinforcement during whole group instruction. Mrs. Cain mentioned that she specifically likes to be intentional with her positive reinforcement. She praises students for their depth of thought when answering questions because she believes it makes students start becoming "thoughtful which will help them be successful" as a student and in life. In addition, participants mentioned that the CE course is the capstone course for students that have met the prerequisites. Since many of the participants were the only human development teacher in their school, they taught their CE students in a previous prerequisite course. The participant was able to build rapport with students over the course of multiple semesters making their influence with students greater.

The CE educators displayed a positive attitude coupled with grit when interacting with students. The participants utilized constant positive reinforcement through verbal praise and tangible rewards. Some participants utilized tangible rewards such as stickers, pencils, or food as incentives to help students achieve. The positive reinforcement was always joined with a

commitment to maintain the rigor of the course. The teacher's positive attitude set the foundation for students to interact with each other in a positive way in the classroom.

The teacher's motivational strategies and positive attitude that were revealed in the interviews and classroom observations can be further supported by the data from the Soares and Soares (2008) Assessment of Classroom Environment's Questionnaire. The Assessment asked participants to respond to twenty-five questions that ultimately would categorize the participant's style of teaching. The three styles of teaching included the leadership model, guidance model, and integration model of teaching. Teachers that can be categorized as having a teaching style in the leadership model more frequently "define and clarify the objectives of the lesson, select and organize the learning activities and provide models and examples, monitor the practice and designs the evaluation procedures to determine wither the objectives have been achieved" (Soares & Soares, 2008, p. 4). Teachers responding with answers congruent with the guidance model capitalized on student diversity and have students utilize their own understanding of concepts to form their own understanding of new concepts. Teachers in the guidance model use "various ways of grouping students for constructing understanding, learning form one another, challenge solutions, while contributing to both the intellectual and social complexity of the activities" (Soares & Soares, 2008, p. 6). Lastly, in the integration model, teachers take on an "information-processing approach in which the instructor assists students to process sensory data efficiently, organize information, develop concepts, build cognitive structures, verify their knowledge, and great new ideas" (Soares & Soares, 2008, p. 7). The participants in this study were categorized into one of the three models of teaching through the Assessment of Classroom Environments questionnaire. The participants overall scores fell under the leadership model of

teaching. This demonstrates that the teacher takes on the role of a strong leader that carefully plans the learning activities and college-going activities within the classroom (see Figure 5).

Table 5

Assessment of Classroom Environment Questionnaire Data

	Leadership Model	Integrated Model	Guidance Model	Highest Score
Overall Score of Participants	56.1	41.6	51.9	56.1 LM
Classroom Management	9.8	8.2	12.0	12.0 GM
Learning Environments	12.6	6.2	11.2	12.6 LM
Instruction Methods	10.1	8.4	11.1	11.1 GM
Efficacy	11.6	10.1	8.4	11.6 LM
Assessment	12.1	8.7	9.2	12.1 LM

Notes. Scores for 14 out of 16 participants. Two participants were unable to report data due to a death and refusal to do the questionnaire in a timely manner. LM = Leadership model, GM = Guidance model.

The leadership model of teaching that was revealed through the Assessment of Classroom Environments Scale is consistent with the process that CE educators used to plan their lessons. The teacher chose how to organize the college curriculum to fit in the college readiness skills. The teacher took a large role in organizing the assessments and the learning focus of each class. According to Soares and Soares (2008), the leadership model is most useful in preparing students for "skill development, mastery of material in one's own timeframe and for presenting large bodies of knowledge" (p. 4). The leadership model is consistent with the purpose of the CE course. The CE teachers had to present a vast amount of college level material to the high school

student, so they took a leadership role in organizing, presenting, and developing students' skills throughout the course.

Upon more careful analysis of the Assessment of Classroom Environments questionnaire, I found that there were two areas in which the participants did not fit the leadership model. The participants scored higher in the guidance model for classroom management and instruction. The high scores in the guidance model for these two aspects of teaching and learning are important to the understanding of how the CE teacher executes their lessons. The guidance model is more active, time consuming, and relies on really understanding each student's strengths and weaknesses (Soares & Soares, 2008). The guidance model is founded on the Vygotskian belief that knowledge should be constructed and discovered through problem solving activities. The guidance model focuses on the student acquiring metacognitive strategies so that learning can be repeated by the student on their own (Soares & Soares, 2008). The participants scored higher in classroom management in the guidance model, showing that they allowed students to discover their own mistakes instead of the teacher identifying mistakes as in the leadership model. This discovery is consistent with the interviews and classroom observation data, which revealed that the teachers commonly used constructive criticism to encourage students to build knowledge of what is expected in the college classroom. The CE educator places more ownership on academic behaviors and professional behaviors on the student to develop college-ready behaviors. Similarly, the participants scored higher in the guidance model in the area of instruction. The Assessment of Classroom Environments questionnaire identified instruction as the actual delivery of the lessons. The interviews and classroom observations were consistent with the guidance model of teaching in this area. The guidance model is described as having instructional strategies that include discovery learning, cooperative learning, and problem-solving activities.

The CE educators utilized discussion-based cooperative learning activities on a regular basis. The lessons were centered around a controversial issue in the field of human development that forced students to utilize their own foundational knowledge and personal beliefs to respond. Thus, the lessons were more student-centered with the teachers as a guide to learning. The classroom observations demonstrated that when the students got off topic, the teacher utilized questioning techniques to ask open-ended questions to get the students back on topic. The Assessment of Classroom Environments questionnaire displayed how the CE educators take on a leadership role in the classroom while giving students more autonomy in the classroom from a guidance model in classroom management and during daily instruction.

Balancing Rigor and College Readiness Skills

The CE teacher must balance the academic rigor of the college course with the current developmental stage of the high school student while building college readiness skills. Three themes emerged through the interviews and classroom observations as indicators of how CE educators balance the academic rigor of the college content in the high school classroom. These themes included: modeling, gradual release of independence, inclusion of authentic learning experiences, and time management strategies.

Modeling

The CE teachers modeled how to tackle the college-level concepts during the class. They showed students how to identify what information is important in the text and how to make interdisciplinary connections to what they have read. The participants continually modeled how to ask how and why questions when thinking about college level concepts. Modeling the academic content enables the students to see how to overcome any deficits or fear they may have toward doing college work.

Gradual Release of Independence

The participants mentioned that they work toward having students gradually learn how to learn college level material. The participants gave students more assistance at the beginning of the year and slowly released the responsibility of learning back on the student. Mrs. Lang and Mrs. Watson gave major projects at the end of the year in which they do not give any assistance to the students. At the beginning of the year, participants gave students outlines, graphic organizers, or detailed explanations of what exactly is expected for each assignment. The level of support lessens as students build skills and gain confidence in their ability to tackle college level work. Mrs. Roy gave worksheets that supported the reading for the first quarter of the class. Then she gradually lessened the number of homework assignments related to the chapter reading. During the last quarter of the class, Mrs. Roy did not give any homework packets. She reported that the students "initial reaction is, yay! No more homework packets." Then students realized that the reading and learning has to be done completely on their own. The participants built in a gradual release of more autonomy to the students as the course progressed to build their college readiness.

Inclusion of Authentic Learning Experiences

Authentic learning experiences through fieldwork experiences are required by the host university. However, the type and frequency of authentic learning experience is left up to the CE teacher. The authentic learning experiences provide students the ability to network in the community while gaining valuable skills. CE teachers go over professionalism, appropriate dress and appropriate communication styles prior to going out of the school. Authentic learning experiences incorporated by the CE teachers included trips to local elementary schools, assisted living facilities, community outreach events, and participation in non-profit fundraising

activities. In addition, each participant provided at least one authentic, college-going experience by attending either a college fair, college campus tour, or a visit to a college class. These authentic learning experiences related to college going are valuable to students. Mrs. Roy brought students to a college bookstore after a campus tour. She made each student "pick out five books and see what it would cost for a semester's worth of books." Upon coming back to their school, the class discussed strategies for paying for college. These authentic learning experiences provided an element of fun for the high school student while allowing them experiences that added depth to their understanding of college concepts.

Time Management Strategies

The CE teachers utilized time management strategies for themselves and their students to help bridge the gap between high school and collegiate academic work. The CE educators taught how to manage and chunk assignments in college courses. Mrs. Rogers showed her students the course syllabus weekly and described what should be done that week. In addition, she showed students how to take efficient notes when reading the college text. She stated, "I require them when they read the chapter, they have to outline it. And I […] go over that. I go over a ten percent rule […] you would be recording just about ten percent of that section." She demonstrated to the students how to identify what facts in a sample of the text should be recorded as notes. All the other CE teachers in the study mentioned some way of helping students tackle the college text. For example, Mrs. Lang helped students realize that all the information in the headings or in the chapter summary were absolutely necessary to understand the overall themes of the chapter. The participants focused on helping students develop reading and note-taking skills; however, their primary focus was helping students manage their time as they were assigned a greater workload than they were used to as a high school student.

The CE teachers have discussions with their students on how to manage reading, writing assignments, and long-term projects. They discussed how to chunk assignments into smaller parts with distinct due dates. The teachers also gave written suggestions on papers given to students on how to manage deadlines and chunk long-term assignments. Many CE teachers chunked the assignments for the students and have small check-ins with students prior to the actual long-term assignment due date. Mrs. Cain demonstrated to her students how to organize and chunk reading. She stated, "I space out the reading. I will say, 'your notes are due' this particular day, but I will try to go a week out." She tried to make all assignment have at least one weekend in between since that is when most high school students get the most done. Teaching students time management strategies helps the student adjust to the new rigor of the college course since they can work toward smaller goals.

Summary

Sixteen participants were studied to examine how college readiness skills are incorporated into CE courses while maintaining college rigor. All participants were high school teachers in Connecticut teaching a CE course in human development. Data were collected through interviews, surveys, classroom observations, and a document analysis. Participants' perspectives on college readiness were shaped by their own experiences, experiences of their family members, and the rigorous academic content of the CE course. Participants balanced the college course content with authentic learning experiences to enhance the high school students' understanding of college. All participants utilized class time to speak to students about differences in high school and college academics. The participants infused the course with rich, descriptive stories of their own personal lives, allowing the high school student to really build a relationship with the teacher. The rapport that was built in the classroom enabled the teacher to

give positive verbal encouragement and constructive criticism to remind students that personal effort is required to achieve goals. As a result of the rapport that was built in the classroom, participants were accessible to the student during non-class time. Students were able to get extra help and ask about life issues. The participants had a deep commitment to teaching as well as maintaining academic rigor in the course. The participants all held a personal belief that the course was a privilege to teach. They refused to let students fail but were uncompromising on the fact that the course was academically college-level. Commitment, grit, and accessibility are the three facets that describe a concurrent enrollment educator.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore the pedagogical strategies utilized by high school concurrent enrollment educators and how their perspectives on college readiness influence the strategies implemented in the classroom. Concurrent enrollment courses are increasingly becoming an important part of the secondary school experience. The growing need for college as a means of obtaining a job has increased the need for students to be prepared upon entrance to college to ensure ongoing academic success. Current research on CE programs has been mainly on student success (Leonard, 2010; North & Jacobs, 2010; Reid & Moore, 2008) or program policies (Krueger, 2006; Morrison, 2008; Oliva & Nora, 2004). Little is known about how the CE educator identifies and implements college readiness skills in the CE classroom. This study fulfilled the gap in the literature regarding the pedagogical strategies of CE educators. The results of this study are meaningful to educational stakeholders since the findings can help with identifying future teachers for CE programs, professional development opportunities, and helping current CE teachers implement best practices in their curriculum.

Summary of Findings

Through a qualitative study of 16 participants teaching in one CE program in Connecticut, a theory was created to explain the process of teaching CE courses. The purpose of this study was to examine the teacher's perceptions of college readiness and how CE teachers determine what should be taught to get students ready for college. In addition, this study examined the pedagogical strategies, motivational behaviors, and techniques for balancing rigor used by the CE teacher. The data revealed that CE teachers teach college readiness skills over time. The CE educator embeds the college readiness skills within the college requirements but

keeps the high school student in mind. The CE teacher embraces teachable moments to address college-going concepts and to build students' self-esteem. The CE teacher utilizes authentic learning experiences to bring depth to the college level content. Pedagogically, the CE teacher utilizes constant formative assessment through strategic questioning of student understanding of college concepts. The CE teacher addresses vocabulary development, reading, writing, and research within the course.

The CE teacher's attitude toward their students and view of themselves as an adjunct professor enhanced the understanding of how the course was taught. CE teachers typically view themselves as capable adjunct professors. All participants felt that teaching the course was a positive experience and saw it as an honor. All the CE teachers believed the course was beneficial in helping the high school student to master college-going skills and gain college credits while still in high school.

Discussion

The process that the CE teacher goes through to take a college course and present it to high school students without losing the academic rigor is important to understand, as CE courses are on the rise in secondary institutions. The CE course in human development at Grand Oak University has been successful in having students pass the course and continue onto post-secondary educational endeavors. Thus, understanding how these participants managed to take a college course and have high school students gain college credit and gain college going skills will enable other educators to replicate their process in future CE courses. The process of teaching CE courses can be visualized into five distinct steps.

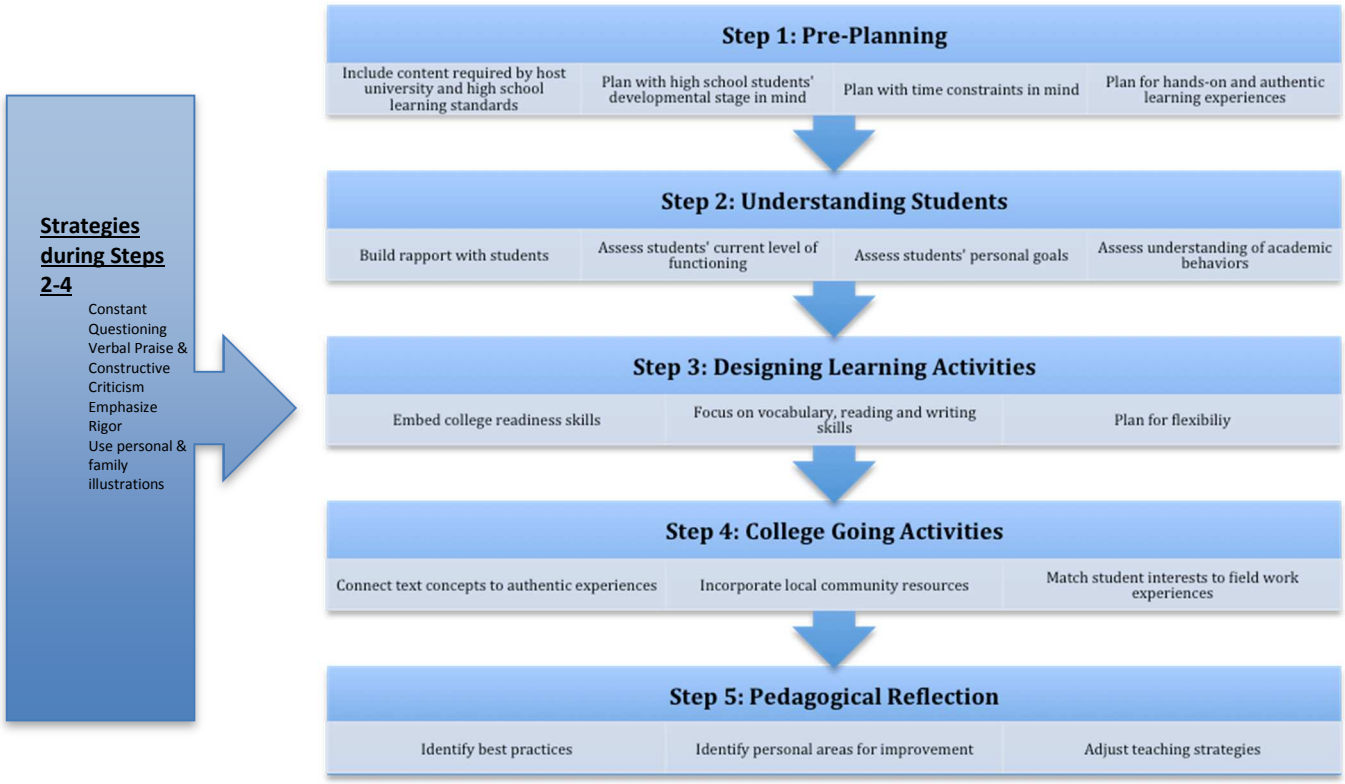

Figure 1. This figure represents the process of teaching CE courses.

Pre-Planning

The first step in the process of teaching a CE course was pre-planning. The CE educators immersed themselves in the college content by reading provided materials, talking with college teaching staff, and reading the college text. The CE teacher identified the concepts that the high school student would easily understand at their developmental stage and then identified the concepts that would be very difficult. The CE teacher created a plan for teaching that fit the high school schedule. Often, the CE teacher had to plan around high school social activities such as dances and sporting events to make sure all the content was covered. The CE teacher planned major assessments for specific parts of the school year. They carefully chunked the assessments so that students could master smaller amounts of information rather than take assessments with

cumulative assessments like in college classes. The process of preplanning allowed the CE educator to have a map of what needed to be accomplished throughout the school year.

Understanding the Students

The CE teacher utilized the plan made for the course but planned for flexibility once they met their students. Each participant admitted to spending time at the beginning of the year establishing rapport with the students. The ability of the CE teacher to build rapport was important for later interactions with students that needed constructive criticism about poor academic performance later in the year. Establishing rapport for the CE teachers was equally important as pre-planning the course sequence for the year. CE teachers assessed the students' current academic understanding of the content and the student's college-going skills. Many participants utilized summer assignments or introductory writing assignments to test students on their writing skills, time management skills, and level of academic self-advocacy. CE educators wanted to know if students could step up and ask for help if they needed it at the beginning of the year. CE educators embraced students that struggled and made mental notes to support the student in upcoming assignments through differentiated instruction, positive reinforcement, and one-on-one conferencing. The ability of the CE teachers to build rapport gave each teacher a level of influence with the students. The CE teachers utilized their influence to give life advice and college-going advice throughout the course.

Learning Activities

Thirdly, the CE teacher created learning activities that drive the classroom activities for each day. The CE teachers tended to plan activities that spanned the course of two or more classes but had a singular focus. The CE teacher focused on building understanding of vocabulary and concepts in their lessons first and then created activities that included application

and synthesis activities. The CE teacher planned learning activities that have a hands-on component. For example, teachers included interviews, role-playing, and debates as part of lessons involving controversial topics. The CE teacher incorporated activities that forced students to practice recall of information while including a kinesthetic component. For example, teachers had students define and match concepts at different locations around the room. These activities were utilized to build foundational knowledge for more difficult content. Overall, learning activities were designed in a simple to complex format. Whatever activity was planned began with simple vocabulary and ended with students applying and synthesizing college level concepts.

The CE teacher always planned learning activities with the high school student in mind. The CE teacher planned lesson activities with the knowledge of the students' developmental stage. The participants mentioned that their students are wrapped up in social issues related to their high school experience and social media. Many participants mentioned that students are somewhat immature and sometimes fail to realize at the beginning of the year that college is quickly approaching. The CE teacher understood the high school student population due to their constant contact with the students. In addition, the CE teacher took time to build rapport with the students in the CE course and prior to the CE course during prerequisite classes. The learning activities are designed by the CE teacher to engage the students at their current level of understanding while incorporating rigor.

College-going activities

After planning learning activities for daily classes, the CE teacher planned college-going activities both in and out of the classroom. These activities were planned after the primary focus of students learning the college course material. Typically, the college-going activities were

planned for specific units of study or were planned for specific times of the school year. For example, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Smithton, and Mrs. Jenkins all planned specific college-going activities related to writing around November. For these participants, the month of November coincided with their goal of getting students ready to write a college-level research paper for their midterm that would be due in December. The participants taught students how to utilize key word searches, access research databases, and navigate formatting. Similarly, other participants aligned resume writing, interviewing, making professional phone calls, and responding to emails during specific times of the school year.

College-going activities outside of the high school classroom were planned as opportunities arose. All the participants mentioned that college-going opportunities changed from year to year. Mainly, this was due to the availability of events within driving distance and monetary support. Fifteen out of the 16 participants were solely responsible for the planning and preparation regarding field trips. One participant had the help of a school to career counselor. The most common college-going activities were trips to college campuses, college fairs, and career fairs. Participants also planned fieldwork experiences that related to the course content that provided opportunities for the CE teacher to discuss career pathways. CE teachers were committed to planning experiences outside of the classroom for students.

Pedagogical Reflection

The final step in the process of teaching a CE course was pedagogical reflection. The participants all spent time organizing materials, making personal notes, and thinking about how to improve the overall CE experience for their students. The participants taught the CE course differently each year since they tweaked imperfections in the lessons from the previous year. In addition, teachers added new lesson ideas and dreamed of new ways to help high school students

grasp college concepts. The pedagogical reflection process was on-going for the CE teachers. As they taught lessons and interacted with students, they made mental connections to new methods of organizing course materials. In addition, the participants were constantly reviewing their own lives and current events and taking inventory of student comments to share with upcoming classes. All the participants mentioned that they at some point shared success stories of their previous students to teach their current students that success was possible. The process of pedagogical reflection enabled the CE course to be constantly revised to stay up to date with the current needs of students.

Strategies

Throughout steps one through five, the CE educator utilized four main pedagogical strategies. The CE educator used constant questioning, verbal praise, and constructive criticism; emphasized rigor; and used personal illustrations. These pedagogical strategies were the foundational teaching practices in the CE course.

Constant questioning. The CE educator used questioning strategies constantly to formatively assess the students' level of current knowledge about the college concepts. Also, questioning allowed the CE educator to force the student into higher levels of cognitive understanding. The CE teachers utilized the questions "Why?" or "How" during class discussions to get students to expand on their answers and truly think about the concepts in the college text. The CE educators utilized questioning to encourage students toward synthesis and application of knowledge as described in Bloom's taxonomy. The CE teacher's skillful use of constant questioning inserted high school students into a classroom that emphasized college-level analytic thinking.

Constant verbal praise. The CE teacher utilized constant verbal praise and constructive criticism when needed. The constant verbal praise was balanced between whole class praise and praise focused on one single student. All the participants praised the whole class for specific educational behaviors that mirrored behaviors of real college students. Participants praised individual students for the same behaviors. For example, Mrs. Cain had a ritual that after each test, she would praise the student with the highest test grade and applaud them for their efforts. In addition, she would have that student share with the class what strategies they used to earn the high grade. Constant verbal praise was part of the fabric of the class. Participants walked around the room and praised students for their thought process, for their time management skills, and other positive academic behaviors. When students were not on task, the participants urged students to join the rest of the students in their pursuit to learn college academic material. Participants frequently reminded students as they utilized constructive criticism that the course was a "college class." Participants also met with students individually both to praise their work and to help students improve on their performance.

Emphasis on rigor. The CE teacher, throughout all the aspects of planning and teaching the CE course, always emphasized rigor. The rigor of the course was evident in the way their handouts were given to the students. The deadlines stated reminders that the course was college level and late work would not be accepted. The verbal reminders that reading the course textbook was necessary to understand the concepts were repeated frequently. Participants reminded students that it was not the teacher's responsibility to help them learn that they were college students and needed to take ownership of their learning. The CE teachers demanded that students adapt to the rigor.

Personal illustrations. Finally, the CE teacher utilized personal illustrations to describe the college text concepts to the students. The participants utilized their own college experiences, life experiences, and those of their family members. Participants told stories about their children most frequently. The personal stories used to illuminate difficult college concepts is what made the course special to the teacher. The participants mentioned that the CE course was their favorite to teach because they could share their life experience. The students responded well to the personal stories since it added a human element to otherwise challenging human development concepts. The participants felt that by sharing their personal college-going experiences and those of their family members with the students they were enabling the student to gain perspective on the true college journey. Participants mentioned that high school students did not understand how hard the social and academic transition to college can be. The participants utilized teachable moments to share successes and failures during their own journeys. Sharing personal experiences also allowed the CE teacher to offer advice and challenged students to think about how their own choices will impact their lives.

Interactions with Students

The process of planning CE course material was just as important as finding out how the CE educator interacted with students. This study found that the interactions with students that were reported through interviews and seen during the classroom observations displayed a unique pattern of interaction. This pattern of interaction included assessment, lesson implementation, building rapport, embracing teachable moments, and participation in college-going activities.

Table 6

Teacher Interactions with students in CE classrooms

Step	Teacher Interaction	Primary Strategies
Step 1	Assessment	Critical questioning
Step 2	Lesson Implementation	Hands-on activities & embedded rigor
Step 3	Build Rapport	Constant verbal praise & constructive criticism
Step 4	Embrace Teachable Moments	Use of personal stories
Step 5	College-Going Experiences	Field work & visits to college campuses
Step 6	Repeat process and begin at step 1 again	

Notes. Teacher Interactions with Students in CE Classrooms. This figure demonstrates the process of the teacher's interaction with students and strategies utilized to incorporate college preparation activities.

The pattern of interaction with students was continuous. Wherever the CE educator was in the continuous loop of interactions, she moved effortlessly to the next step to continue to support students in becoming college ready.

Assessment. The CE educators began their interactions with students with assessment. If possible, CE educators identified their future students the year before by obtaining a class roster from the high school guidance department. These participants found it helpful to assign summer writing, reading, or note-taking assignments to help them gauge college readiness and academic behaviors quickly in the fall. All participants gave some form of assessment early in the course to gather data about student work ethic, time management, and current understanding of college concepts. The formal assignments to assess student understanding were joined with constant formative assessment through critical questioning techniques. CE educators used open-ended

questions during class discussions to help students develop their answers into more thought provoking, college level responses.

Lesson implementation. CE educators implemented the lessons they designed. The lesson implementation took on a variety of formats from discussion-based lessons about one major topic to multi-topic lessons that focused on building students' skills. When implemented the lessons were focused on learning college concepts but had an informal nature. The participants switched between formal and informal methods of delivery for their lessons. They questioned students about their understanding of topics and utilized informal language to give positive feedback or to make a comment about social issues that were important to the students.

Building rapport. CE educators took the time to build rapport with the students. The educators utilized time before and after class to talk to the students about their personal lives and school events. The CE educators also talked to students about their lives from a big-picture perspective. The CE educators were interested in developing life skills in the students that would help them beyond just the CE course. Teachers talked to students about saving money on college expenses, social issues with roommates, and how to cope with change. The CE teachers were committed to building rapport through thoughtful discussions and constant verbal praise. The rapport with the student was vital to the academic process since if the student showed signs of struggling academically, the CE educator could utilize constructive criticism to influence the student in making positive changes.

Embracing teachable moments. The CE educator interacted with students through teachable moments. The teacher-student interaction during lessons took a distinct turn from the formal lesson when the CE educator noticed an opportunity to either allow the student to share their personal experiences about the current topic or an opportunity to share their own life

application. The emphasis on taking time to embrace teachable moments was the main reason why CE educators liked teaching the course. Mrs. Roy mentioned that she embraced teachable moments when the students were confused about topics. She stated, "If they [students] are having a hard time with it, I'll try to come up with another scenario." She shared scenarios from her own life and hypothetical scenarios to make the students think critically about the course topics. Mrs. Roy further mentioned that teaching the course was fulfilling since she could share her life with students. She stated, "It has really turned my career around and […] I'm just really, really happy with what I am doing." The CE educators took the time to embrace teachable moments by infusing personal stories from their lives and the lives of their students into the course discussion.

College-going experiences. The CE educator planned college-going activities both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. The CE educator participated in these activities with the students. The shared experiences of college-going activities built the educator's rapport with the students. The experiences of guest speakers, fieldwork experiences, and field trips to college campuses allowed the students to have experiences that sparked their interest in learning the college concepts. In addition, it allowed the CE educator to follow up with conversations that emphasized college-going academic behaviors. For example, Mrs. Smithton discussed a field work experience with special needs students and how it related to developmental stages. The conversation included concepts from the college text but also a discussion on professional behaviors when interacting with special education professionals and families. The college-going experiences allowed the student and teacher to interact in different ways, bringing depth to the course.

Continuous interaction. The interaction between the CE educator and the student was ongoing. The CE educator went through the process of assessment, implementing lessons, building rapport, and participating in college-going activities with the students. Then the pattern of interaction began again, as CE educators assessed students' level of understanding for the next college topic. In addition, CE educators were always re-assessing students' understanding of college academic behaviors. CE educators were building the academic behaviors of reading, writing, research, and time management throughout the course. The process of interacting with students to build their knowledge and college-going academic behaviors was a continual process throughout the course.

Implications

This grounded theory study of concurrent enrollment programs identified the pedagogical strategies and self-perceptions of CE teachers. CE teachers play a vital role in the overall understanding of the success of CE students and the success of programs as a whole. This study produced theoretical, empirical and practical implications for the future.

Theoretical

The educational process of CE teachers combining college readiness skills and college content in the high school classroom has theoretical implications. This study found that CE educators take on a leadership model of education while including students in the learning process during class activities. This is consistent with the social constructivism theory of learning. CE educators are Vygotskian in their approach to planning lessons. They plan for flexibility even though they have to take a leadership role in planning. The teacher organizes and plans lessons to allow the large amount of content fit into course. However, the CE teacher plans for flexibility, and they take the time to answer students' questions when teachable moments

arise. They embrace student diversity in the classroom and allow students to share their own life experiences in the context of the course discussion.

The CE educator utilizes constant questioning and authentic learning experiences to build the students current level of knowledge into an in-depth understanding of the college content. The CE teacher's process of helping students learn college concepts can be theoretically described by Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development. The CE educator's ability to use constant questioning to bring the student from a basic response to a well-developed college-level response to an advanced concept is the epitome of the use of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978),

> Using this method we can take account of not only the cycles and maturation processes that have already been completed but also those processes that are currently in a state of formation, that are just beginning to mature and develop. (p. 33)

The CE teachers built rapport with the students and assessed their current level of functioning at the beginning of the ZPD process. Then they utilized pedagogical strategies and careful planning with flexibility in mind to create a learning environment that fostered mastery of more difficult material. The CE teacher's process of teaching matches Vygotsky's social constructivism theory.

The findings of this study also have connections to Bandura's (1994) focus on the teacher's self-efficacy. The CE educators had a positive self-concept toward themselves as college level educators in the Soares and Soares (2008) self-perception questionnaires. The participants' self-concept was also demonstrated through their actions in the classroom observations and mentioned by the participant during the interviews. The positive self-concept of the educator toward their teaching practice produced a positive learning environment for

students. This matches Bandura's theory of how self-efficacy influences educational outcomes. According to Bandura (1994), "self efficacy determines how people feel, think and motivate themselves to behave" (para. 1). The CE educators believed they were capable of teaching college courses and therefore were motivated to include college rigor and college-going activities in the classroom. The CE educator's self-efficacy influenced how they interacted with students. The CE educators admitted that teaching the CE course was harder than their other courses and took more time. All the participants stated that they enjoyed teaching the course despite the challenges. This demonstrates Bandura's belief that self-efficacy can influence how an individual approaches challenges. According to Bandura (1994), "people with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than threats to be avoided" (para. 2). The CE educators' self-efficacy was demonstrated in the classroom as they spoke with students. The CE educator modeled how self-efficacy and persistence can help individuals meet lofty educational goals. They verbally stated to students that college content could be mastered even though they were in high school. Therefore, the CE educator's self-efficacy helped them to verbally promote self-efficacy of learning in their students in CE courses.

Empirical

The expansion of CE programs will continue as more students seek learning options that will prepare them for college. Prior research, as emphasized students' success in CE programs, has left a gap in understanding the teacher's role in the learning process (Leonard, 2010; Tobolowsky & Allen, 2016). This study examined the experiences of CE teachers. The process the teachers took to bring the high school students to a higher academic level in order to complete and succeed in college academic work emerged from the data. Empirically, the process

of teaching CE courses can enable future CE programs identify areas for professional development and teacher support services. Additionally, the process of teaching CE courses can apply to other accelerated learning courses. High school teachers looking to incorporate college preparation activities into their curriculum can utilize pedagogical strategies and methods of teaching CE courses that were revealed in this study.

Practical

The practical implications of this study relate to the support and professional development opportunities for teachers. Participants in this study admitted varying levels of support for their efforts to prepare college-ready students. Many participants were not treated any differently than other teachers in their school even though the participants spent many hours preparing college-level lessons for their students. Availability of resources within the classroom varied. Some participants had access to technology in the form of computer labs and iPads that enabled them to incorporate more college preparatory technology components into their classes. Other participants had little to no access to technology. The disparity of technological resources was coupled with the lack of technological support services. Teachers had access to technology but no means in which to learn how to utilize the technology effectively in a CE classroom. Since college students are required to understand how to advocate for themselves as students via technological communications with other students and professors, it is vital that CE teachers have access to technology. Suggestions for stakeholders working with CE teachers should include:

- Acknowledge the time, effort and extra work CE teachers spend to teach a college-level course in the high school,

- Provide support for the CE teacher in the form of extra preparatory time, reduction in the number of teaching duties, or time to collaborate with other CE teachers from other schools,
- Provide technology and technological support services to CE teachers, and
- Identify ways to enable the CE teacher to share their expertise in bridging the gap between high school coursework and college rigor with other faculty and staff.

In addition to the support of teachers, there are practical implications relating to CE programs as a whole. Participants in this study identified that communication between the host university and the high school administrators was minimal. Participants felt supported and understood the professional learning experiences provided by the host university. However, their high school administrators often did not see the value in the professional development or did not comprehend the deadlines that needed to be met in order to provide college credit to the high school students. Professional development is necessary in order to enable the high school educator to communicate and connect with the university faculty to understand academic goals. Professional development is vital in order to, "align curriculum and evaluate outcomes, enabling the high school instructors to learn college expectations from college faculty in their discipline and observe firsthand the skills needed to succeed in college courses" (Scheffel et al., 2015, p. 95). Therefore, more work needs to be done to educate administrators on the importance of collaboration between secondary and postsecondary educators involved in a CE program. Practical suggestions for stakeholders regarding collaboration in CE programs include:

- Educate administrators about the academic collaboration that takes place when high school and college educators meet for professional development,

- Identify ways for both high school and college educators to share what they learned through collaboration with non-CE teachers to enhance an understanding of college readiness for all teachers, and
- Attend conferences and programs hosted by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships.

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations

This study only focused on one CE program. Although it is the largest, Grand Oak University is only one of the concurrent enrollment programs in the state. The lack of more programs in the study limits the ability to compare and contrast the results. In addition, only the human development course was studied. Human development teachers only teach one concurrent enrollment course and do not have experience in teaching other concurrent enrollment courses. Thus, it limits the ability of the results to be generalized to other subject areas or other educators that teach numerous concurrent enrollment courses.

The delimitations of this study included the fact that the population studied was not ethnically diverse or diverse in age. Fifteen of the 16 participants identified as Caucasian. One participant identified as mixed American. The demographic representation of the participants in this study was consistent with the whole of Connecticut educators. According to the State Department of Education's 2012-2013 report entitled The Condition of Education in Connecticut, 91% percent of teachers in Connecticut are White. In addition, the population of teachers represented older teachers. This is mainly due to the educational requirements to teach the course. Educators must have advanced degrees and at least three years of teaching experience to teach the CE course. This eliminated some teachers that are new to the field of teaching from

becoming a CE teacher. The lack of diversity of educators decreases the generalizability to ethnically diverse teacher populations in other states.

Limitations

Each participant was part of a unique school and each had their own challenges in implementing college readiness into their CE classrooms. Each participant had different classroom resources, space, and support. These differences could not be avoided during the process of collecting data. The different classroom environments influenced the style of implementation of the college readiness skills. For example, some teachers could use technological resources as a mode of teaching, while others were restricted to computers in other parts of the school building. The participants were also limited by the physical constraints and school protocols when trying to implement college visits and field work. Some schools were located in the center of their towns with access to other schools and businesses. Other schools were set apart from the center of their towns and had little access to outside resources for guest speakers, fieldwork, and field trips. Furthermore, some schools that were more remote were limited by budgetary restraints and could not get their students bussed to other parts of the town or city. The disparity in the ability to go with students to fieldwork sites, attend college events, and access to technology made the teaching experience very different for the participants in this study.

Recommendations for Further Research

Concurrent enrollment courses are becoming a staple of secondary educational opportunities as college becomes a norm for high school graduates. Thus, teaching CE courses is becoming a norm for high school educators. This study explored the pedagogical strategies of CE teachers and how college-going skills are incorporated into the daily educational practices.

Concurrent enrollment teachers embed college readiness skills, utilize constant formative assessment, and employ motivational strategies to thrust students into success in college academics. This study revealed that CE educators are experienced educators that possess an unwavering commitment to seeing their students succeed. All the participants in this study had a positive self-concept about teaching CE courses, a positive demeanor in the classroom, and fearlessness to give constructive criticism to students when needed. Conducting future research with a larger samples size in a larger state would give a broader perspective on the understanding of how CE educators teach CE courses. Exploring teaching practices in all types of school demographics in the future would add to the understanding of what educational practices work in all school settings. Three themes for future research emerged during this study, including: best practices for educators teaching CE courses, the need for professional development for CE educators, and the administrator's role in identifying and supporting CE teachers.

Best Practices

This study found that there are best practices that CE teachers utilize to embed college readiness skills into their courses without depleting the academic rigor of the course. CE educators utilize constant verbal motivation coupled with constructive criticism when needed. They use teachable moments to explain the college-going process using personal and familial stories. Delivering college-going knowledge through personal stories humanizes the process, making it less formidable to the high school student. Pedagogically, CE teachers discuss controversial issues regularly with students and require them to analyze and reflect. CE teachers give clear expectations and give suggestions for how to manage the work. They are masterful in their questioning strategies. CE educators demand that students expand their answers and give interdisciplinary and personal examples when answering questions during class discussion.

These findings are best practices for teaching CE courses that can be utilized as a standard of good teaching for other CE educators. Further research should be conducted on how other subject areas besides human development CE courses have similar pedagogical best practices. Ultimately, understanding the best practices in all CE courses would allow a greater understanding of what strategies new CE teachers need to implement to ensure student success.

Administrator's Role

The administrator's role in the process of identifying and supporting CE educators emerged throughout this study as an obvious need. Participants identified that there is varying support from high school administrators for the CE course. Although high school administrators approved of the participants offering a college-level CE course for the high school students, participants identified that administrators did not fully support their educational efforts. Participants rarely received financial support for their courses and were not compensated by the high school either monetarily or by reducing the teaching load. All participants identified that teaching the CE course is more work than their other classes and is sometimes overwhelming. CE educators have to overcome the paperwork, technology issues, planning lessons, and organizing field experiences for students relatively on their own. In addition, the human development CE teachers in this study taught a variety of other courses. Reducing the course load for these teachers may allow them to focus on teaching the CE course. Also, providing these teachers with equitable access to technology for their students would allow the CE educator the freedom to utilize online college resources and research. These administrative changes for the CE teacher could reduce the stress of teaching the course. Researching the role of high school administrators in supporting CE educators in the process of teaching CE courses would be beneficial for positive outcomes in CE programs.

The administrator's role is important in identifying which educators are best suited to teaching a CE course at the high school level. CE teachers have a positive attitude and self-concept that allows them to develop a unique rapport with students in the classroom. This study found that CE educators have a commitment to education and a passion for their subject area. They are willing to be accessible to their students by offering extra help sessions, meeting with students to talk about life issues and spending time doing extracurricular activities (see Figure 2).

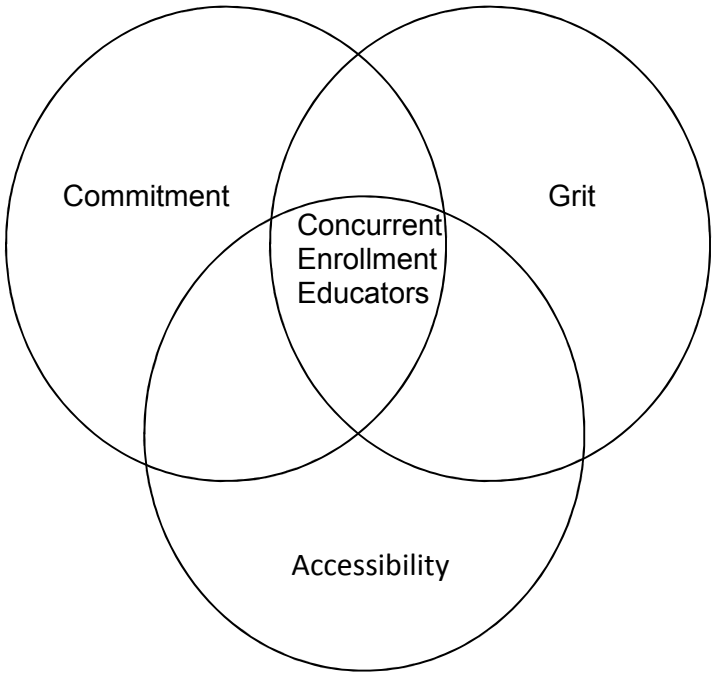

Figure 2. Qualities of a CE Educator. This figure displays the relationship between the three qualities of CE teachers.

Finally, CE teachers are unwavering in their commitment to academic success for their students. They are willing to verbally utilize constructive criticism for students that are not performing to their potential. Their ability to multitask by teaching difficult college content while also managing to make the content accessible to a high school age audience can be described as grit. According to Duckworth and Quinn (2009), grit is "defined as trait-level perseverance and

passion for long term goals" (p. 166). Duckworth and Quinn (2009) found that individuals with grit had "predicted achievement in challenging domains over and beyond measures of talent" (p. 166). The term grit epitomizes the CE teacher. The CE educators had to overcome many teaching challenges, including poor support from administrators and students that were not accustomed to doing college work. Yet despite the challenges, CE teachers demanded excellence from themselves and their students.

Also, CE teachers demonstrated their academic grit by being verbally uncompromising about the difficulty level of the assignments since it was a college credit-bearing course. Administrators on the college and secondary level need to find ways to identify the individuals in their educational settings that hold these qualities of commitment, accessibility, and grit (see Figure 2), coupled with a positive self-concept. Individuals with these qualities would be an excellent fit for teaching CE courses. Fifteen out of the 16 educators in this study were over the age of 50. The administrator's role in identifying new educators to teach CE courses is going to become paramount as the current educators think about retirement. Therefore, more research is needed to identify strategies that administrators can use to find highly qualified educators that will be successful in preparing students for college and teach CE courses.

Professional Development

CE educators did receive support from the host university through bi-annual professional development opportunities. CE educators enjoyed the social aspect of the professional development functions because it allowed them to feel part of a larger community of educators going through the same educational challenges. The teachers in this study were from various areas of the state of Connecticut; connecting with other colleagues on a regular basis was difficult. The host university's biannual professional development allowed for the educators to

see each other in a professional setting and develop lasting collegial friendships. How the professional development actually supported the educators was not discussed or revealed during the course of this study. Further research should be done on the effectiveness of professional development opportunities for CE educators. Since the social aspect of professional development was discovered to be important through the CE educator's interviews, professional development opportunities should continue to be a part of the host university's responsibility.

Access to Resources

Interviewing the CE educators about their experiences teaching the CE courses revealed that there is inequitable access to resources among the CE teachers. Some schools have more access to current technology and educational resources compared to others. For example, some schools have access to computer labs and laptops all the time, while other teachers have to schedule certain dates for computer use. This creates a different learning experience for the high school student compared to a student on the college level taking the same course since college students have access to college computer labs at all times. Although the host university provided all students taking the CE course with access to digital libraries, web tutorials, email access, and course management tools, few teachers were able to fully implement these resources into their teaching. Secondary school systems vary greatly on their technology resources. In addition, student populations in different socioeconomic areas of Connecticut vary on their personal access to technology outside of the classroom.

Access to human resources such as guest speakers and fieldwork experiences varied greatly as well. Some high schools are physically located in central locations near major businesses and other schools. Schools within closer proximity to town were able to provide more varied and regular fieldwork experiences to their students. Teachers that lived in rural areas or

suburban areas in which the school was located further from town found it difficult to implement authentic fieldwork experiences. In addition, some schools had monetary resources through regional budgets or grant money to bring students to college campuses or college-related preparation events, while others lacked these resources. The lack of consistent access to resources created a disparity in the experiences for both the CE educator and students from school to school. More research needs to be done on how rural educators or educators that lack financial resources can provide similar fieldwork experiences for their students. In addition, both the host university and secondary schools need to find ways to equalize the high school students' access to appropriate technology so students can utilize similar college-level digital resources while in a CE course.

Role of Administrators

The need for support from educational leaders at the high school level and the host university level was evident from the teacher interviews. Although the participants enjoyed teaching the CE course, educators admitted that support was lacking. Most evident was the support that was lacking from the high school. Participants admitted that principals did not fully understand the magnitude of the benefit of the course for students in the future. As a result, participants mentioned that principals failed to understand the role of the teacher and the amount of work that the teacher did to ensure student success. Participants struggled with funding issues to bring students to college-going activities, lack of materials for the course, and limited technological resources. Administrators need to be cognizant of the educational needs of the CE teacher to enhance the experience for students. The host university in this study provided access to digital library materials and online course management software for teachers that could rarely be utilized by the CE educator due to the lack of technological resources at the high school level.

Further research needs to be done to understand the role of the high school administrator in supporting CE teachers and ensuring that students have access to the materials that host universities provide.

The host university administration also plays a role in supporting the CE teacher. The participants in this study admitted that they enjoyed the biannual training at the host university. They found the training helpful and practical while enabling the participants to connect with educators from around the state. Participants stated that the host university staff did not understand the challenges that individual CE teachers faced in their local school districts. The most common complaint among the participants was that college administrators and staff did not understand the time constraints and high school schedule. University staff and administrators commonly made plans and deadlines that conflicted with secondary school events such as parent's nights, quarter grading periods, and high school breaks. Future research should be done on how high school teachers and university staff can find a more advantageous system to connect with each other despite the differences in the two types of school schedules.

Role of Policy Makers

As the line between secondary and postsecondary education continues to blur, policy makers have a responsibility to support the students and teachers involved in CE programs. As policy makers begin to consider new programs, CE teachers should be considered as a separate type of educator compared to the typical high school educator. CE teachers work hard to complete coursework, training, and on-going professional development in order to teach CE courses. However, educators are not monetarily compensated for their efforts by their district or host university. Therefore, policy makers should look for unique ways to set apart CE teachers, giving them more recognition within the field of education for the special role that they play in

preparing students for college. Policy makers should additionally look ways to fund CE teachers in special projects that allow the CE educator autonomy in planning college readiness activities. CE teachers are experts of their students' current abilities and gaps in college-going knowledge. Allowing CE educators the ability to apply for grants would allow the CE educator to create programs to build the students' knowledge and fill the monetary chasms that are not funded by the school district. Policy makers can play a key role in giving a voice to CE teachers and supporting their efforts through funding initiatives.

Student-Centered Research

Finally, more qualitative research is needed from the students' perspective in CE courses. A majority of the current CE research involving students is from a quantitative perspective. It would be advantageous to know what students identified as the best practices utilized by their CE teachers. In addition, it would be helpful to understand what personality qualities of the CE teacher the student thought were most advantageous to helping them succeed in the course. It would also be beneficial to know what students identified as the greatest benefit of the CE course in helping them transition to college. Understanding a student's point of view from a qualitative perspective would fill the gap in the literature in CE research. It would ultimately allow administrators to identify the qualities that are most important to students in the teachers they higher to teach CE courses.

Summary

This study examined how educators teach CE courses while preparing students for college academics. This study examined the self-perceptions of CE teachers, their pedagogical strategies, and how their teaching strategies were implemented in the classroom. This study includes data from 16 schools across Connecticut all participating in the same CE course in

human development. As a result of this study, a model of the process of how CE teachers execute teaching CE courses was created. As CE programs continue to grow as a viable method of introducing college academics to students, educational stakeholders should use this model to ensure the success of future programs. Specifically, the model for teaching CE courses can be utilized by other CE educators to help organize their teaching process. More importantly, the model should be used for professional development opportunities both at the high school and college levels to help create a more streamlined transition to college academics.

In addition to the process of teaching CE courses model, an understanding of the qualities of the CE educator were discovered. CE educators have commitment, grit, and accessibility. These qualities embody a successful CE educator. Administrators both on the high school and college level need to develop ways to identify these qualities in educators. The ability to identify these qualities in individuals can ensure that CE courses are taught by individuals that will be able to meet the demands of teaching the CE course and make a positive impact on the student as an individual.

Finally, a conditional matrix of how CE teachers interact with their students was created. This matrix demonstrates how the CE teacher interacts with the students and the CE curriculum. The CE teacher implements the college curriculum but does so in a manner that puts the students first and embeds college readiness throughout. Authentic learning experiences are at the forefront of course activities. The CE teacher utilizes the pedagogical strategies of positive feedback, constructive criticism, and personal stories to motivate students toward academic success.

This study fulfills the gap in the literature for qualitative research surrounding the success of CE programs (Leonard, 2010). In addition, little was known about the role of the teacher in

producing students that succeeded in CE courses. The 16 participants in this study had clear pedagogical techniques for blending the college rigor and college preparation activities in the CE course. Their pedagogical strategies were just as important as their motivational behaviors. This study should be a catalyst for more research on a larger scale to the important role the teacher's pedagogical strategies and personal interactions with students play in producing college-ready students.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL

LIBERTY
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The Graduate School at Liberty University

December 10, 2012

Amanda G. Langlais
IRB Approval 1404.121012: Secondary Educators' Perceptions of College Readiness and Pedagogical Strategies in Concurrent Enrollment Programs

Dear Amanda,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054

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IRB Change in Protocol Approval: IRB Approval 1404.121012: Secondary Educators' Perceptions of College Readiness and Pedagogical Strategies in Concurrent Enrollment Programs

IRB, IRB <IRB@liberty.edu>

Tue 7/29/2014 3:41 PM

To Langlais, Amanda <aglanglais@liberty.edu>;

Cc Puga, Jose Arturo (School of Education) <japuga@liberty.edu>; Garzon, Fernando (Center for Counseling and Family Studies) <fgarzon@liberty.edu>; IRB, IRB <IRB@liberty.edu>;

Good Morning Amanda,

This email is to inform you that your request to change the sample size for your study from 20-25 participants/schools to 15-20 participants/schools has been approved.

Thank you for complying with the IRB's requirements for making changes to your approved study. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

We wish you well as you continue with your research.

Best,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Institutional Review Board Coordinator
The Graduate School

(434) 592-5530

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APPENDIX B: INITIAL EMAIL CONTACT SCRIPT

Introductory e-mail to be sent to University of Connecticut Human Development educators in the Early College Experience Program identified by the university program director as expert teachers.

Dear Early College Experience teacher:

My name is Amanda Grace Stirgwolt and I am currently pursuing my Educational Doctorate (Ed.D.) at Liberty University. I am currently seeking participants for my dissertation research project. The purpose of this research study is to explore the process of how educators prepare students for college in concurrent enrollment programs. I would greatly appreciate if you would consider participating in this study during the 2012-2013 school years. In order to participate in this study you must be willing to:

1. Complete a demographic, personal survey about your background in education.
2. Complete a 15-20 minute self-perception survey.
3. Complete 1-2 formal, audio/ video taped interviews lasting from 45-1 hour.
4. Allow the researcher, Amanda Grace Stirgwolt, to complete 1-2 classroom observations of your Early College Experience class. Classroom observations will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes.
5. Allow access to lesson plans, curriculum-planning documents, class handouts that are relevant to the study.

For your participation in this study, you would receive a $100 gift card. Please consider participating in this study since it will help to enhance the understanding of concurrent enrollment programs and their importance in the transition to college. If you are interested, please let me know by responding to this email. I will also be contacting you by phone to discuss your possible participation.

Thank you,

Amanda Langlais Stirgwolt
amanda.stirgwolt@gmail.com

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Secondary educator perceptions of college readiness and pedagogical strategies
in Concurrent Enrollment Programs
Amanda Grace Stirgwolt
Liberty University
Department of Graduate Education

You are invited to be in a research study of educator perceptions of college readiness and academic success. You were selected as a possible participant because of your participation in teaching concurrent enrollment classes at the high school level. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.
This study is being conducted by: Amanda Grace Stirgwolt, Department of Education, Liberty University.

Background Information
The purpose of this grounded theory study is to describe the process that effective concurrent teachers use to develop college readiness skills develop while maintaining academic rigor in concurrently enrolled students in Connecticut. The impact of the teacher's perspective on curriculum choices and motivational tools in the classroom will be explored. A theoretical model depicting the process of integrating college readiness skills into the concurrent enrollment classroom will be the final result of this qualitative study.

Procedures
If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
The data needed for this study will be conducted through 1 descriptive questionnaire and 2-teacher perception inventories that will be completed at the beginning of the study. The total time commitment to complete the questionnaire and inventories is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. A one-hour participant interview will be conducted to discuss curriculum procedures for the concurrent enrollment class. An additional interview may be needed. At least one classroom observations lasting approximately one class period will be conducted to examine the participants' implementation of curricular goals in the fall. A second classroom observation may be needed in the spring. All classroom observations will be audio-recorded and interviews will be audio or video recorded for data collection purposes. During video recording only the teacher will be in the interview room. The purpose of video recording during the teacher interviews is to capture nonverbal communication techniques.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
The risks of being in this study are minimal. The risks are no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life. The benefit to participating in this study is that you will be contributing to the understanding of high school educators teaching college level courses. Thus, you will be contributing to data that possibly could impact the understanding of concurrent enrollment courses for both high school and collegiate educators.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records.
In order to ensure privacy, the research video equipment, computer and printed data will be kept in a locked cabinet and in password protected digital files. The audio/ video transcripts of the interviews will be viewed only by the researcher, research consultant and research committee chairs. All data collected in this study will be used for educational purposes only. Each participant's identity will be kept anonymous; pseudonyms will be used for the written data analysis. Pseudonyms for the high school and school district will also be used to ensure anonymity.

Voluntary Nature of the Study/ How to Withdraw:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the Liberty University, University of Connecticut or State of Connecticut School Districts. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time with out affecting those relationships. If you decide to withdraw at any time, contact Amanda Grace Stirgwolt. The data from your school district, interviews, audio and/or video files will be destroyed.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is: Amanda Grace Stirgwolt. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 203.954.7953, amanda.stirgwolt@gmail.com
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.
You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records

Statement of Consent:
I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.
Signature:_____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D: TEACHING BACKGROUND SURVEY

Introduction: The following survey will be virtually sent to Concurrent Enrollment teachers after their participation has been verified. The Teaching Background Survey will be sent after IRB permission and school district permissions have been obtained. The survey will be sent via email using Google Documents and Forms.

Teaching Background Survey

Welcome. I would like to take the time to thank you for your participation in this research study. The purpose of this research study is to explore the process of how educators prepare students for college and implement college readiness skills in concurrent enrollment courses. Please respond to the following questions about your personal, educational and concurrent enrollment teaching background. All information will be reported in the final research paper using pseudonyms to protect your privacy.

Name:
Age:
Ethnicity:
School:
Contact Phone Number:
Contact Email Address:
Number of Years Teaching:
Classes Taught in the 2012-2013 school years:
Number of Early College Experience courses:
Number of Years Teaching Early College Experience Courses:
Number of Current Students in your Current Early College Experience Class(es):

Question 1: Describe your educational background.

Question 2: Describe the personal benefits of teaching a concurrent enrollment course.

Question 3: Describe personal challenges of teaching a concurrent enrollment course.

APPENDIX E: SCRIPT FOR QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

Introductory Briefing

Welcome. I would like to take the time to thank you for your participation in this research study. The purpose of this research study is to explore the process of how educators prepare students for college in concurrent enrollment courses. Data collected today will be used for education and research purposes only. A pseudonym for you and your school will be used in the research analysis to protect your privacy and anonymity. To begin my research, I will need you to complete an introductory questionnaire about your demographic information, years of teaching experience and general viewpoints on education. If at any time you would like to leave a question blank you may do so. The introductory questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes. The questionnaire can be completed now or you may take it with you and mail it at a later date. What is your preference? (Participant will either take the questionnaire or be given a self-addressed enveloped with a questionnaire enclosed). In order for me to better understand you as a high school teacher and adjunct college instructor as part of the concurrent enrollment program, I need you to complete two inventories. The first inventory is the Self Perceptions of University Instructors Inventory. This inventory has 40 sets of paired words. You will be asked to choose the words that describe your belief or understanding of college instruction. At this time I will give you the Self-Perceptions of University Instructors Inventory. When you are finished you will complete a second inventory.

Participant will take the Self Perceptions of University Instructors (Soares&Soares).

Now, I will give you the Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory. You will again be given 40 sets of paired words. You will be asked to choose the words that describe your understanding of your own classroom. For the purpose of this study, answer all the questions in regard to your concurrent enrollment course and not any other courses that you may be teaching. I will now hand out the inventory.

Participants will take the Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory (Soares).

Debriefing Statement: Thank you for your participation today. I am finished with data collection for today. I will need to conduct a one-hour personal interview as the next step of my research. When would you be available to interview?

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Introductory Briefing: Welcome. Thank you in advance for your time and participation in this research study. The purpose of this research study is to explore the process of how educators prepare students for college in concurrent enrollment courses. Data collected through this interview will be used for educational purposes only. A pseudonym for you and your school will protect your privacy and anonymity.
Interviewer: Can you please state your full name and current job title.
Interviewer: This interview will be videotaped to create research transcripts for the purpose of data analysis. You will receive a copy of the transcript to review within two weeks. Do you give permission for me to video record this interview for research purposes?

Research Question 1: How do concurrent enrollment teachers determine what college readiness skills should be taught? And how do they determine mastery?

Interview Questions:

1. Do concurrent enrollment classes help to prepare students for college? How?
2. Do you feel a personal responsibility to prepare students for college in your concurrent enrollment class? Why?
3. How do you address college readiness skills in your concurrent enrollment class?
4. How do you assess the students' level of college readiness in your classroom?

Research Question 2: How do personal perceptions of college readiness impact the educator's motivational behaviors in the concurrent enrollment classroom?

Interview Questions:

1. How have your personal experiences influenced your perception of college readiness?
2. Describe any personal or professional experiences that have helped you understand college readiness?
3. Describe how your experiences and understanding of college readiness influence your interactions with students.

Research Question 3: How do concurrent enrollment teachers develop college readiness skills?

Interview Questions:

1. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of time management skills? (Conley, 2010)
2. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of note-taking skills? (Conley, 2010)
3. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of test taking strategies. (Conley, 2010)
4. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to strengthen student vocabulary.
5. Describe teaching strategies you utilize in the concurrent enrollment class to promote the development of self-advocacy.

6. Beyond the college curriculum you are required to teach, describe other college-related information you impart to your students. (Conley, 2010)
7. Describe collegiate experiences you provide for your students.
8. How do you encourage students to examine topics from multiple perspectives?
9. How do you facilitate discussions of complex topics in your classroom?
10. How do you encourage students to access college resources?
11. How do you encourage students to identify their own personal biases?
12. How do you engage students in developing intellectual curiosity about human development?
13. Describe how you integrate college level research skills in your class.
14. Describe how you integrate college level writing skills in your class (Conley, 2010; VanDeWeghe, 2006).
15. Describe how you integrate college level reading skills in your class.

Research Question 4: How does the concurrent enrollment teacher utilize motivational techniques to encourage the development of college readiness skills in the classroom?

Interview Questions:

1. Describe your role in supporting the student to achieve in a college-level class.
2. How do you motivate students to do college level work?
3. How do you use positive reinforcement in your concurrent enrollment class?
4. How do you utilize constructive criticism in your concurrent enrollment class?

Research Question 5: How do concurrent enrollment teachers balance academic rigor and the development of college readiness skills?

1. How do you balance the academic rigor of college academics with the fact that the students are in high school?
2. What strategies do you use when planning homework assignments and classroom activities to bridge the gap between high school level work and college level work.

Debriefing Script: Is there anything else you would like to mention or add about your responses today? I want to thank you for your participation in this study. Your continued cooperation is appreciated. At this time, I would like to get copies of any documents that display the process that you take to plan lessons for the concurrent enrollment class. These documents might include: lesson plans, calendars, memos, teacher notes or student worksheets. Since our formal interview time is now over I would like to get your "permission to report" any topics that we may discuss informally after the video is turned off. Do I have your consent? (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 129).

APPENDIX G: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

During the classroom observations of the concurrent enrollment teachers both descriptive and reflective notes will be taken. A chart will be used to easily gather data about the teacher's language and interactions with the students (Appendix H). The researcher will specifically be looking for verbal motivators, teaching strategies that implement college academic preparedness techniques and emphasis on collegiate academic rigors. The classroom observations will be audio recorded so that detailed transcripts can be utilized for further data analysis. Audio recording procedures will be contingent upon the individual high school's policy on research collection. I will take a non-participative role in the classroom observations.

Steps to Classroom Observation

Prior to Observation

1. Permission from the participating school district will be obtained
2. Permission from the concurrent enrollment teacher will be obtained

Day of Observation

1. I will arrive 10-15 minutes early to ensure that I am able to observe classroom preparation, the classroom's physical environment and teacher interactions with students prior to class.
2. Lesson Observation Chart completed

After the Observation

1. Reflective notes completed
2. Audio recording transcription completed
3. Member checks of transcription data by teachers

APPENDIX H: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHART

Date of Observation:

School:

Teacher:

Physical Description of the Classroom:

Description of Students:

Time Start:

Time End:

PART 1: Lesson Sequence

Beginning of Lesson	Middle of Lesson	End of Lesson

PART 2: Evidence of College Readiness Skills in the Classroom

College Readiness Skill	Observation Description	Observation Reflection
Teacher Implementation of College Readiness Skills		
1. Evidence/ Emphasis on Time Management		
2. Evidence/ Emphasis on Note-Taking		
3. Evidence/ Emphasis on Test Taking Strategies		
4. Evidence/ Emphasis on vocabulary development		
5. Evidence/ Emphasis on the development of self-advocacy skills		
6. Evidence/ Emphasis on college-related information		
7. Applies/ Integrates prior collegiate experiences into current lesson		
8. Evidence/ Emphasis on development of analysis from multiple perspectives		
9. Promotes accessing college resources		
10. Integrates/ Facilitates discussion of complex topics		
11. Promotes the student's understanding of personal bias		
12. Promotes intellectual curiosity		
13. Evidence/ Emphasis on developing research skills		
14. Evidence/ Emphasis on developing writing skills		
15. Evidence/ Evidence on developing reading skills		

PART 3: Evidence of Motivational Techniques

Technique	Observation Description	Observation Reflection
Teacher Implementation of Motivational Techniques		
1. Verbal/ Nonverbal support for future college attendance and achievement		
2. Verbal/ Nonverbal motivation for current classroom activities		
3. Evidence of Positive Reinforcement		
4. Evidence of Constructive Criticism		
5. Evidence of positive rapport with students		

Part 4: Balancing College Academics & Rigor

Technique	Observation Description	Observation Reflection
Teacher Implementation of Strategies to Balance College Academics & Rigor		
1. Teacher makes comparisons between high school and college academics		
2. Evidence of chunking/ segmenting college material into manageable pieces for a high school student		
3. Evidence of integrating real world/ community connections to the college curriculum		

APPENDIX I: AUDIT TRAIL

Date	Action	Reflective Notes
Fall 2012	Complete Dissertation Proposal and Defense	Wrote proposal and submitted. Completed steps for proposal defense.
December 10, 2012	IRB Approval	Wrote and submitted IRB application. Received IRB approval.
Winter 2012-13	Initial Contact with host university supervisor for criterion sampling	Initial contact with host university supervisor was made by email.
Winter 2012-13	Volunteer sampling—contacted possible participants	Contact was made by email.
Winter 2012-13	Stratified sampling	Chose participants that represented different demographic areas of Connecticut. No participants volunteered from "wealthy" districts.
Spring 2013	Data Collection	Drove to schools to interview participants and complete classroom observations.
Summer 2013	Transcripts Created & Questionnaires Scored	Over the summer, transcripts were created from the data collected. Member checking completed.
Fall 2013	Data Collection	Drove to schools to interview participants and complete classroom observations for remaining participants.
Winter 2013-Fall 2014	Data Analysis & Coding	Read through all data using constant comparative analysis. Began coding for themes through open coding.
Summer 2014	IRB Change of Protocol Accepted	Reduced samples size to 15-20 since it was taking so code the data. Sample size finalized at 16 schools.
Fall 2014-Spring 2015	Data Analysis & Coding	Re-read all interview and classroom data using constant comparative analysis. Finished all open coding and organized in-vivo codes for each participant.

Summer 2015-Fall 2015	Axial Coding	Identified themes. Re-read all data until themes were solidified. Completed Axial coding
Winter 2016-Spring 2016	Writing Chapter 4	Created theory and began to write and edit Chapter 4.
Summer 2016-Fall 2016	Writing Chapter 5	Wrote and edited Chapter 5
Spring 2017	Manuscripts completed and editing process began	Approved by chair in February 2017 Sent for APA editing process April 5, 2017

APPENDIX J: POST STUDY DEBRIEFING STATEMENT & CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant:

Thank you for your time and contribution to the study entitled: Secondary Educators Perceptions of College Readiness and Pedagogical Strategies in Concurrent Enrollment Programs. The purpose of this grounded theory study is to describe the process that effective concurrent teachers use to develop college readiness skills develop while maintaining academic rigor in concurrently enrolled students in Connecticut. The impact of the teacher's perspective on curriculum choices and motivational tools in the classroom will be explored. A theoretical model depicting the process of integrating college readiness skills into the concurrent enrollment classroom will be the final result of this qualitative study. This study has been approved by Liberty University's Department of Graduate Education and Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The data collected from this study includes the 1. Teacher questionnaire, 2.Self-Perceptions of University Instructors Inventory, 3.Assessment of Classroom Environments Inventory 4.Personal Interview(s), 5.Classroom Observation Data and 6.Classroom/ Teacher Documents. The personal interview and classroom observations include audio and/or video. This data will be analyzed to further understand concurrent enrollment teachers. All data will be stored on password protected computer files and in locked cabinets for a duration of at least 3 years according to federal research guidelines. Pseudonyms for your name, school and school district will be used in data analysis and reporting to protect your anonymity.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.
You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records

Sincerely,

Amanda Grace Stirgwolt
Principal Investigator
Dissertation Candidate
Liberty University

Post Study debriefing consent form

Post Debriefing Consent Form
Secondary Educators Perceptions of College Readiness and Pedagogical Strategies in Concurrent Enrollment Programs
Liberty University
Department of Graduate Education

Researcher: Amanda Grace Stirgwolt
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Jose Arturo Puga

I have been fully debriefed about the research project entitled, Secondary Educators *Perceptions of College Readiness and Pedagogical Strategies in Concurrent Enrollment Programs*. I have had an opportunity to read the debriefing information provided, it has been explained to me, and any questions that I may have had have been answered. I understand that my identity will be protected using pseudonyms.

I agree to allow the data collected during my participation in this research project to be used, understanding that I am doing so voluntarily and that confidentiality will be maintained.

_____
Signature

_____

Date

Note:

- Participants should be asked to sign two copies of this form, one for their own records and one for those of the researcher.

APPENDIX K: FIGURES

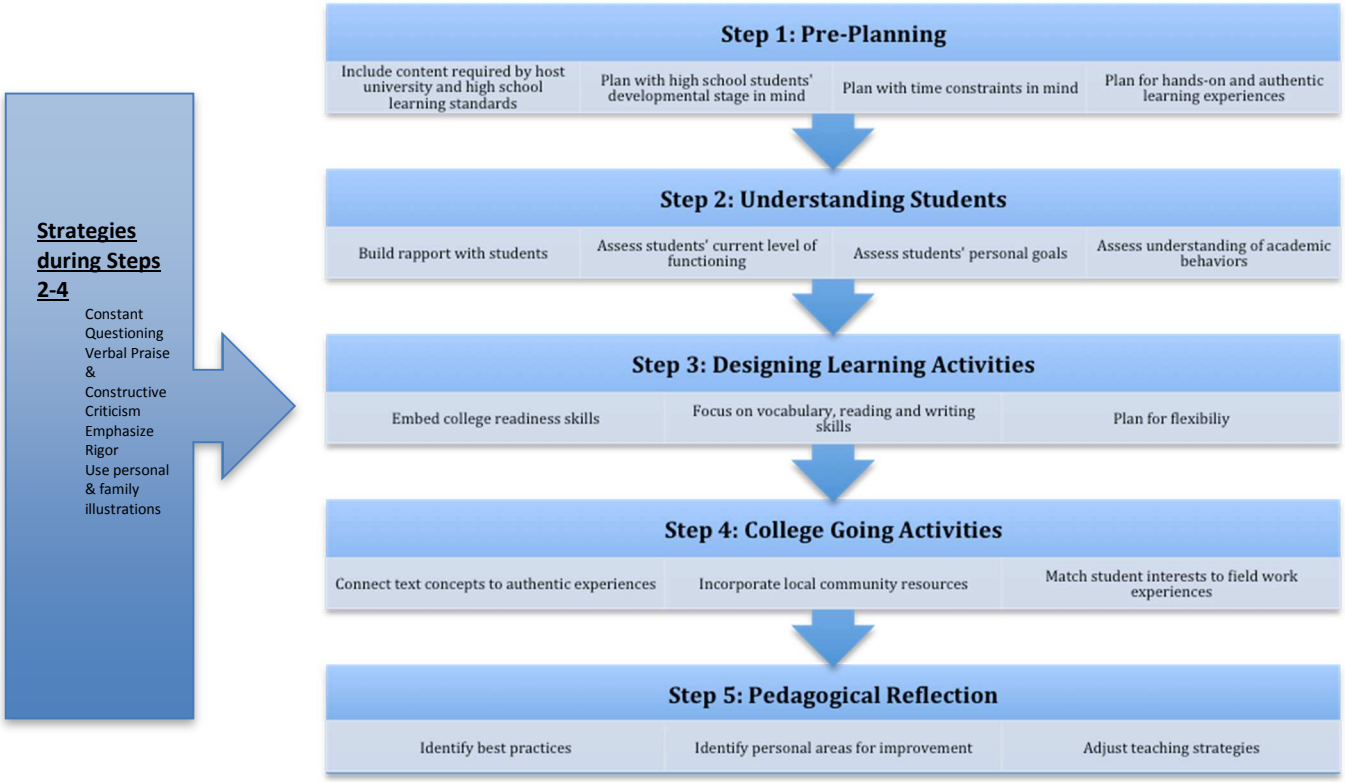

Figure 1. Process of Teaching CE Courses

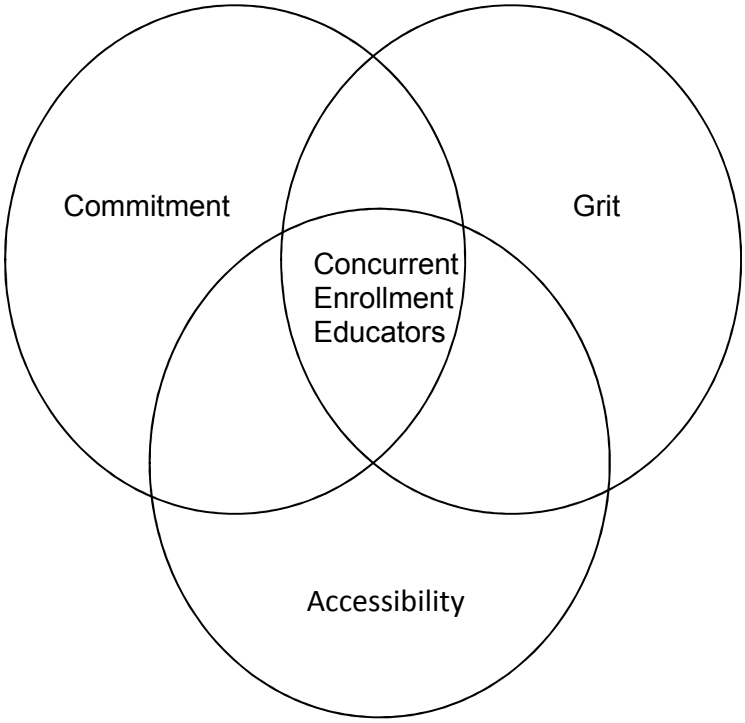

Figure 2. Qualities of an effective CE educator. This figure displays the relationship between the 3 qualities of CE teachers.