“THEY GET DIVERSITY”:
TEACHER PREPARATION FOR K-12 STUDENT DIVERSITY IN THE HISPANIC
SERVING INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Tara Eve Gerst

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in
Teachers College, Columbia University

2021
ABSTRACT

“THEY GET DIVERSITY”:
TEACHER PREPARATION FOR K-12 STUDENT DIVERSITY IN THE HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Tara Eve Gerst

The dearth of K-12 teachers of color remains a resounding issue of equity and social justice. Given that more potential candidates of color are enrolling in Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) to avoid the negative experiences at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) that discourage them from entering the field, this qualitative study explored teacher preparation at two 4-year public Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). The goal was to better understand: (a) how HSIs work against the barriers that have historically excluded teachers of color, (b) how teacher educators at HSIs respond to the diversity of college student abilities and prior academic experiences, and (c) how teacher educators at HSIs conceptualized and taught about the increasing racial, ethnic, and ability diversity of today’s K-12 students.

Drawing on data at the individual, classroom, institutional, state, and federal levels, this study both centered the voices of teacher educators and college students of color and analyzed their narratives in relation to larger systems of power and privilege. From this analysis, two broader questions emerged. First, what does it mean to serve historically marginalized students who wish to be teachers? The study demonstrated that even institutional contexts that work to be welcoming spaces for college students of color contend with the historical legacies of whiteness
and ability as property in teacher education, as the majority of graduated teachers across both racially diverse schools were white.

Second, is there something to “get” when it comes to diversity in teacher education, and how do we know that students “get” it? As teacher educators of color complicated essentialist narratives of urban schools, teachers of color, students of color, and students with disabilities, tensions emerged around the impact K-12 teachers and schools have on society, dilemmas when college students’ needs clashed with their future K-12 students’ needs, and pedagogically sound ways to respond to understandings of diversity that work against equity and social justice. The role of care emerged as essential in simultaneously upholding the democratic ideals of schooling and productively responding to pathologizing discourses about people of color, moving beyond critical critique in teacher education, and (re)prioritizing the humanity of both K-12 and college students.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables ........................................................................................................ vi
Acknowledgments ................................................................................................... vii
Dedication ................................................................................................................. xii

Chapter 1 – RESPONDING TO THE CALL FOR MORE TEACHERS OF COLOR IN
A HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED SPACE .......................................................... 1
  Background of the Problem ................................................................................. 7
  The Emergence of the Call for Teachers of Color .............................................. 8
  “Highly Qualified” Teachers, “Effective Teachers,” and Teachers of Color ...... 11
  The Consequences of Current Diversity Curricula for Preservice Teachers
  of Color ............................................................................................................... 14
  Statement of the Problem .................................................................................. 17
  Rationale ............................................................................................................. 19
  The Case for MSIs/HSIs .................................................................................... 20
  The Case for Intersectionality .......................................................................... 24
  Statement of Purpose and Research Questions .................................................. 27
  Significance ......................................................................................................... 29

Chapter 2 – A DISCRIT REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON PREPARING
TEACHERS (OF COLOR) FOR DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS .................. 32
  Theoretical Framework ...................................................................................... 33
  Disability Studies/in Education ......................................................................... 33
    The Social Construction of Dis/ability .............................................................. 34
    The (Nondisabled) Norm ................................................................................ 35
    Sustaining Ableism ......................................................................................... 37
  Critical Race Theory/in Education ................................................................... 37
    The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity ............................................. 38
    The (Unstated) Norm of “whiteness” ............................................................. 39
    Colorblindness ............................................................................................... 43
  Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education (DisCrit) ................. 45
    Extending CRT ............................................................................................... 47
    Extending DS/E ............................................................................................. 48
    Tenets of DisCrit ............................................................................................ 51
    Social Construction of Identity .................................................................... 52
    Conceptualizing Normalcy ........................................................................... 52
    Systems of Oppression .................................................................................. 54
  Preparing (Racially Diverse) Teachers for Diverse Student Populations .......... 56
    Conceptualizing Inclusive Pedagogy and Preparation .................................... 57
    Inclusive Stance/Philosophy .......................................................................... 57
    Inclusive Practices .......................................................................................... 58
    Preparing Inclusive Educators ...................................................................... 59
  Teacher Preparation for Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice ......................... 65
    The Assumed Preservice Candidate and Institution ...................................... 66
    Conceptualizing Diversity, Equity, and/or Social Justice .............................. 69
Chapter 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring Stance/Relation</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating Diversity to Equity and Justice</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identities and Experiences Currently Centered in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Curriculum</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kinds of Teachers Most Equipped to Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity, Equity, and/or Social Justice</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and Pedagogy of Preparation Courses</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Positive Beliefs about Students</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking Theory to Practice</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelling Culturally Responsive Practices</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizing Critical Thinking about Equity and Social Justice</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers and Challenges</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing and Teaching Preservice Teachers (of Color) at MSIs</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education Programs at MSIs</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Diverse Students at MSIs</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 3 – METHODOLOGY ........................................................................... 97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Research Design</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS/E Methodology</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRT/in Education Methodology</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DisCrit Methodology</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positionality</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Context</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern City University (ECU)</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern State University (NSU)</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side-by-Side Comparison</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Methods: Instruments and Procedures</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor/Teacher Educator Interviews</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Interviews</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Observations</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular Documents and Artifacts</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors’ Public Profile and Scholarship</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional and Programmatic Documents</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Documents Regarding Teacher Employment/Licensure and Higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Generated in Response to Campus and Sociopolitical Climates</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility of the Data</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Study on Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Observations</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with Four Preservice Teachers at ECU</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods of Data Analysis</th>
<th>..........................................................</th>
<th>138</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memos</td>
<td>.....................................................................</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding and Categorizing</td>
<td>.....................................................................</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>.....................................................................</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>.....................................................................</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional, Programmatic, State, and Federal Documents</td>
<td>................................................................</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playwriting</td>
<td>.....................................................................</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>.....................................................................</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Remainder of the Dissertation</td>
<td>................................................................</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 4 – SERVING (HISPANIC) PRESERVICE TEACHERS (OF COLOR) IN THE HSI CONTEXT ........................................................................................................ | 150 |

| The “Hispanic” Aspect of the HSI Label: Student Demographics and Institutional Characteristics of ECU and NSU as They Intersect with Racial Diversity | ................................................................ | 151 |
| The “Serving” Aspect of the HSI Label: Supporting Students on Campus and In the Classroom | ................................................................ | 155 |
| Academic Outcomes        | ..................................................................... | 156 |
| Student Experiences: Supports in Diverse Environments | ................................................................ | 157 |
| Faculty Experiences: Shifting Priorities in Research and Teaching | ................................................................ | 162 |
| Serving Preservice Teachers | ................................................................ | 168 |
| Internal Organizational Dimensions: Curricular Foci Within the COEs | ................................................................ | 169 |
| Preparing Urban Educators at ECU | ................................................................ | 169 |
| Preparing Progressive Educators at NSU | ................................................................ | 173 |
| External Influences: Navigating Stringent State Licensure Exams | ................................................................ | 176 |
| Summary | ..................................................................... | 187 |

Chapter 5 – DIVERSITY CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY IN THE HSI CONTEXT ........................................................................................................ | 191 |

| A Focus on Individuality, Situated Within (Socially Constructed) Group Identities | ................................................................ | 191 |
| An Emphasis on Humanity and Care, Rooted in Lived Experience | ................................................................ | 194 |
| Complicating Urban School Narratives in Teaching about Diversity | ................................................................ | 199 |
| Stretching Student Labels | ................................................................ | 201 |
| Diversity as a Focus on Expanding Commitments to Equity | ................................................................ | 205 |
| Relationship Between Perspectives on Changemaking and Diversity | ................................................................ | 206 |
| Individual Focus | ................................................................ | 206 |
| Broader Bird’s-eye/Policy View | ................................................................ | 209 |
| Focus on K-12 Teacher Practice over Theory | ................................................................ | 211 |
| Opening Possibilities in Foundational Courses | ................................................................ | 211 |
| Depoliticizing Diversity in Methods Courses | ................................................................ | 213 |
| Dilemmas in Expanding Notions of Equity in Teacher Education Practice | ................................................................ | 216 |
| Diversity as Process: Creating Opportunities to Expand Experiences and Perspectives | ................................................................ | 220 |
| Exposing Students to Multiple Perspectives and Ideas | ................................................................ | 221 |
| Tensions in Simultaneously Affirming and Changing Student Perspectives | ................................................................ | 225 |
| Summary | ..................................................................... | 233 |
Chapter 6 – DISCUSSION ................................................................. 237
  Whiteness and Ability as Property in Teacher Education in the HSI Context .......... 240
  Whiteness and Respect/ability as Property of Admitted Preservice Teachers .... 241
    De jure and De facto Segregation of Hispanic and Black Teachers ............ 242
  Raced Respect/ability as Property Inherent in Undergraduate
    Student and Preservice Candidate Diversity ................................................ 245
  Interest Convergence in the Relationship Between COEs and HSIs ............. 248
    Student Enrollment and University Revenue ................................................. 250
  Teaching, Tenure, and Promotion Requirements at ECU and NSU ............. 251
Grassroots Approach and Equity and Social Justice ...................................... 254
  Breaking from Current (Critical) Trends in Teacher Education for Diversity ... 255
  Teaching Amid Materialist Critique of Critical (Race) Theory .................. 262
  Diversity as (Im)moral Curriculum ................................................................. 267
  Being a “Champion of Diversity” ................................................................. 268
  Emphasis on Rigor .......................................................................................... 270
  Inclusion as (Im)moral ..................................................................................... 273
Implications ................................................................................................. 275
  Serving Historically Marginalized Undergraduate Students in Higher
    Education ..................................................................................................... 276
    Recommendations for Practice: Departmental Goals with HSIs .............. 276
    Recommendations for Policy: “Black Serving Institution” (BSI) Label .... 277
  Serving Students and Faculty at HSIs in Teacher Education ..................... 278
    Recommendations for Policy: Teacher Preparation Requirements ........... 279
    Recommendations for Policy: Teaching and Tenure Requirements .......... 280
    Recommendations for Practice: Care-driven Teacher Education .......... 280
Future Research .............................................................................................. 283
  Research with Students Who Wish to Be Teachers at HSIs ...................... 284
    Learning about Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice .............................. 284
    Teacher Preparation Program Admissions Process ................................... 285
  Research with Teacher Educators ................................................................. 286
    Understanding the Identities and Experiences of Teacher Educators
      (of Color) ...................................................................................................... 286
    Methodological Considerations ................................................................. 288
  Research on HSIs ............................................................................................ 289
    Larger-scale Studies on “Servingness” in Teacher Education and
      Higher Education ....................................................................................... 289
    Examining Typology in Relation to Servingness ..................................... 289
Conclusion ....................................................................................................... 290

REFERENCES ............................................................................................... 292
APPENDICES

Appendix A  Professor/Teacher Educator Interview Protocols ........................................................... 319
Appendix B  Student Interview Protocol .................................................................................................. 322
Appendix C  Researcher Journal Entry on Time When Observational Data Were Collected .......................... 325
Appendix D  Information Used for Informal Review of Sample of Institutions of Higher Education in the State in Which the Study Took Place ............................................................ 327
Appendix E  Diversity Curriculum and Pedagogy in the HSI Context: A (Data Analysis) Play ......................................................................................................................... 332
Appendix F  Dr. Anderson’s Syllabus (ECU) .......................................................................................... 356
Appendix G  Dr. Ocampo’s Syllabus (ECU) ......................................................................................... 379
Appendix H  Dr. Ruben’s Syllabus (NSU) ........................................................................................... 395
Appendix I  Dr. Abbott’s Syllabus (NSU) ............................................................................................. 400
# LIST OF TABLES

Table

1  Research Site Data ................................................................. 114
2  Comparison of Racial Demographics at ECU Between Preservice Teachers and Institution During the 2017-2018 School Year ......................................................... 115
3  Comparison of Racial Demographics at NSU Between Preservice Teachers and Institution During the 2018-2019 School Year ......................................................... 115
4  Focal Professor Participants and the Courses They Taught as Part of the Study .......... 118
5  Student Participant Information ............................................................................. 119
6  Professor Interview Details .................................................................................. 124
7  Course Observation Details ................................................................................. 128
8  Teacher Preparation Program Admissions Requirements at ECU and NSU ............ 177
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Throughout my 7 years as a doctoral student, I repeatedly heard that graduate school, and the dissertation in particular, is a “marathon, not a sprint.” As a (former) competitive, long-distance runner, for me these words hold a different kind of significance. Like a doctoral degree and dissertation, the 26.2-mile marathon distance is not one that happens in isolation. I could not have made it through the ebbs and flows training, to the start line of my defense, without the support of an incredible team of professors, colleagues, and family members.

First, I thank the coaches who form the foundations of this work, from training to “race day”: my committee members. To my sponsor, Dr. Srikala Naraian, who has been with me on this journey before mile 1, or before I could even articulate what it was I wanted to study. Like the best coaches, you knew when to push me and when to let me find my way. You taught me not to shy away from the complexity of conducting research with people in ways that honor their humanity. From you, I have learned how to have faith and confidence simultaneously in my own scholarship and to interrogate my own worldview continuously. Thank you for instilling in me the nuances required to undertake a project about diversity, equity, and social justice.

To my second reader, Dr. Michelle Knight-Manuel, who joined my journey around mile 3, as I was beginning to formulate my ideas about this project in her qualitative methods class. You made sure my training plan contained the right mix of care, respect, and rigor and that it would set me up for success not only in this race, but in my future endeavors as a scholar. I thank you for reminding me of my responsibilities not only to my participants, but to the broader academic community—to remember that I have an obligation to make a contribution to the field and to distinguish between what I want to see in the data and what might actually be there. I am
truly humbled by, and hold immense gratitude for, the time you have given and the generosity you have shown me over the last 4 years.

Thank you to Dr. Mariana Souto-Manning, my third reader, who I met around mile 11, just shy of the half-marathon mark of this project—that time in the race when you are still feeling good but wary of what is to come. As my professor in dissertation seminar, you provided the community that honored not only our writing, but also what was going on in our lives. I have worked to maintain a similar commitment to the work and lives of my participants in this project. Thank you for taking the time to serve on my committee in the same semester you are starting a new position.

Thank you to Dr. Elissa Perry for her role as fourth reader of this dissertation. Your insight and feedback have strengthened this work and have helped me continue to think about what it means to serve historically and multiply marginalized students who wish to be teachers.

While I am fortunate to have learned from many professors at Teachers College, there are three in particular in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching whom I thank for supporting not only this project, but also my journey as a scholar. Thank you to Dr. Marjorie Siegel, for serving as third reader in my dissertation proposal hearing and for pushing my thinking on what a “politics of solidarity” with participants means. To Dr. Haeny Yoon, whom I met around mile 6 of this journey. Thank you for teaching me the value of “play” in data analysis, for supporting my first journal article to come out of this dissertation topic, and for serving as a reference for me on the job market. And to Dr. Dani Friedrich, whom I met in my first year as a doctoral student. Thank you for serving as a mentor throughout this entire journey—from working with me on my very first solo-authored journal article, to supporting me as an instructor in the department, giving me the opportunity to grow professionally as the doctoral peer mentor,
and supporting me in the job market. The way you pushed my thinking and your belief in my teaching, research, and service capabilities have undoubtedly impacted this project.

It was not until I entered the field that I fully appreciated Johnny Saldaña’s premise that what our participants share with us is not only potential data, but also a gift. Thank you to the four focal professors in this study—for your time; for your care not only about this project but also about me as a person; for your openness; and for trusting me with your stories. I truly could not have anticipated how much I would learn from all of you, and I am so glad that this dissertation allowed our paths to cross.

To my colleagues/teammates at Teachers College, who jumped in and ran with me at various points in this race—thank you for helping me put in the miles and the work to get to this point. Dr. Katie Newhouse—my femtor, dear friend, and thought partner—whom I met before mile 1 of this race and who continues to share generously with me both emotional and scholarly support. Dr. Rae Leeper and Dr. Indu Viswanathan, who jumped in at mile 20—when the race shifts from running with your legs to running with your heart. Thank you for supporting me not only with the second half of this dissertation, but also with the life obstacles I experienced this last year. Dr. Chico Knight—my very first friend at Teachers College and someone I now consider my family—I hold so close to my heart our relationship over the last 7 years. Dr. Laura Vernikoff—who reached back after she already crossed the finish line of this degree and continued to support me—I truly appreciate the miles we have shared as research team members and co-authors, as well as the actual miles we have run together as neighbors/friends. Thank you also to Dr. Jordan Corson, Dr. Jennifer Dauphinais, and Dr. Gail Russell Buffalo, for showing someone who once thought education was an individual endeavor the joy and the power that can come from writing, reading, and thinking together.
To my parents, Joyce Salomon and Steven Schwitzman, who have given me everything. Your constant belief in me has been a pillar of strength throughout my life. Thank you for modelling what it means to put your head down and do the work, but also to remember to enjoy life and nourish my relationships with others along the way. To my sister, Jessica Schwitzman Abergel, who has been one of my most loyal friends and confidants—thank you for reminding me that I can do this and for going to Tabbies Land with me when I needed to recharge my mind and spirit. To my second set of parents—Michael Kobela and Cliff Somerville—thank you for making our family whole 20 years ago and for your support of all my personal and academic endeavors. You did not have to treat me as your own child, and it is not lost on me that you do. And thank you to my parents-in-law—Angela and Bob Gerst—for understanding the doctoral journey, for being a sounding board for my ideas, and most importantly, for welcoming me into your family with open arms and hearts. I am so proud to be a Gerst.

Finally, thank you to Andrew Gerst. My husband, my rock, my soulmate, my very best friend. The best and most beautiful thing to come out of graduate school was not this dissertation, but that it led me to New York City and, ultimately, to you. Thank you for reading more drafts than my committee, for listening to each and every one of my ideas (both good and bad), for helping me write countless emails to professors and administrators, for holding my hand during difficult conversations, for instilling in me an interest in law and policy, and, most importantly, for challenging my thinking about what social justice really means. I fell in love with you 3 months after we met, when you jumped in with me at mile 21 of the Boston Marathon. I was ready to quit after hot weather broke my dreams of a personal record, and you ran with me to the finish. Little did I know that day would become a metaphor for the rest of my life. You are relentless in making sure I know every day that I can finish no matter what if I just
set aside my expectations of how I think the race should go, and instead embrace the beauty in the present moment. I cherish you and the life we have built together, and I cannot wait for the next chapter. Same team.

T. E. G.
DEDICATION

For my grandparents, Leon and Esther Salomon,
whose survival of the unthinkable breathes life into me and into this work.

For my daughter,
whose coming arrival has already changed my entire world.
Chapter 1

RESPONDING TO THE CALL FOR MORE TEACHERS OF COLOR IN A HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED SPACE

“Professor, I’m really nervous about the quiz.” I was drinking coffee in the lobby of a building on campus when I heard the shaking voice on the other side of my laptop. I looked up to find Yasmeen—an African American woman, a freshman, and an Early Childhood Education major in my diversity course at Eastern City University (ECU). A 4-year public institution located in the northeastern United States, ECU is a racially diverse Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)—a type of college under the broader category of Minority Serving Institution (MSI).

During the first week of class, Yasmeen enthusiastically told me about her desire to be a teacher because she wanted to make a difference. With only 10 minutes before my next class and the quiz a mere 2 hours away, I gave the best advice that I could: “The first quiz in any class is always a little tricky, since you haven’t been exposed yet to the professor’s testing style. You have been coming to class, which is important, and you offer wonderful insight during our class discussions. As long as you have kept up with the reading and consulted the study guide, you should be in good shape.” Yasmeen seemed to relax as I packed my bag and headed to class.

“Also, the quiz is only 5% of your final semester grade, so I really don’t want you to worry too much about this. The quiz is more for me to check in and see how well I am doing as your teacher, rather than how you are doing as a student,” I said as I headed out the door.

I was surprised when Yasmeen failed the first quiz. Like many education majors at ECU, Yasmeen worked hard to contribute to class discussions, to relate the course material to her own experiences, and to ask questions when she did not understand something and when my

1 Names of people and institutions have been changed to protect participant and/or student identities.
directions were unclear. Even though the course focused on “diversity” in general, she always tried to link what we were learning to ways that she could advocate for her future students. For example, when we discussed how the medical model legitimizes the exclusion of people with disabilities in society, Yasmeen connected this to the deficit thinking engaged by her younger brother’s teachers and how, as a teacher, she would try to do the opposite for her own students.

Yet, perhaps my surprise was not fully rooted in my prior experiences as a teacher educator at ECU. Over the course of the multiple semesters I have taught this class, many students have struggled with the quizzes. Students who have received final semester grades of A, C, and F have similarly received low grades on the quizzes I write. I have wrestled with the idea of whether I should even be giving the quizzes and have wondered what exactly I am assessing. This wonder is complicated by students who receive A’s on the quizzes, even when they have regurgitated the exact words of the PowerPoint slides I display in class and those words happen to answer the assessment question correctly.

As I returned the quizzes in class, Yasmeen was visibly upset and asked if we could talk in that moment. I gently told her that I could not talk individually with her while I was teaching the whole class, but I would be happy to speak with her during office hours. When the period was over, she avoided eye contact with me as she packed her things and was the first one out of the room. I wrote her an email that evening to see how she was feeling and emphasized that I would be more than happy to speak with her.

She never responded. She also did not attend/attempt the next two quizzes. Additionally, testing was not the only area in which Yasmeen struggled. Her homework was often late and reflected only a partial understanding of the reading. Her discussion board posts were incomplete and did not address all the questions. Overall, her writing was difficult to follow, had multiple
spelling and grammar errors, and often engaged in stereotypic thinking that seemed to contradict the aims I had set for my diversity course. Yet, even through these struggles, Yasmeen discussed both in class and in her writing the importance of accepting people for who they are. It would be remiss of me to frame that in any way other than being at the core of what it means to be an outstanding teacher, despite the seemingly contradictory stances she seemed to engage. For example, in one of her discussion board posts, she simultaneously showed substantial empathy for transgender people while also suggesting—without citing evidence or insight from the transgender community—that most of them are uneducated about what is in their hormone medications.

Despite meeting one of the aims I set for the course of having a disposition of care and concern for others, especially historically marginalized children in school, Yasmeen failed her final paper/exam, which was worth 40% of her final semester grade. Even though I felt I provided multiple supports to the class for this assignment throughout the semester—guided notes, rough drafts, peer edits, sample papers, reviewing the rubric in class, weekly office hours—Yasmeen ultimately failed because she did not understand the prompt and what she was even supposed to be writing. Advocating for herself, she emailed me after I returned the paper to ask how she could have failed since her assignment was the right number of pages. “I did not know I was doing the assignment wrong,” she responded to me when I explained how her writing was not answering the question the assignment posed.

The final paper/exam asked students to explore a cultural group different from their own using the concepts we learned throughout the semester. I borrowed the prompt from my own master’s degree program that was originally assigned to me by a professor of color\(^2\) at a

\(^2\) Throughout this work—following W.E.B. DuBois who advocated for writing “Negro” with a capital N (Grant & Grant, 1975)—Black is upper-case to signify people of African origin, with a shared history. By contrast,
Predominantly white Institution (PwI). Yet, I have similarly wrestled with the idea of what exactly this final paper assesses. Learning about African Americans when I did this assignment as a new teacher was necessary because, as a white person, I am rarely put in the position of needing to navigate a culture different from my own. While being from a historically marginalized community may not directly translate to automatically understanding all marginalized communities, the majority of my students, including Yasmeen, have been navigating a world that does not forefront their identities for their entire lives. Not only has this equipped them with certain skills for understanding difference, but it has also necessitated their learning about themselves in relation to others. It is no wonder, then, that Yasmeen scored significantly higher on the cultural autobiography assignment. Also borrowed from my previously mentioned professor, this assignment asked students to explore the intersections of their own identities using concepts from the class. This assignment was worth 15% of the students’ final semester grades. Perhaps prioritizing what I needed as a white teacher in designing my course has been influencing my students’ final semester averages as well as what they are learning.

Concerned about her grade, Yasmeen completed an extra credit paper and ultimately passed the class with a 60% semester average. I was relieved because I felt Yasmeen’s struggling was a stronger reflection of her prior schooling and perhaps my own pedagogical shortcomings as a white professor of undergraduate students of color than of something inherently wrong with her. Yet, I am not sure her performance indicates progress in a teacher preparation program. Yasmeen seems to be facing many barriers. From my experience with her in my course, I feel

“brown” and “color” remain lower-case, as these terms describe a range of people with different histories and cultures (Crenshaw, 1991). To push against a system that has continued to confer advantages to white people (Tatum, 1997/2017), I do not capitalize “white.”
she needs academic support, as well as additional opportunities—grounded in her strengths and prior experiences—to unpack ideas related to diversity and difference.

Ensuring Yasmeen’s success is especially important as inequitable education access in the United States is often attributed to the fact that the teaching force does not reflect the increasing racial and ethnic diversity of K-12 students in today’s urban public schools (Brown, 2014; Haddix, 2017; Kohli, 2009). This heightened focus on race and ethnicity in both teacher recruitment and preparation is supported by the belief that teachers of color are more effective at raising overall student achievement and act as positive role models for students of color (Bower-Phipps et al., 2013; Gist, 2017; Irizarry, 2011; Kendi, 2019; Sleeter, 2001; Waddell, 2014).

During the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King advocated for integration in every aspect of society except K-12 schools, as he was concerned about how white teachers would view Black children and felt Black teachers were more equipped to teach Black children (Kendi, 2019). Today, teachers of color are “more likely to teach in and…persist” (Brown, 2014, p. 332) in urban schools, which are currently facing a shortage of high-quality teachers (Howard, 2003; Ng, 2003), as many preparation programs across the country, including those at MSIs, have faced a sharp decline in enrollment in recent years (Haddix, 2017; Will, 2017).

Despite the importance of this resounding call, a wealth of research has demonstrated that college students of color continue to experience alienation, marginalization, silencing, and discrimination within their teacher preparation programs at PwIs (Bower-Phipps et al., 2013; Brown, 2014; Cozart, 2009; Gist, 2017; Irizarry, 2011, 2007; Jackson, 2015; Jones et al., 2002; Knight, 2002; Pizarro & Kohli, 2018; Sleeter, 2017; Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016; Waddell, 2014). In addition to the barriers that students of color experience on the road to becoming teachers—such as the regimen of standardized testing and racial biases in defining teacher
quality (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012)—the experiences at PWIs deny students of color access to a robust teacher preparation and discourage many from pursuing the profession. This may be why Yasmeen chose to attend an MSI, a type of higher education institution that enrolls a high percentage of students of color (Conrad, 2015; Flores & Park, 2014, 2013; O’Bien & Zudak, 1998). Valuing and acknowledging experiences of marginalization, discrimination, and racism, MSIs (such as ECU) might be better positioned to meet the needs of students of color (Conrad, 2015; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Raines, 1998). MSIs produce significant numbers of teachers of color (Raines, 1998). Almost half of Black\(^3\) and Hispanic\(^4\) teachers and 12% of Native American teachers have earned their bachelor’s degrees in teaching at MSIs (John & Stage, 2014). Still, little is known about the preparation of teachers of color in these spaces (Will, 2017) and how faculty, students, and programs negotiate barriers for preservice candidates of color.

At ECU, some education faculty recognize the need for academic support. Specifically, they describe the Praxis licensure exam as a significant barrier for many students. Yet, they continue to characterize their preservice teachers as “getting diversity” and inherently understanding urban schools just because they might have attended them. Students have similarly characterized themselves as “used to dealing with a lot of diversity and differences.” Yet, my experience of teaching the diversity course at ECU cautions me against assuming that students will automatically know how to translate their experiences as students into equitable pedagogical practice as teachers and to enact sociopolitical consciousness, even if they are attending an institution of higher education that prioritizes racial diversity and social justice and/or have knowledge about culturally relevant education (Jackson & Knight-Manuel, 2018).

---

\(^3\) Unless otherwise specified, Black refers to people who identify as Black and/or African American, recognizing that individuals may hold one or both of these identities.

\(^4\) Unless otherwise specified, Hispanic refers to people who identify as Hispanic and/or Latinx, recognizing that individuals may hold one or both of these identities.
Put differently, Yasmeen will not “automatically become [a] culturally responsive teacher because [emphasis added] of [her] race, ethnicity, and culture” (Jackson, 2015, p. 224). Placing Yasmeen in an urban school is not a sufficient response to the call for more teachers of color (Irizarry, 2007)—nor will it ensure that her students are receiving a high-quality education (Haddix, 2017)—if she does not receive academic support and/or if she is essentialized, due to her race, as having an intuitive sense of social justice pedagogy and, therefore, needing minimal support in learning how to teach children of color. Throughout this study, I sought to understand the ways in which HSIs, and MSIs more broadly, negotiate discourses of marginalization and essentialism that prioritize the placement, rather than the preparation, of teachers of color. Specifically, I explored the ways in which two HSIs are serving their students and preparing them for teaching in today’s increasingly (racially) diverse urban schools.

**Background of the Problem**

Even if they are aware of the barriers Yasmeen is experiencing, teacher educators at MSIs/HSIs may not have the experiences or resources to support her. Many curricular activities—especially those centered around better understanding diversity—are designed to support the preparation of a white teacher candidate attending a PwI, which makes sense given that the majority (approximately 85%) of teachers in the United States are white women (Irizarry, 2011; King & Butler, 2015; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; Morrell, 2010; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Sleeter, 2017). Less than 20% of K-12 teachers are people of color (Gist, 2017; Haddix, 2017), and many public schools have no teachers of color (Kohli, 2009). The lack of teachers of color is a consequence of a segregationist history that continues to fuel inequitable educational access for K-12 students of color and positions teachers of color as less qualified and less effective (Bristol & Goings, 2019). Taken together, this has affected the current landscape of
how teacher education programs respond to barriers that have excluded candidates of color from the profession and address diversity in preparing preservice candidates for urban schools.

**The Emergence of the Call for Teachers of Color**

The dearth of teachers of color is not a recent accident (Gist, 2017; Haddix, 2017). Representing a shift in looking at the “real-world effects” of laws, rather than just the language of the law (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 sparked the Civil Rights Movement by focusing on the racial integration of Black students. Yet, given that, in some ways, this movement focused on the integration of bodies, rather on the more meaningful integration of resources (Kendi, 2019; Malcolm X & Haley, 1965), this ruling (unsurprisingly) had negative implications for how students and teachers of all non-dominant racial backgrounds continue to be positioned in relation to white students and teachers. Specifically, *Brown v. Board* ushered in a color-evasive (Annamma et al., 2017) acceptance of the de facto segregation that occurred after this ruling. Prior to 1954, African Americans remained committed to the development of Black communities as they created their own schools and developed their own educators (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012). As all-Black schools were shut down to support desegregation efforts, white teachers kept their positions and Black teachers were dismissed (Bell, 2004, as cited in Kohli, 2009; Haddix, 2017; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Siddle-Walker, 2015). This happened even though the Black teachers of segregated schools were highly qualified, with many having completed more rigorous training than their white counterparts; moreover, they were deeply committed to advocating for their students’ successes both in and out of school (Siddle-Walker, 2000, 2015) and “were largely single-minded in the way they approached the education of African American children” (Roberts, 2010, p. 453). As “role models, intercessors, ‘othermothers,’ and philanthropists for their students” (p. 453), they
“held unrelentingly high expectations, introduced socio-political critique, [and] participated and lived in the surrounding community” (p. 453). What followed—and many might argue that this continues in today’s urban schools (Gist, 2017)—was the “erasure of a Black cultural imprint on curriculum, pedagogy, and school community” (Tillman, 2004, as cited in Haddix, 2017, p. 142) and a precedent of “ignoring local, indigenous, and community-based knowledge sources” (Heilig et al., 2014, as cited in Gist, 2017, p. 951). The pushing out of Black teachers sent the message that school was not the space for Black knowledge or Black bodies in positions of authority (Fairclough, 2007).

The post-Brown era both changed the educational landscape for Black teachers and saw the persistence of inequitable educational access and outcomes for Black students (Siddle-Walker, 2015). In response, reform efforts in the 1970s and 1980s began to develop programs that recognized the growing racial mismatch between white teachers and K-12 students (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012) and the subsequent need to recruit and retain teachers of color (Ogletree, 2004, as cited in Haddix, 2017; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012). While some national and state programs exist today to recruit teachers of color (Haddix, 2017; Irizarry, 2007), the majority of initiatives continue to recruit candidates at elite PWIs for alternate certification programs (e.g., Teach for America) that temporarily place them as solutions to the shortage of high-quality teachers in urban schools (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Sleeter, 2017). As post-Brown efforts remain committed to preserving the status quo of majority white teachers, teachers of color continue to be pushed out of urban schools and/or essentialized as “necessary role models for K-12 students of color, but not as potentially effective pedagogues” (Brown, 2014, p. 338), even though today’s K-12 public schools are still de facto segregated by race and inherently unequal.
The K-12 achievement gap has consequences for access to higher education. State test scores, however culturally biased, not only act as gatekeepers to college admission; they also might indicate areas of academic content that professors at many colleges—including MSIs—will expect students to have mastered. Lower scores on state exams—that are disproportionately earned by students of color (Aud et al., 2010)—might indicate insufficient access to learning some of this academic content. This might partially explain why Yasmeen was struggling academically at ECU. The achievement gap persists in higher education, as the majority of university graduates in the United States are still white (Flores & Park, 2014; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Sleeter, 2017), even though more students of color are enrolling in institutions of higher education (Conrad, 2015; Flores & Park, 2013; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; Raines, 1998). Furthermore, alongside a racial wealth gap that is reified within higher education (Kendi, 2019), the majority of white students attend PwIs (Renner, 1998, as cited in Jones et al., 2002), while approximately 45% of students of color in higher education attend community colleges and approximately 40% attend MSIs (Blake, 2017; Carter & Wilson, 1995, as cited in Irizarry, 2007, and Jones et al., 2002; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005).

This de facto segregation is legitimized by the underperformance of students like Yasmeen, even though her “lack” of academic skills can be traced to a post-Brown context that continues to push out the teachers of color who might have more successfully prepared her for college at any type of institution. Attributing the achievement gap in K-12 and higher education to the individual efforts and merits of students of color, without examining the exclusionary context in which they are situated, also supports racist policy decisions, such as recent repeals of affirmative action (Irizarry, 2011; Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999), that do little to remedy the unwelcoming and hostile environment for students of color at 4-year PwIs. In this inherently
unequal post-\textit{Brown} era that continues to exclude students of color, MSIs are especially important as they might be the few higher education spaces that have the potential to graduate teachers of color. Put differently, ECU might have been the only higher education option for Yasmeen, especially if she attended an under-resourced school.

\textbf{“Highly Qualified” Teachers, “Effective Teachers,” and Teachers of Color}

The persistence of the post-\textit{Brown} achievement gap and the continued exclusion of teachers of color from the majority of urban school recruitment and policy decisions allow the skills in which white teachers more often excel to remain at the center of what it means to be highly qualified educators. As No Child Left Behind (2001) ushered in an era of high accountability, scores on standardized licensure exams became the predominant measure to determine preservice teacher quality (Irizarry, 2007; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Sleeter, 2017). Even though white preservice candidates tend to score higher (Irizarry, 2011), there is little evidence to indicate that these exams can predict teacher effectiveness (Irizarry, 2007, 2011; Sleeter, 2017). Measures valued by students and parents of color, such as establishing relationships with families and enacting culturally responsive pedagogy, are rarely prioritized in definitions of high-quality teaching (Sleeter, 2017), even though they are more effective at addressing dropout rates and making school relevant for students in urban schools (Irizarry, 2011; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Siddle-Walker, 2015).

Furthermore, some states mandate that teacher education programs have a minimum 80% passing rate on these exams to stay accredited. As a result, some programs are requiring that students pass these \textit{exit} exams \textit{before} they enter their programs and start their upper-level coursework and field placements (e.g., Bennett et al., 2006; Graham, 2013). Grade point average and other indicators that might demonstrate teacher potential cannot be the sole considerations
for admission to these teacher education programs (Irizarry, 2007, 2011), which can usher in feelings of frustration for historically marginalized students: “It was completely unfair. We had to take a test on information we didn’t even learn yet” (Irizarry, 2011, p. 2823). This policy disproportionately affects students of color, who are more likely to score lower or fail these exams (Irizarry, 2007, 2011; King & Butler, 2015; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012), given that they are often developed from Eurocentric content standards. For example, California’s history exam did not have one question about African studies, thereby excluding the knowledge of candidates of color who may choose this as a major to learn about a history that might have been excluded from their K-12 curriculum (Kohli, 2014). Based on her performance in my course, Yasmeen’s chances of passing the test were low. Even if her potential to be an effective teacher could be realized with the right supports, she in all likelihood would not be admitted into the program.

Biased definitions of teacher qualifications affect not only the recruitment but also the retention of teachers of color. Once admitted to the teaching profession, preservice candidates who excel in pedagogical strategies developed and reinforced by white practitioners are more likely to be perceived as effective. For example, many (predominantly white) principals at pay-for-performance urban charter schools give high ratings to teachers who use strategies from Teach Like a Champion (2010) by Doug Lemov (a white man), even though it could be argued that these strategies are another reincarnation of the disciplinary methods used to control students of color since their inclusion in formal education (Anderson, 1988; Du Bois, 1903; Ogbu, 2011). As teachers of color are more likely to question (white) principals’ commitments to antiracist education (Carr & Klassen, 1997), they might be less likely to engage in these practices encouraged by their school’s leadership, even if those practices position them as “highly qualified” and/or “effective.” Thus, even if Yasmeen receives academic support, passes the
licensure exams, and learns how to translate her experiences of marginalization into equitable pedagogical practice, her principal may not interpret her pedagogy as effective if it is not aligned with white norms (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012; Sleeter, 2017), especially since much of the research on “effective” teacher “qualities” and “practices” has been conducted by white scholars (e.g., Cullingford, 1995; Marshall, 2016; Stronge, 2018; Stronge et al., 2004). As the most common factors pushing teachers of color out of K-12 schools are administrative/institutional concerns (Gist, 2017) and “hostile racial climates” (Kohli, 2018, p. 314), rather than difficulties with students, parents, and/or delivering instruction, Yasmeen’s less effective status could prematurely push her out of the profession, thereby reigniting the call for more teachers of color.

Teacher education reform efforts around the importance of meeting the needs of diverse K-12 students perpetuate conflicting messages of the need to increase both diversity and selectivity in the teaching force (Cochran-Smith, 2016). Selectivity, by definition, means narrowing the scope of who can be an effective teacher. Diverse candidates, then, are welcome into teaching to the extent that they can meet the selective standards set by predominantly white practitioners and policymakers in teacher education—or, put differently, to the extent that they can be less diverse. This simultaneous call for teachers of color/diversifying the teaching force and the continued recruitment of elite educated white teachers to work in urban schools (King & Butler, 2015) positions teachers of color as less qualified, reinscribing a binary between “highly qualified” teachers and teachers of color. This binary helps sustain the continued focus on teachers of color as good role models rather than as effective educators.

In this regard, the call to diversify the K-12 teaching force is misguided since it is based on simply ensuring the larger presence, or number, of teachers of color. The continued focus on numbers and diminishing investment in preparation, however, has potentially disastrous
consequences. If the call for more teachers of color is not successful and students of color continue to be underrepresented in teacher education programs, the underachievement of K-12 students of color that is likely to persist in the current system will still be attributed to a lack of teachers of color. If the call is successful and the turnover rate for teachers of color improves, then teachers of color will be held disproportionately responsible for the academic achievement of K-12 students of color (Haddix, 2017). We must strike a careful balance, then, between recognizing the importance of teachers of color in designing preparation curricula, while also making sure that the onus to complete teacher preparation programs and raise the achievement of students of color does not fall squarely on their shoulders (Brown, 2014; Haddix, 2017).

The Consequences of Current Diversity Curricula for Preservice Teachers of Color

As history and policy continue to support the widening of the “demographic gap between who becomes a teacher and the children who attend urban schools” (Bales & Saffold, 2011, p. 968), teacher education curricula continue to be designed for white women attending PWIs who have not experienced the structural inequities faced by urban K-12 and college students of color (Bales & Saffold, 2011; Morrell, 2010; Sleeter, 2001). Without these experiences, they are more likely to enact pedagogy consistent with white, middle-class culture (Brown, 2002, as cited in Waddell, 2014; King & Butler, 2015). It would seem, then, that teacher education has been tasked with the work of preparing this assumed homogeneous white female population to better understand cultural differences (Sleeter, 2001) and address diversity “issues” (Knight, 2002; Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999). Diversity curricula, then, include texts and experiences that teacher educators use to: unpack strategies related to the equitable teaching of “different,” “diverse,” or marginalized students (e.g., Mensah, 2013; Ukpokodu, 2003); help preservice teachers explore their own attitudes, beliefs, and identities in relation to their prospective
(diverse) students (e.g., Amatea et al., 2012; Gay, 2010); and engage in conversations about how teaching can be an act of social justice (e.g., Baldwin et al., 2007; Whipp, 2013).

Placing all white women into a uniform “unprepared urban teacher” category is certainly problematic, especially given that some white women do not attend and/or are not recruited from elite PwIs. Yet, dwelling on this issue and providing counternarratives of white women teachers outside of this category could be understood as a way of maintaining the status quo that white teachers are still more qualified and/or more effective. It also leaves unexplored the narratives of teachers of color and their diverse experiences both within and outside the category of “unprepared urban teacher.” I focused my study, therefore, on the consequences of utilizing curricula that assume preservice teacher candidates are white women attending PwIs. This focus is relevant in thinking about Yasmeen’s preparation, as even some programs with more racially diverse candidates normalize white culture and teach to this assumed preservice teacher candidate (Kohli, 2009).

This assumption results in particular learning objectives and activities in teacher education courses. For example, engaging in the work of unlearning postracial ideology might be very useful for white, middle-class women; however, teachers of color need a different approach that both centers their experiences and leaves space that does not assume they are experts on the topic (Jackson & Knight-Manuel, 2018). Teacher education programs at PwIs have yet to consider that “preparing white teachers and teachers of color to enter communities of color cannot look the same” (Kohli, 2009, p. 237). As the focus on white teachers persists—especially when teaching race-related content (Matias, 2016, as cited in Sleeter, 2017)—there is not yet a consensus, or even enough research, on how this training for teachers of color is supposed to be enacted, especially at PwIs (Jackson, 2015). It is not surprising, then, that students of color feel
that their teacher preparation programs are neither effectively teaching them how to work with
diverse student populations nor preparing them to engage in authentic social justice work
(Brown, 2014; Irizarry, 2011; Jackson, 2015). As a preservice teacher of color and co-author of
Tolbert and Eichelberger’s (2016) study put it:

Through different conversations in class, it became clear the program wasn’t so much
about how to teach social justice, just the buzzwords you need to know when asked about
it, and that true social justice programs were too radical for this institution. (p. 1033)

Focusing on the needs of white women teachers also situates diversity in a context in
which it is often discussed only on racial and/or ethnic terms (Montecinos, 1994, as cited in
Knight, 2002). Not only does this neglect the preparation of teachers of color (Jones et al., 2002;
Kohli, 2009; Morrell, 2010), but it also insufficiently prepares teachers of all backgrounds to
teach diverse populations of students (Bales & Saffold, 2011; King & Butler, 2015; Pabon et al.,
2011, as cited in Goings et al., 2018). While racism permeates all aspects of society (Alexander,
2010; Bell, 1992; Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Lipsitz, 1998; Tatum, 1997/2017), including schools
Tate, 1995), this unidirectional focus can potentially discount the “multiple grounds of identity”
(Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1245) that construct the social world. Diversity curricula that perpetuate a
partial, rather than intersectional, understanding of difference might leave teachers unequipped to
respond to students who traverse multiple systems of oppression. For example, simultaneously
utilizing the lenses of both race and dis/ability can better respond to intersectional, less often
addressed, consequences of racial disproportionality in special education such as: the
socioeconomic disparities in special education services that are more likely to impact students of
color (Baines, 2014; Harry & Klingner, 2006); the cultural differences that are still downplayed
in special education literature (Connor et al., 2019; Ferri & Connor, 2006); the achievement gap
between disabled African American students and disabled white students across both low and high incidence special education categories (Blanchett, 2006); the better treatment that white students with the same disability label as a student of color receive in school (Annamma et al., 2013; Blanchett et al., 2009; Valle & Connor, 2011); and the fact that “Black students with dis/abilities are positioned differently than white students with a disability and Black students without a disability” (Banks, 2017, as cited Annamma et al., 2018, p. 57).

**Statement of the Problem**

Despite the resounding call for more teachers of color in urban schools, the majority of the teaching force remains white women. The exclusion of teachers of color is legitimized and normalized by the past and present consequences of *Brown v. Board* (e.g., Brown, 2014; Kohli, 2018; Sleeter, 2017). As students, preservice teachers of color are less likely to have access to quality K-12 schooling that would grant them entry into college and/or into a teacher preparation program, in part because their own teachers were likely white women who might not have known how to raise student achievement and/or prepare them for the academic expectations/content standards of higher education. Policymakers’ and practitioners’ responses to this continued achievement gap have only maintained the current status quo: “highly qualified” candidates excel in racially biased measures of knowledge (i.e., licensure exams), and “effective” educators excel in teaching techniques valued by white practitioners and administrators.

Prior work has responded to the exclusion of candidates of color by focusing on the unjust treatment of college students of color at PwIs (e.g., Bower-Phipps et al., 2013; Haddix, 2017; Jackson, 2015; Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999; Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016). In addition to overt acts of racism (Irizarry, 2011; Jones et al., 2002), many candidates are pushed out of the profession by the whiteness of teacher education (Sleeter, 2017), or the ways in which
policies and practices that promote the knowledge and interests of white people remain unquestioned, normalized aspects of teacher preparation. At PwIs, it might be harder to push against whiteness because students and faculty of color—who unjustly are more likely to carry the burden of educating others about racism (DuBois, 1903)—are outnumbered.

In contrast, many scholars frame MSIs as “equity-oriented institutions” (Blake, 2017), or those that prioritize college access, support, and opportunities for “first generation, low-income, and racially underrepresented students” (p. 25) to graduate with degrees and move up the socioeconomic ladder. At MSIs, it may be more necessary to push against racism and whiteness because these systems and ideologies adversely affect many of their students and faculty. Yet, there is scant literature that examines how this is actually being accomplished. The literature highlights the inputs (e.g., culturally relevant curriculum, support services, mentoring services, lower financial costs) and outputs (e.g., higher graduation rates, a welcoming environment/community) of MSIs more broadly (Conrad, 2014, 2015; John & Stage, 2014; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Raines, 1998) and of HSIs in particular (Garcia et al., 2019). Yet, the processes behind these products—the nuanced, personal accounts of the ways in which students and faculty in schools of education at MSIs and HSIs shape their particular contexts—remain largely unknown. This may be because, in exploring these processes, students and faculty of color may carry a burden of “racial awareness” (Bell, 1992, p. 3) that their experiences—especially negative ones—will be attributed solely to their race and/or ethnicity. With caution, then, this study explored this gap to challenge an assumption upon which it rests: given the more equitable inputs and outputs at these racially diverse institutions, preservice teachers of color will automatically have increased opportunities to learn about teaching diverse
K-12 students, even in the absence of intentional, deliberate practices and policies focused on the preparation of teachers of color at MSIs (and HSIs in particular).

In the absence of this focus, policies and practices regarding diversity are still largely informed by white norms and produce certain consequences (Gist, 2017; Sleeter, 2017). One such practice is through diversity curricula that continue to assume a universalized white teacher candidate who had access to quality K-12 schooling, does not understand her privilege in relation to her prospective students, and attends a PwI. This is problematic because not all teacher candidates are white; not all teacher candidates have access to quality K-12 schooling; not all teacher candidates attend PwIs; and not all teacher candidates of color share one, singular experience as members of a “diverse” and/or marginalized community that in and of itself prepares them to teach sufficiently in urban schools. This study sought to address these problems by centering the voices of minoritized students and faculty, exploring the potential of HSIs to better negotiate barriers toward the recruitment and retention of teachers of color, and utilizing an intersectional lens that moves the field of teacher education beyond the premise that diversity equals racial difference.

**Rationale**

This study was driven by a more expansive notion of diversity that interrogates the whiteness of higher education and teacher preparation. In addition to problematizing the assumed preservice teacher candidate, conducting this study in the MSI/HSI context also problematized the assumed place and space of teacher education. Using an intersectional framework—Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education (DisCrit)—to examine this space problematized unidimensional understandings of race and racism that contribute to the marginalization and essentialization of preservice teachers of color.
The Case for MSIs/HSIs

PwIs continue to be exclusionary spaces for students of color who lack “financial…, academic…, social…, [and] professional support” services (Irizarry, 2007, p. 99) that address their unique needs (Jackson, 2015; Kohli, 2009). While some evidence suggests that experiences for students of color at PwIs are improving, the gains are marginal (Jones et al., 2002). The majority (70%) of Black students in these spaces do not graduate, and research suggests the social—not academic—environment is a stronger influence on this high attrition rate (Davis et al., 2004, as cited in Waddell, 2014).

Part of this social environment might be a combination of a lack of faculty of color (Jones et al., 2002; Sleeter, 2017; Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999) and (predominantly white) faculty who do not know how to enact and/or teach using culturally responsive pedagogy (Jackson, 2015), stereotype and hold “different expectations” for students of color (Jones et al., 2002, p. 31), and/or do not “recognize students’ differences” (Bower-Phipps et al., 2013, p. 36). Students of color at PwIs have reported that while administrators and faculty speak of the importance of diversity, they have little experience and/or have made minimal effort to cultivate culturally responsive campus and classroom environments (Jackson, 2015; Jones et al., 2002). Additionally, they also reported that in their courses, professors either ignore them completely, treating them as if they are “invisible” (Irizarry, 2011, p. 2818), or essentialize them as diversity experts who can speak on behalf of all members of a particular marginalized group (Irizarry, 2011; Jones et al., 2002).

Doing “well” in programs that do not make a deep commitment to diversity for students of color often means setting aside identities, experiences, and perspectives that challenge racism and whiteness (Haddix 2010, as cited in Haddix, 2017; Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016). Students
of color reported that their point of view is often silenced, especially when they challenge deficit
testing and stereotypes of communities of color (Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016). Given the
discomfort exhibited by some white professors and white students when talking about race and
racism, it is hardly surprising that students of color at PwIs also reported a sense of hostility
and/or isolation from white students and staff (Goings et al., 2018; Irizarry, 2011; Jones et al.,
2002). Unless (predominantly white) institutions of higher education are responsive to the needs
and experiences of all their students, preservice teachers of color are likely to continue reporting
that they are there “to increase the minority population, but...only for statistics and not... [their
own] well-being” (Jackson, 2015, p. 231).

When the attendance of students of color is an issue of interest convergence (Bell,
1980)—or a way of meeting the needs of white students by exposing them to “diverse” students
and the interests of the university in promoting its reputation as an equitable institution—it might
seem that diversity education has been “achieved” when minority attendance increases at PwIs.
Giving their attention to helping white students understand diversity, (white) faculty might also
assume that all preservice teachers of color intuitively know how to translate their experiences
with racism into equitable pedagogical practice (Brown, 2014; Jackson, 2015; Kohli, 2009),
while also essentializing them as good role models for students of color because of their race
(Brown, 2014). Even if these possibilities are rooted in good intentions of trying to recognize and
value the experiences of students of color, they also deny them a meaningful education.

One important set of experiences that is ignored—in examining both the barriers
preservice teachers of color face in teacher education and diversity curricula—is that many
preservice teachers of color attend MSIs, in part to avoid some of the negative experiences at
PwIs (Goings et al., 2018). In fact, HSIs in particular enroll not only large numbers of Hispanic
students, but also more Black and Native American students than Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) (Núñez et al., 2015), rendering them important sites in the conversation on racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force. The lack of literature on how MSIs and HSIs prepare teachers of color reflects an overall pattern of the low representation of MSIs (Flores & Park, 2013; Raines, 1998) and of HSIs (Núñez & Bowers, 2011) in higher education research. This might be because MSIs and HSIs are often considered inferior to PwIs (Gasman et al., 2015; Raines, 1998), despite measures that indicate they have remained “on par with traditional (white) institutions” (Flores & Park, 2014, p. 266), especially when they are more appropriately and fairly compared to PwIs and HwCUs (Historically white Colleges and Universities) of similar means and resources (Kendi, 2019). Such perceptions of inferiority can lead to and legitimize what Kendi (2019) referred to as “space racism,” or a “collection of racist policies that lead to resource inequity between racialized spaces or the elimination of racialized spaces, which are substantiated by racist ideas about racialized spaces” (p. 166). In order to combat this “space racism” toward the HSI context specifically, scholars have worked to provide nuanced and multidimensional understandings of: “servingness” beyond institutional missions statements, thus complicating PwI-HSI and Hispanic-serving/Hispanic-enrolling binaries (Garcia et al., 2019); the diversity that exists among HSIs (Núñez & Elizondo, 2015; Núñez et al., 2016); and conducting research and examining and enacting practice at HSIs through a transformative lens (Núñez et al., 2015).

When examining the experiences of preservice teachers of color, the continued focus on PwIs leaves unexplored how teacher educators and students at MSIs/HSIs negotiate exclusionary policies and practices currently embedded in the field of teacher education. MSIs/HSIs might be the forgotten spaces in higher education that can better meet the needs of postsecondary students
of color; however, it is problematic to assume that the presence of more preservice teachers of

color in and of itself is enough to combat policies and practices that work to maintain the status

quo of the majority white K-12 teaching force. For example, like at other institutions of higher

education, teacher educators and administrators at MSIs/HSIs might have to support

exclusionary practices—such as requiring students to take licensure exams as entry exams for

program admission, even though they act as barriers for Hispanic and Black students (Bennett et

al., 2006)—in order to stay accredited and/or preservice the rigor of their programs (Bennett et

al., 2006; Graham, 2013), especially if they are public institutions that are “especially susceptible
to the influence of public policies and state resource allocation” (Núñez et al., 2016, p.75). Yet,
support of these practices might also do little to encourage teachers and graduates of MSIs/HSIs
to transform the educational system that continues to underserve students K-12 and college

students of color.

Furthermore, some research has suggested a possible relationship between college

context and how students make sense of exclusionary licensure exams and teacher preparation

program admissions requirements. For example, while many students of color in Bennett et al.’s

(2006) study at a PwI in the Midwest believed the Praxis was culturally biased—aligning with

my earlier analysis of California’s history exam—Graham (2013) found that Black students at a

Historically Black University in North Carolina did not feel this way and instead attributed

higher scores to access to resources. Regarding the HSI college context specifically, students

who chose to enroll in 4-year HSIs (which were the focus of this study) tended to be less

academically prepared and to come from high schools that are less oriented toward a college-
going culture (Núñez & Bowers, 2011). Given the relationship between a high-quality K-12

education and difficulty with Praxis test questions (Bennett et al., 2006), students at HSIs may
have more difficulty with the *Praxis* or other licensure exams. Additionally, HSIs may differ from each other, in terms of trends around students’ experiences with licensure exams and being admitted to a teacher preparation program, given the diversity across HSIs as a whole (Núñez et al., 2016) and within 4-year HSIs in particular (Núñez & Elizondo, 2015).

**The Case for Intersectionality**

Even though MSIs have made racial difference central to cultivating a diverse student community, race is not the only lens through which diversity is foregrounded in these spaces. An MSI designation by itself does little to indicate the demographics of the student population. HSIs in particular may have a majority white population, others might be racially diverse, and still others might have a high proportion of a single ethnic minority (Liu & Liu, 2012). Race, then, cannot be the only way through which MSIs and HSIs make a commitment to diversity, especially given the combination of the other possible experiences these students might bring—namely, membership in low-income families and/or as first-generation college students, admission through open enrollment, representation of undeserved geographic areas; moreover, they are more likely to fit the profile of nontraditional students (age 24 or above, financially independent, working full-time, single parents, and/or or part-time students) (Benítez, 1998; Conrad, 2015; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998).

While students of color may not carry the extra burden of educating their peers and sometimes faculty on issues of (racial) diversity (Blake, 2017; Irizarry, 2011) at MSIs and HSIs, the ways in which students and faculty in these spaces negotiate the understanding that “students of color” are not a homogenized, universal group are largely unknown. The experiences of students of color are constructed through other axes of difference that, in turn, affect their unique lived realities as people of color. A gay Black cisgender woman born in the United States and a
straight Latino cisgender man born in South America will have different understandings of social justice and what it means to be a “person of color” in the United States. Moreover, being a person of color does not automatically mean that one is (interested in) working toward racial equity (Herndon, 2019; Kendi, 2019). Yet, as neither of these candidates is currently the assumed audience of teacher education curricula, diversity efforts continue to focus on a unidirectional understanding of race and racism, thereby perpetuating only partial understandings of subjectivity and systems of oppression.

While forefronting race in discussing school experiences rightly prioritizes the historical and present inequities faced by students of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), this discussion can also, potentially, “conflate or ignore intragroup differences” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1242) within specific racial groups, rendering an incomplete understanding of how students are being positioned in both K-12 settings and higher education. Throughout this study, I responded to the importance of using an intersectional lens when examining diversity (Collins, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991) by utilizing Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education (DisCrit) (Annamma et al., 2013). Understanding racism and ableism as “normalizing processes,” this intersectional framework theorizes difference at the mutual construction of race and dis/ability, such that “race does not exist outside of ability and ability does not exist outside of race” (p. 6). For example, the practice of eugenics was first utilized “to improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations either physically or mentally” (Galton, 1883, as cited in Ladson-Billings, 2012, p. 116). Racial difference became deficit through dis/ability (Kendi, 2019). Put differently, “without racialized notions of ability, racial difference would simply be racial difference” (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 15). Similarly, dis/ability became deficit through its association with race, or as Baynton (2001) wrote: “only disability might lower a white person…to the level of a
being of a marked race” (p. 38). Thus, any examination of racism must also take into account ableism, and any account of ableism must also take into account racism. Relatedly, intersectionality from a critical race feminist of color perspective (Collins, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991) necessitates studying identity in relation to power and privilege. Thus, from this critical perspective, any examination of diversity in teacher education should be situated within working toward equity and social justice for historically and multiply marginalized students and communities (e.g., Bennett et al., 2019; Knight, 2004; Noddings, 2005; Philip et al., 2019; Roberts, 2010; Rowan et al., 2021).

Using DisCrit offers multiple affordances for examining the experiences of a student like Yasmeen and what a robust diversity education should entail. Disability Studies in Education (DSE) would conceptualize Yasmeen’s low academic achievement as constructed through problematic school environments that may not grant her access to the curriculum, rather than a result of an individual cognitive deficit (e.g., Harry & Klingner, 2006). Critical race theory (CRT) would emphasize that casting Yasmeen as academically deficient, or unable, legitimizes possible exclusionary acts of racism, such as denying her admission into a teacher preparation program, even if such exclusion is not intentional (Bennett et al., 2006). Furthermore, like CRT (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002b), DisCrit also acknowledges that other social locations, such as gender and class, “contribute to constructing dis/ability” (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 12). Put differently, DisCrit does not focus on race and disability to the exclusion of other markers of identity, such as gender and class (Annamma et al., 2013; Gillborn et al., 2016). In using DisCrit, I worked to leave space to consider additional categories of difference with the understanding that it is nearly “[impossible] [to] do justice to every possible intersectional dynamic” (Gillborn et al., 2016, p. 36). Thus, DisCrit would unravel how neither racism, nor ableism, nor other
systems of oppression in isolation can explain Yasmeen’s 60% average in my course. Rather, these systems of oppression construct and sustain each other.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

Given that little is known about how MSIs and HSIs are preparing preservice teachers of color, this study sought to explore how teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs are working against barriers that historically have excluded candidates of color and how teacher educators in elementary and secondary education programs at two 4-year public HSIs are addressing diversity in their courses. Research has suggested that students of color have experienced marginalization and discrimination on campus, in the classroom, and in institutional policies (e.g., Irizarry, 2011), and that diversity is insufficiently threaded throughout entire teacher education curricula (e.g., Miller & Mikulec, 2014; Milner, 2010; Whipp, 2013); however, the majority of these studies have been conducted at PwIs and/or with white preservice teachers in mind (e.g., Juarez et al., 2008). Furthermore, even though DisCrit conceptualizes the mutual construction of race and dis/ability, “diversity” in teacher education has generally foregrounded race (e.g., Bales & Saffold, 2011; Morrell, 2010), despite the overlap in the strategies used to prepare teachers for (racially) diverse K-12 students and for including students with disabilities, such as the importance of positive beliefs, attitudes, and non-deficit thinking (e.g. Baldwin et al., 2007; Berube, 1996; Ferguson, 1995; McHatton et al., 2009). Additionally, “diversity” has remained in the field of general education and dis/ability (and subsequent color-evasion) has remained in the domain of special education (Connor et al., 2019), despite the fact that today’s K-12 classrooms have more racially diverse students (Cochran-Smith, 2016; Milner, 2010; Sullivan & Artiles, 2011) and more students with disabilities (Danforth, 2017) than ever before.
My research questions took into account the current landscapes of serving students of color in higher education and of diversity curricula in preparing teachers of color. My first question derived from an interest in the affordances and limitations of the HSI context in racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force. Within this question, I explored how teacher preparation programs, at the institutional level, responded to barriers that have historically excluded candidates of color from (i.e., state licensure exams) and how professors, at the classroom level, utilized the promise and potential of HSIs to negotiate the marginalization and exclusion that preservice teachers of color have experienced at PwIs. Responding to the fact that the majority of college graduates are still white (Flores & Park, 2014; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Sleeter, 2017) and that many students who enroll in 4-year HSIs are (academically) underserved as K-12 students (Núñez & Bowers, 2011), my second question derived from an interest in how professors are teaching their students about diversity. Specifically, in unpacking the professors’ instruction, I utilized the lens of inclusive pedagogy, or how they take up a stance in which they are constantly working to remove barriers to students’ learning and to make instruction accessible (e.g., Danforth, 2017; Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014; Tobin, 2007), not only for disabled students but for any student who is marginalized by the ability structures of schooling (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014; Florian et al., 2010; Hart et al., 2007). My third research question derived from an interest in how professors are preparing their students for the increasing racial, ethnic, and ability diversity of today’s K-12 classrooms. With this question, I used the concept of dis/ability to think not only about whether people with disabilities were included in diversity curricula, but also how notions problematized by Disability Studies/in Education (DS/E)—such as normality, capacity, and autonomy—were utilized in their thinking about other marginalized and/or diverse groups of people (Erevelles, 2005). Additionally, this question was
guided by a critical race feminist of color perspective (Collins, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991) (stated earlier) of the importance of studying identity in relation to larger systems of power, privilege, and inequity. In exploring these ideas, I designed a qualitative study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) guided by DSE (e.g., Connor et al., 2008), CRT (e.g., Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, 2002a, 2002b), and DisCrit (Annamma et al., 2013, 2018) methodologies that seek to better understand the lived realities of people who, historically, have been marginalized by positivist methodologies (Harding, 2006) and to situate their narratives within larger systems of inequity.

The following questions guided this study:

1. How are teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs working toward racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force?
   a. How do teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs account for, and respond to, barriers that have traditionally excluded preservice candidates of color from the profession?
   b. How do two professors at two 4-year public HSIs consider the marginalization and/or essentialization of students of color in coursework related to diversity?

2. When teaching preservice teachers of color, how do two teacher educators at two 4-year public HSIs address the diversity of student abilities in their teacher education courses?

3. When teaching about diversity, how do two teacher educators at two 4-year public HSIs engage with the concept of dis/ability as it intersects with race and other categories of difference?

**Significance**
While more educators at PwIs are recognizing the importance of MSIs and how they can inform efforts at equitable education (Conrad, 2014), I carefully grounded this work in the importance of the space and the participants and not for the benefit of informing white educators’ understandings of diversity. This work was also not meant to reinforce the burden that people of color and other minoritized groups often bear when it comes to dismantling systems of power and oppression. Instead, this study enriches the literature on what it means to teach for equity and social justice by focusing intersectionally on participants in a space—students and faculty (of color) at HSIs—and on a social location of difference—dis/ability—that are often neglected in discussions of diversity in teacher education.

Conducting this study at two 4-year public HSIs was important because racially diverse MSIs are “likely to grow in importance…and will further challenge our capacity to sort institutions into neat [racial] categories” (Merisotis & O’Brien, 1998, p. 2). Additionally, few studies in the literature have addressed the role of HSIs in the broader MSI community (Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005). Examining two 4-year public HSIs showed the strengths within the specific context of each individual teacher preparation program, while also suggesting how the HSI/MSI label impacts the work of teacher educators across institutions of higher education (Gasman et al., 2015). Making this connection in a nuanced way informs thinking on how MSIs can stay united, rather than letting their “rich and diverse, yet intermingled histories” (p. 136) divide them, when facing similar challenges such as all being institutions in need of funding for low-income students (Raines, 1998). Furthermore, this study could be utilized as another piece of data that MSIs and/or HSIs can use as they try to secure more resources, given the increased pressure under which they must prove they are improving student outcomes (Watson, 2015).
Racially diverse spaces might provide new avenues for thinking about difference in a way that moves the field from the placement of teachers of color to their preparation; however, an intersectional framework helps to better realize this possibility. While the under-theorization of race in teacher education (Milner et al., 2013, as cited in Sleeter, 2017) has encouraged scholarship that purposely applies CRT to the field, using DisCrit expands this theorization of race in teacher education and in higher education overall to generate more robust understandings of diversity and difference for the benefit of those whose differences have been characterized as deficits. DisCrit is an essential framework for problematizing students’ academic abilities as fixed and the notion of “needs,” thereby helping us understand the system that “disables” teachers and students of color. Furthermore, this study responded to the call to expand DisCrit and use it to inform scholarship topics outside of special education (Annamma et al., 2018).

Finally, the call for more teachers of color currently presents a paradox in educational policy: Teachers of color are needed to address the diverse needs of K-12 students, but the fact that white faculty members may be less able to address the diverse needs of college students goes untouched (Jackson, 2015; Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999). Grounded in the voices of faculty of color and from other historically marginalized backgrounds, this study addressed this inconsistency and can help teacher educators of all races reflect on their own stances toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice and the ways in which their stances influence their praxis. This reflexivity can better prepare a student like Yasmeen and position her as a highly qualified teacher in an urban school.
Chapter 2

A DISCRIT REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON PREPARING TEACHERS (OF COLOR) FOR DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS

At the latest count, there are “253 MSIs with schools of education” (Will, 2017, p. 6) that remain excluded from the conversation on how to prepare teachers for diverse K-12 student populations. This exclusion results in curricular objectives that continue to neglect dis/ability as foundational to understanding diversity, despite the assertion of DisCrit scholars that “[d]isability, like race, offers [more than] just a ‘nuance’ to any analysis of difference” (Erevelles & Minear, 2010, p. 128). In this chapter, I work to show how the ways dis/ability and race work together to uphold notions of normalcy in discourses of difference, equity, and/or social justice have implications for both the content and pedagogy of education coursework addressing diversity at HSIs and MSIs more broadly.

I start by developing the theoretical lenses that informed my understanding of the research inquiry. First, I discuss aspects of Disability Studies/in Education (DS/E) and Critical Race Theory/in Education (CRT/in Education) that informed my thinking about preparing teachers of color at MSIs for diverse K-12 populations. Grounded in the work of critical race feminists of color who asserted the importance of intersectionality (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Lorde, 1984/2007/2016), I then connect these aspects of DS/E and CRT/in Education to the tenets of Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education (DisCrit). Next, I explain the affordances of DisCrit in reimagining solutions to current educational inequities in both K-12 and higher education. Finally, I utilize DS/E, CRT/in Education, and DisCrit to review and examine the underlying assumptions of the empirical literature on how professors are preparing
teachers for diverse K-12 populations. I conclude this part of the chapter by reviewing the small body of literature on teacher preparation programs at MSIs.

**Theoretical Framework**

I understand schools and society to be inherently linked, or what happens in society is (re)produced in schools. Therefore, while Disability Studies (DS) and Disability Studies in Education (DSE) are two separate academic fields, I discuss them together (DS/E) to show the parallels between ableism in society and ableism in school. Similarly, I discuss Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Critical Race Theory in Education (CRT in Education) together (CRT/in Education) to show the parallels between racism in society and racism in school. Acknowledging these parallels also reifies that DisCrit can and should be applied to both in- and out-of-school contexts. I finish by bringing DS/E and CRT/in Education together in my discussion of DisCrit.

**Disability Studies/in Education**

In conceptualizing subjectivity and difference, DisCrit draws from DS and DSE. DS is a dynamic, interdisciplinary field (Ferguson & Nusbaum, 2012; McRuer, 2006) that conceptualizes disability as a “social and political category” (Ferguson & Nusbaum, 2012, p. 76). A “deliberately evolving field” (Connor et al., 2008, p. 448) guided by “a practical concern with schooling practices” (Taylor, 2006, p. xix), DSE scholars utilize diverse theoretical approaches (Broderick, 2010; Taylor, 2006) to push actively against the ways in which even critical approaches to pedagogy and curriculum marginalize dis/ability (Broderick, 2010) and work to normalize/homogenize students (Erevelles, 2005). Both DS and DSE (DS/E) privilege the voices and experiences of people with disabilities and understand that, taken collectively, they constitute a minority group (Erevelles, 2005; Hahn, 1998; Siebers, 2008, 2013). What follows are aspects of DS/E that informed my thinking about the preparation of teachers of color.
at MSIs. Specifically, I discuss the social construction of disability, how dis/ability is at the center of what it means to be normal, and how ableism is sustained in schools and in society.

**The Social Construction of Dis/ability**

DS/E provides models, or ways of thinking, that push against the medicalized idea that disability is an individual defect in need of diagnosis and remediation (Ferguson & Nusbaum, 2012; Siebers, 2008). One relevant and prominent model that informs DS/E is the social model of disability (Connor et al., 2008). In this model, disability is another socially constructed facet of human diversity (Connor, 2013; Connor et al., 2008) like race, gender, and other social locations. Instead of trying to “fix” people with disabilities, DS/E problematizes the social contexts that disable an individual—e.g., deficit attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and policies—as well as physical buildings and structures that exclude people with disabilities (Ferguson & Nusbaum, 2012; Siebers, 2008). For example, the medical model would understand a person using a wheelchair as disabled by their individual, limited mobility. The social model, however, might argue that a person using a wheelchair is disabled by inaccessible environments that lack ramps and/or elevators. The way in which a person using a wheelchair walks/moves through the world is considered part of who they are, rather than something that is “wrong” with them. The social model emphasizes that the experience of being labelled disabled is often more impactful—and the conditions that follow that labelling more oppressive—than specific biological differences that mark someone as impaired (Baines, 2014; Broderick, 2010; Linton, 1998; May & Ferri, 2005; Thomson, 1997).

Given that the majority (85%) of students in special education have school-based, high-incidence, subjective disabilities with vague diagnostic criteria—such as learning disability (Baglieri et al., 2011; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Valle & Connor, 2011)—DS/E scholars prioritize
using the social model. Additionally, an uptake in a particular disability label might be more a reflection of social conditions than an increase in specific biological traits. For example, Baker (2002) attributed the learning disability “epidemic” to the catastrophe mentality promulgated by *A Nation at Risk*. Broderick (2010) similarly attributed the autism “epidemic” to more public awareness and broadening diagnostic criteria. Importantly, the medical and social models are not a binary or in direct opposition to each other, especially because the social model is limited in thinking about disabilities that have medical and/or painful components (Connor, 2013; Siebers, 2008). Still, thinking about dis/ability as another socially constructed aspect of human diversity has implications for teacher preparation, as it pushes prospective educators to use non-deficit thinking about students in special education and to problematize disabling educational environments.

**The (Nondisabled) Norm**

Left abstract and unstated, what is “normal” is defined by its contrast with what is stated as abnormal (Berube, 1996; Mitchell & Snyder, 2000). Someone is only “normal” because someone else is considered “abnormal.” Dis/ability is at the core of what it means to be normal (Erevelles & Minear, 2010; Linton, 1998) because people with disabilities comprise everyone who is *not* normal:

Because disability is defined not as a set of observable, predictable traits—like racialized or gendered features—but rather as any departure from an unstated physical and functional norm…the concept of disability unites a highly marked, heterogeneous group whose only commonality is being considered abnormal. (Thomson, 1997, p. 24)

Normal behavior and performance in school are defined by what *not* to do—both positively and negatively. Both “good” and “bad” behavior can only exist when acknowledged and set apart from “normal” behavior. DSE scholars purposely work to unpack and analyze how the “normal” student is understood in (positivist) theory, research, and practice (Connor, 2013). For example,
even though discourses of scientism and objectivity fix disability labels within individual students, DSE scholars problematize the “normal” standard against which all students are measured by taking into account social, cultural, environmental, and even educational factors that can explain a child’s “abnormal” achievement or behavior (Baglieri et al., 2011; Ferri & Connor, 2006; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Sleeter, 1986). While students’ academic achievements and behaviors are assumed to distribute normally on a bell curve, the random errors that are required to produce a normal curve statistically cannot explain “socially mediated human behaviors” (Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010, p. 10). Even if students’ test scores produce a normal curve, this does not mean that what is being measured “actually distributes normally among human populations” (p. 16). Importantly, the bell curve needs both the upper and lower scores in order to distribute normally. Therefore, closing the achievement gap is a statistical impossibility if someone’s high score is defined by someone’s lower score, or if someone’s normal score is defined by someone’s abnormal score. For example, a grade of A is premised on other students not receiving A’s. Problematizing the normal curve destabilizes a very naturalized structure of schooling (Baglieri et al., 2011) that depends on “winners need[ing] losers” (Brantlinger, 2006b). It also exposes the necessity of blaming low achievement and failure on individual students’ differences, as the normal curve that guides educational practices and policies cannot exist without that very failure (Baines, 2014).

DSE scholars also problematize curriculum as a normalizing tool that legitimates certain (nondisabled) subjectivities in school and constructs disability as deviance in order to justify the exclusion of students marginalized along multiple social locations (Erevelles, 2005, 2011). DS/E has been a powerful theoretical tool for examining the (mis)representation and inaccurate, negative depictions of dis/ability in both K-12 and college curricula and in society (Erevelles,
2005; Linton, 1998; Valle & Connor, 2011). For example, DSE might problematize how the ways in which special education textbooks, which could be part of the curriculum at MSIs, utilize the medical model by dedicating each chapter to a particular disability also position the “normal” child—absent from the text—as nondisabled (Baglieri et al., 2011; Brantlinger, 2006a).

**Sustaining Ableism**

Ableism is sustained by many ideologies, beliefs, and discourses about identity, the body, equity, and human rights that determine not only who has privilege and power, but also who is even considered worthy of human status (Siebers, 2008; Thomson, 1997). Centering dis/ability and disabled people exposes the ableist practices that are normalized by the ideology of ability, or society’s “preference for able-bodiedness” (Siebers, 2008, p. 8). For example, the presence of a student with Down’s Syndrome in general education makes visible that it has become “normal” to utilize taken-for-granted assumptions about students’ development to design curricular goals. Similarly, many educational practices and policies, even at the college level, work to maintain ableist norms in schools and in society. For example, the ideology of eugenics normalizes a continued interest in testing, measurement, and diagnosis in both general and special education across all grade levels, even though it is the practice of measurement itself—rather than biological difference—that socially constructs people as disabled, or “abnormal” (Smith, 2008; Snyder & Mitchell, 2006).

**Critical Race Theory/in Education**

DisCrit also draws from CRT and CRT in Education (CRT/in Education) to center race and ethnicity when conceptualizing subjectivity and difference. CRT scholars understand race as a central organizing principle in society (Bell, 1992; Malcolm X & Haley, 1965) that “cuts across class, gender, and other imaginable social identities” (Leonardo, 2004, p. 140). Building
on the work of critical legal studies (e.g., Bell, 1992; Crenshaw, 1991), CRT is an analytic tool for exposing the social construction of race and the oppressive effects of racism (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998). First introduced by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), CRT in Education is “a radical critique of both the status quo and the purported reforms” (p. 62) that normalize overt and covert acts of racism in schools (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998). What follows are aspects of CRT/in Education that inform my thinking about the preparation of teachers at MSIs. I discuss the social construction of race, the consequences of whiteness as an unstated norm, and how the ideology of colorblindness upholds racism and white privilege.

The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity

CRT/in Education scholars are more interested in the domination and subordination that results from racial categories (Tatum, 1997/2017) and the “systems we use to make sense [of race]” (Hall, 1997, p. 10), and they are less interested in concretely identifying physical differences that reflect supposed genetic, innate predispositions (Rothenberg, 2016). The need to interpret race, or to have racial categories, is a foundational, persistent, and fixed part of U.S. culture (Bell, 1992; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1986; Takaki, 2008; Tatum, 1997/2017). The United States clearly and continuously upholds the boundaries between who is considered white and who is considered non-white (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Tatum, 1997/2017). Importantly, social construction does not deny real, material consequences of being labeled a subordinate race. For example, regardless of social class, race affects the quality of medical care one might receive (Lipsitz, 1998). Given these material consequences, some scholars refer to race as a power construct rather than a social construct, thereby reaffirming that the root of racism is power rather than ignorance and hate (Kendi, 2019).
While racial categories are fixed, the social definitions and political meanings of these categories have fluctuated and changed over time (Hall, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Omi & Winant, 1986; Tatum, 1997/2017). For example, when the Irish, Jews, and Italians first came to the United States, they were not considered part of the dominant white culture (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Yet, citizenship laws helped the Irish elect Irish people into positions of power, thereby allowing them to enter the middle class and gradually become “white” over time (Takaki, 2008). Race, then, is a sociohistorical concept—racial categories and the meanings of race are given concrete expression by specific social relations (Omi & Winant, 1986). Some of these social relations are persistent, such as the legacy of slavery that still shapes Black-white relations in the United States (Alexander, 2010; Lipsitz, 1998; Tatum, 1997/2017).

Rather than focusing on biological features, ethnicity focuses on shared cultural experiences, heritages, and traits, such as speaking the same language (Navarro, 2012; Rothenberg, 2016). While racial identity is often a significant part of someone’s experiences (Omi & Winant, 1986; Tatum, 1997/2017), some people, such as Latinxs, identify more strongly with their ethnicity. As white people socially construct racial/ethnic categories, they also socially construct ethnic identities. For example, before the Census Bureau—whose director has always been a white person—used the term “Hispanic” in 1980, very few people in the United States thought of themselves as Hispanic (Rothenberg, 2016).

**The (Unstated) Norm of “whiteness”**

Enduring consequences of “white” as the normalized racial/ethnic category are the persistence of whiteness, white privilege, and white supremacy, which together work to maintain racism and what society considers acceptable or normal cultural practices and/or beliefs. The

---

5 I am making this claim based on the fact that the photos of all the directors from the years 1790-2017 posted on the Census Bureau’s website appear to be of white people.
legal definition forming within the context of immigration and deciding U.S. citizenship (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), whiteness has been foundational in creating the (white) American subject (Kendi, 2019; Takaki, 2008) and ensuring the racial stratification of society (Buck, 2001; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lipsitz, 1998). In the economic sense, for example, whiteness is a form of property (Harris, 1993) that in and of itself affects the price of housing, as houses in majority white neighborhoods are worth more money than houses in majority Black neighborhoods (Desmond, 2016; Lipsitz, 1998). Moreover, capitalism itself can be read as inherently racist (Kendi, 2019), as Black people experience higher and longer-lasting rates of poverty and unemployment, alongside lower wages, less intergenerational wealth, and a stronger likelihood of downward economic mobility—all while white people are more likely to take advantage of government aid/programs (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Kendi, 2019). This extends into education, as school districts serving more students of color receive significantly less funding per pupil than districts serving more white students (Kendi, 2019; Kozol, 1991, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

In the social sense, whiteness is a form of property that influences education by influencing and defining what is taught in the curriculum and what constitutes high student achievement (Blanchett, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). For example, the manifest, explicitly stated curriculum often excludes knowledge outside of mainstream white culture (Pinar, 1993, as cited in Erevelles, 2005). One example of this, as discussed in Chapter 1, was of how Eurocentric content standards continue to drive the development of K-12 history assessments and teacher licensure exams (Kohli, 2014). Furthermore, the hidden, implicit curriculum of schooling teaches all students that the correct ways to produce knowledge and to behave in schools are those aligned with white norms. For example, high school students of color
have reported that while they feel being “loud” is a cultural trait, white norms of what constitutes
smartness construct loudness as “a form of transgression across social and academic
expectations” (Caraballo, 2019, p. 14). It is likely that this hidden curriculum follows students
of color into higher education as well.

It is this “intersection of race and property [that] creates an analytic tool through which
we can understand [systems of] inequity” (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 48). CRT scholars
assert that racism is not simply individual bias, but a de facto, normalized system built into the
very fabric of our society that grants privileges to white people from the disadvantages of people
of color (Alexander, 2010; Bell, 1992; Leonardo, 2004; Tatum, 1997/2017). As such, some
scholars in the fields of education and psychology feel that in order to be racist, one is not only
prejudiced but also in a position of power/is a white person benefiting from the system of racism
(Tatum, 1997/2017). Consequently, this does not mean that people of color cannot act negatively
toward other people of color based on stereotypes and prejudice or that hate crimes committed
by white people are any worse than those committed by people of color. The distinction here is
that the actions committed by people of color are more the result of internalized oppression and
not of benefitting from the system of racism (Tatum, 1997/2017). By contrast, some scholars and
historians operating within the policy domain work to discern differences between racist
power/policymakers—or the conditions that create and sustain racial inequities—and white
people (Kendi, 2019). From this perspective, it is “illusory, concealing,…[and] disempowering”
(p. 136) to say that people of color cannot be racist, as this ignores how some people of color are
in positions of power that are responsible for enacting racist policies and implies that people of
color are being anti-racist all the time, which may not be true. Rather than focus on people,
Kendi (2019) focused on how policies are either racist, by sustaining racial inequity, or
antiracist, by working against racial inequity. Thus, racist/antiracist are not fixed identities, and anyone (of any race) can be racist or antiracist at any given point in time.

White privilege means that white people rarely have to acknowledge the “salience of race in life’s possibilities” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 11) and are consequently “unaware of their own racism, until they face some test, and their racism emerges in one form or another” (Malcolm X & Haley, 1965, p. 363). This is complicated by the fact that white people do not all benefit equally from racism (Lipsitz, 1998; Tatum, 1997/2017) as they can identify with/be affected by other subordinate identities. Similarly, not all people of color are equally targeted by racism as they can identify with/be affected by other dominant identities (Tatum, 1997/2017). Still, in addition to perpetuating the (false) belief that racially equalizing policies—such as affirmative action and the Affordable Care Act—that also benefit white people are somehow anti-white (Kendi, 2019), the normalized silence and denial around (white) privilege maintain racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; King, 2015; Kohli, 2009; McIntosh, 1989; Tatum, 1997/2017) and white supremacy, or the belief that white people are inherently “better” than people of color. Belief in the inherent superiority of white people legitimizes and normalizes excluding people of color.

One salient example of the ways in which whiteness, white privilege, and white supremacy operate to maintain racism in education is the persistence of the “achievement gap” between white students and students of color. White students score higher on assessments as students of color score lower, given the (statistical) impossibility of all students receiving an A, as discussed earlier in how DSE problematizes the normal curve. A multitude of reasons why students of color score lower are rooted in their schooling environment and (lack of) opportunities (Kendi, 2019): disproportionate placement in lower-income neighborhoods and
schools, resulting in less money per pupil from the school district (Kendi, 2019; Kozol, 1991, 2005); overrepresentation in special education categories that legitimize low expectations and exclusion from rigorous instruction (Ferri & Connor, 2006; Harry & Klingner, 2005); and racial bias (Crenshaw, 2015; Gregory et al., 2010) and colorism (Kendi, 2019) on the part of teachers and administrators that lead to higher rates of suspension and expulsion, not only for students of color but for students with darker skin in particular, ultimately feeding the school-to-prison pipeline (Fenton, 2016; Heitzeg, 2009; Hirschfield, 2008). White students score higher not because they necessarily work harder, but because the school system is designed for their success, and they do not face the same barriers (Kendi, 2019). Yet, the normalized belief in the former—combined with deficit views of “urban” students of color (i.e., that they are “loud”; Caraballo, 2019) and their families [e.g., that they lack the ability and/or resources to be (correctly) involved in their child’s education; Lightfoot, 2004]—maintains white supremacy and white privilege. While it is important to problematize whether high-stakes tests measure liberatory learning and/or whether closing the achievement gap can actually dismantle racism, the material affordances of test scores—such as college access and scholarship qualifications—are also important to consider. Even if there is a disconnect between what someone learns in college and their chosen profession, college graduates are more likely to have better life outcomes in terms of housing, salary, health, and employment (Blake, 2017; Reuss, 2001/2016). If white students disproportionately score higher on state tests and/or have more access to college, then they also disproportionately receive the privileges that come with these scores.

**Colorblindness**

People of all races might denounce the achievement gap; yet many might not understand it specifically as racism (Kendi, 2019) (and ableism, as I mention later in my discussion of
DisCrit). This is because, while still rooted in the notion that racism is an act of individual bias, many (white) people conflate being racist with acknowledging race in any way (Wells, 2014, as cited in Annamma et al., 2018). Instead, they encourage colorblind, race-neutral stances to societal issues, which mask how racism normalizes racial inequities (Kendi, 2019). (I unpack colorblindness’s use of the dis/ability metaphor later in my discussion of DisCrit.) For example, race is often avoided when talking about students and schools. Black and brown students are continuously referred to as “at-risk,” and schools that serve mostly students of color are called “Title I” and/or “urban” schools (Brown, 2014; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012) without any explicit mention of race.

Colorblindness is a form of racism because white people’s refusal to “see” and acknowledge race is a refusal to “see” people of color and to acknowledge how they (white people) benefit from racism. Racism is now harder to “prove,” given that there are de jure laws that make it illegal to discriminate based on race (Bell, 1992; Lipsitz, 1998). In fact, many white people interpret overturning Jim Crow and other de jure laws as evidence that race relations have improved (Alexander, 2010). Since people of color cannot (legally) attribute their problems to racism, they often get blamed as individuals for their subordinate positions in society (Bell, 1992; Cacho, 2012; Du Bois, 1903; Kendi, 2019). Colorblindness also legitimizes de facto racial segregation. This can happen through both liberal ideas—such as overturning affirmative action under the guise of being open-minded, tolerant, and/or inclusive and judging people for who they are on the “inside” (Bonilla-Silva, 2001/2016, 2003; Lipsitz, 1998; Rothenberg, 2016)—and conservative ideas—such as the criminalization of drug and substance abuse in low-income, Black and brown neighborhoods (Alexander, 2010; Lipsitz, 1998).
Colorblindness normalizes racism by sustaining ideologies and beliefs that also do not explicitly acknowledge race, such as liberalism, the myth of meritocracy, individualism, and objectivity/neutrality (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw, 1991; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Opposing affirmative action, for example, reinforces the myth of meritocracy—that everyone has an equal chance of becoming the “best” person for the job, scholarship, or other selective opportunities if they work hard enough (Hurn, 1993). Not all racial groups have equal access to being the “best”—an abstract ideal set by the white dominant culture. Yet, white people continue to use the myth of meritocracy to make colorblind statements about people of color—“I just don’t think he’s the best one for the job”—that, while racist, are still legal. This preserves whites’ own group interests and “mask[s] the reality of economic and political power” (Bell, 1992, p. 103). Thus, while there may be good intentions behind pleas to not make everything about race, terminating racial categories in and of itself is not antiracist and can only happen when there is no longer a relationship between race and economic, political, and social power (Kendi, 2019).

**Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory in Education (DisCrit)**

DisCrit is an intersectional framework with foundations in the work of critical race feminists of color (Annamma et al., 2018; Collins, 1990/2003, 2003; Erevelles & Minear, 2010; Lorde, 1984/2007/2016), which contends that “race and racism are always part of any discussion” (Annamma & Winn, 2019, p. 5) on how an individual’s experiences are impacted by the ways their various identities interlock within systems of power and privilege. Intersectionality is a “common everyday metaphor” (Crenshaw, 2014/2016, p. 172) that describes the process of being simultaneously and reciprocally shaped by multiple social locations. Dealing with differences within groups, rather than pretending they do not exist (Crenshaw, 1991; Lorde, 1984/2007/2016), helps to shape a minority group’s collective interests.
(Crenshaw, 1991), mobilizes a group’s power (Lorde, 1984/2007/2016), and ensures that multiply subordinated members within groups are not positioned as “instruments, rather than beneficiaries, of the civil rights struggle” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1277). For example, while all members of the group “women” may have had the same interest in the right to vote, women of color were marginalized within this struggle, as white women activists utilized racism to garner white men’s support for women’s suffrage (Rothenberg, 2016).

This intercategorical approach to intersectionality binds identities to the structural conditions and historical contexts in which they are constructed (Erevelles & Minear, 2010; Siebers, 2008). For example, the social construction of the “woman” gender cannot be conceptualized outside of current systems of privilege and power. The very traits associated with femininity—such as being “compromising”—are constructed within the historical and present consequences of sexism and patriarchy, such as the wage gap, that have rendered such traits necessary. (The interpretation of this trait as feminine is also influenced by a woman’s other identities.) Thus, from this realist perspective (Siebers, 2008), conceptualizing knowledge and identity as socially constructed in and of itself is not enough to change the material consequences of being labelled a subordinate identity (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Siebers, 2008). Even well-intentioned members of dominant groups can perpetuate inequities (Roegman, 2018).

Using this understanding of intersectionality, grounded in the work of critical race feminists of color, I start my discussion of DisCrit by first showing how it extends the prior work of CRT scholars who argue for the importance of using an intersectional frame when understanding racism. Next, I show how DisCrit extends the prior work of DS/E scholars who trouble how dis/ability (language) is built into current conceptualizations of oppression and liberation. Finally, I use these extensions to discuss how the tenets of DisCrit informed my
thinking about the research inquiry. I work to show how the previously discussed aspects of DS/E and CRT/in Education relate to and inform the tenets of DisCrit that I used in thinking about how students at HSIs are being prepared to teach diverse K-12 populations.

**Extending CRT**

CRT scholars argue that dismantling racism cannot happen without also understanding and dismantling the ways in which multiple systems of oppression interact to position people in society (Lorde, 1984/2007/2016; McIntosh, 1989; Tatum, 1997/2017). CRT, then, is an intersectional framework that values the ways our identities traverse multiple categories and how our experiences cannot be defined by a single type of oppression (Bell, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 2012). This stance allows CRT scholars to problematize, for example, sexism that exists in Black communities, while also understanding that Black masculinity is constructed within the racist conditions in which many Black men live and that this violence is co-opted to legitimize the unequal treatment of people of color (Crenshaw, 1991; Leonardo, 2004; Tatum, 1997/2017).

DisCrit, then, is a “tool indebted to, and simultaneously further strengthens, CRT” (Annamma et al., 2017, p. 153) by showing how the intersection between race and dis/ability has presently and historically worked to marginalize people of color, often with violent and disastrous consequences (Annamma et al., 2018; Erevelles & Minear, 2010). Today—without explicit mention of race, dis/ability, and/or the purpose of exterminating an “undercaste” or “surplus” population (Alexander, 2010; Erevelles, 2005; Lorde, 1984/2007/2016)—the ideology of eugenics utilizes the intersection of race and dis/ability to normalize the exclusion of people of color through segregated settings for students of color in special education (Reid & Knight, 2006); racial disparities in the death penalty (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017); the disproportionate representation of Black and brown men in the U.S. prison system (Alexander, 2010; Malcolm X
& Haley, 1965), the majority of whom have a disability (Valle & Connor, 2011); and the overrepresentation of Black and brown people murdered by law enforcement (Kendi, 2019), at least half of whom have a physical or mental disability, are Deaf, and/or are autistic (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018).

This study, then, was informed by a necessary alliance between CRT and DS/E. Yet, perhaps due to the historical legacy of other marginalized groups distancing themselves from dis/ability (Baynton, 2001)—a topic I address more thoroughly in the next section—CRT (and other) scholars often do not recognize dis/ability as a social construction and exclude it as a critical social location (Erevelles & Minear, 2010). Leaning on the medical model and equating dis/ability with deficit, they often perpetuate an “unconscious non-analysis of disability as it intersects with race, class, and gender oppression” (p. 128).

**Extending DS/E**

DS/E scholars conceptualize dis/ability as an organizing theoretical tool (Erevelles, 2011; Linton, 1998; Siebers, 2008). DS/E is not only a theory about disability as diversity and identity (Ferguson & Nusbaum, 2012), but a “[dis]abling of theory itself” (Collins & Valente, 2010, p. 1) that affords deeper thinking about “dismantling the politics of difference, marginalization, and oppression along multiple other axes of identity” (Erevelles, 2011, p. 2148). Utilizing this organizing theoretical tool, DS/E scholars have shown how, both historically and presently, many marginalized groups have used dis/ability as “metaphors for weaknesses of limitations” (Schalk, 2013, as cited in Annamma et al., 2017, p. 153) to form coalitions. By arguing that they are all people who are impaired by or lacking something in society (May & Ferri, 2005; Thomson, 1997), they worked to distance themselves strategically from disability in order to assert that they should be granted citizenship and equal rights (Baynton, 2001; Siebers, 2008).
For example, in addition to race, women suffragists also used disability to assert their right to vote, arguing against claims that they lacked mental capacity (Baynton, 2001). They never questioned why disability justified exclusion from the “normal” people in society (Baynton, 2001; Charlton, 1998; Linton, 1998) in a similar way that educators do not question why disability justifies exclusion from the “normal” students in general education.

Scholars have used DisCrit to “lay bare some of the contradictions between language and epistemological commitments” (Annamma et al., 2018, p. 52) in order to expose “the ways ableist language perpetuates non-recognition, allows for the subordination of dis/abled people, and misses the intersections between being socially constructed racially as the other and dis/abled” (p.154). Importantly, uncovering these ideological commitments is “not simply linguistic or philosophical in nature. It is specifically political” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1298), as the overt disability language historically utilized by minority groups from other social locations—to both assert their rights as citizens and describe their oppressive experiences—mirrors real, material conditions. For example, May and Ferri (2005) wrote that “ableist notions of mobility and movement…define and imagine liberation, resistance, and transformation” (p. 122). Yet, the notion of “standing up” for one’s rights invokes a particular way of moving that is not accessible to all in society. This is mirrored by the material inaccessibility of citizenship, or that these “rights tend to be practiced in certain locations—polling places, town centers, courtrooms, and so forth—that are not always accessible to people with disabilities” (Siebers, 2008, p. 152).

CRT scholars have similarly use[d] dis/ability as a metaphor for disadvantage: racism cripples, deaf to the argument on racial injustices, and short-sighted views on racial inequities. Yet, people with physical differences experience racism; deaf people can listen to arguments; and those who are nearsighted can still understand complex situations. (Annamma et al., 2017, p. 153)
Dis/ability metaphors abound in Derrick Bell’s (1992) *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*: “disabling despair” (p. ix), “racial schizophrenia” (p. 6), “racial paranoia” (p. 139), and his use of Le Guin’s short story of the *feeble-minded* child to illustrate how racism bonds white people. Cornell West critiqued the “blindness of legal formalists” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 11), and Rita Kohli (2009) wrote that it is unfortunate that “many teachers are blind to the way white history, culture, and values are prioritized, or the stereotypes they carry about students of color” (p. 243). George Lipsitz (1998) described whiteness as a “ruinous pathology” (p. 23) that has “injured Black families” (p. 18). Even some attempts to use intersectionality to strengthen CRT arguments have pushed dis/ability to the margins and/or used it as a metaphor to describe the experiences of people multiply marginalized. For example, in discussing how gender complicates race, Lorde (1984/2007/2016) referred to male hostility as a “disease” (p. 612).

Thus, DisCrit builds on the work of DS/E scholars by applying the affordances of problematizing dis/ability metaphors to the work of CRT. For example, DisCrit scholars trouble notions of colorblindness for utilizing ableist metaphors that position dis/ability as ignorance (or blind people as unknowing), limiting understandings of racism as only visual, and suggesting a passive response to the unequal material conditions experienced by people of color. They instead propose color-evasiveness as a term that is not ableist; signals a more robust understanding of race and racism as multimodal; and more appropriately captures society’s purposeful, rather than passive, refusal to interrogate racism and white privilege (Annamma et al., 2017). Importantly, color-evasiveness is not simply problematizing and updating the language of CRT theorists, but instead “expose[s] the (un)spoken norms” (p. 156) that “limit the ways…[colorblindness] can be dismantled” (p. 148). Put differently, when people utilize dis/ability metaphors to address racial inequity, they both “[in]accurately depict the problem of refusing to acknowledge race,” while
also “maintaining a deficit notion of people with disabilities” (Watts & Erevelles, 2004, as cited in Annamma et al., 2017, p. 153). Thus, in exposing dis/ability metaphors in conversations about race and racism, DisCrit extends the affordances of DS/E in helping us understand how dis/ability normalizes the dehumanization of people marginalized along other lines of difference. For example, in addition to the inaccessibility of citizenship from a disability perspective—i.e., courtrooms and polling places without social and physical support structures—DisCrit can also expose the racial component of citizenship’s inaccessibility, or how restrictive U.S. immigration laws construct Black and brown people as “illegals” and “criminals,” thereby justifying their dehumanizing treatment in society (Cacho, 2012; Massey, 2013; Ngai, 2004).

Tenets of DisCrit

In understanding race and disability as relational concepts (Erevelles & Minear, 2010; Leonardo & Broderick, 2011), DisCrit highlights multiple points of contact between CRT and DS (Erevelles & Minear, 2010) that have resulted in the following seven tenets:

1. DisCrit focuses on ways the forces of racism and ableism circulate interdependently, often in neutralized and invisible ways, to uphold notions of normalcy.
2. DisCrit values multidimensional identities and troubles singular notions of identity such as race or dis/ability or class or gender or sexuality, and so on.
3. DisCrit emphasizes the social constructions of race and ability and yet recognizes the material and psychological impacts of being labeled as raced or dis/abled, which sets one outside of the western cultural norms.
4. DisCrit privileges voices of marginalized populations, traditionally not acknowledged within research.
5. DisCrit considers legal and historical aspects of dis/ability and race and how both have been used separately and together to deny the rights of some citizens.
6. DisCrit recognizes whiteness and Ability as Property and that gains for people labeled with dis/abilities have largely been made as the result of interest convergence of white, middle-class citizens.
7. DisCrit requires activism and supports all forms of resistance. (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11)

Here, I demonstrate how these tenets relate to the earlier mentioned aspects of DS/E and CRT/in Education that informed my thinking about systems of inequity and the research phenomenon.
**Social Construction of Identity.** As stated earlier, DS/E utilizes the social model to conceptualize dis/ability as a form of identity, rather than an individual, biological deficit (e.g., Connor et al., 2008). Similarly, CRT/in Education scholars agree that race is a powerful social construction and signifier without a strong biological basis (Hall, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Omi & Winant, 1986). Informed by critical race feminists of color, DisCrit brings these aspects of DS/E and CRT together in Tenets 2 and 3 to argue that the social constructions of dis/ability and race are dependent on each other and work together to uphold ableism and racism. The ideologies typically associated with maintaining ableism, such as eugenics, are inextricably linked with race (Gillborn, 2016, as cited in Annamma et al., 2013), as discussed in Chapter 1. Similarly, the ideologies associated with maintaining colorblindness and racism, such as the myth of meritocracy—which presumes that hard work, or one’s ability/achievement, should be the basis for their rewards—are inextricably linked with maintaining ableism. Thus, in bringing together these tenets, DisCrit also builds on intersectionality’s premise of challenging not only the construction of identity, but also “the system(s) of subordination based on that identity” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1297).

**Conceptualizing Normalcy.** As stated earlier, DS/E scholars work to show how dis/ability defines its dominant culture, nondisabled. Being nondisabled, or able-bodied/minded, means not claiming its subordinate—disability. Just as normal cannot exist without abnormal, the construction of the “able” body/mind cannot exist without the construction of the disabled body/mind. Someone is crazy only because someone else is not. Someone has a limp and/or moves/walks abnormally because someone else walks without a limp and/or “normally.” Furthermore, as nondisabled is the norm, one impairment makes someone disabled even if everything else in that person’s body and/or identity is nondisabled, or “normal” (Thomson,
Like the nondisabled identity that depends on dis/ability for its construction, whiteness is an unmarked, normative, yet always shifting category that cannot exist without its racial other (Leonardo, 2004; Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). Whiteness is defined by what it is not. For example, at a basic level, the existence of a “hair care” aisle and an “ethnic hair care” aisle in many drug stores across the United States implies not only that normal hair care products are those suited to white people’s hair, but also that white people are not ethnic and/or do not have an ethnicity. This can be traced to the antebellum era when white was considered the pure, normal racial category, and any racial intermixture made someone “non-white” (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1986). The effects of this can still be felt today, when Barack Obama—who is half white and half Black—identifies himself and is identified by others as the first Black president.

Yet, an important distinction here is that whiteness is not built into the overt language we use to describe this relationship—“race” or “racial” difference—while dis/ability is still built into the overt language we use to describe the relationship between disabled (normal) and nondisabled (abnormal) people. Thus, bringing DS/E into contact with CRT might provide a more robust understanding of normalcy. Tenet 1 of DisCrit recognizes and emphasizes the relationship between whiteness and dis/ability, or that whiteness depends on dis/ability and dis/ability depends on whiteness in constructing the “normal” standard in the United States. For example, Leonardo and Broderick (2011) argued that like whiteness, “the hidden curriculum of smartness saturates everyday school life” (p. 2215). Responding to smartness cannot happen without a simultaneous interrogation of how whiteness constructs some students as intelligent and how intelligence brings students of all races closer to approximating the “normal” (white, nondisabled) student subject. They have also furthered this work to explicate how the “material-
ideological system of ‘goodness’” (Broderick & Leonardo, 2016, p. 55) is informed by white norms for both behavior and academic achievement/ability. In relation to this study, Tenet 1 can help the field of teacher education better understand both the racist and the less-often-discussed ableist norms that shape the experiences of preservice teachers of color.

**Systems of Oppression.** DS/E affirms that ableism—like racism, sexism, and other types of marginalization—is a system of oppression built into the very fabric of our society that simultaneously excludes people with disabilities and affords privileges to nondisabled people. Similarly, the work of CRT scholars shows that the good intentions of some white people (Bonilla-Silva, 2001/2016, 2003) are not enough to radically alter the impacts of being labelled a person of color in the United States. Tenets 5 and 6 of DisCrit bring this prior work together in thinking about how race and dis/ability have worked to marginalize people “caught at the violent interstices of multiple differences” (Erevelles & Minear, 2010, p. 128). In relation to this study, these tenets unpack how policies and practices within teacher education exclude candidates of color and confer to white candidates race and ability—i.e., passing scores on standardized licensure exams (see Chapter 1)—as forms of property.

Regarding Tenet 6 specifically, Bell’s (1980, 1992) idea of interest convergence—or how efforts at addressing racial inequity are often only successful if they also advance the interests of white people—can be applied to dis/ability. Using the social model of disability to advocate for accessibility must often framed as benefiting everyone in order to be realized by the nondisabled community (Annamma et al., 2013). (In fact, I use this framing in my discussion of inclusive education later in this chapter.) Similarly, DS/E scholars have pointed out that “in capitalism, there is a substantial reason to maintain disablement as an exploitable and serviceable commodity” (Oliver, 1999, as cited in Baglieri, 2016, p. 168). One could use DisCrit to expand
this notion to problematize how students of color are constructed as “at-risk” of dropping out of school and/or ending up in prison, and therefore in need of extra services—e.g., social workers and behavioral health programs—that, in effect, provide jobs to (white) middle class people.

Tenets 4 and 7 of DisCrit draw on the work of critical race feminists of color and utilize the framework of intersectionality when thinking about how to respond to systems of oppression that sustain each other. DisCrit emphasizes that subordination by race and ability are “mutually reinforcing…, [thus] a political response to each…must at the same time be a political response to both” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1283). Thus, in Chapter 3, I discuss how I apply Tenets 4 and 7 of DisCrit in conceptualizing a research methodology that works to privilege the voices of my participants and to resist the predominant, deficit narratives of teachers of color maintained by the current teacher education landscape, as described in Chapter 1.

Taken together, the Tenets of DisCrit can also problematize and reimagine current solutions to inequities in school and society (Annamma et al., 2018)—which are more likely to affect college students of color—that “continue to rest on and reify other ideological systems of oppression” (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011, p. 2225) by focusing on race and dis/ability in isolation. For example, thinking about the “achievement gap” through the lens of race alone does little to challenge the inherent “ableist normativity” (Baker, 2002, p. 688) in categorizing students based on their measured achievement and leaves unquestioned why the achievement gap between students of all races and ethnicities in general and special education (Valle & Connor, 2011) hardly receives as much attention as a social justice issue. When some scholars conceptualize “mak[ing] achievement gains and exit[ing] special education” (Blanchett, 2006, p. 24) as something to which students of all races should have equal access, it reifies the normalized assumption that students in special education are, by default, low achievers.
Furthermore, much of the DSE scholarship focuses on subjective, high-incidence disabilities that are school-based (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014) and how those intersect with other social locations, such as race (Ferri & Connor, 2006; Harry & Klingner, 2006), to deny educational opportunities to historically marginalized students. DisCrit scholars, however, problematize solutions to racial disproportionality in special education that suggest, either implicitly or explicitly, removing disability labels from children of color. This suggestion is rooted in an ideology of cure (Garland-Thomson, 2013)—most often generated from outside of the disability community (Broderick, 2010; Linton, 1998)—that emphasizes the importance of “overcoming” one’s disability (Valle & Connor, 2011), even though some disabilities will never go away and cannot be extinguished. The distinction between students who have supposed “real” biological differences “requiring” their exclusion and those whose differences are socially constructed in the environment reinscribes the medical model of disability, ignores the negative effects of labeling, and does little to change the status of disability as undesirable (Baker, 2002). Put differently, if the “solution” to the problem of overrepresentation is to stop labelling children of color with disabilities, then the overall problem of the ways that students with disabilities are treated in schools will remain unaddressed (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). Yet, focusing on problems in special education solely through the lens of dis/ability does little to take into account how both general and special education are embedded in the institution of schooling that, both historically and presently, has utilized the intersection of race and class to stratify students in society (Anderson, 1988; Blanchett et al., 2009; Du Bois, 1903; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

**Preparing (Racially Diverse) Teachers for Diverse Student Populations**

As disability is a foundational and integral part of constructing many social differences (Erevelles, 2005; Erevelles & Minear, 2010), “particularly race” (Erevelles & Minear, 2010,
p. 133), I start my review of the literature with the field of inclusive education—which centers how the ideology of ability hierarchically positions students marginalized along multiple social locations of difference—as it relates to understanding the pedagogy and content of diversity courses. Next, I utilize DS/E, CRT/in Education, DisCrit, and inclusive education to review the literature that explicitly discusses preparing teachers for diverse student populations. Finally, I utilize DS/E, CRT/in Education, DisCrit, and inclusive education to review the empirical literature on the curriculum and pedagogy utilized in teacher preparation programs at MSIs.

**Conceptualizing Inclusive Pedagogy and Preparation**

The field of inclusive education is relevant to my study in two ways. As related to my first and second research questions, I am interested in whether teacher educators themselves are adopting an inclusive pedagogy, given (a) the marginalization and essentialization students of color have experienced in higher education, and (b) the fact that students at 4-year HSIs, in particular, may enter college needing more academic support (Núñez & Bowers, 2011), as stated in Chapter 1. As related to my third research question, I am interested in how/if inclusive education and/or dis/ability is covered in teacher preparation courses for diverse populations. Thus, I am interested in how teacher educators incorporate an inclusive philosophy/stance and/or inclusive practices in both the content of their diversity curricula and their own pedagogy. This can help ground claims regarding the inclusion of dis/ability in diversity coursework and the accessibility of teacher educators’ instruction.

**Inclusive Stance/Philosophy**

Rather than an “achievement” that happens when diverse students share the same classroom or when a finite set of skills has been taught, inclusion signals a realized belief that *all* students benefit both academically and socially when there is a range of abilities in the classroom
that require more diverse approaches to teaching (Berube, 1996; Ferguson, 1995; Oakes, 2005). Utilizing the social model to locate the “problem” of low achievement in the educational environment rather than in individual students (Oakes, 2005), inclusive educators adopt an open stance in which they are constantly working to remove barriers to learning (Danforth, 2017; Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014; Hart et al., 2007; Naraian, 2017; Tobin, 2007). Inclusive educators work to “presume competence” (Biklen & Burke, 2006; Biklen & Kliewer, 2006) and to understand students’ perspectives on their learning, rather than project their own, possibly ableist, interpretations. Still, the work of inclusion is messy (Danforth, 2017) and limited in a society in which the world outside of schools has yet to be inclusive (Linton, 1998). Thus, an inclusive philosophy in and of itself is not enough to make inclusion “work.” It must be realized with the enactment of inclusive practices, made possible by supportive school contexts (Baines, 2014; Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014; Tobin, 2007).

**Inclusive Practices**

There is a growing body of theoretical and empirical literature on specific practices that can help educators more fully realize the goals of inclusion. Many of the following tenets of accessible instruction align with the literature on culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogies (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Paris & Alim, 2014) and how to teach (racially) diverse students, as I discuss later. Accessible instruction often reinforces strengths of all, not just some, learners; allows for changes in assignments, evaluations, and/or assessments based on students’ interests and strengths; takes place in a positively managed classroom community; expands beyond whole-class instruction by utilizing individual instruction and flexible grouping strategies; gives students consistent feedback; positions students as the experts of their learning; fosters collaborative problem solving; differentiates instruction based on student learning profiles;
establishes routines for high-quality discussions; offers students choices; and integrates multimodality (e.g., Hart et al., 2007; Lotan, 2006; Oyler, 2001). Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is the main framework in the field of inclusive education for considering these tenets of accessible instruction (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014). Instructors utilizing UDL work to provide multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression in their lessons in order to achieve accessible goals (Hitchcock et al., 2002; Jackson & Harper, 2006). While leaning on interest convergence, this aligns with the tenet in the social model of disability that when we design (educational) environments for everyone, social contexts are better for all people. A student may not “need” another instructional method, but it certainly may allow them deeper engagement with the lesson (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006).

In addition to realizing accessible instruction through careful planning (Valle & Connor, 2011), another important practice is prioritizing the voices of students and families (McCloskey, 2011). This is especially important in a society in which nondisabled people continue to believe they know what is best for disabled people and to make decisions on their behalf (Biklen & Burke, 2006; Danforth, 2017). Finally, the literature suggests that inclusive practices are realized in successful co-teaching relationships in which general and special educators can each contribute their own, different perspectives on student learning (Jackson & Harper, 2006) and can straddle both general and special educator roles/identities (Naraian, 2016, 2017).

Preparing Inclusive Educators

While the empirical and theoretical literature supports the strategies and practices that cultivate inclusive classrooms, there is not as much research on how to prepare preservice teachers to be inclusive educators (Allday et al., 2013; Florian et al., 2010; Zagona et al., 2017). Furthermore, there are three gaps/areas in the literature that my study addressed. First, there is a
continued focus on inventories of the types and number of inclusive and/or special education
courses being offered (Allday et al., 2013; Harvey et al., 2010), rather than on deeper analyses of
course syllabi, content, and instruction. This does little to tell us how teacher educators are
addressing inclusive education and/or disability. For example, in their inventory analysis of
teacher education courses, Allday et al. (2013) did not analyze “courses related to ‘culturally’ or
‘linguistically’ diverse populations…because they do not specifically focus on students with
disabilities” (p. 303). Yet, many DSE scholars believe that inclusive education is not just about
students with disabilities, as the ideology of ability works to reinforce many exclusionary
mechanisms that affect students marginalized along other social locations, such as race,
language, or ethnicity (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014; Florian et al., 2010; Hart et al., 2007).
Importantly, as inclusive education is not solely about disabled students, inclusive practices such
as UDL can, and should, be used in conjunction with other social justice pedagogies such as
culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy (Kieran & Anderson, 2018). Thus, even though
Allday et al. (2013) claimed that “minimal coursework” (p. 306) in teacher preparation programs
addresses disability, it is possible that courses excluded from their inventory are addressing
inclusive practices and/or fostering inclusive beliefs. Second, when studies looked across
multiple teacher education programs, researchers tended to categorize institutions by geographic
location (Allday et al., 2013; Gehrke & Cocchiarella, 2013; Harvey et al., 2010; Voltz, 2003),
rather than by PwI and type of MSI. The literature on preparing inclusive educators might be
another example in which MSIs remain invisible and/or unrepresented. Third, in addition to
examining an underrepresented research site, my qualitative study makes a different contribution
to the literature by focusing more deeply on the lived experiences of a smaller sample of teacher
educators and students, as many of the studies I reviewed were mixed-methods (e.g., Allday et al., 2013; Cooper et al., 2008) and focused on trends across large sample sizes.

As many “students enter teacher education programs with limited knowledge and oppressive conceptions of disability” (Valle & Connor, 2011, as cited in Connor, 2013, p. 122), teacher education programs have been insufficient in adequately addressing inclusion and preparing their preservice teachers to take up an inclusive stance, especially their general education majors (Allday et al., 2013; Cooper et al., 2008; Danforth, 2017; Lombardi & Hunka, 2001). This is evidenced in both special and general educators’ claims that they do not feel fully prepared to individualize instruction and provide accommodations for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms (e.g., Zagona et al., 2017). The type of program in which preservice students are enrolled—special education, general education, elementary, secondary, and so on—also influences how prepared they feel to be inclusive educators, with special educators generally feeling more prepared than general educators (Gehrke & Cocchiarella, 2013) and secondary teachers feeling the least prepared and holding fewer positive beliefs about inclusive education (Cooper et al., 2008). Many DSE scholars have argued against the traditional separation of general and special education (Connor, 2013; Florian & Linklater, 2010; Oyler, 2011), as it reifies the need for separate teachers and separating students. They believe that one way to address the complexity of inclusion more thoroughly is to offer more integrated programs (Harvey et al., 2010) that have been found to be more successful in teaching specific, inclusive practices (Lombardi & Hunka, 2001), such as how to co-teach successfully (e.g., Arndt & Liles, 2010, as cited in Allday et al., 2013).

Empirical research has demonstrated that, to some extent, coursework on special education, inclusive education, and/or students with disabilities does improve preservice
candidates’ preparedness for inclusion and understanding of disability as difference, not deficit (Gehrke & Cocchiarella, 2013; Parker et al., 2014; Zagona et al., 2017), which is a more humanizing view of people with disabilities (Bogdan & Taylor, 1989; Connor, 2013) as agentic.

Yet, while preservice teachers can confidently define inclusion, as it is presented in their academic coursework (Gehrke & Cocchiarella, 2013), they struggle with recognizing inclusive practices in their field work that “reach beyond the mere placement of students in general education settings” (p. 212). Other studies have also noted the need for a more explicit connection between coursework and field placements, or theory and practice (Brantlinger, 2006a; Florian et al., 2010; Naraian & Schlessinger, 2017). For example, in their qualitative study that examined preservice teachers’ understandings of disability as diversity, Parker et al. (2014) realized that:

> While the field provided a context for applying coursework, we naively assumed that the very act of pairing the course and field would be a sufficient vehicle for scaffolding preservice teachers’ beliefs and constructions of disability as difference…. [T]he mere act of placing of students in the field did not prompt them to actively pursue opportunities to connect back to the course content. (p. 148)

The literature highlights several strategies to help preservice teachers make these connections. First, several studies suggest the importance of helping preservice teachers develop positive attitudes and beliefs regarding disability that can help them develop an inclusive stance and feel prepared to teach in inclusive classrooms (Florian & Linklater, 2010; Parker et al., 2014; Silverman, 2007). Giving preservice teachers multiple opportunities to reflect on their practical experiences can foster more inclusive, positive attitudes and beliefs about students and their families as they make sense of their particular school/classroom contexts (Florian & Linklater, 2010; Naraian & Schlessinger, 2017) and the tensions that arise when the theory and the “instructional purity” (Naraian & Schlessinger, 2017, p. 98) of inclusive education coursework...
do not fully align with state and/or national standards (Cooper et al., 2018), the notion of “best practices” (Danforth, 2017), and/or their personal experiences in classrooms (Naraian & Schlessinger, 2017). While teacher educators should prioritize an understanding of their students’ beliefs and knowledge of societal inequities in developing coursework, they should also take into account that preservice teachers feel they learn best from hands-on experiences, such as developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and working directly with students (Lombardi & Hunka, 2001; Van Laarhoven et al., 2007; Zagona et al., 2017). Just as positive beliefs are limited if they cannot be translated into practice (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015), coursework that makes central connections to the field has been found to foster inclusive attitudes and beliefs for both general and special educators (Van Laarhoven et al., 2007).

A second important—and often insufficiently addressed inclusive skill in teacher preparation (Van Laarhoven et al., 2007)—is successful collaboration and/or co-teaching between general and special educators. Even as more general education programs are offering extended coursework on inclusive practices, researchers are continuing to find that special educators have more focus on collaboration in their coursework and recommend that general educators also need these opportunities (Harvey et al., 2010; Zagona et al., 2017). Addressing collaboration as an inclusive skill in coursework is important because preservice teachers feel less prepared to work with educators who hold different philosophies on co-teaching, disability, and/or inclusion (Zagona et al., 2017). Furthermore, while inclusion is becoming more widely accepted, the specific roles that general and special educators are supposed to assume are less clear (Allday et al., 2013; Cooper et al., 2008). One way to address co-teaching that has received positive attention in the literature—despite inherent institutional challenges to its implementation
— is for faculty across departments to model co-teaching in courses for preservice teachers (Cooper et al., 2008; Voltz, 2003).

The dominant approach that general education programs use to teach about disability and/or inclusion is through a separate, focused course (e.g., Harvey et al., 2010). Yet, Gehrke and Cocchiarella (2013) stated the importance of presenting inclusion as a “complex, contextual concept that may be implemented in varying degrees across schools and classrooms” (p. 215), rather than “fragmented,…‘disjointed experiences’” (p. 215) partially addressed across their coursework. The latter reinforces the technicist notion that teaching is a discrete set of skills that can be easily transferred from one school context to another, which does little to privilege the skills that teachers may bring outside of this set that can also foster inclusive classrooms (Brantlinger, 2006a; Florian & Linklater, 2010; Silverman, 2007). Thus, a third strategy for developing inclusive educators could be infusing disability throughout the entire curriculum, rather than leaving it the subject of a separate special education course (e.g., Voltz, 2003). This strategy helps preservice teachers understand disability as something integral to all aspects of their teaching, rather than as an add-on to already established instructional strategies (Voltz, 2003). Yet, some students in elementary and secondary general education programs that are infusing disability throughout the curriculum have reported “feeling neither competent nor confident to teach…students [with disabilities] in inclusive settings” (Lombardi & Hunka, 2011, p. 192). This finding led the authors of the study to suggest “that a new course designed specifically for general educators be developed rather than attempting to use current special education courses” (p. 194) in addressing inclusive education. Taken together, these somewhat divergent views in the literature might suggest that general educators need both a separate special education and/or course on disability, as well as disability infused throughout the entire curriculum.
curriculum, to address the complexity of inclusion and to understand disability as
diversity/identity, in addition to the specific practices and strategies for teaching in inclusive
classrooms. This suggestion aligns with the conversation on whether “diversity” should be
threaded throughout the curriculum or addressed in a separate course, as I discuss later.

A fourth important skill for inclusive educators is positioning disability as a form of
diversity and agency (Baines, 2014), or another “culture-bound, physically justified difference”
(Thomson, 1997, p. 5), rather than as a deficit (Oyler, 2011). This can include more accurate,
humanizing “simulation” exercises, such as boycotting inaccessible places rather than
“pretending” to be disabled for a finite amount of time (Valle & Connor, 2011). Relatedly,
course assignments and activities should be informed by the voices and experiences of people
with disabilities (Brantlinger, 2006a; Florian & Linklater, 2010). Finally, while students report
that lecture and class discussion are the most frequently used modalities to teach about disability,
special education, and/or inclusive education (Lombardi & Hunka, 2001), some literature
suggests that preservice candidates enjoy multiple modalities for engaging with the material,
such as group work, project presentations, and hearing teacher educators’ stories and experiences
as practical examples (Gehrke & Cocchiarella, 2013). Thus, while some scholars believe
preservice teachers are not prepared for inclusive classrooms because they are not taking enough
coursework related to students with disabilities and/or inclusive education (Allday et al., 2013), it
seems what is even more significant is the way all courses, taken together, address inclusion.

**Teacher Preparation for Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice**

In using DisCrit and inclusive education to review the empirical and theoretical literature
on preparing teachers for diversity, I work to show how the assumption of a white preservice
candidate attending a PwI and foregrounding race and racism results in particular content and
pedagogy for teaching preservice teachers about diverse student populations. Here, I focus on how/if the strategies researchers have suggested intersected with the previously mentioned strategies for preparing inclusive educators. I also focus on the accessibility of these strategies.

**The Assumed Preservice Candidate and Institution**

The majority of the studies that explicitly address teaching diverse student populations reinscribed the normalized assumption that preservice teachers are white women attending PwIs in one of a few ways. Significantly, the analysis I provide aligns with Cochran-Smith et al.’s (2015) literature review on teacher preparation for equity and social justice:

> [T]eacher candidates from dominant groups…held deficit views of students who differed from the mainstream, an assumption supported by numerous studies…. These studies framed helping future teachers examine and alter their views about diversity as a fundamental problem of teacher preparation. (p. 114)

First, many studies explicitly described their participants as majority white women. Many researchers legitimized this focus by saying that their sample was representative of the national teacher population and could therefore be more informative when conceptualizing the preparation of teachers of diverse student populations (e.g., Kahn et al., 2014; Waddell, 2011). Yet, a CRT lens might conceptualize the abundance of research on white women preservice teachers as interest convergence, or how the needs of diverse K-12 students only seem to be relevant when they converge with the interests of a predominantly white teaching force that is becoming increasingly aware that they cannot meet their students’ needs (Milner, 2008).

Relatedly, if the authors did not explicitly state that their participants were white, they nonetheless conducted their inquiry at PwIs (e.g., Juarez et al., 2008). Some mentioned this explicitly in the description of their research sites. If they did not include this, CRT theorists’ work demonstrates that even if unstated, a “raceless” participant and/or university is most likely
white, as white people often do not see themselves as racial and/or ethnic (McIntosh, 1989; Tatum, 1997/2017). (See the earlier discussion on normality and the “hair care” aisle example.) Researchers also reinscribed this assumption when they discussed that the goal of diversity education is to help (white women) preservice teachers understand the systems of oppression that impact their prospective students (e.g., Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Gay, 2010; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). In fact, Juarez et al. (2008) explicitly tied the goals of diversity education to white preservice teachers: “teacher education for diversity…is…just for white people” (p. 21). Relatedly, researchers also discussed how teacher educators can be prepared for their students’ resistance and defensiveness when teaching about social justice, diversity, and/or equity issues, since this might be the first time students’ core beliefs are questioned (McHatton et al., 2009; Pohan & Mathison, 1998; Ukpokodu, 2003). While one could argue that not all people of color think deeply about their beliefs regarding racial diversity, CRT theorists remind us that economic and social systems in the United States are designed so that people of color have to develop “racial awareness” (Bell, 1992, p. 123), or a “double consciousness” (Du Bois, 1903), of how white people’s perceptions of them shape their realities. Thus, it might be less likely that preservice teachers of color will be defensive or resistant to social justice topics if they already had to develop even an implicit awareness of unequal systems that continue to be confirmed in the literature (Kochhar & Fry, 2014/2016; Lipsitz, 1998). While white people are becoming more aware of the ways in which racism puts people of color at a disadvantage, there is less acknowledgment of the ways in which they benefit from those advantages (McIntosh, 1989). It would make more sense to assume that the preservice teachers resisting curriculum that exposes this inherently, unequal de facto system would be white. Preparing teacher educators for this resistance, then, means preparing them to respond to their white preservice teachers.
Both Wiedeman (2002) and Trent et al. (2008) discussed the gap in the literature on how teachers of color came to understand diversity in their teacher preparation programs. A few of the studies I reviewed did focus on preservice teachers of color and/or MSIs; however, none seemed to focus on preservice teachers of color attending MSIs. The studies that focused on preservice teachers of color were those attending PwIs and how their voices were silenced and marginalized (e.g., Jackson, 2015; Knight, 2002). Additionally, some of the studies that examined racially diverse institutions did not seem to take this into account in the way they reported the findings. For example, while King and Butler (2015) examined the exposure to diversity curricula at nine majority white teaching programs and five majority Black teaching programs, there did not seem to be a significant relationship between the racial make-up of the university and whether/how they offered diversity content. This was evidenced both in the quantitative data the authors presented as well as a lack of focus on this possible relationship in their discussion on the inconsistent delivery of diversity/multicultural curricula across all teacher preparation programs they examined. Similarly, while Enumah (2021) mentioned that three of the 16 teacher educators in her study on how teacher educators balance pedagogical tensions when teaching about race taught at an HSI, she did not account for this institutional context in the presentation and discussion of her findings. Taken together, this evidence suggests the overwhelming presence of whiteness, in both teacher education and research (Sleeter, 2017).

First, the lack of discussion on the part of the authors is also an effect of whiteness and/or interest convergence, as focusing on racially diverse institutions might be absent because it does not benefit white students and teacher educators. Second, the reported insufficiency of diversity curricula at teacher preparation programs serving racially diverse students suggests that even MSIs can be influenced by the ideology of whiteness, especially if their status as an MSI came...
after years of being considered a PwI. This might be even more likely for HSIs. Unlike HBCUs and TCUs which were developed for the explicit purpose of meeting the academic and social needs of African and Native American students, respectively, HSIs developed circumstantially due to a large number of Hispanic students living in the area and attending the college (Gasman et al., 2015; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005).

**Conceptualizing Diversity, Equity, and/or Social Justice**

When reviewing the literature for how diversity, equity, and/or social justice pedagogy are conceptualized, I decided not to tease apart these terms in my search and review. Most of the studies, either explicitly or implicitly, addressed one or two of these terms when talking about the other. Put differently, the majority conceptualized the importance of successfully teaching diverse K-12 populations as a social justice and/or equity issue. Here, I use DS/E, CRT/in Education, and DisCrit to discuss the following in relation to teaching diverse K-12 students: the importance of a caring stance, relating diversity to equity and justice, the identities and experiences that are centered in current diversity curriculum, and the kinds of teachers that the field conceptualizes as most equipped to address diversity, equity, and/or social justice.

**Caring Stance/Relation.** There is an abundance of literature on the importance of an ethic of caring that recognizes the wholeness of the child (Knight, 2004) and students (and people) as both individuals and as members of larger groups in the context of schools (Collins, 1990/2003; Noddings, 1998, 2005). An ethic of caring is relational, rather than an individual or collective virtue or behavior (Knight, 2004; Noddings, 2005, 2012a, 2012b), and is integral to the success of all students, but particularly multiply marginalized students (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Valenzuela, 1999). Students in urban middle school classrooms reported that care is an important aspect of teacher quality, even if they never felt they had a caring teacher (Alder,
In her work with immigrant and U.S.-born Mexican high school students, Valenzuela (1999) similarly found that “students view caring, or reciprocal relations, as the basis for all learning” (p. 79). Relational caring moves beyond passive empathy through mere exposure to others’ stories (Boler, 1999) and instead argues for empathy forged through shared experiences (Collins, 1990/2003); attentive, respectful listening (Boler, 1999; Collier, 2005; Noddings, 2012b); and motivational displacement, or seeking to understand what the “other” is going through (Noddings, 2005, 2012a, 2012b; Zembylas, 2015) or how they formed their ideas (Collins, 1990/2003), rather than how we might feel in the same situation (Boler, 1999; Noddings, 2012b). Put simply, treat others as they wanted to be treated, not how you want to be treated (Noddings, 2012a). An ethic of caring also emphasizes reciprocity (Noddings, 2012b; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018). The cared-for must perceive the caregiver’s act as caring in order to complete the caring relation (Noddings, 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Valenzuela, 1999).

While teachers have the responsibility to both create and maintain caring relations with their students and to model to their students how to develop the capacity to care (Knight, 2004; Noddings, 2005), the situation and context of particular schools and schooling impact whether relational caring can happen (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). Thus, when students demonstrate resistance, it is often to these schooling processes rather than to education (Valenzuela, 1999). From a culturally relevant, Black humanist perspective, Knight (2004) further refers to this as “degrees of caring,” when considering whether caring can look different depending on the context of the school, teachers, and students. Caring ethics emphasizes the importance of respecting students’ differences (Collins, 1990/2003; Noddings, 2005) and parents and students determining their own needs (Collier, 2005; Noddings, 1997, 2005, 2012a; Noddings & Brooks, 2017), in dialogue with their teachers (Philip et al., 2019), including
whether they want traditional or progressive practices (Noddings, 2005). Within an Afrocentric feminist epistemological perspective that pushes against the “Eurocentrist, masculinist knowledge validation process” (Collins, 1990/2003, p. 49) often valued in both K-12 and higher education and in which “concrete,” lived experience is a “criterion of meaning” (p. 54), Collins (1990/2003) articulated an ethic of caring in which “personal expressiveness” or “individual uniqueness” (p. 62), “the appropriateness of emotions in dialogue” (p. 62), and “developing the capacity for empathy” (p. 63) are “central to the knowledge validation process” (p. 62).

While coercing students to engage in any kind of pedagogical activity “for their own good” may be incompatible with a caring stance (Noddings, 1997; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Valenzuela, 1999), it is also important that the teacher not neglect aspects of education to which all children should be exposed (Collier, 2005; Noddings, 1997, 2005; Noddings & Brooks, 2017) and which connect with students’ identities, experiences, and interests (Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Valenzuela, 1999) and target instruction accordingly (Alder, 2002). Put differently, caring does not neglect academic achievement (Alder, 2002; Noddings, 2012a; Roberts, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). Rather, a caring stance questions the curriculum on which such achievement is premised (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). Valenzuela (1999) made a distinction in her work between an aesthetic form of caring, “premised on commitment to ideas or practices that purportedly lead to achievement” (p. 61) and an authentic form of caring that emphasizes a reciprocal, caring relation between teacher and student. When teachers insist on the former, or “caring about school in the absence of relation” (p. 79), the result is often a “subtractive” form of schooling that emphasizes “cultural and linguistic eradication” (Bartolomé, 1994, as cited in Valenzuela, 1999, p. 62) via a “curriculum [that] [students] perceive as uninteresting, irrelevant, and test-driven” (p. 62).
Thus, within the current structures of schooling that often work against this relational type of care (Fisher & Tronto, 1990, as cited in Valenzuela, 1999; Noddings, 2005), many students feel their teachers do not care (Alder, 2002; Valenzuela, 1999), thereby severing the caring relation. Alder (2002) thus recommended that teachers and students talk together about what care means in their classrooms. Relatedly, a disability justice perspective on care further affirms care as a collective responsibility, access as a process, and the need for the cared-for to consent to the caring relation; moreover, disability justice does not often fit into many traditional structures and movements toward justice (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018).

**Relating Diversity to Equity and Justice.** DS/E, CRT, and DisCrit are critical theories that assert the importance of addressing issues of equity and social justice in relation to diversity (as discussed earlier). In other words, difference is significant because it is inherently tied to unequal power relations in both school and society. From this critical perspective, teacher education requires a focus—rooted in the knowledge of local school communities (Zeichner, 2019)—on the larger sociopolitical context and systems of equity and justice that form the backbone of education and schools (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018; Valenzuela, 1999; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017). Commitments to equity from a critical perspective can be idealist—or focus on use of language and beliefs in bringing about change; realist/economic determinists—or focus on structural change and material conditions in relation to larger systems of inequity; and/or middle ground—or consider both cultural and structural forces in social justice work (Bennett et al., 2019; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). For example, researchers in the idealist or middle ground camps may push back against “practice-based” pedagogies that have a history of seeing culturally sustaining pedagogies as only relevant to certain aspects of instruction (Brown & Brown, 2019) and are often “rooted in classical liberalism…and ultimately serve the status quo.
because they distract us from specifying and addressing continued structural violence” (Philip et al., 2019, p. 8). Realists/economic determinists might argue that straying too far from practice and advocating for equity and justice through (academic) language alone runs the risk of ignoring immediate ways of responding to students’ and families’ material needs (Bell, 1996; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

In their narrative literature review on how white privilege is addressed in teacher education, Bennett et al. (2019) found that the majority of studies were idealist, focusing on changing beliefs of white preservice teachers in relation to privilege in order to combat racism, “with no explicit goals provided to motivate and provide students with tools to create social and structural change” (p. 900). Similarly, in their systematic review of how “initial teacher education research frame[s] the challenge of preparing future teachers for student diversity” (p. 112), Rowan et al. (2021) utilized an idealist stance in examining specifically whether and how diversity is linked to equity and/or social justice. Of the 209 studies that met the criteria for the review, they claimed that only 40 specifically addressed equity and/or social justice. They characterized these studies as “teaching for diversity,” which “relates to the affordances of teacher education as a political project in the identification, contestation, and/or denaturalization of narrow, reductive, essentialist beliefs” (p. 146) about diversity, working against diversity as something to simply be acknowledged and celebrated. Studies within this strand emphasized the importance of intersectionality, challenging the construction of identities, and requiring teachers to develop very particular combinations of theoretically informed knowledge and skills, all of which rest upon supported and structured opportunities to learn how to recognize, make visible, critique, and work against traditional operations of power. (p. 141)

Rowan et al. (2021) suggested critical theories should inform teaching for diversity, such as
anti-essentialist…[analyses] of gender that draw upon feminist or profeminist theory, analyses of race that draw on…postcolonial theory or critical race theory…[and] [analyses] of disability that acknowledge the differences between medical or social models. (p. 139)

They classified 190 of the studies in their review as teaching about diversity, as they addressed the “need to provide preservice teachers with a knowledge base about diversity” (p. 136), and 187 of the 190 as catering to diversity, as they emphasized “principles, pedagogies, and practices catering to diverse learners” (p. 136). Studies in these two groups tended to “name a group of learners with consistently evidenced educational problems that preservice teachers need to know about in order to be effective teachers into the future” (p. 137) and then suggested pedagogical approaches in order to meet their needs. Thus, without an emphasis on (critical) theory and language, Rowan et al. (2021) did not conceptualize these 190 studies as emphasizing equity and/or social justice.

Care can/should also be a vehicle for equity and social justice in K-12 schools, as it “should transform schools and, eventually the society in which we live” (Noddings, 2005, p. 25). Put differently, a caring relation must also “advance moral ends” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017, p. 182) in teachers’ “aim…to produce better people—citizens adequately prepared for a place in participatory democracy” (pp. 162-163) and people who, in reflecting upon their own lives (Mintz, 2013), both “care for those they encounter and…care about the suffering of people at a distance” (Noddings, 2010, p. 394). This necessitates a reckoning with the tension around the fact that there exist varied understandings around the purposes of education (e.g., academic, moral, social, political, spiritual, etc.) (Noddings, 1997, 2018) and the fact that some students, teachers, and/or educators may not agree with this relationship between school and a democratic society.
From Black feminist, womanist, and culturally responsive perspectives, care must be related to an intentional, collective effort in working toward social justice and dismantling racial inequities (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Knight, 2004; Roberts, 2010) that works against the ideology of capitalism’s emphasis on the individual, constructed apart from the social (Knight, 2004; Noddings & Brooks, 2017). Anchored in the experience of an African American preservice teacher, Knight (2004) specified five themes from which teachers can draw connections between culturally diverse theories of care and being change agents: engaging in culturally affirming practices of multiple cultures, emphasizing fortitude to persevere in the midst of adversity, having the ability to recognize and willingness to address difference and inequities, emphasizing the importance of the whole child, and being able to see oneself as a teacher engaging as part of a collective in challenging inequities. Roberts (2010) found that African American teachers’ definitions and perceptions of culturally relevant critical care intersected with CRT. In particular, two themes emerged: political clarity/color talk with students—around their beliefs that Black students need Black teachers to help them understand academics as a pathway to equity and to advise them on the increased challenges they are likely to face as members of marginalized groups—and rooting their practices in concern for students’ futures beyond school as they contend with “the prevalence of racism and hegemonic influences in American society” (p. 462). Valenzuela (1999) similarly argued that authentic caring (mentioned earlier) is “necessary but not sufficient” (p. 109) in “mak[ing] schools truly caring institutions for members of historically oppressed subordinate groups like Mexican Americans” (p. 109) and must be “infused with political clarity” (p. 110). More specifically, teachers, administrators, and school staff must “bring issues of race, difference, and power into central focus” (p. 109); “abandon the notion of a color-blind curriculum and neutral assimilation
process” (p. 109); and fully engage in understanding the “socioeconomic, linguistic, sociocultural, and structural barriers that obstruct the mobility of Mexican youth” (p. 109), rather than holding individual students and families solely responsible for changing their circumstances. In examining the pedagogy of exemplary Black women teachers, Beauboeuf-Lafontant (2002) used a womanist perspective to frame care as political activism. Working toward social justice and change, these Black women teachers’ commitments to “contest the societal stereotypes imposed on children” (p. 77) and to believe in and expect greatness from Black children is, in and of itself, a political act.

**Identities and Experiences Currently Centered in Diversity Curriculum.** In assuming preservice candidates were white women attending PWIs, the majority of studies centered race, ethnicity, and/or racism when talking about preparing teachers for diversity, equity, and/or social justice. Some studies stated this explicitly. For example, Juarez et al. (2008) emphasized the importance of preservice teachers responding appropriately to “issues of diversity, racism, and social justice” (p. 21). Other studies did this implicitly by linking social justice and/or equity education to that which is integral to teaching students in “urban” areas (Bales & Saffold, 2011; Waddell, 2011; Whipp, 2013). Sometimes race and class came as a joint issue when preparing teachers to address diversity successfully in their classrooms (e.g., Amatea et al., 2012; Morrell, 2010), which makes sense given the continued overrepresentation of people of color in lower-income brackets (Lipsitz, 1998) (discussed earlier). For example, when Cochran-Smith et al. (2009) analyzed interviews with preservice candidates for social justice themes, they had a code for “recognizing inequities,” which included “ideas about racial and economic inequities” and “breaking down racial or class barriers” (p. 356). Even if race and racism were not the focus, they were still mentioned. Authors who wrote about other social locations of difference did so
only with the acknowledgment that race has generally dominated conversations of diversity and, for that reason, they were going to discuss a social location that was not receiving as much attention in literature (Hughes, 2010; O’Hara, 2006; Stevens & Miretzky, 2014).

Some researchers, however, expanded their definitions of diversity to include other social locations, such as gender and sexuality (e.g., Ellerbrock et al., 2016; King & Butler, 2015). Yet, even when offering an expansive list, race, ethnicity, and/or combatting racism as a goal of diversity education were often listed first (e.g., Spalding et al., 2010; Whipp, 2013). Furthermore, many times these expanded conceptualizations did not include disability (Leonard & Leonard, 2006; Miller & Mikulec, 2014; Waddell, 2011). If disability was included, it was often not explicitly stated. Rather than referring to disability as a form of diversity, researchers used descriptors such as “diverse learners” (e.g., King & Butler, 2015, p. 48) and “exceptionalities” (e.g., Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002). The fact that scholars in the academy have stayed somewhat silent on considering dis/ability a form of diversity in curriculum (Biklen & Kliwer, 2006; Erevelles, 2005) is likely because it threatens their “own claims to smartness” (Biklen & Kliwer, 2006, p. 177), or an “ideological system at the heart of the normative center of schooling” (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011, p. 2215) and higher education that legitimizes the knowledge they produce. Smartness, however, “intersects both race and ability” (p. 2207). For example, tracking students by ability also ends up tracking students by race and class (Oakes, 2005). Thus, including a nonracialized conception of dis/ability in the curriculum might not be enough to combat the social, economic, and material advantages of being labeled “white/smart.”

Some scholars, however, did include disability in their expanded notion of diversity (e.g., Cochran-Smith et al., 2015). Yet, Kahn et al. (2014) limited their discussion of disability as diversity to focus on the development of “culturally competent special education teachers”
Relatedly, Gao and Mager (2011) forefronted disability in their definition of diversity; however, they were purposely examining an inclusive education program. Thus, dis/ability, even as a form of diversity, remains the domain of special and/or inclusive education (Baglieri et al., 2011). When diversity was, in fact, infused in special education programs, race and ethnicity were still forefronted (Trent et al., 2008).

The Kinds of Teachers Most Equipped to Address Diversity, Equity, and/or Social Justice. Outside of the literature that explicitly discusses preparing teachers for diversity, equity, and/or social justice, the literature on the preparation of teachers of color is also relevant to this discussion. The preparation of teachers of color in and of itself is often conceptualized as an issue of diversity, equity, and/or social justice (Kohli, 2009). Race is also forefronted, then, in conceptualizing the types of teachers that are more equipped to teach for social justice and dismantle inequities. While inclusive education of students with disabilities is also conceptualized as an issue of social justice, the preparation of disabled teachers is an area of scholarship that has yet to even be realized. There are hardly, if any, studies that call for disabled teachers (whether they have a school-based or non-school-based disability), discuss the preparation of disabled teachers, and/or position disabled teachers as necessary for combatting inequities and promoting social justice in K-12 schools. Put differently, the literature seems to suggest that students of color (and white students) need teachers of color and that disabled students need inclusive, but nondisabled, teachers. This speculation is also supported by the taken-for-granted assumption that we have official designations—general vs. special educator—that segregate students by ability; yet there remains no official distinction between teachers of white students and teachers of students of color.
This is especially problematic, given that people with disabilities are, statistically, the largest minority group facing social and economic oppression in the United States (Belt, 2016; Erevelles, 2005; Siebers, 2008). The economic sphere/pool of eligible teachers became increasingly inaccessible to people with disabilities after the Industrial Revolution ushered in an ideology of capacity—alongside the ideology of capitalism (mentioned earlier)—that normalized the assumption that the “best” workers are those who are completely autonomous (Garland-Thomson, 2013; Hahn, 1998; Linton, 1998; Thomson, 1997). By this logic, people with disabilities and/or people who need supports to work are conceptualized as burdens. Unsurprisingly, because the independent, autonomous subject is deemed best suited for work, employment is the biggest area in which the Americans with Disabilities Act has not succeeded (Davis, 2015; Valle & Connor, 2011). An ideology of capacity, then, masks the inherent ableism in not recruiting disabled teachers and/or not implementing supports for disabled people who would like to become teachers. The current case law makes it difficult to change this. In schools, the ideology of capacity similarly normalizes the logic that including students with disabilities will somehow put a drain on the system, due to their “diminished” capacity, and will deprive “normal,” nondisabled students of the resources they need (Naraian, 2016).

**Content and Pedagogy of Preparation Courses**

Like the literature on preparing inclusive educators, the literature on preparing teachers for diverse populations emphasizes the importance of field experiences; however, I purposely focused on strategies developed during coursework, given the scope of my research questions. Similar to the discussion of whether/how to infuse disability throughout teacher education curricula, there is considerable discussion in the literature on the importance of purposefully infusing diversity (e.g., McHatton et al., 2009). Even though many teacher education programs
proclaim a commitment to social justice, equity, and/or diversity in their mission and/or vision statements, there is still considerable variation in the delivery and content of diversity curricula and implementation of social justice strategies across teacher education (King & Butler, 2015; McDonald, 2005). This might be because teacher educators may not know how to enact social justice pedagogy themselves and/or teach it (Galman et al., 2010, as cited in Spalding et al., 2010).

Similar to the discussion on how to address disability and/or inclusive education in coursework, many researchers have demonstrated that a stand-alone, separate course is ineffective, and that diversity, equity, and social justice need to be threaded throughout the entire teacher education curriculum in order for students to link these ideas more purposely to their practice (e.g., Leonard & Leonard, 2006; Miller & Mikulec, 2014; Milner, 2010; Wiedeman, 2002). Threading diversity throughout the entire curriculum can help preservice teachers understand that social justice is not just an “add-on” to academic content areas (Jackson, 2015; Lazar, 2016; Spalding et al., 2010) in a similar way that disability and/or differentiation is not something to add on after planning a lesson. For this threading to be successful, faculty need to have a shared, clear commitment to social justice (Jackson, 2015; Lazar, 2016) and an understanding of how, as a department, they are going to spiral the diversity curriculum in a coherent way throughout teacher education programs (Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002; Whipp, 2013). This shared commitment and understanding can be cultivated in cross-departmental meetings, working together to design rubrics, and discussing and designing ways of assessing the explicit diversity dispositions they expect students to develop upon graduation (e.g., Lazar, 2016). Without this purposeful infusion, students have reported that the discussion of diversity topics have felt redundant in their programs (Whipp, 2013).
Some researchers, however, have noted that preservice teachers’ understandings of diversity are incomplete without a separate, stand-alone course (e.g., Stevens-Smith et al., 2014). For example, McDonald (2005) found that without a separate course, students had a hard time pinpointing exactly what they had learned about various systems of oppression. Thus, many schools of education are working to weave diversity throughout the teacher education curricula while also offering a separate course (Gay, 2010). In developing a separate diversity course, teacher educators need to make sure the objectives are aligned with the needs and current knowledge of their students (Morrell, 2010).

Within the context of still figuring out the best way to deliver diversity content, scholars have documented several strategies for preparing teachers for diverse populations. Many of these strategies are similar to those recommended for preparing inclusive educators and incorporate aspects of a caring stance/ethic, mentioned earlier. I discuss here the following strategies: the importance of developing positive beliefs about students, how to link theory to practice, modelling culturally responsive practices, and emphasizing critical thinking in difficult conversations about equity and social justice. I conclude with barriers and challenges teacher educators may face when employing these strategies.

**Developing Positive Beliefs about Students.** Many studies have discussed the importance of developing preservice teachers’ positive beliefs and/or attitudes about diverse populations, as well as the importance of removing barriers to students’ learning and/or not positioning them in deficit ways (e.g., Baldwin et al., 2007; McHatton et al., 2009). One strategy teacher educators use to foster positive beliefs is assigning reading and/or research about multiple categories of diversity, power, and privilege. In order to foster more inclusive class discussions, O’Hara (2006) worked to make this research more accessible by providing explicit
strategies that students were to use in their written homework to better understand the reading: “Underline and/or highlight the text. Respond in the margins to the text with comments…in your own words, discuss two or more critical concepts from each reading” (p. 44). Another strategy was by centering class conversations on various topics, sometimes by inviting diverse faculty members and/or guest speakers who could share their personal experiences (e.g., Waddell, 2011). It is important to note, however, that incorporating disability into these conversations has been more difficult. For example, McDonald (2005) found that while preservice teachers recognized larger systems of inequity regarding race and class, conversations around disabled students ended at individualizing instruction for their individual needs rather than broader conversations about mainstreaming and inclusion. A third strategy, also similar to preparing inclusive educators, was building time into class to reflect on course content and field experiences. Relatedly, engaging students in self-study of their own diverse heritage and beliefs has also been shown to help preservice teachers develop into social justice educators. A student’s experience as an “insider” of a marginalized group can be used as a strength in helping them develop positive diversity dispositions (Jackson, 2015; Kohli, 2009; Leonard & Leonard, 2006).

Positive beliefs were found to help preservice teachers develop “transferable” skills for teaching diverse student populations across different social locations. Specifically, Stevens and Miretzky (2014) found that teacher educators believed that focusing on broader skills for any student marginalized as “other”—e.g., being self-reflective and treating students fairly and with respect—versus focusing on skills for specific marginalized groups—e.g., strategies for racial minorities, strategies for gender minorities, etc.—was more beneficial. Reflecting an intersectional approach to difference, some of the reasons they gave for this included: diversity is dynamic and evolves (i.e., Rothenberg, 2016); there is diversity within groups and individuals
(i.e., Crenshaw, 1991; Lorde, 1984/2007/2016); there are commonalities across groups marginalized along different social locations (i.e., Annamma et al., 2013); and it is more practical. This finding further supports the case for how preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms and for diverse populations intersects.

Guided by positive diversity dispositions/beliefs, these transferable skills mirror the earlier described definitions of an inclusive stance and an ethic of care and include: individualizing lessons to meet students’ needs; having high expectations for all students and believing they can all learn; emphasizing critical thinking in lessons; treating students fairly and with respect; caring for all students and wanting to help them succeed; and being an activist and/or advocating for diverse students (e.g., Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Gay, 2010; Lazar, 2016; Leonard & Leonard, 2006). Despite the overlap in inclusive strategies and strategies for (racially) diverse student populations, which makes sense given the overrepresentation of racial/ethnic minorities in special education, many teacher educators still believed focusing on a single group was “beneficial when teaching about the special needs of certain groups, most commonly ELLs and students with disabilities” (Stevens & Miretzky, 2014, p. 45). Even though many teacher educators have challenged teaching as a set of discrete skills that can be easily packaged and delivered successfully to any student population (e.g., Bales & Saffold, 2011; Philip et al., 2019), disability has yet to be considered outside of this techno-rational conceptualization of teaching. Put differently, teacher educators might believe that teaching diverse populations is dynamic and complex, unless those students have a disability. Jackson’s (2015) analysis of the experiences of preservice teachers of color might legitimize this speculation when she wrote of a need for preservice teachers to “understand the structural differences between [culturally responsive pedagogy] and concepts like ‘differentiating
instruction’ or uncritical methods of teaching about diversity” (p. 233). Not only was Jackson (2015) excluding disability from culturally responsive teaching (which has generally been an espoused social justice method), but her analysis neglected the fact that differentiating instruction can be critical if enacted from a DS/E and/or inclusive stance.

**Linking Theory to Practice.** Even though there is not as much research on the specific strategies teacher educators use to prepare teachers for diverse populations (Ellerbrock et al., 2016), the literature has highlighted some strategies that teacher educators have used to help students link the theory they are learning in their courses (that affects the development of their beliefs) to practice (Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Mensah, 2013; Milner, 2010; Spalding et al., 2010). These strategies generally addressed culturally responsive instructional techniques or family/community practices. Teacher educators have also built in time for students to practice teaching strategies and get feedback (Mensah, 2013; Whipp, 2013). Furthermore, many teacher educators required that students develop lesson and/or unit plans that purposely incorporate diversity and/or social justice (e.g., Gay, 2010; Mensah, 2013; O’Hara, 2006; Ukpokodu, 2003). Yet, even as they described the necessity of this, teacher educators continued to isolate disability as something that requires a different consideration. For example, McHatton et al. (2009) wrote, “students were expected to develop lesson plans or instructional units that clearly demonstrate culturally responsive methods, including accommodations for students with disabilities” (p. 130). Here, considering disability is positioned as an add-on when incorporating diversity and/or social justice. This is further mirrored in the literature by the lack of studies on how special education programs infuse diversity (Trent et al., 2008). This gap warrants attention, as special education majors have reported less comfort with racially/ethnically diverse students (Dee & Henkin, 2002, as cited in Flores & Smith, 2009). This gap and lack of comfort are problematic given the
overrepresentation of students of color in special education. Thus, when general and special education remain separated, so too do “diversity” and “disability.” As mentioned earlier, diversity remains in the domain of general education, and disability remains in the domain of special education. Fusing these conversations could provide deeper tools for researchers to analyze their findings (Blanchett et al., 2009). For example, in their study on attitudes and beliefs toward different types of disabilities, Gao and Mager (2011) found that preservice teachers had the most negative attitudes toward students with behavioral disabilities. Yet, they did not analyze the inherent racism in that label, as children of color are more likely to receive this diagnosis (Blanchett et al., 2009).

Some of the strategies used to develop culturally responsive family/community practices include: using activities that help students practice collaborative problem solving with families; tutoring “at-risk” students and other service learning projects in the community; helping students practice how to introduce themselves to families; and unpacking family, student, and/or classroom case studies and strategizing solutions to potential challenges (e.g., Bales & Saffold, 2011; Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Juarez et al., 2008; Lazar, 2016). A DS/E, CRT, and DisCrit lens on some of these family/community strategies exposes the ways in which they could be problematic or exclusionary. For example, several researchers have suggested simulations that help them understand being poor and/or from a minority group (McHatton et al., 2009; Waddell, 2011), such as a “food stamp challenge” in which students have to live on that budget for a week (Amatea et al., 2012). Given the relationship between race and class (e.g., Kendi, 2019) discussed earlier, a CRT perspective might problematize the inherent whiteness in this challenge that seems to assume there are no low-income students in the class who might already live on food stamps. Additionally, DS/E scholars have problematized disability simulations for
positioning disability as something additive that can be easily removed (Valle & Connor, 2011). For example, having nondisabled people use wheelchairs temporarily cannot give them a true sense of what it means to be disabled, as they cannot fully grasp “the sense of embodied knowledge contained in disability identities” (Siebers, 2013, p. 327). If dis/ability were considered a form of diversity in these courses, perhaps the problematics of these diversity simulations—that might suggest one can understand what it means to be poor by living on food stamps for a week—would be revealed sooner. One study even suggested using “scripts representative of a cultural communication style” (Amatea et al., 2012, p. 812) to practice communicating with families. A CRT lens might argue that this could essentialize certain groups and position alternate forms of communications as deficit.

**Modelling Culturally Responsive Practices.** Similar to preparing inclusive educators, the literature has also emphasized the importance of teacher educators modelling culturally responsive practice with preservice teachers (e.g., Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002; Whipp, 2013), as well as sharing stories of real-life scenarios from their own teaching experience (Mensah, 2013; Pohan & Mathison, 1998). Despite a current scarcity in the literature regarding how teacher educators themselves use the culturally responsive pedagogy about which they teach preservice teachers (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015), some strategies have been discussed. In particular, it is the responsibility of teacher educators to provide a safe space to have difficult conversations regarding diversity, equity, power, and privilege. In line with UDL, this can be done by: providing online environments/multiple platforms to continue class conversations (McHatton et al., 2009); utilizing a cohort model so students feel comfortable with each other (Waddell, 2011); establishing guidelines and ground rules with students for respectful class conversations (e.g., Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002; Leonard & Leonard, 2006); promoting cooperation
and collaborative learning activities to help students build relationships with each other (Ellerbrock et al., 2016); and not forcing (outward) participation during open discussion (Noddings, 2018).

It should be important to note here, however, that the concept of “safe space” in teaching and learning has been critiqued by critical race feminists of color. Challenging the status quo of current inequities is not supposed to be safe or comfortable/will not happen if students (and people) are comfortable (Davis & Steyn, 2012; Kumashiro, 2015; Mintz, 2013; Ng, 1997, as cited in Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009; Zembylas, 2015). Additionally, not all students have the privilege of feeling safe both in and out of school. For example, in their feminist critical classroom, Knight-Diop and Oesterreich (2009) theorized the role of emotion as necessary for social change and found that students’ engagement with their emotions shifted, depending on their intersecting identities and understandings of power and privilege.

The concept of “safe space” has also been critiqued from the field of teaching and learning in higher education. Some faculty are perplexed by students’ requests for safe spaces—or “places on campus where they can be sure that certain topics of words will not be used” (Noddings, 2018, p. 335)—given that, “[w]ithout controversial issues, critical thinking is nonexistent or, at best, weak” (Noddings, 2006, p. 1). Moreover, the need to keep students happy reinscribes the logic of the student as a consumer of education (Amsler, 2011).

Emphasizing Critical Thinking about Equity and Social Justice. Preservice teachers’ critical thinking about diversity “must be guided by a moral commitment” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017, p. 7) made possible by an authentic, relational, interpersonal ethic of caring (Beauchamp, 2002; Collier, 2005; Noddings, 2010, 2012b; Valenzuela, 1999) between professor/teacher educator and student/preservice teacher. From this moral perspective, rather
than affirmatively resolving equity and social justice issues, students should learn how to think through all sides of politically contentious issues from both historical and current perspectives in ways that catalyze “morally justified ends” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017, p. 182). This perspective necessitates an understanding that critical thinking in and of itself cannot “prevent evil acts” (Noddings, 1998, p. 483). However, it works against externally imposing (critical) beliefs about social justice onto students (Amsler, 2011; Noddings, 1998; Rodgers, 2013; Zembylas, 2015) or structuring classes in ways that the goals become about “win[ning] arguments” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017) or “be[ing] on the right side” (Noddings, 2018, p. 334). Such external imposition cuts of communication in classrooms (Noddings & Brooks, 2017), runs the risk of reducing students’ individual experiences to the larger structures in which their identities are situated (Giroux, 1997), “sometimes displaces the just ends ostensibly sought” (Noddings, 2018, p. 334), and works against a democratic education (Giroux, 1997; Noddings, 2005). As such, professors/teacher educators have a responsibility to emphasize dialogue across different perspectives; present all sides of politically contentious issues (Noddings, 2005, 2006, 2010; Zembylas, 2012); and respond sensitively, positively, and empathetically to all students, including those who express unacceptable, immoral, or offensive views that seem to be working against justice (Noddings, 2005, 2010; Zembylas, 2012). By assuming the best of all students (Noddings, 2010) and responding in ways that maintain the caring relation (Noddings, 2012a), students are encouraged to come to their own conclusions about diversity, equity, and social justice (Davis & Steyn, 2012; Rodgers, 2013; Tejeda, 2008) rather than pressured to agree outwardly with certain (critical) perspectives (Noddings, 2018).

A caring stance toward critical thinking should not be confused with endorsing problematic views (Noddings, 2010; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Zembylas, 2012). Rather, it
encourages professors to fully engage with students “troubled knowledge” (Zembylas, 2012)—through in-class questioning and encouraging students to continue to unpack the roots of their beliefs (Amsler, 2011; Rodgers, 2013; Zembylas, 2012; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017)—rather than simply write off certain students as bad people (Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Zembylas, 2012). This engagement also teaches students that perspectives “need not be accepted or rejected wholly” (Noddings, 2005, p. 54), thereby prompting students to engage with more complex and nuanced views on diversity, equity, and social justice.

**Barriers and Challenges.** The literature also cautions against potential barriers to student learning in diversity courses. Similar to teacher educators addressing inclusion, teacher educators have also noted lack of planning time and professional development as a barrier to teaching about diversity (McHatton et al., 2009). New faculty without tenure may feel worried about how the content will affect students’ evaluations of them (McHatton et al., 2009); faculty of color may worry that students will perceive their teaching as racially and/or politically motivated (Ukpokodu, 2003); and white faculty may not have enough experience to speak to issues of marginalization and/or inequality (Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002; Noddings, 2006).

Additionally, faculty must contend with how to engage student resistance (mentioned earlier). In recognizing that students of different races have different needs, the teacher educators in Enumah’s (2021) study who taught about race and racism grappled with the tension of “knowing ‘when to push’ against white students’ resistance” (p. 10). They recognized there was a fine line between providing the context for resistant students to learn something new and pushing them too hard that they shut down, while at the same time maintaining a “safe space” for students who might be the target of resistant students’ problematic views. Not pushing students in the moment demonstrates a possible pedagogical stance toward diversity, equity, and social
justice as topics around which learning cannot and/or should not happen within the short
temporal confines of one college semester (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018; Rodgers, 2013), but is
possible in the longer term (Zembylas, 2012; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017) if students
continue to reflect on what they learned once the semester is over. Importantly, “resistance is not
‘not engaging’; in fact, resistance is often how white students engage” (Davis & Steyn, 2012,
p. 31). Yet, if professors respond to this resistance with empathy, positivity, and sensitivity in
order to maintain the caring relation with the student (mentioned earlier), they run the inherent
risk of having students leave their classrooms with problematic and deficit perspectives toward
historically marginalized students and communities still intact (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002;
Tejeda, 2008; Zembylas, 2012; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017) and unequipped to work toward
social justice (Knight, 2004; Noddings, 1998; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Roberts, 2010).

Finally, teacher educators have reported that it is difficult to assess cultural sensitivity
and how beliefs change practice (e.g., Leonard & Leonard, 2006). Given the inherent power
dynamics between students and professor (Giroux, 1997; Rodgers, 2013; Zembylas, 2015),
students may write course reflections and assignments based on what they think faculty want to
read (Tejeda, 2008; Zembylas, 2015), which gives little indication of how they will apply what
they have learned to their teaching (McHatton et al., 2009). Relatedly, “success” and other data
in this literature are often self-reported by preservice teachers and/or teacher educators, not the
families or the students themselves, so it is hard to know if they “work” (e.g., Bales & Saffold,
2011; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Flores & Smith, 2009). Finally, addressing diversity, equity,
and social justice without sensitivity and care runs the risk of inducing what Noddings and
Brooks (2017) referred to as “‘educated despair’ with respect to the history of our country’s or

90
group’s various transgressions” (p. 7). This despair and hopelessness may not motivate teachers toward socially justice teaching.

The literature also suggests (unintended) consequences when strategies for preparing teachers for diverse populations are likely developed for white preservice teachers at PwIs and center race and/or ethnicity. If strategies are developed with white preservice teachers in mind, it comes as little surprise that teachers of color tend to report that diversity is not addressed sufficiently in their programs at PwIs (Jackson, 2015). For example, African American students in Jones et al.’s (2002) study “reported that ‘the institution administrators spoke a lot about diversity but acted minimally toward creating a culturally diverse, tolerant and sensitive environment’” (p. 28). Similarly, students of color in Jackson’s (2015) study reported that “the faculty seems to have little actual experience dealing with cultural issues” (p. 231) and professors “were dismissive” (p. 232) when students brought up culturally responsive teaching. Thus, as aligned with the inclusive education literature, researchers have suggested co-teaching across content areas in order to address some of these barriers and more purposefully spiral the diversity curricula (Ellerbrock et al., 2016; King & Butler, 2015). Additionally, the parallels previously demonstrated might suggest that the literature on inclusive education also assumes white women attending PwIs and could therefore benefit from a DisCrit approach.

Preparing and Teaching Preservice Teachers (of Color) at MSIs

There seems to be a gap in the literature on what constitutes relevant diversity curricula for preservice teachers of color at MSIs, as well as inclusive ways of teaching that can make the curricula more accessible for multiply marginalized students. The latter is important to consider, given not only the previously mentioned likelihood that students attending 4-year HSIs have been academically underserved as K-12 students (Núñez & Bowers, 2011), but also that an
increasing percentage of college students have a disability (Valle & Connor, 2011). Yet, “[college] graduation rates for [college students with disabilities] remain low” (Lombardi & Lalor, 2017, p. 107). Still, I found a small body of work that does report on the content and instruction of teacher education programs at MSIs.

**Teacher Education Programs at MSIs**

Ginsberg et al. (2017) wrote that MSIs recognize the kinds of supports and curricular opportunities that need to be “embedded into coursework and across degree programs” (p. 24) to prepare diverse preservice teachers, yet there seems to be little in the scant literature that supports this claim. For example, one college in their review provided a seminar series for faculty on pedagogical strategies for diverse students, yet there was little indication whether this seminar was effective and/or required. The literature continues to highlight programmatic inputs to increase the recruitment and retention of teachers of color at MSIs, such as mentoring, greater access to financial aid, flexible class schedules, cohort models, and other strategies to help them overcome the likelihood of being a nontraditional student (Ginsberg et al., 2017; Goings et al., 2018). The literature also emphasizes the various community engagement opportunities for preservice teachers at MSIs, such as multiple opportunities for clinical/field practice, due to close relationships with local school districts; creating “lab schools” on campus; holding courses at the same school site where preservice teachers teach; and incorporating service-learning opportunities (Ginsberg et al., 2017; Goings et al., 2018). Paradoxically, the literature also calls for more resources to support preparing for the state licensure exams (Ginsberg et al., 2017; Irvine & Fenwick, 2011; Will, 2017), the preparation for which is likely not connected to the field experiences that may attract students to MSIs. Relatedly, Irvine and Fenwick (2011) recommended that the evaluation of teacher education programs at HBCUs should take into
account if the ways they address “content knowledge, pedagogy, and pedagogical content knowledge” (Shulman, 1987, as cited in Irvine & Fenwick, 2011, p. 202) and implement support programs for students are being informed by the “best research on teacher preparation” (p. 202). Yet, a CRT lens highlights that most educational research, including the “best,” often assumes and centers the needs of white women teachers attending PwIs, as demonstrated earlier. A DisCrit lens further problematizes their recommendation in two ways. First, Irvine and Fenwick (2011) cited Lee Shulman, a white man, as an example of a scholar who has produced the best research, rather than a scholar of color. This aligns with the current landscape of teacher preparation, as discussed in Chapter 1, in which white people define high quality and “effective” teaching. Second, Irvine and Fenwick did not consider professors’ implementation of inclusive and/or culturally responsive/sustaining pedagogies in their recommendations for teacher preparation programs at HBCUs, which might make the content of teacher education programs more accessible.

Thus, the examples the literature provides to demonstrate the ways in which MSIs are adequately preparing their teachers highlight community and classroom/teaching opportunities in culturally diverse schools (Ginsberg et al., 2017) rather than coursework. Some work has suggested that coursework might actually hinder teacher preparation at HSIs. For example, Nieto (1999) found that few faculty at an HSI infused diversity and culturally responsive pedagogy into their curricula, had very little knowledge of the cultures of their students, and considered these secondary aspects of planning (as cited in Brooks et al., 2012). Conversely, and more recently, in their literature review on “servingness” at HSIs, Garcia et al. (2019) did find some (22) examples of culturally relevant curricula or pedagogical practices at HSIs. Thus, while MSIs are important
and promising sites to prepare teachers of color robustly, early research on their potential is “still speculative” (Ginsberg et al., 2017, p. 25).

**Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Diverse Students at MSIs**

Given the increased need for faculty to develop their teaching at MSIs (Will, 2017) and the importance of understanding the diversity across MSI designations (Hubbard & Stage, 2009), I focused my review on pedagogical strategies used at HSIs because this was the context of my research sites. The lack of a historical root across HSIs as compared to HBCUs and TCUs (discussed earlier) for meeting the needs of their students might explain why there is less research and/or consensus on what constitutes appropriate, successful instructional pedagogy (Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Hubbard & Stage, 2009). This is important because without explicit attention to race, even educational practices and teacher education programs with a commitment to equity and social justice can perpetuate racism by reaffirming existing institutional structures that privilege whiteness and grant advantages to white people (Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016).

Answering Hubbard and Stage’s (2009) call for more qualitative research that can help unpack and explore how faculty attitudes influence their instructional practice, Nuñez et al. (2010) conducted a study on “the connections between faculty identity and pedagogy” (p. 178). As a group of three female professors with “ties to South America” (p. 180) at an HSI, they found that reflecting on their own biographies helped them challenge assumptions about their students. Positioning their students’ backgrounds “as resources rather than liabilities” (p. 183), they also developed instructional activities to help students consider how their own identities relate to their communities and the broader society along the social locations of gender, race/ethnicity, class, national origin, and sexuality, as well as “forms of privilege that tend to be less recognized, such as native language, status, and nationality” (p. 184). While students have
reported that these activities are helpful, disability is not mentioned at all in their work. Their activities that positioned students as “agents and co-creators of knowledge” (Collins, 1993, as cited in Nuñez et al., 2010, p. 184) and overlapped with tenets of UDL included: exploring understudied communities, helping students make salient connections to the lessons by utilizing course readings that relate to students’ personal lives and experiences, speaking with students in Spanish, utilizing multiple types of assessments, and facilitating conversations that address both the power dynamics and available agentic opportunities embedded within the institutional structure of schooling. Along with Goings et al. (2018), Nuñez et al. (2010) also worked to show care and concern for their students by checking in with them. They recognized that they served as role models for their students, given the lack of Latinx representation in higher education. They discussed how coming together as members of a marginalized faculty community helped them share pedagogical strategies and combat the often-reported isolation of academia. Moreover, they mentioned the importance of faculty coming together “on the basis of any relevant shared affiliation” (p. 187), of which disability was not included in their list.

Garcia and Okhidoi (2015) gave two recommendations for better serving the needs of diverse populations at HSIs. First, they suggested embedding Chicano/a and ethnic studies into the fabric of the university by making it a full-fledged department that also houses general education courses for students across all majors. Yet, students agreed with faculty perceptions that this was the only department offering culturally responsive curricula, thereby aligning with Jackson’s (2015) observation that programs rarely demonstrate culturally relevant pedagogy in content areas other than English/Language Arts and/or social studies. Second, they embedded their Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)—which was originally created to support “at risk” students with financial, social, and academic advisement—within the institution and now use it
as a model to advise all students. This is similar to an inclusive stance that prioritizes making supports available for all students, even the ones who do not “need” them. Furthermore, and possibly as a way of not separating culturally responsive pedagogy (diversity) and the needs of students (dis/ability), they suggested that HSIs privilege the often-neglected voice of underrepresented groups in higher education when evaluating both the course content and the ways students are evaluated to ensure students’ diverse perspectives are informing instruction.

Both studies also commented on not making deficit assumptions about white students, faculty, and/or administrators. One of the authors in Nuñez et al.’s (2010) study commented how her own biography surfaced assumptions about a white male student when she was surprised that he made thoughtful comments about nontraditional research methodologies. Garcia and Okhidoi (2015) also commented that while administrators of color “would be ideal” (p. 353), they found that the provost, a white man, was “deeply committed to serving underrepresented students” (p. 354). Given the overwhelming focus on white students, faculty, and administrators in teacher education research, I hesitate to include this commonality. Yet, it suggests that these researchers are either not making deficit assumptions about students of color, or they might feel that reporting these deficits would reinscribe the binary between “highly qualified” teachers and teachers of color discussed in Chapter 1. Both possibilities demonstrate the need for research that focuses on curriculum at MSIs (Hubbard & Stage, 2009; Irvine & Fenwick, 2011).
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Ginsberg et al. (2017) asserted that “very little rigorous, qualitative, and cross-institutional research exists on the impact, or potential impact, of MSIs on…expand[ing] the pool of qualified and committed [teachers of color]” (p. 5). This qualitative study responded to this gap by exploring the potential of HSIs to serve college students of color and racially diversify the K-12 teaching force, and by examining pedagogy and curriculum in education coursework about K-12 student diversity. The following questions guided this study:

1. How are teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs working toward racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force?
   a. How do teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs account for, and respond to, barriers that have traditionally excluded preservice candidates of color from the profession?
   b. How do two professors at two 4-year public HSIs consider the marginalization and/or essentialization of students of color in coursework related to diversity?

2. When teaching preservice teachers of color, how do two teacher educators at two 4-year public HSIs address the diversity of student abilities in their teacher education courses?

3. When teaching about diversity, how do two teacher educators at two 4-year public HSIs engage with the concept of dis/ability as it intersects with race and other categories of difference?

Informed by the epistemological and ontological commitments of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) and DisCrit (Annamma et al., 2013) (see Chapter 2) and a “transformative research and
practice paradigm...[that] seek[s] a social justice agenda for HSIs” (Núñez et al., 2015, pp. 10-11), I discuss the following in this chapter: the research design, research context, and data collection methods; my pilot study that utilized the data collection methods; methods of data analysis; limitations of the study; and the organization of the remainder of the dissertation.

Overall Research Design

As the current literature on HSIs, and MSIs more broadly, has utilized mostly quantitative and/or mixed-methods studies, this study utilized qualitative methods. As “one’s theory is embedded in the formulation of one’s research question” (Luttrell, 2009, p. 3), my design was also grounded in how Disability Studies/in Education (DS/E), Critical Race Theory/in Education (CRT/in Education), and DisCrit conceptualize identity as it relates to the production of knowledge. Put differently, DS/E, CRT/in Education, and DisCrit have not only made possible the research questions I chose to ask, but also the methodologies and methods that are most appropriate in answering those questions (Annamma, 2018). Thus, the discussion of my overall research design begins by explicating a DS/E methodology, a CRT/in Education methodology, and a DisCrit methodology as it relates to my research questions, research design, and the “unique assumptions regarding...axiology,...ontology,...epistemology, and...methodology” (Mertens, 2009, as cited in Núñez et al., 2015, p. 10) that characterize a “transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs” (p. 10). In line with DS/E, CRT, and DisCrit methodologies, I also include a positionality statement that explains how I was embedded in this study and how that affected the types of data I collected and the knowledge I produced (Annamma, 2018; Saldaña, 2015).

DS/E Methodology
While DS/E welcomes a variety of approaches to research (Connor et al., 2008), the field works to challenge methodology that has historically and presently marginalized people with disabilities and has left unquestioned the societal practices that construct disability categories as fixed and/or deviant (Connor et al., 2008; Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010; Garland-Thomson, 2013). By questioning the foundations of educational practices that marginalize people across multiple social locations (Connor, 2013), a DS/E methodology is rooted in both the rights of disabled people and the affordances of a dis/ability analysis in furthering our understandings of teaching and scholarship (Garland-Thomson, 2013). A DS/E methodology informed my research design by providing the conceptual tools to problematize pathologizing identities, to utilize a standpoint approach to better understand the experiences of others, and to conceptualize knowledge as socially situated and identity as socially constructed (Siebers, 2008). These conceptual tools also align with “unique assumptions regarding…the nature of reality (ontology)” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 10) within a transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs. Given the history of research that has worked on, rather than with, people with disabilities, my research was designed by a DS/E methodological stance that positions all the people in my study as “informed participants…, not ‘subjects’” (Connor et al., 2008, p. 448).

**CRT/in Education Methodology**

It is my hope that explicating a CRT/in Education methodology reflects that, as a white scholar, I am continuously working to read broadly about how issues of race and racism affect educational research, especially work conducted by white scholars (Roegman, 2018). The legacy of biological sciences includes methods that have worked to maintain racist structures in society and methodologies that discount the experiences of people of color by relying on standards of objectivity, rationality, and generalizability (Harding, 2006; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, 2002b).
In order to work against this legacy, I utilized CRT as an “important intellectual and social tool for…the deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 9).

While CRT scholars encourage multiple theoretical and methodological stances (Crenshaw et al., 1995), in designing my study, I drew on the tenets of a CRT/in Education methodology, as articulated by Solórzano and Yosso (2002b) who defined it as a theoretically grounded approach to research that (a) foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process…and also challenges the separate discourses on race, gender, and class by showing how these three elements intersect to affect the experiences of students of color; (b) challenges the traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color; (c) offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination; and (d) focuses on the racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of students of color. Furthermore, it views these experiences as sources of strength and (e) uses the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies, women’s studies, sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color. (p. 24)

CRT/in Education theorists have focused on activism and social change (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998) and have asserted the importance of marginalized people naming their realities and lived experiences through the process of storytelling (Bell, 1992; Rankine, 2014; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, 2002a, 2002b). In working toward social justice by responding to oppressive societal structures (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001), a CRT methodology utilizes the counter-story as “a method of telling the stories of these people whose experiences are not often told” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002b, p. 32). Similar to how the exclusion of some (disabled) bodies can “display the workings of ideology and expose it to critique and the demand for political change” (Siebers, 2008, p. 33), the counter-story is also “a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002b, p. 32). Importantly, counter-stories “need not be created only as a direct response to majoritarian stories” (p. 32), for this would position their existence as possible only in relation to mainstream
discourses. These simultaneous emphases of centering the voices of people (of color), as well as political change and challenging inequities, aligns with the “unique assumptions regarding ethics and values (axiology)” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 10) of a transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs, in which “researchers assume respect for the cultural norms of diverse communities in connection with a social justice agenda…and assume rigorous forms of research that advocate for improving the conditions of marginalized communities” (p. 11).

**DisCrit Methodology**

Intersectionality does not suggest that being subordinated along multiple lines of difference in and of itself is a singular, universal experience, since “differences in the hierarchical organization of race, gender, sexuality, class, and disability do exist” (Collins, 2003, p. 212). Put differently, Black women and white disabled women do not experience oppression in the same way, even though both occupy subordinate positions within the category “woman.” Intersectionality gives us a frame for understanding how Black women can participate in ableism and how white disabled women can participate in racism. It also advocates for placing another system at the center of unpacking our experiences so that we can understand our participations in other systems of oppression, even as we are oppressed along another social location (DiAngelo, 2006/2016). As referenced in Chapter 2, white disabled women can benefit from using race to analyze their experiences of being disabled women and to better understand how they participate in racism. Similarly, Black women can benefit from using dis/ability to analyze their experiences of being Black women and to better understand how they participate in ableism.

My research design moved beyond a “limited application of intersectionality” (Crenshaw, 1989, as cited in Annamma et al., 2017, p. 152) by placing both race and dis/ability simultaneously at the center of my analysis (Annamma et al., 2018). Even though mainstream
discourses of disability remain in the field of special education and diversity in the field of
general education, I demonstrated in Chapter 2 how the ways in which race and dis/ability
mutually construct each other result in several overlaps in the literature on preparing teachers for
inclusion and preparing teachers for diversity, equity, and social justice. A DisCrit methodology
provided a conceptual framing that made visible how focusing on the preparation for inclusion or
multiculturalism/diversity, in isolation, can “protect or forward white and abled privilege”
(Baglieri, 2016, p. 175). Thus, I understood the mutual construction of ableism and racism as
central to the production of knowledge for preparing teachers for diverse populations.
Additionally, a focus on how “ways of knowing are linked to multiple social contexts and
positionalities” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 11) and “recogniz[ing] power relations and dynamics in
broader historical, economic, and social contexts” aligns with the assumptions around the “nature
of knowledge and the relationship of the researcher to study participants (epistemology)” (p. 10)
inherent in transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs.

Like DS/E and CRT, a DisCrit methodology asserts the “importance of attending to the
direct testimony of the lived realities of individuals who are multiply oppressed in terms of race
and dis/ability, along with other markers” (Annamma et al., 2018, p. 59). Utilizing multiple
methods for data collection and analysis (which are further outlined later in this chapter) to
understand those direct testimonies aligns with the “unique assumptions regarding…appropriate
methods of systematic inquiry (methodology)” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 10) inherent in a
transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs. Attending to the direct
testimonies of my participants through multiple methods is also a form of intellectual activism
because it presumes competence of people on the margins to tell their stories (Annamma et al.,
2018). Thus, I worked to engage a “politics of solidarity” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 4) with my
participants, or “mutuality, accountability, and the recognition of common interests as the basis for relationships among diverse communities” (p. 7), even if their perspectives pushed against tenets of DS/E, CRT, and DisCrit.

**Positionality**

As a researcher, I “[did] not stand metaphorically outside the inquiry” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 24). Rather, I was built into the very fabric of the research phenomenon (Annama, 2018; Emerson et al., 2011). The research questions I asked and the methods I utilized influenced my relationships with my participants, which in turn affected the knowledge that resulted from my data collection and analysis (Annama, 2018; Luttrell, 2009). Nuñez et al. (2010) framed the importance of their self-study on pedagogy at an HSI around the fact that throughout history, the majority of claims about MSIs have been authored by people outside of these colleges and universities. While technically I was not a complete outsider because I have worked at an HSI (that was also one of the research sites), I was still an outsider in the sense that my position as a white, nondisabled woman grants me privileges that students and faculty of color may not be granted.

Understanding subjectivity as embedded throughout the entire research process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Peshkin, 1988), I articulate my positionality here as part of the ongoing reflexivity (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Emerson et al., 2011; Erickson, 1986) that I needed to adopt in utilizing DisCrit methodology, as my experiences—likely shaped by dominant narratives of whiteness and smartness—influenced the philosophical, epistemological, and ontological assumptions I made about my research phenomenon. For example, I am separated from students (of color) at HSIs who did not have the privileges of whiteness and smartness as bolsters in their education and who might have been constructed as unintelligent in their previous school contexts
(Annamma et al., 2013; Milner, 2007). My class position—another strong predictor of academic achievement (Kendi, 2019)—also separated me from students (of color) at HSIs, as many come from lower socioeconomic homes (Garcia et al., 2019). This meant I needed to work even harder to “actively…understand participant perspectives” (Roegman, 2018, p. 848), especially those that did not initially make sense to me due to my positionality. For example, when I reviewed writing submitted to the online portion of one of the courses I observed, I worked against using my own writing as an undergraduate or master’s student as a comparison. A DisCrit methodology helped remind me that my writing was not inherently “better.” Rather, whiteness and smartness worked together to deem my work potentially more rigorous and/or advanced to people in positions of authority in higher education. Additionally, my writing was also a reflection of the fact that attending K-12 school in a wealthier neighborhood provided me with more educational resources/property (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Utilizing Milner’s (2007) framework for researcher positionality, I understand “researching the self, researching the self in relation to others, engaged reflection and representation, and shifting from self to system” (p. 395) as integral to conducting ethical qualitative research that works against framing my participants in deficit terms and other “dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen” (p. 388). I acknowledge the limitations of my position as a nondisabled, white/Jewish, middle-class, cisgender, nonqueer woman born in the United States (second generation) in relation to my research participants, especially those who are people of color, disabled, and/or hold other marginalized identities. My positionality affects what I see and foresee and, in turn, what I do not see, as well as how I interpret these dangers (Roegman, 2018). The more privileged I am in relation to my participants, the more likely I may misinterpret their perspectives. Thus, as I write my researcher positionality statement, I understand that “answers
to the questions [I ask of myself about myself] may change, but the charge to question...remains the same” (p. 395). Identity work is ongoing rather than a finite achievement (Villenas, 1996). Thus, I engaged in ongoing reflection on my positionality throughout this study and not just in this section of the dissertation (Roegman, 2018). I worked to consider how the ways in which I situated myself both shape and are shaped by others (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993, as cited in Villenas, 1996) in the context of my research.

In conceptualizing “positionality as complex and intersectional” (Roegman, 2018, p. 837), I position myself/am positioned as a nondisabled, white/Jewish, middle-class, cisgender, nonqueer woman born in the United States (second generation). There is no linear relationship among these positions. Whichever is dominant at a given point in space or time is dependent on the context. Audre Lorde (1984/2007/2016, specifically called attention to the fact that those outside of the “mythical norm” “identify one way in which we are different” (p. 610) and “assume that to be the primary cause of all oppression, forgetting other distortions around difference, some of which we ourselves may be practicing” (p. 610). Being raised by a white woman who came to understand her gender identity during the height of the second wave of (non-intersectional) feminism, I was consistently taught throughout my childhood how to identify and understand sexism on both a personal and systemic level. I was told I was “smart” and could do anything that a man could do. I was encouraged to work, to vote, and to fight for gender equality, the latter two of these encouragements reflecting a top-down belief in politics and policy as levers for change. When my mother had my sister and me attend multiple protests of the Iraq war in 2003, she utilized the slogan: “SEND THE BUSH DAUGHTERS TO IRAQ!” on her protest sign. While this might have implicitly called attention to the fact that the frontlines of our military industrial complex are often poor people of color, it explicitly utilized gender
equality—that the young Bush women were just as capable as young men—to denounce the presidential administration at the time.

I must actively work, then, to use other lenses outside of my marginalized social locations of “woman” and “Jew.” I did not learn I was white until I started teaching in North Philadelphia in 2009, in an all-Black school, when I was only 22 years old. Given my lack of cultural and racial awareness and understanding, I fear to this day that the person who learned the most when I was a K-8 teacher was myself and what it means to be white in the United States. As being dominant in one social location can “mediate the oppression experienced in those other social locations” (DiAngelo, 2006/2016, p. 183), I understand that my whiteness mediates my oppressive experiences as a woman and as a Jew. For example, if I experience violence at the hands of cisgender men (or anyone for that matter) of any racial/ethnic background, I am more likely to have my case heard in court and receive support services and resources (Crenshaw, 1991). Similarly, as the granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, I am hyperconscious that my relatives could not pass as white in the way I do now, especially since I hesitate to take up Judaism in my religious beliefs and reject it almost completely in my outward appearance: I wear pants, have multiple tattoos, and underwent rhinoplasty when I was 21. Moreover, I do not experience racism in the way that Jews of color do today.

Aligned with critical race feminist scholars who have argued that intersectional work is political (Crenshaw, 1991), disability studies scholar Linton (1998) wrote that “[s]tating one’s position relative to the subject matter is of theoretical importance, and it is also of political importance” (p. 153). For example, explicitly stating that I am nondisabled and white calls attention to the “absent voice of disabled people [and people of color] in scholarship and illustrates that the reader may…make the [normalized] assumption…that the writer is
It also calls attention, implicitly, to (racist and ableist) political structures and practices that keep this norm intact, such as the standardized test scores and licensure exams that exclude students of color from college and/or teaching (see Chapter 1).

My positionality also has political affordances and consequences. The majority of educational problems are researched by white people, including problems specific to people of color (Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999). This could reflect one of the “rules of racial standing,” that white people feel they are more equipped to talk about race and racism (Bell, 1992). It also could reflect that white people tend to be overrepresented as faculty members in schools of education across the country that are conducting this research (Jones et al., 2002; Sleeter, 2017). Where they are represented, professors of color are more likely to have higher service loads on and off campus as compared to white professors, especially in advising/mentoring college students of color (Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999). This inherently limits their time to devote to research. It is possible that people/scholars of color are researching/talking about educational inequities that are facing students of color as much as white people. Yet, perhaps they are more likely to use nondominant methodologies (Collins, 1990/2003) outside “the majority of research epistemologies in the U.S. [that have] come from white social history” (Roegman, 2018, p. 837), which are less likely to be recognized as legitimate in academia (Collins, 1990/2003). Finally, scholars of color may not want to research race and racism, as they may want to work against the notion that the only thing they are equipped to research is race (Malcolm X & Haley, 1965).

Thus, my positionality as a white person in academia and higher education runs counter to the ideals of representation in teaching and higher education. For this reason, I only tentatively position myself as a critical scholar and teacher/educator. (I use teacher/educator to indicate that I understand my prior experience as a K-8 teacher in North Philadelphia as embedded and
inseparable from my identity as a teacher educator and educator both within and outside the
pedagogy’s emphasis on dialogue that “assumes that we could all engage in dialogue equally as
if we were not raced, gendered, [abled], and class persons” (p. 718). Given my multiple layers of
privilege, I hesitate to claim a critical position as a teacher/educator and/or scholar, given the
social capital it affords me in some (usually “liberal” or “progressive”) spaces (Schwitzman,
2018). For example, being perceived as “woke” about race in my context might liken me to
being “smart,” while Black bodies are still dying at the hands of the police. Still, I understand the
“tensions that emerge” (Milner, 2007, p. 396) from “acknowledging the multiple roles, identities,
and positions that researchers and research participants bring to the research process” (p. 396) as
productive and powerful tools for social change.

**Research Context**

HSIs are the most recent, fastest growing classification of MSI and make up the majority
of MSIs in the country (John & Stage, 2014; Wolanin, 1998). The majority of HSIs are
community colleges; however, 4-year degree-granting institutions—such as the research sites in
this study—do exist (Benitez, 1998; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; Núñez et al., 2016).
Historically, students have chosen to attend HSIs due to lower financial costs, the “cultural
support” (Conrad, 2015, p. 29), and the closeness of the university to their homes and families
(Gasman et al., 2015; Núñez & Bowers, 2011). They have often attended a high school with a
higher percentage of Hispanic or students of color (Benitez, 1998; Flores & Park, 2014; Gasman
et al., 2015) and/or a high school that is less oriented toward a college-going culture, rendering
them less academically prepared (Núñez & Bowers, 2011). HSIs enroll almost 50% of all
Hispanic undergraduates and 25% of all undergraduates of color (Benitez, 1998; Conrad, 2015;
Flores & Park, 2013; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998). Yet, there is also tension between HSIs and other MSIs for funding, with some saying HSIs might be on the frontline of federal budget cuts (Flores & Park, 2014; Gasman et al., 2015). This tension may have been exacerbated in the Fall 2019 semester (during data collection), as mandatory federal funding for MSIs lapsed during this time (“Booker urges Senate”, 2019; Schwarber, 2019).

While many MSIs have a commitment to serving their local communities and have produced many teachers (Ginsberg et al., 2017), each type of MSI has a unique history, purpose, and set of common goals. As discussed in Chapter 2, unlike HBCUs and TCUs, HSIs developed circumstantially in areas with increasing Latinx populations asserting their civil right to a college education, rather than for the explicit purpose of educating a specific racial group or righting a historical wrong of educational exclusion (Benitez, 1998; Flores & Park, 2013, 2014; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998). Given this development, federal funding requirements for HSI status specify a full-time undergraduate Hispanic population of (only) 25% and a low-income undergraduate population of 50% (John & Stage, 2014; Wolanin, 1998). HSIs, then, vary in their degree of racial diversity and percentage of students of color across campuses (Liu & Liu, 2012). In fact, HSIs are considered some of the most diverse schools in the country (Conrad, 2015; Gasman et al., 2015). To better understand the diversity across HSIs, Núñez et al., 2016 “identified six types of [HSIs]: (1) Urban Enclave Community Colleges, (2) Rural Dispersed Community Colleges, (3) Big Systems 4-Year Institutions, (4) Small Communities 4-Year Institutions, (5) Puerto Rican Institutions, and (6) Health Science Schools” (p. 57). As explained further below, both research sites—while still noticeably different from each other (Núñez & Elizondo, 2015)—fell into the third category, “Big Systems 4-Year Institutions.”
As HSIs were not developed explicitly to meet the needs of a specific racial or ethnic group, an HSI designation in and of itself is not enough evidence to indicate how welcoming the university environment is for students who have historically been underserved in higher education (Hubbard & Stage, 2009). Some HSIs have even been shown to be more similar to PwIs than other MSIs, in terms of meeting diverse students’ academic and social needs (Hubbard & Stage, 2009). In this case, some scholars believe these HSIs might be more appropriately thought of as Hispanic-enrolling (versus -serving) institutions (Gasman et al., 2015). However, more recent research has argued against utilizing a Hispanic-serving and Hispanic-enrolling binary, as an “HSI’s organizational culture can be more nuanced” (Garcia et al., 2019, p. 6) and can serve their students in a variety of ways.

**Research Sites**

The HSI designation signals that an institution of higher education might be working differently than traditional PwIs to meet the social and academic needs of historically and multiply marginalized students (see Chapter 1). Yet, some data have suggested that “there is no consistent negative (or positive) effect on college completion and the HSI designation alone after taking into account student characteristics and institutional capacity” (Flores & Park, 2014, p. 261). As such, I utilized two research sites to garner a more robust analysis when discussing the affordances and limitations of the HSI context in serving and preparing preservice teachers (of color) and whether/how the HSI influenced teacher educators’ practices. Two was a small enough number to permit a deeper examination of the characteristics of these two institutions, beyond those that simply designated them HSIs.

Within the state in which the study took place, around 35% (or 5/14) of 4-year public universities were HSIs in 2019 (when data collection took place). In 2019, all 17 of the MSIs in
this state were HSIs, with two also being labeled Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) and one also being labeled an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) (Rutgers Center for Minority Serving Institutions, 2020). Thus, I utilized the affordances of purposeful sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Maxwell, 2005) and convenience sampling (Marshall, 1996) to select two 4-year public HSIs in the same state in the northeastern United States. In addition to institutional characteristics of each research site, here I also detail how I gained initial access, even as I understand access as a complex negotiation that happens throughout the entire research process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Erickson, 1986).

*Eastern City University (ECU)*

I used purposeful sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Maxwell, 2005) to select ECU, as I am also an adjunct professor who teaches a diversity course offered in a department outside of the College of Education (COE). As indicated in Chapter 1, it was in this context that I started exploring diversity curriculum and pedagogy in the HSI context. I utilized the affordances of being in this position to gain access to the site, as I was able to recruit eligible participants via my ECU email account. I was also able to apply for ECU Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval as an adjunct faculty member.

Based on available data from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), ECU is a public 4-year institution that has been designated an HSI for at least the last 12 years. As such, it works to “provide a diverse population of learners with an excellent education” (ECU website). Located in an urban area, during the 2019-2020 school year, the university served just under 8,000 students, about 75% of whom were undergraduates. The majority (81%) of undergraduates were full-time students. The undergraduate racial demographics during the 2019-2020 school year—39% Hispanic/Latino, 19% white, 8% Asian,
24% Black or African American, 0% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders, 0% American Indian or Alaska Native, 3% Two or more races, 5% race/ethnicity unknown, and 2% non-resident alien (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2021)—made ECU a “majority HSI” (MA-HSI) at the time of the study, or an “institution where Hispanic students are the majority among all race groups on campus” (Liu & Liu, 2012, p. 78). While full-time faculty made up only a small percentage of the instructional staff (approximately 30%), as of the 2018-2019 school year, they were mostly white: 57% white, 11% Black, 9% Hispanic, and 17% Asian. Voted the best public school in the state for ethnic diversity (U.S. News and World Report, 2015, 2016, as cited in ECU website) and the 7th “best bang for your buck” (Washington Monthly, 2015, as cited in ECU website) because its tuition is the lowest offered by a 4-year public university in the state, ECU was established in the 1920s initially as a training school for teachers. Today, the school is composed of four accredited colleges and offers multiple undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

**Northern State University (NSU)**

In order to find another 4-year public HSI in the same state, I used convenience sampling (Marshall, 1996). To gain access to NSU, I emailed two professors who were editors of a book in which I had co-authored a chapter. They put me in touch with the chair of one of the education departments and an administrator in charge of Hispanic-serving initiatives, who helped me recruit eligible professors. The administrator was also able to secure permission for me to conduct the study at NSU.

Like ECU, NSU is also a 4-year public institution; however, the campus is significantly larger, both in terms of geography and student enrollment. During the 2019-2020 school year, the university served approximately 21,000 students, 80% of whom were undergraduates.
Almost 90% of undergraduate students were full-time. Slightly more of NSU’s graduate student population was full-time (36%), compared to ECU (21%). The undergraduate racial demographics during the 2019-2020 school year—30% Hispanic/Latino, 40% white, 6% Asian, 14% Black or African American, 3% Two or more races, 4% race/ethnicity unknown, 2% non-resident alien, 0% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders—characterized NSU as a “minority-majority Hispanic Serving Institution (MIMA-HSI)” at the time of the study, or a school that “has a Hispanic population of 25 percent which is also the largest minority group on campus” (Liu & Liu, 2012, p. 78). Like ECU, full-time faculty at NSU made up a small percentage of the instructional staff (34%) and taught approximately half of the courses; just under 60% were white, as of Fall 2018. Seven percent of full-time faculty were Hispanic, 12% were Asian, and 6% were African American (NSU Institutional Report, 2019).

Also originally a training school for teachers, NSU today offers over 300 majors, minors, concentrations, and certifications across eight colleges/schools, and as such, NSU ranks as one of the “best” universities in the state (NSU website). Additional awards and recognitions include being ranked in the top 200 national universities in the country in 2020, #23 in Top Performers on Social Mobility, and #79 in Top Public Schools (U.S. News & World Report, as cited in NSU website). In 2019, three separate publications included NSU in its list of colleges that offered the best value in terms of tuition.

**Side-by-Side Comparison**

Both ECU and NSU, like many HSIs, were working with limited financial resources to support their students (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2012, as cited in Núñez et al., 2015) and had similar in-state and out-of-state tuition during the 2019-2020 school
year,\(^1\) when the data were collected (NCES, 2020). However, they differed in terms of demographics and other institutional factors, reflecting the diversity of HSIs as a whole (Núñez et al., 2016) and the diversity within 4-year HSIs, in particular (Núñez & Elizondo, 2015), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Site Data</th>
<th>Eastern City University (ECU)</th>
<th>Northern State University (NSU)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HSI status</td>
<td>Has been an HSI for at least 12 years</td>
<td>Became an HSI in 2016, after no longer requiring the SAT/ACT for admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment, 2019-2020 school year</td>
<td>Approximately 8,000 students, 75% undergraduates</td>
<td>Approximately 21,000, 80% undergraduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Racial Demographics, 2019-2020 school year</td>
<td>“Majority HSI” (Liu &amp; Liu, 2012): 39% Hispanic, 19% white, 8% Asian, 24% Black, 3% Two or more races, 5% race/ethnicity unknown, 2% non-resident alien</td>
<td>“Minority-Majority HSI” (Liu &amp; Liu, 2012): 30% Hispanic, 40% white, 6% Asian, 14% Black, 3% Two or more races, 4% race/ethnicity unknown, 2% non-resident alien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell Grant Recipients, 2017-2018 school year</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance Rate, 2019-2020 school year</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Rate, 2018-2019 school year</td>
<td>73% for full-time, 11% for part-time</td>
<td>80% for full-time, 42% for part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall graduation rate within 6 years, 2018-2019 school year</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students formally registered with office of disability services,(^2) 2019-2020 school year</td>
<td>4% (which was reported at 3 out of the 13 4-year public universities in the state)</td>
<td>3% or less (which was reported at 7 out of the 13 4-year public universities in the state)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *U.S. News & World Report*, and each institution’s website.

---

\(^1\) If institutional information on an aspect of the university was not yet available during the 2019-2020 school year, I utilized the most recent publicly available information in the tables throughout this chapter.

\(^2\) I recognize that institutions may differentially name the office on campus that works with students around disability accommodations (e.g., Office of Specialized Services). I decided to keep the language uniform throughout the dissertation for (a) clarity and (b) making sure I did not compromise the identities of the participating institutions.
At each research site, both undergraduate students who applied to the COE and graduate students who received their bachelor’s degrees in another field and returned to school for their teaching certification are included in the overall group of students admitted to and graduating from each institution’s COE. (Throughout the dissertation, I refer to this combined group of undergraduate and graduate students seeking certification as “preservice teachers.”) Using information from Data USA and Title II reports, Tables 2 and 3 compare the racial demographics of the undergraduate and graduate populations on campus with those of preservice teachers.

Table 2

*Comparison of Racial Demographics at ECU Between Preservice Teachers and Institution During the 2017-2018 School Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Combined Undergraduate and Graduate Population on Campus</th>
<th>Population of (Undergraduate and Graduate) Preservice Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7.62%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1.77%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic of any race (including white)</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.338%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

*Comparison of Racial Demographics at NSU Between Preservice Teachers and Institution During the 2018-2019 School Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Combined Undergraduate and Graduate Population on Campus</th>
<th>Population of (Undergraduate and Graduate) Preservice Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic of any race (including white)</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The combined undergraduate and graduate population figures in Tables 2 and 3, compared to the undergraduate demographics of each institution in Table 1, demonstrate that the majority of graduate students at both institutions are white, even as both institutions are designated HSIs via their undergraduate demographics. Additionally, white students are overrepresented in the group of “preservice teachers” at each campus, relative to the overall population, and Hispanic and Black students are underrepresented. These demographics are further described in Chapter 4.

Participants

As access is built on trust, I worked to be as explicit as possible with my participants about the purpose of my research and what I was doing in the setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Erickson, 1986) before, during, and after data collection. I selected two professors as focal participants at each research site—a decision also grounded in the possibilities presented in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 on pedagogical strategies for teaching diverse students at HSIs. Of the two relevant studies, the aims of Nuñez et al.’s (2010) study were similar to mine in focusing on professors’ pedagogy. They studied three teacher educators at one HSI. Choosing two research sites for this study thus extends Nuñez et al.’s work. Additionally, limiting focal participants to a total of four professors allowed more in-depth data collection and analysis, as it was only one more focal participant than in Nuñez et al. This addressed the scarcity of literature on in-depth explorations of diversity curricula and pedagogy at HSIs and MSIs more broadly.

Professors were invited to participate if they were teaching a course that had an overt commitment to addressing diversity. This commitment to diversity could be expressed either in the course catalog description, the course syllabus, and/or any other medium used to describe the aims of the course’s objectives, activities, and/or assignments. The course could be an
introductory, foundational course focused on educational theory or history—open to any undergraduate student, in any major, who might have an interest in teaching—or a methods course—open only to admitted preservice teachers (graduate and undergraduate students seeking certification). The course could be in any elementary or secondary program.

At the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, I used my ECU email account as an adjunct in another department to send individual invitation letters to professors who were teaching courses that were eligible, based on descriptions in the university catalog. Of the four who responded, two were available and agreed to participate in the study after an introductory meeting. One was teaching an introductory course and one a methods course. As such, I sought an introductory and methods course at NSU. At NSU, the chair with whom I was put in contact was teaching an introductory course and agreed to participate in the study after an introductory meeting. The administrator in charge of Hispanic-serving initiatives put me in touch with the chair of another education department, who recruited a fourth faculty member teaching a methods course on my behalf. This fourth faculty member agreed after an introductory phone call. The relevant demographic details of each focal professor (as described to me) and the courses they taught in Fall 2019 as part of the study, are shown in Table 4. As indicated in Table 4, three of the four professor participants were people of color, and all four were from multiply marginalized backgrounds. Annamma (2018) wrote:

Methods also signify the relationship we strive to have, and what actually occurs, with our participants and others at the sites where we do research. Erickson (2006) noted we can study down, up, or side by side and each of these choices affects our deeper commitments. (p. 167)
Table 4

**Focal Professor Participants and the Courses They Taught as Part of the Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ECU</th>
<th>NSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Course</td>
<td><strong>Professor Anderson</strong>&lt;br&gt;African American male&lt;br&gt;Age: Late 60s/Early 70s&lt;br&gt;“Challenges in Urban Education”&lt;br&gt;25-30 students enrolled</td>
<td><strong>Professor Ruben</strong>&lt;br&gt;Latino, Jewish male&lt;br&gt;Age: Late 60s&lt;br&gt;“Historical Foundations of American Education” (section reserved for first-semester freshmen only)&lt;br&gt;25-30 students enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods Course</td>
<td><strong>Professor Ocampo</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hispanic male&lt;br&gt;Age: Late 40s&lt;br&gt;“Classroom Management and Assessment” (hybrid course)&lt;br&gt;12 students enrolled</td>
<td><strong>Professor Abbott</strong>&lt;br&gt;Black female&lt;br&gt;Age: Mid 50s&lt;br&gt;“Social Studies and the Arts in the Elementary Classroom”&lt;br&gt;9 students enrolled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While I strove to study my participants side-by-side, in some ways I felt I was simultaneously studying down—as a white woman born in the United States, in relation to my participants’ racial, ethnic, and/or national identities—and studying up, as a doctoral student 25-35 years younger than my participants. I feel it is important to note this here, as these dynamics inherently impacted this study’s findings.

I used convenience sampling (Marshall, 1996) and invited every student to participate in an individual interview, with the goal of interviewing 2-3 students in each course (8-12 total), via an announcement during class and a recruitment letter. Participation did not affect students’ grades, as professors did not know which students volunteered. Table 5 shows the student participants and the identities that surfaced in their interviews.
Table 5

**Student Participant Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Identities</th>
<th>Year/Status in School</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ameerah</td>
<td>white appearing*, Muslim female</td>
<td>Undergraduate, senior</td>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Dr. Ocampo/methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto</td>
<td>Hispanic male</td>
<td>Undergraduate, senior</td>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Dr. Ocampo/methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>white appearing, Hispanic male who had an IEP in high school</td>
<td>Undergraduate, transfer student</td>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Dr. Anderson/introductory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allison</td>
<td>white female from suburbs</td>
<td>Undergraduate, transfer student</td>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Dr. Anderson/introductory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>Hispanic male</td>
<td>Undergraduate, transfer student</td>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Dr. Anderson/introductory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>white appearing female</td>
<td>Graduate student seeking certification</td>
<td>NSU</td>
<td>Dr. Abbott/methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara</td>
<td>white female</td>
<td>Graduate student seeking certification</td>
<td>NSU</td>
<td>Dr. Abbott/methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>white appearing female</td>
<td>Undergraduate, first- semester freshman</td>
<td>NSU</td>
<td>Dr. Ruben/introductory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liana</td>
<td>Hispanic female with a learning disability</td>
<td>Undergraduate, first- semester freshman</td>
<td>NSU</td>
<td>Dr. Ruben/introductory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If they did state their race, I noted it as “appearing.”

I did not need to apply further selection criteria for student participants, as only two students volunteered in Dr. Ocampo’s, Dr. Ruben’s, and Dr. Abbott’s courses, and only three students volunteered in Dr. Anderson’s. As further detailed, the student interviews were used to contextualize the observations and interviews of the focal teacher educators.

**Data Collection Methods: Instruments and Procedures**

As a qualitative researcher, I took the stance that there are no “pure,” “raw” data (Charmaz, 2006; Emerson et al., 2011; Erickson, 1986; Marshall & Rossman, 2011) waiting for
me in the field, “uncontaminated by human thought and action” (Freeman et al., 2007, p. 27). Rather, the significance of what I “found” depended on how I interpreted the way it fit with other data within the context of my study (Freeman et al., 2007). However, to the extent that I could, I engaged the field as if I knew very little about my participants and diversity curricula at HSIs (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Additionally, I understood what my participants shared as not only potential data but as a gift (Saldaña, 2015).

In line with that understanding, I “collected” the following: interviews with professor and student participants; observations of the courses taught by the professor participants; public profile and scholarship data about the professor participants; curricular documents/artifacts related to the courses; institutional and programmatic documents; state documents regarding teacher employment/licensure and information on institutions of higher education in the state; and a trail of virtual and physical materials that helped me understand the impact of campus-wide incidents/events and the current sociopolitical climate on the work of professors and their students. Collecting multiple types of data at different levels (individual, classroom, institutional, state, federal) (a) helped steer me away from privileging a certain way of producing knowledge and instead kept me grounded in working to understand my participants’ perspectives (Fontana & Frey, 2005; (b) “reflect[ed] a commitment to understanding the different layers of activity that affect each other” (Anamma, 2018, p. 184), in relation to the research questions; and (c) helped me “focus on how actors in [these two] HSIs [made] sense of their roles, responsibilities, organizational challenges, and contributions” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 12) in a way that did not position these two institutions in deficit ways (Garcia et al., 2019; Núñez et al., 2015). Taken together, these three groundings and commitments helped me engage in data collection (and subsequent analysis) that honors “the complexity of HSIs” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 12).
Additionally, my chosen data collection instruments and procedures aligned with the literature on what constitutes credible qualitative research (Brantlinger et al., 2005).

**Interviews**

The interview method aligns with qualitative research, as the goal is to better understand people’s stories and the sense they are making of their lived experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Seidman, 2013). I conducted semi-structured interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) that were “conversational and narrative in style” (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 76). Thus, while I prepared an interview protocol, I treated my participants as experts and let their responses shape the direction of the interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Even as I collected multiple types of data, I gave the most weight to the interviews because the professors were the main focus of my research questions. Observations, curricular documents/artifacts, public profile and scholarship information about the professors, institutional and state-level data, and materials generated in response to the sociopolitical climate were used to inform the interviews and help me contextualize stories that, from my perspective, seemed to either diverge away from each other or from my own understandings of diversity and/or curriculum. Additionally, I audio recorded and transcribed all of the interviews myself (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Seidman, 2013). This allowed me to re-visit the interview data, especially the nonverbal aspects of the interviews (e.g., sighs, pauses) and important contextual information (e.g., if someone interrupted us). I transcribed the entire interview and not only sections that I deemed important in order to avoid, to the extent that it is possible, imposing my own frame of understanding onto the data before undertaking in-depth analysis.

In conducting interviews with my participants, I adopted an empathetic stance to interviewing (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Saldaña, 2015). Understanding that it is impossible to be
neutral when interviewing someone, this “method of morality” (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 118) asserts the importance of taking an “ethical stance” (p. 117) that aligns with a DisCrit methodology in several ways. First, it prioritizes, through a non-deficit lens, the lived experiences of my participants over “any theoretical or methodological concerns” (p. 118). Second, it emphasizes that both my participants and I are involved in the interview exchange, and the material conditions that shape our understandings of the world collectively create the interview. This meant understanding that my positionality—especially along the social locations in which I hold a different position than my participant—might affect how my participants interpret this stance. For example, if my participant is a person of color, then perceiving me as authentically invested in a conversation about race might have been more difficult, given the ways in which racism—a system that benefits white people—works to make inaccessible the stories of people who oppose it (Tatum, 1997/2017) and to keep people of color in subordinate positions in society (Alexander, 2010; Bell, 1992). Third, this stance encourages the researcher to work as an advocate and a partner with participants from marginalized groups and to use research to create more socially just policies often advocated by DisCrit scholars and those working from a “transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 10). This meant being open to changing my understanding of what is even considered social justice, as this understanding has been developed from my various subjective positions in society and, therefore, might be different than what my participants understand as equitable higher education praxis (Roegman, 2018).

**Professor/Teacher Educator Interviews**

As professors were the main focus of my study, I used Seidman’s (2013) “in-depth, phenomenologically based interviewing” (p. 15) to conduct three separate interviews. Utilizing
Seidman’s notion of interviewing also provided a stronger sense of validity, as internal consistency across all three interviews suggests that participants have been honest in telling their stories. The first interview protocol focused on their life histories and teaching philosophies. The second interview protocol focused on their instruction and was guided by the literature on preparing teachers for K-12 diversity (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015), the literature on preparing teachers of color (e.g., Kohli, 2009), and the literature on inclusive pedagogy (Valle & Connor, 2011) (outlined in Chapters 1 and 2). In other words, I asked them questions about both the curricular content and accessibility of their courses. The final interview asked them to reflect on the semester and was also guided by the literature on HSIs, where I asked them questions about how they felt the institution was serving its students (Garcia et al., 2019). The protocols for the three professor interviews can be found in Appendix A. I also left time during the second and third interviews to ask any follow-up questions about prior interviews and what I observed in their classes and/or at the institution. In this way, I worked to engage data collection and preliminary analysis that was “ongoing and iterative…wherein [I] collected data, analyzed the data, considered a range of possibilities, collected more data, and then discussed the data with the [professor]” (Annamma, 2018, p. 185).

Seidman (2013) suggested that each interview be 90 minutes. However, in practice, each professor interview lasted between 45-90 minutes, as some professors were more available and/or talkative than others. While Seidman also suggested that spacing interviews 3 days to one week apart is ideal, this structure can be adjusted as long as participants feel they can both reconstruct and reflect on their experiences. Given that my study was firmly bound by the temporality of one semester (as the courses were all one-semester long) and I wanted to incorporate questions based on what I was observing in their classes throughout that time period,
I adjusted this structure and interviewed them at the beginning, middle, and end of the Fall 2019 semester. All of the interviews took place in each professor’s office, with the exception of Dr. Anderson’s third interview, which took place over the phone due to scheduling/logistical constraints. Table 6 provides more details on the professor/teacher educator interviews.

Table 6

Professor Interview Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor Participant</th>
<th>Interview Date and Time</th>
<th>Length of Interview (in hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ocampo (ECU)</td>
<td>Interview #1: Monday 9/16/19 at 12:00 pm</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #2: Monday 9/30/19 at 12:00 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #3: Monday 11/18/19 at 12:00 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Anderson (ECU)</td>
<td>Interview #1: Tuesday 9/17/19 at 2:15 pm</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #2: Tuesday 10/22/19 at 2:30 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #3: Wednesday 11/13/19 at 9:00 am</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ruben (NSU)</td>
<td>Interview #1: Thursday 10/10/19 at 1:00 pm</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #2: Thursday 11/7/19 at 1:00 pm</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #3: Thursday 12/12/19 at 1:00 pm</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Abbott (NSU)</td>
<td>Interview #1: Wednesday 10/23/19 at 4:00 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #2: Wednesday 11/13/19 at 3:00 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview #3: Wednesday 12/11/19 at 2:30 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total = 12.1 hours</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Interviews**

As student interviews were used to contextualize the professor interviews, I drew on Spradley (1979) to conduct one 30-45-minute interview with the student participants, toward the end of the semester after I had gained their trust (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Aligned with the literature in Chapters 1 and 2, I started with “grand tour” questions that were broad and open-ended about their experiences in their preparation programs as whole (or education courses, for those students who had not yet been admitted) as well as about what they were learning in the course I was observing. I then followed these questions with “mini tour” questions that dealt with
smaller units of experience. Here, I asked them questions about specific assignments and activities utilized in their courses. Finally, I asked them “example questions” on a single event that they described earlier in the interview. I also included questions that were specific to each instructor’s course and thus added in response to/to learn about other data—professor interviews, observations, curricular documents, and so on. For example, Dr. Ocampo shared in his second interview that the students learning about the “six soft spots of student discipline” was a highlight/moment of success. Thus, I asked the students in his class whom I interviewed “How useful did you find learning about the six soft spots?” to help further contextualize and understand Dr. Ocampo’s interview response. The protocol for student interviews can be found in Appendix B.

In total, I spent 4.4 hours interviewing the students. At ECU, interviews took place in my adjunct office. At NSU, interviews took place in the student café. I offered to buy students a snack and gave them my contact information in case they wanted to follow up with me about the study and/or their future teaching careers.

**Course Observations**

As student and professor experiences are an important aspect of “servingness” (Garcia et al., 2019) and given my awareness of how my positionality as a white, nondisabled researcher could impact the data in ways that decenter their voices (Roegman, 2018), observations were used to contextualize student and professor interview responses and thus were not considered main data sources. Observations took place over the duration of the Fall 2019 semester, which was the length of each course in the study. For each professor participant, I conducted 4-6 observations of their course. At the beginning of the semester, I met with each professor
individually to decide together what course sessions would be best to observe, in terms of curricular objectives and activities planned for that session.

In conducting observations of the teacher educators’ courses, I worked to adopt the role of the “sensitive ethnographer” (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 29) who prioritizes participants’ concerns and privileges “‘insider’ descriptions and categories over [my] own ‘outsider’ views” (p. 29). Understanding that fieldnotes create, rather than record, reality (Emerson et al., 2011), I took both descriptive and reflective fieldnotes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Using specific details and language, descriptive fieldnotes included: portraits of my participants, description of the physical setting (with accompanying photographs), accounts of events, reconstruction of dialogue, description of activities, and my own behavior as an observer and how I might have been influencing my data collection (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). As reflection improves fieldnote data, reflective fieldnotes included: reflections on analysis, or what I was learning and/or possible connections to other data/information; methodological reflections; reflections on ethical dilemmas or conflict in the field; reflections on how my own beliefs might have been influencing data collection; and any points of clarification (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Reflective fieldnotes took the form of observer comments throughout the descriptive fieldnotes as well as longer memos at the end (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Emerson et al., 2011). I also wrote reflective fieldnotes before entering the setting to surface my own assumptions and expectations about the observations (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

While my note-taking strategies shaped and are shaped by the setting (Emerson et al., 2011), in the beginning I took more notes because I was new to the setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and had a broader understanding of what might be relevant data and/or information (Emerson et al., 2011). I started descriptive fieldnotes with “jottings” of my initial impression of
the setting, including specific sensory details as well as a general sense of feeling and emotion (Emerson et al., 2011). Then, I focused on what seemed to be significant, unexpected, or exceptions to people in the field, as well as everyday aspects of the teacher education classroom (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Emerson et al., 2011). After leaving the field, and as soon as possible, I turned my “jottings” into more detailed field notes and memos (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Emerson et al., 2011). Each set of fieldnotes concluded with a summary commentary on a separate page (Emerson et al., 2011).

As I conducted observations of the courses, the professor/teacher educator was the “main character” of my observations (Emerson et al., 2011), as they were the main focus of the study. Thus, I was minimally focused on the students. Dr. Abbott put it well during our first observation when she told the students, “She is here to watch me, not so much you.” Yet, there were moments where I felt I had to take more detailed notes on the students, given how they were impacting the classroom dynamics and, subsequently, the professor’s pedagogy. These extra details were evident in my fieldnotes in two ways. First, in addition to the students I interviewed, there were some students who I named (and then gave pseudonyms) because they spent a lot of time outwardly participating and/or the professor and I spoke about their participation in our interviews. Two students in Dr. Anderson’s introductory class at ECU (Oliver and Hillary) who are referenced in Chapter 5 met these criteria. Second, I noted (what I perceived to be) students’ race, gender, dis/ability status, age, and/or other identities if I felt this was relevant to what I was witnessing. (This applied to both named and unnamed students in the fieldnotes.) For example, I included Hillary’s race (white), gender (female), class (from the suburbs), and nationality (Australian) in my fieldnotes as I felt it was important to note these aspects alongside observing her views on the hijab as oppressive (see Chapter 5).
Toward the end of the Fall 2019 semester, I reflected in my researcher journal on when in the semester I conducted each professor’s observations and how that might have impacted data analysis. Different time periods in the semester tend to elicit different responses from students and faculty. It is possible that had I observed professors at a different point in the semester, I might have noticed different things. I do not suspect that the professors would be radically different, but I do think the students might have been in significantly different mental spaces at a different point in time. Table 7 shows when in the semester I observed each focal professor’s course. Taken from my researcher journal, Appendix C details how that might have impacted what I observed, and how what I observed might have been different if I visited these classrooms at different points in the semester.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor Participant</th>
<th>Observation Dates and Time</th>
<th>Length of Observation (in hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ocampo (ECU)—Beginning of semester</td>
<td>Thursday 9/3/19 at 9:55 am</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday 10/28/19 at 12:00 pm</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Dr. Anderson (ECU)—Mostly beginning of the semester</td>
<td>Thursday 9/17/19 at 4:25 pm</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 10/3/19 at 4:25 pm</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 10/10/19 at 4:25 pm</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 11/21/19 at 4:25 pm</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ruben (NSU)—Throughout the Semester</td>
<td>Thursday 9/26/19 at 11:30 am</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday 10/15/19 at 11:30 am</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday 10/22/19 at 11:30 am</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday 11/19/19 at 11:30 am</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday 12/3/19 at 11:30 am</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 12/5/19 at 11:30 am</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Abbott (NSU)—End of the semester</td>
<td>Thursday 10/24/19 at 8:30 am</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 11/7/19 at 8:30 am</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 11/14/19 at 8:30 am</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday 12/5/19 at 8:30 am</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total = 31.0 hours

*Dr. Anderson sometimes let the students out early, which is why his observations were not all the same length.
Curricular Documents and Artifacts

I also collected curricular documents and artifacts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) from each professor’s course to help me better understand the professors’ pedagogical strategies and commitments. These documents and artifacts included: course syllabi, photographs and copies of PowerPoint slides used in class, readings assigned and/or referenced in class, worksheets accompanying classroom activities, in-class examinations (in the case of Dr. Ruben), project rubrics (in the case of Dr. Abbott), and photos of student work constructed both during class and at home. These documents and artifacts were used to contextualize interviews and observations and were positioned as “triggers for telling stories” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 46), rather than a significant focus of the research. For example, in Dr. Abbott’s class, I noticed that there was an explicit commitment to inclusive education and disability throughout her syllabus (image of a wheelchair; inclusion of disability in her diversity, equity, and inclusion statement; and disability integrated into students’ assignments). Thus, I used her syllabus as a prompt to ask her about her experience with students with disabilities and/or inclusive education.

Professors’ Public Profile and Scholarship

In the Spring 2020 semester, I collected additional, publicly available data about the professor participants as a way to supplement what I learned about them through the interviews, observations, and curricular documents/artifacts. I first gathered information to create a “public profile” (to the extent that this was possible) of each professor, which included blog posts and/or videos they may have authored or in which they were featured, and I searched around for whether they had a strong social media presence. For example, I found a lot of videos and blogs in which Dr. Anderson was featured as a Vietnam veteran. This information was used to supplement what he shared in his first interview, which centered on how his experience in
Vietnam brought him to education (see Chapter 5). Similarly, when I first met Dr. Ruben, he shared a blog post in which he was featured around his role as a Latino professor in an HSI. This helped me better understand his views on “servingness” at NSU (see Chapter 4).

I also reviewed and read the scholarship of each professor, even though at the time of the study, they had varying degrees of continuing to carry out writing and research. Given that I asked all four professors about their experiences as doctoral students, I started with their dissertations and then created an annotated bibliography of some of their work since graduating. This helped to further contextualize how research did (or did not) inform each professor’s teaching. While the direct findings from these data are not explicitly stated in Chapters 4 and 5, professors’ scholarship helped influence what data were important to include in these two findings chapters, given that I had deepened my knowledge about their practice.

**Institutional and Programmatic Documents**

As I sought to understand how students (of color) at HSIs who wish to be teachers were “served” (Garcia et al., 2019), during the Spring 2020 semester, I examined external documents (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) about each institution as a whole, as well as documents about the teacher preparation programs at each institution. Institutional documents included: student and faculty demographics and other relevant statistics (graduation rates, acceptance rate, etc.); the mission and organization of the university; university-wide accomplishments and achievements; student testimonials; and the history of the institution. I also looked for whether and how the university’s website shared/mentioned that the institution was an HSI. I then focused on the teacher preparation programs at each institution, with an eye toward requirements for admission to teacher preparation programs, supports for standardized licensure exams and other barriers to the profession more likely to be experienced by students of color, the number and types of
programs, the mission and philosophy of each institution’s COE, and any public information on the success of the COE’s graduates.

These institutional and programmatic documents helped contextualize student and professor interviews around what it was like to be a member of the institutional community. They also helped me better understand the different demographics of each professor’s course, in relation to those of the institution as a whole. (These points are further explained in Chapter 4.)

**State Documents Regarding Teacher Employment/Licensure and Higher Education**

During the Spring 2020 semester, I collected two types of state documents to further contextualize and understand the institutional and programmatic data. First, I reviewed the state’s requirements for seeking certification and employment as a teacher. This helped me better understand the COE admissions requirements for each institution and how they integrated the state’s requirements. (This will be further explained in Chapter 4.)

Next, in order to understand the landscape of higher education more broadly in the state in which the study took place, I conducted an informal review of statistical data from a sample of 15 colleges and universities (including ECU and NSU), using publicly available and institutional data from the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years—the most recent available data at the time of collection (Spring 2020). To conduct this informal review, I selected 15 colleges and universities that reflected the range of institutions in the state in which the study took place. Included in the sample were: four public 4-year HSIs, including ECU and NSU; two private 4-year HSIs, one of which was also a PBI; two public 2-year HSIs, one of which was a community college; four public 4-year PwIs; two private 4-year PwIs, one of which was an Ivy League school; and one public 2-year PwI, which was a community college. For each school, I used the *U.S. News and World Report* to find its endowment in 2018. I then used data from the
NCES to gather the following for each school: fall admissions requirements, acceptance rates, graduation rates and outcomes for full-time and part-time students, and graduation rates and outcomes by race and ethnicity. The information used for this informal review can be found in Appendix D, and the findings from this informal review are presented in Chapter 4.

**Materials Generated in Response to Campus and Sociopolitical Climates**

How a university responds to the current sociopolitical climate might also have implications for how professors and students engage with the topic of diversity. If the university issues a campus-wide statement of solidarity and support in the wake of the announcement of a political policy that targets immigrant families, students may feel that, at least on campus, they can share their immigrant identities. The same goes for how the university responds to campus-wide incidents and events. During my pilot study, I kept track of email announcements and statements to get a sense for how ECU responded to campus-wide and societal current events during the Fall 2016, Spring 2017, and Fall 2017 semesters. The President of ECU affirmed the university’s commitment to diversity and inclusion both right after Donald Trump was elected and the Executive Order on DACA was first announced. Yet, I also received emails in response to campus robberies that were racialized (Kendi, 2019), alerting the campus to the “Black” and “dark-skinned” suspects. The juxtaposition of these emails might have presented conflicting messages regarding which racial/ethnic groups are welcome on campus.

Thus, in my dissertation study, I kept a trail of physical and virtual responses from the university to both campus-wide current events and the sociopolitical climate. At ECU, this took the form of emails sent to my faculty account and/or flyers posted on campus. At NSU, I could only include the latter, as I did not have access to these email announcements. Additionally, I kept a running log/journal of current events that were happening in the United States (and
globally) during the Fall 2019 semester, when I was collecting interviews and observational data. At both ECU and NSU, I included questions about these events in my interview protocol with the professors. Furthermore, this running log/journal of current events that were happening off-campus acted as a consistent, constant aspect of the setting across both research sites, thereby strengthening my research design. For example, after collecting media about the Global Climate Strike and United Nations Meeting in September 2019, I then kept an eye out for any on-campus initiatives around climate change. (I noted a Clean and Sustainable Energy summit at NSU in Chapter 4.) While the relationship between professor pedagogy and specific current events is not the focus of the findings in this study, the interview questions about the current sociopolitical climate, in relation to on-campus and classroom interactions, influenced the data presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

Credibility of the Data

Luttrell (2009) wrote, “Knowing why we make the decisions we do is what lends our research validity and credibility” (p. 4). Throughout the data collection process, reflective memos grounded my research decisions in prior research, DisCrit, and other data that I collected. Within these memos, the detailed description of the setting, participants, and complexities of the field lent credibility to the analysis I engaged after data collection (Emerson et al., 2011). Furthermore, my analysis process was both iterative (Annamma, 2018) and took into account the biases I brought to the data collection and why I may have disagreed with my participants (Saldaña, 2015). For example, in conducting my pilot study, I learned that one bias I brought was the understanding of the teacher/professor as an expert on both the content area and understanding their students. Prior to one of my student interviews, my professor participant described one student as ready for graduate-level content. In reviewing the memo, I wrote after
the interview, I feel now that my impressions were highly influenced by this assessment. I also realize that I likely held this bias because my whiteness and identity as nondisabled have allowed the institution of schooling to work for me, thereby instilling certain (positive) beliefs about teachers. Second, the professor was a white man, thereby holding dominant subjective positions that likened him to being knowledgeable and smart.

I also used several credibility criteria for qualitative research. First, I was able to triangulate my data, as I collected multiple types and viewed them through three theoretical lenses (DS/E, CRT, and DisCrit) (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Brantlinger et al., 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Second, focusing my observations on both everyday aspects, as well as exceptional events, allowed me to collect disconfirming evidence (Brantlinger et al., 2005; Erickson, 1986). Third, focusing on writing memos helped me engage in researcher reflexivity (Brantlinger et al., 2005; Luttrell, 2009). Fourth, I engaged in member checks with my participants to get a better sense of how my understanding of diversity curricula aligned with theirs (Brantlinger et al., 2005; Freeman et al., 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011), as well as how the stories they told me about their life histories and teaching philosophies aligned with their experiences (Polkinghorne, 2007). Member checking occurred during the Fall 2019 semester, as I used the second and third interviews to ask clarifying questions about previous interviews and observations (mentioned earlier). These member checks also included talking about “the research process itself” (Saldaña, 2015, p. 177). During the Spring 2020 semester, I conducted another round of member checks, in which the professors shared feedback on narratives I had written about their courses, after I had engaged in more in-depth analysis. I worked to continue to ask questions and share any concerns throughout the research process in order to work against the “unseen dangers” (Milner, 2007) that my positionality as a white researcher could have brought
to my understanding of the data (Roegman, 2018). Fifth, I engaged in peer debriefing with my sponsor, second reader, other knowledgeable colleagues, and a diverse group of “critical friends” (Bambino, 2002; Dingus, 2008; Horvat, 2013) to see if my data collection and beginning interpretations seemed credible (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). These debriefing conversations helped me see things in the data that my positionality and prior experiences prevented me from initially noticing and/or understanding (Roegman, 2018) and allowed me to further refine my analysis and interpretation throughout the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters. Finally, in Chapter 6, I described how I worked through the “ethical and moral dilemmas” (Saldaña, 2015, p. 61) in utilizing observational data in research with professors and in only conducting one interview with the students.

**Pilot Study on Data Collection Methods**

During the Fall 2017 semester, I conducted a pilot study utilizing some of the data collection methods I previously outlined to provide an example for conducting my dissertation study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This pilot was shaped by my work in Dr. Michelle Knight-Manuel’s qualitative methods course. I observed two teacher educators at ECU and interviewed four students at ECU who were education majors. The data I collected included: fieldnotes from course observations, transcripts from the formal student interviews, curricular documents from both courses, reflective memos, and a trail of ECU’s responses to current events happening both on and off campus, as described earlier. Here, I reflect on what I learned from my observations and informal conversations with one professor and the student interviews and how this pilot study informed the design, data collection, and analysis of my dissertation study.

**Professor Observations**
In my professor observations, I sat in the back row of the class and used my laptop to type my fieldnotes. While this practice could be critiqued for positioning me as even more of an outsider than I already was, I was sitting among students who were also taking notes on their laptops. Thus, I feel my observational data collection method did “not intrude excessively on the flow of daily events” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 205). Typing also helped me capture more word-for-word dialogue and observational comments. Given that my dissertation research context was similar, I wrote my fieldnotes in the same way.

My observations and informal conversations showed me the importance of using multiple data sources (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and lenses to interpret participants’ perspectives. Had I viewed the professor’s class solely through the lens of inclusive pedagogy, I might have missed the complexity of what was happening in the classroom. For example, from an inclusive pedagogical stance, he might have been discriminating against students without the prerequisite reading skills and abilities when he told me, outside of class, that he was not interested in students participating if they had not done the reading. (Importantly, perhaps our shared position as white professors of students of color influenced his choice to share this opinion with me. It is possible he thought I could understand where he was coming from and/or that I held a similar belief.) Yet, he also told me that some of the reading he selected was planned with the intent of preparing his students for graduate school, which might not be a stance taken up by professors at a school serving traditionally underserved students. It seemed, then, that this professor was taking up the notion of holding “high expectations,” which the literature described as an important aspect of teaching diverse students (e.g., Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Gay, 2010).

**Interviews with Four Preservice Teachers at ECU**
One professor I observed paired me with three education majors in his course whom I could interview. Before meeting with them, I tested my interview protocol with one of my former students who was an education major. In my reflective methodological memo I wrote after our interview, I noted that our conversation seemed somewhat short. In addition to how a student of color might have responded to being interviewed by a white professor/person in a position of authority, I also wondered if the way I framed the questions made it difficult to ask follow-up questions. Additionally, I wondered if we were missing some sort of shared context around which we could center our conversation. After my interview with her, I updated my protocol to include questions that related more to things that happened during the course sessions I observed. Aligning the observation and interview in my new protocol helped me revise the questions in a way that allowed more robust conversations with the students in the course I observed. Thus, in my dissertation study, I worked to include our shared context of the course with the students I interviewed (see Appendix B) rather than solely asking them broad questions about diversity, equity, and/or social justice. Additionally, I found that audio recording and transcribing the interviews myself allowed me to feel close to the data and engage in a deeper analysis. Thus, as described earlier, I followed this procedure in my dissertation study.

Aligned with my literature review in Chapter 2, all three student participants from the professor’s class I interviewed foregrounded race when talking about diversity; however, the Black race specifically was central in our discussions. All three identified as (non-Black) racial/ethnic minorities; yet, when talking about the marginalization that people of color face, they all used examples of Black people’s experiences. They did not center and share their own experiences as a people of color. This could be attributed to the prevalent Black-white binary used to describe racial relations in the United States (Ancheta, 2010; Kohli, 2009). It is also possible that they did
not share painful experiences with me because they had just met me. Thus, my interviews with the three students from the professor’s class confirmed the need to conduct interviews with the students in my dissertation study toward the end of the semester, after I have become (a small) part of their classroom context and when they were more likely to trust me (mentioned earlier). Additionally, in reflecting on these pilot interviews, I feel my impressions of these students were influenced by comments from people outside of my pilot study. Thus, during my dissertation study, I heeded Bogdan and Biklen’s (2007) advice on not talking about what happened in the field before I could record it and kept thoughts on participants to myself before recording fieldnotes and memos.

**Methods of Data Analysis**

In line with a DisCrit methodology, I was interested in both the particular aspects of participants’ individual perspectives as well as the external, social conditions in which such perspectives were embedded. As such, I utilized both inductive and deductive approaches to analyzing the data (Annamma, 2018; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). While I present here the distinct phases of analyses in which I engaged, I also conceptualize analysis as a non-linear, iterative, ongoing process that happens throughout all parts of the research, not just after the data are collected (Annamma, 2018; Emerson et al., 2011; Horvat, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Miles & Huberman, 1994). With that conceptualization in mind, I discuss here the following phases, or tools, of my data analysis: memos, coding and categorizing, and playwriting.

**Memos**

I wrote memos and kept a researcher journal before, during, and after data collection as well as during the analysis and writing phases of my research (Bazeley, 2013; Charmaz, 2006). These memos included questions about what I was learning, points from discussions with
colleagues about the research phenomenon (after writing my fieldnotes and memos), and my
daily feelings about how I was encountering the work (Bazeley, 2013; Saldaña, 2015). My initial
memos were used to try to find general patterns in the data (Emerson et al., 2011). Subsequent
memos were as follows: theoretical, and explored more deeply how my emerging analyses
connected with my theoretical framework and literature review (Emerson et al., 2011; Marshall
& Rossman, 2011); thematic, which helped me think about the patterns and narratives that were
emerging from the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011); and methodological, where I kept notes on
my role as a researcher, any dilemmas that occurred during data collection, and reflections on
analytic techniques (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I brought my initial, theoretical, thematic, and
methodological memos together by writing analytic, integrative memos (Emerson et al., 2011)
that furthered these connections.

**Coding and Categorizing**

Coding and categorizing took into account different “layers of activity” (Annamma,
2018)—e.g., individual, classroom, institutional, state, federal contexts—in relation to answering
the research questions. Codes and categories were generated from the interviews and utilized to
analyze the observations. These codes and categories were then compared across institutional
and programmatic documents, state documents regarding teacher employment/licensure and
higher education, curricular documents and artifacts, professors’ public profile and scholarship
information, and materials generated in response to campus and sociopolitical climates. In other
words, institutional, programmatic, state, and federal-level documents were used to deepen my
understandings of the interviews and observations.

**Interviews**
As professor interviews were my primary data source and student interviews my secondary data source, and in line with Tenet 4 of DisCrit (see Chapter 2), I started with an inductive analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) of the interviews. Descriptive codes and subsequent categories were generated from each interview (Miles et al., 2013). In line with analytic coding techniques that “[open] up avenues of inquiry” (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 175), I first engaged in open coding of the interviews, in which I worked to generate as many codes as possible (Charmaz, 2006; Emerson et al., 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011) that reflected the concerns of my participants and how they negotiated their particular contexts and made sense of diversity curricula (Childers, 2014; Emerson et al., 2011; Saldaña, 2015). I paid particular attention to the topics that seemed significant to my participants and on which I had collected substantial data (Emerson et al., 2011). In line with an inductive analytic approach, when I went to categorizing the various codes, the categories that I constructed were from the data themselves (Saldaña, 2015). Where I could, I used ideas explicitly stated by participants in creating categories. Importantly, I remained open to allow coding categories to change during this phase of analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Additionally, in utilizing a DisCrit methodology, I kept in mind that the distinctions I made between categories and the characteristics of the data I deemed to be significant were reflective of my positionality and prior experiences that I brought to the data (Freeman, 2017). Institutional, programmatic, state, and federal-level documents were used to supplement my understanding of the codes and categories generated from the interviews. For example, I kept the category of “ideological slant in social justice” generated from Dr. Ruben’s interviews (see Chapters 4 and 5) in mind as I reviewed the institutional and programmatic documents from NSU that explained the social justice and diversity initiatives on campus.

**Observations**
As the observations were a tertiary data source, I analyzed them deductively (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) using the codes and categories from the interviews. This allowed me to see how topics that were important to participants (Emerson et al., 2011) were emerging in the observations. For example, after several codes fell into the category of “emphasizing the practical” in Dr. Ocampo’s interviews, I then reviewed the observations from his class for when he and/or the students were—or were not—emphasizing “practicality.” Institutional, programmatic, state, and federal-level documents were used to supplement my understanding of how the codes and categories generated from the interviews related to the observations. In keeping with the same example, I also noted “practicality” in the curricular documents for Dr. Ocampo’s course, such as where practicality was or was not emphasized in the syllabus and PowerPoint slides he used in class.

**Institutional, Programmatic, State, and Federal Documents**

To better understand “servingness” (Garcia et al., 2019) in relation to Research Question 1 (which guides the findings presented in Chapter 4), I then compared the analytic codes and categories generated from the interviews and substantiated by the observations to institutional, programmatic, state, and federal-level documents/data sources. For example, I compared the several codes in Dr. Ocampo’s and Ameerah’s (his student) interviews that led to the category “difficulty of the Praxis exam as a barrier for students being admitted to ECU’s COE” to the racial demographics of the students in Dr. Ocampo’s methods class that I observed (given the relationship between race and standardized licensure exam scores, stated in Chapter 1), programmatic documents on the COE admissions policies, and state documents regarding employment/licensure.
I then compared analytic categories between ECU and NSU and between course type (introductory or methods). This allowed broader, thematic categories to emerge from the data that demonstrated differences in practices and policies between institutions and course type. For example, the theme of “differentiation as challenging” was unique to the data from introductory courses at both institutions (taught by Dr. Anderson at ECU and Dr. Ruben at NSU). I related these themes that emerged across research sites and course type to programmatic and institutional characteristics that relate to DisCrit. For example, I analyzed the theme of “differentiation as challenging” in relation to the undergraduate racial demographics (Table 1) and noted that it did not come up in the less racially diverse (as indicated in Tables 2 and 3) methods classes. As will be shown in Chapter 4, I related this comparison to the higher education context, overall, at the state level.

**Playwriting**

While coding and categorizing generally prompt a researcher to focus on commonalities across pieces of data and how they can be grouped together (Freeman, 2017; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Saldaña, 2015; Seidman, 2013), I still engaged, yet did not seek to resolve, participant narratives that told truths that seemed to be in conflict with each other (Emerson et al., 2011; Erickson, 1986). This was especially important in analyzing the professor interviews, student interviews, and observations across all participants, in relation to Research Questions 2 and 3, which prompted a deeper look into the curriculum and pedagogy of each focal professor’s course (and guide the findings presented in Chapter 5). (Given this deeper look, data sources outside of the interviews and observations were not a substantial part of the analysis in relation to Research Questions 2 and 3.) Thus, I took up another mode of analysis to better understand both the human connections across four very different people and the curricular connections across
four very different courses and instructional techniques (Bazeley, 2013), without pitting professors with different philosophies against each other or positioning one of their perspectives as better than others.

In line with critical race theorists who utilized allegory and storytelling (e.g., Bell, 1992, 1996), I put the interview and observational data together in the form of (an imagined) conversation, or play/script, between me and the four focal professor participants, where I started by asking the professors how they teach about diversity in their respective courses. I answered this question using the data themselves, which are presented throughout the script as unitalicized text. This question allowed me to follow multiple avenues within the data; however, there were moments when I added interpretive text to “fill in the blanks to uncover or construct the possible hidden meanings” (Saldaña, 2015, p. 52) and thus indicate how I was making sense of the connections across their different perspectives. I presented this interpretive text as italicized in the script to indicate these words did not occur in my actual conversations with the professors or in my observations of their teaching.

The full script can be found in Appendix E. Similar to my approach with the interview data, I first coded and categorized the script. I then placed the categories into larger thematic buckets. This allowed three analytic themes to emerge, which formed the basis for the presentation of the findings in Chapter 5.

**Limitations**

Understanding that it is my responsibility as a researcher to identify and explain the limitations of my data collection and analysis (Freeman et al., 2007), I utilize DisCrit to think about how my study was constrained by its design and implementation. I believe my positionality as a nondisabled white person who has not attended an HSI was a vulnerability as a
researcher and a limitation in my study. As I expressed earlier, this might have been a limitation in my pilot study and a reason why the students may not have shared their vulnerabilities with me. While I was transparent with my participants, worked to build relationships with them, and included them in the data analysis, the lack of this important shared experience still influenced how I interpreted their stories (Roegman, 2018). Relatedly, there can be multiple interpretations of the data I present, and the reader may understand the professors’ stories differently than I do (Emerson et al., 2011). This can also be a limitation if the reader interprets these stories in ways that position my participants and/or members of marginalized groups in deficit ways (i.e., Roegman, 2018) and would work against the politics of solidarity (Mohanty, 2003) I tried to engage with a DisCrit methodology.

Several limitations can also arise with qualitative research. While these limitations could not be fully resolved, I worked to keep them in mind as I selected which stories I presented in the findings of my study. First, there are likely aspects of my participants’ experiences that they did not share with me (Clandinin, 2013). Some stories may not be shared because people cannot, or do not, always provide an explanation for the events that happen in their lives (Saldaña, 2015). I worked to account for this limitation by leaning on the affordances of ethnographic observation in contextualizing the interview data. Second, there was the chance that I interrupted and/or disrupted the meaning of my participants’ stories from their perspectives with the way I chose to represent them, which is ultimately from my perspective as the researcher and not as someone who has lived them (Clandinin, 2013; Emerson et al., 2011). As Roegman (2018) learned in her work as a white research member of a racially diverse team of practitioners, it is important to combat against this unforeseen danger by asking participants for feedback on how I am interpreting their stories early and continuously in the research process and not at the very end,
right before the dissertation is submitted. Thus, as described earlier, I engaged in multiple forms of member checking to work against this limitation.

Third, Freeman (2017) warned that “the stories that get circulated and accepted are more often those that reinforce, rather than resist, the status quo” (p. 43). Put differently, the same dominant norms that have framed people of color in deficit ways also influence the ways that narratives are told. To truly practice solidarity (Mohanty, 2003), researchers need to push against these norms and make sure they present participants’ stories “in ways that maintain the inherent complexity of an individual’s or a group’s understandings” (p. 43). Thus, I used DisCrit to prioritize and (re)present counternarratives that can not only stand by themselves—i.e., not only in relation to the dominant narrative (mentioned earlier)—but also push against stock stories (Delgado, 1989) of historically marginalized people. However, utilizing critical theories like CRT and DisCrit run the risk of only reading the data in relation to the tenets of these theories and thus presenting findings that confirm what the field already knows about diversity, equity, and social justice in teacher education. In order to combat against this limitation of a critical inquiry, I engaged in multiple modes of analysis—in particular, playwrighting—that sought to prioritize participants’ perspectives, independent of the theories that guided this study, and to present findings that complicate what the field knows about critical theories in teacher education.

**Organization of the Remainder of the Dissertation**

Neither ECU nor NSU had an explicit mission statement of serving Hispanic students, which is not uncommon for many HSIs, given their historical development (i.e., Gasman et al., 2015) (discussed earlier). However, “servingness” has been defined in multiple ways by researchers in the literature on HSIs and is “more complicated than can be revealed in a mission statement or website” (Garcia et al., 2019, p. 26). To be “intentional” in “conceptualizing what
it means to be an HSI” (p. 1), Garcia et al. identified four themes in the current literature on HSIs—outcomes, experiences, internal organizational dimensions, and external influences—that together comprise a “multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding ‘servingness.’”

Thus, I utilized Garcia et al.’s framework, alongside DisCrit and a “transformative research and practice paradigm for studying HSIs” (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 10), to present the findings in Chapters 4 and 5. This “represent[ation] [of the] data reflect[s] a decision I made” (Annamma, 2018, p. 188) to recognize (a) the importance and complexity of meeting the needs of multiply marginalized students within the HSI context specifically (Garcia et al., 2019; Núñez et al., 2015), and (b) the fact that students of color are not a monolithic group and bring a variety of identities and experiences to their teacher education (Annamma et al., 2013).

The findings presented in Chapter 4 are guided by Research Question 1, which is concerned with how HSIs are working against barriers to racially diversify the K-12 teaching force. As such, Chapter 4 utilizes all four themes of Garcia et al.’s (2019) servingness framework to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how students who wish to be teachers are served at these two HSIs. Alongside the demographics of each institution, the description of the first theme of Garcia et al.’s framework, “outcomes” (e.g., graduation rates, retention rates, etc.) is situated within the broader context of higher education in the state in which the study took place. Thus, I utilized the findings from the informal review of state documents and statistical data from a sample of 15 colleges and universities (mentioned earlier) to put these figures in context. In describing the second theme, “experiences,” I focused on both student and faculty experiences, utilizing both interview data and institutional and programmatic documents.

The third part of Chapter 4 focuses on part of the third theme of Garcia et al.’s (2019) framework, “internal organizational dimensions” of HSIs, which “include institutional policies
and decision making as well as curricula, programs, and practices at the institution” (p. 18) that are within the control of the university. Three subthemes within this theme include “leadership and decision making, culturally relevant pedagogy and curriculum, and culturally relevant programs” (p. 18). Utilizing institutional and programmatic documents alongside professor and student interviews, I described the curricular foci within each COE more broadly. This description falls into the third subtheme “culturally relevant programs.”

I conclude Chapter 4 by focusing on the fourth theme of Garcia et al.’s (2019) framework, “external influences,” which refers to an examination of “external factors that have affected the development and growth of HSIs including decisions and policies of the local, state, and federal government” (p. 14), as well as “factors beyond the control of the institution” (p. 14). Thus far, literature within this theme has focused on such aspects as the development of the federal legislation that established HSIs (e.g., Valdez, 2015, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019); the advocacy work of the Hispanic Association for Colleges and Universities (HACU) (e.g., Calderon Galdeano et al., 2012, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019); and the analysis of financial investments and resources (e.g., Ortega et al., 2015, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019) at the federal (Mulnix et al., 2004, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019) and state (Martinez, 2015, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019) levels. In Chapter 4, for two reasons, I utilize state documents regarding employment/licensure, alongside professor and student interviews, to describe the impact of more stringent state licensure exam and employment requirements as an external influence that affected the enrollment of admitted students to each institution’s COE. First, the theme of “external influences” was the least represented in Garcia et al.’s review of the literature on “servingness” at HSIs, despite the great impact these policies have on the ability of faculty and staff to meet students’ needs (Núñez & Bowers, 2011; Núñez & Elizondo, 2015). Second, given
that many students I interviewed attended ECU and NSU specifically for their teacher preparation programs, the state policies for becoming a teacher may impact the growth and development of HSIs.

Chapter V utilizes mostly interview and observational data to present a more in-depth examination of the diversity curriculum and pedagogy in each focal professor’s class, guided by Research Questions 2 and 3. As such, this chapter continues the conversation of the third theme of “internal organizational dimensions” (Garcia et al., 2019) started in Chapter 4 by focusing on the second subtheme “culturally relevant pedagogy and curriculum,” or “that [which] [takes] into consideration the racial and cultural ways of knowing and learning of students from minoritized backgrounds” (p. 19). By focusing on themes across four classrooms in two different institutions, this chapter contributes to the literature on the internal organizational dimension of culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy, as the majority of studies within this subtheme in Garica et al.’s review focused only on one classroom.

Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation by discussing three larger analytic themes across the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 and presenting implications for practice and policy and suggestions for future research in both teacher education and higher education. In articulating my positionality, explaining my theoretical and ontological commitments, and being transparent about my data collection and analysis processes, I present and discuss my findings with the goal of helping the reader understand the roots of my inferences, as well as how I arrived at them. Given that my goal is neither generalizability nor representativity (Brantlinger et al., 2005; Emerson et al., 2011), I understand that my data and subsequent findings are one version of a truth (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Erickson, 1986; Mifsud, 2016) and do not contain “final” answers (Saldaña, 2015). Yet, by utilizing “inferential generalization” (Freeman et al., 2007, p. 29), in
which I worked to make “careful comparisons across [my two research sites]” (p. 29) to present my findings, I dwelled in the tension of qualitative research that seeks to explain a larger context by examining individual cases (Erickson, 1986). Combined with utilizing detailed description in my data collection and analysis, this tension might have also afforded “particularizability” (Brantlinger et al., 2005, p. 201), or an opening through which “readers can determine the degree of transferability to their own situations” (p. 201).

Regarding the language of Hispanic and Latino/a/x throughout the dissertation, I worked to stay close to what the data revealed. For example, my source for enrollment data presented as Hispanic/Latino. Therefore, I kept this language in Chapter 4 when reporting those data. Similarly, Dr. Ruben specifically referred to himself as Latino, and we talked specifically about why he did not use the term Latinx; as such, I refer to him as Latino. When the data did not specify which term to use (Hispanic, Latino/a/x), I used Hispanic and Latinx to make sure I included students and people who may not identity with both categories, but for whom inclusion in one of the categories is an important indicator of their identity and experiences. I used Latinx instead of Latino/a, as Latinx can be read as more gender- and queer-inclusive, even amid the current sociopolitical and linguistic complexity in using this term (de Onís, 2017). Relatedly, I used the extended acronym LGBTQIA+ for gender and sexuality diversity unless a participant or a data source shortened the acronym to LGBTQ.
Chapter 4

SERVING (HISPANIC) PRESERVICE TEACHERS (OF COLOR) IN THE HSI CONTEXT

In this chapter, I utilize the four themes in Garcia et al.’s (2019) “multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding ‘servingness’” (discussed in Chapter 3)—outcomes, experiences, internal organizational dimensions, and external influences—to describe how each institution “served” (Hispanic) students (of color) who wished to be teachers. The data I collected—publicly available institutional, programmatic, and state documents, and interviews with professors and students at both Eastern City University (ECU) and Northern State University (NSU)—that led to the findings I present in this chapter were guided by Research Question 1: How are teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs working toward racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force?

I start by situating professor participants’ understandings of their institution as an HSI within an in-depth description of each research site’s institutional characteristics. I then describe how each institution “served” students across majors and departments, in terms of the themes of outcomes and experiences (Garcia et al., 2019). Next, I narrow the description of “servingness” to how the College of Education (COE) within each institution “served” preservice teachers. Within this section, I focus on the theme of internal organizational dimensions (Garcia et al., 2019) by describing the curricular foci within each institution’s COE. This focus is guided by subquestion (b) of Research Question 1—How do two professors at two 4-year public HSIs consider the marginalization and/or essentialization of students of color in coursework related to diversity? I then focus on the theme of external influences (Garcia et al., 2019) by describing the impact of revised state policies regarding teacher employment and licensure on graduating teachers of color at each institution. This focus is guided by subquestion (a) of Research
Question 1—How do teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs account for, and respond to, barriers that have traditionally excluded preservice candidates of color from the profession? I conclude with a short summary of the findings in relation to Research Question 1.

The “Hispanic” Aspect of the HSI Label: Student Demographics and Institutional Characteristics of ECU and NSU as They Intersect with Racial Diversity

While both ECU and NSU are 4-year public HSIs, they differ in terms of student demographics (e.g., race, class, academic achievement) and location (urban vs. suburban), reflecting the diversity of HSIs as a whole (Núñez et al., 2016) as well as the institutional diversity within 4-year HSIs (Núñez & Elizondo, 2015) (see Chapter 3). In order to situate ECU and NSU within the context of higher education, more broadly, I conducted an informal review of statistical data from a sample of 15 colleges and universities in the state where the study took place using publicly available and institutional data from the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years (see Chapter 3 and Appendix E). Including a range of institutions in the sample (i.e., PwIs, HSIs, public, private, 2-year, 4-year) in this review was not for the purpose of making claims about whether ECU and NSU are serving Hispanic and Latinx students. Such comparisons, especially to non-HSIs, often yield deficit narratives of HSIs that are “decontextualize[d] [from] the external political, economic, and social environments within which HSIs operate” (Garcia et al., 2019, pp. 6-7). Rather, this review, in combination with professor testimonials, demonstrates how the “Hispanic” aspect of both institutions’ HSI label may not have been the primary lenses through which some understood what it was like to be a student at these institutions.

While ECU had been an HSI for at least 12 years, and the undergraduate student population was predominantly Hispanic/Latinx (39%) (see Table 1), Dr. Ocampo, one professor participant who was Hispanic and had worked at ECU for about 15 years at the time of the study, stated:
I think the [HSI label] is representative of what we are to a large extent…. [However,] I think the demographics have shifted. I think it was more Hispanic 15 years ago, and we’re getting influxes of a lot of other ethnic minority groups, which I think is great. Generally speaking, the kids that come here…they’ve assimilated for the most part…. I thought I would hear more Spanish being spoken, like in the hallways…. Once in a while [you hear that], but generally speaking you don’t. So, they’re operating in English, and I don’t think they think too much about it, to be honest.

A former school leader and superintendent, Dr. Anderson, a professor participant at ECU who was African American, had joined the faculty much more recently (the semester before the study began). He had not heard of the HSI label until I mentioned it to him, when approaching him about participating in the study, and shared:

I rarely think about [ECU] as a Hispanic Serving Institution. I think about it as an institution that serves economically disadvantaged students…. It seems like the majority of the students are in the low socioeconomic status, first-generation university attendees... many immigrants...so I never really thought of the university as a Hispanic Serving Institution. I just thought of it as an institution that’s meeting the needs of economically disadvantaged families.

In line with Dr. Anderson’s perspective, during the 2017-2018 school year, approximately 65% of undergraduate students at ECU received federal Pell Grants (U.S. News & World Report, 2019). Compared to other colleges and universities in the sample, the only schools with a higher percentage of Pell Grant recipients were a PwI community college and another HSI that was also a PBI. Excluding 2-year public and community colleges in the informal review, which had open admissions policies, ECU had the highest acceptance rate (96% in 2018-2019 and 95% in 2019-2020, as indicated in Table 1) (NCES, 2020). Thus, ECU faculty—approximately 70% of whom are part-time (NCES, 2020)—are teaching classrooms of students with a wide range of prior academic knowledge and skills. In terms of student demographics, the only area in which ECU was similar to most schools in the review, including NSU, was the percentage of undergraduate students formally registered with the Office of Disability Services: 3% or less. (That number
increased to 4% during the 2019-2020 school year, as indicated in Table 1.) Two of the three schools with 10% or higher were PwIs. The third was the HSI that was also a PBI.

Excluding the two community colleges in the sample, ECU had the lowest endowment ($12.5 million) in 2018 (U.S. News & World Report, 2019), even when only compared to other HSIs. This may partially explain why the university struggled to maintain adequate facilities and technology. For example, during the semester this study took place, one of the largest buildings for academic instruction did not have heat for over a week in November.

At NSU, Dr. Ruben, one professor participant who identified as both Hispanic/Latino and Jewish, described NSU as “a Hispanic Serving Institution by chance, not by design.” To him, NSU was “more of a Hispanic enrolling institution” (i.e., Gasman et al., 2007, as cited in Gasman et al., 2015). Dr. Abbott, a professor participant who was Black, stated:

I know the people I’ve talked to; we’re trying to figure out what it means to be a Hispanic Serving Institution…. I don’t know that I’ve ever...referenced that [label]. Certainly, in my classes I don’t talk about that.

Additionally, both Dr. Ruben and Dr. Abbott reported disappointment that the HSI label did not describe and prompt a commitment to include other historically underrepresented and/or marginalized groups. While Dr. Ruben was “happy [with the HSI label]”— “I am Hispanic, and it’s a Hispanic Serving Institution, right. Why not?”—he also shared that the cafeteria did not accommodate Jewish students, which comprised a “large contingent” of the graduate student population, on Passover with Kosher for Passover food. Dr. Abbott shared that some of the Black faculty interpreted the label as a sign that some students were (perhaps, unfairly) being prioritized over others:

Does [the HSI label] help to elevate us or garner particular programs and opportunities? Perhaps. If so, that’s not a bad thing…[but] in one of the African American caucus meetings…some folks are just very upset. You know, “Why are you going to call it that?” and “We have Black folks here. We’re not a Black serving
institution? Why couldn’t we get that label or identifier?” And I’m thinking why the riff? What’s the big deal...if it’s about just helping people to learn and to grow in that way? Labels aren’t always helpful in that sense.

NSU (and ECU for that matter) would not have qualified for the label of Predominantly Black Institution (PBI). At least 40% of their student body would need to identify as Black, according to Title III, Part A, Section 318 of the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059, 2008). Yet, if the requirements were more similar to the requirements for HSI status (25%), both institutions would have been closer to being recognized as a PBI.

Moreover, aligned with Dr. Abbott’s perspective that “labels aren’t always helpful in that sense” of guaranteeing support for certain students, both professors were hesitant to interpret the HSI label in and of itself as a commitment to Hispanic and Latinx students at NSU. For example, they both discussed how while there was a Hispanic Vice President of Hispanic Initiatives at the university, this administrator did not receive additional resources or funding, as part of the university’s budget, to implement opportunities for Hispanic and Latinx students, or as she once told Dr. Abbott: “I’ll help you with anything, but I don’t have any money.” Dr. Ruben similarly shared: “When the President gave...a one-hour speech last week, not even one word addressed recognizing that our institution is an HSI. This speaks volumes about the institutional priorities.” Such recognition has been linked to “servingness” in the literature on HSIs (Garcia et al., 2019).

As an institution whose student demographics are still predominantly white (40%), NSU only recently became an HSI in Spring 2016, after adopting an SAT/ACT test-optional policy for undergraduate admissions in Fall 2015. By Fall 2019 admissions, only 44% of students were submitting SAT scores (NCES, 2020). The newness of this label was also reflected in the percentage of students from low-income families. During the 2017-2018 school year, approximately 44% of undergraduate students received federal Pell Grants (NSU website). The
only schools in the sample with a lower percentage of Pell Grant recipients were PwIs, with the exception of one HSI that was a private 4-year institution. While significantly lower than ECU, NSU’s acceptance rate for the 2017-2018 school year (71%) (NCES, 2020) lay in the middle of the sample and increased slightly (76%) during the 2019-2020 school year, as indicated in Table 1.

Excluding the previously mentioned HSI that was a private 4-year institution, NSU’s endowment ($43.9 million) in 2018 (U.S. News & World Report) was higher than the other HSIs in the informal sample as well as a public 4-year PwI. However, NSU had the largest student enrollment of any school in my informal review and was significantly larger than most of the schools, with the exception of one PwI with similar acceptance, retention, and graduation rates. The endowment of this PwI ($207.2 million) was almost five times higher in the same year. Thus, compared to other universities of the same size, financial resources at NSU are being spread more thinly across a larger student population, rendering it more similar to ECU in terms of finances. Thus, both institutions, like many HSIs, were “doing ‘more with less’” (Núñez & Bowers, 2011, p. 1307).

**The “Serving” Aspect of the HSI Label:**
**Supporting Students on Campus and in the Classroom**

In describing how students across all majors and programs were “served” at ECU and NSU, I focus on the following themes from Garcia et al.’s (2019) multidimensional conceptual framework: outcomes and experiences. Regarding the theme of outcomes, I focus on academic outcomes for two related reasons. First, in addition to being Hispanic, students who choose to enroll in 4-year HSIs tend to be less academically prepared and to come from high schools that are less oriented toward a college-going culture, thereby rendering them less likely to finish their degrees (Núñez & Bowers, 2011). Second, as described in Chapter 3, two of the four courses in this study were foundational-level courses and reflected the wide range of academic knowledge
and skills of students enrolled in the institution as a whole, compared to the two methods courses that were part of this study but were open only to students admitted to a teacher preparation program. Regarding the theme of experiences, Garcia et al.’s framework considers both student and faculty experiences within this dimension. As such, I describe how students felt supported and how faculty responded to shifting priorities in research and teaching at each institution.

**Academic Outcomes**

ECU’s retention rate (73% for full-time students and 32% for part-time students) and, overall, 6-year graduation rate (39%) (NCES, 2020) for the 2017-2018 school year were lower than most schools in my informal review. (See Table 1 for updated figures during the 2019-200 school year.) Generally, the schools in the state with lower rates in these areas were 2-year public and community colleges and the HSI that was also a PBI. Of the schools in the sample that reported a “transfer-out rate within 150% of ‘normal time’ to completion for their program” during the 2017-2018 school year, ECU’s rate (31%) was the second highest, behind another private 4-year HSI. While the overall graduation rate at ECU seems to have steadily been increasing over the years, moving up to 41% during the 2018-2019 school year, the 6-year graduation rate for Black students in 2017-2018 (32%) trailed behind Asian (43%), Hispanic/Latino (42%), and white (43%) students (NCES, 2020). This difference was only exacerbated during the 2018-2019 school year: as the 6-year graduation rate for Asian (50%), Hispanic/Latino (43%), and white (44%) students increased, the 6-year graduation rate for Black students fell (29%).

Contrasting with ECU, NSU’s transfer-out rate (19%) was both lower than ECU’s and higher only than three public 2-year colleges and two public 4-year PwIs that reported transfer-out rates. NSU’s retention rate (79% for full-time students, 38% for part-time students) (NCES,
2020) was slightly higher than ECU and most schools in the sample, including one of the PwIs. However, there were still PwIs and HSIs with higher retention rates. NSU’s overall graduation rate (71%) (NCES, 2020; NSU Institutional Report) during the 2017-2018 school year was one of the highest graduation rates in the sample and the highest among HSIs in the sample. (See Table 1 for updated figures for retention and graduation rates during the 2019-2020 school year.) In other words, while NSU may be more academically competitive than both HSIs and PwIs in the state, students are graduating at higher rates than they are at both PwIs and HSIs. This reflects the relationship between college selectivity and completion—even when controlling for other factors and demographics such as race, gender, academic performance, family background—as documented in the literature (e.g., Shamsuddin, 2016).

Like ECU, the 6-year graduation rate at NSU in 2017-2018 for Black students (63%) trailed behind Asian (75%), Hispanic/Latino (74%), and white (73%) students (NSU Institutional Report, 2019). Yet, emerging data showed that while the overall graduation dropped to 67% in 2018-2019, not all racial groups with a significant proportion of enrollment on campus experienced a decline. In 2018-2019, the 6-year graduation rate for Black students (67%), Non-resident alien students (63%), and students whose race/ethnicity was unknown (70%) increased, while the rate for Asian students (63%), Hispanic/Latino students (65%), white students (68%), and students identifying with Two or more races (63%) declined (NCES, 2020). Dr. Ruben’s description of his students’ progress in his course, who were all first-semester freshmen, reflected this fluctuation in academic achievement, relative to race and ethnicity: “In terms of reading comprehension…it’s very unbalanced…. I was trying to see if [there is] a pattern…[but] there’s no pattern…whatsoever. It’s not ethnic, racial, [or] linguistic.”

**Student Experiences: Supports in Diverse Environments**
Like many MSIs, as discussed in Chapter 1, both ECU and NSU worked to provide a welcoming environment to support their diverse student bodies (Conrad, 2005; John & Stage, 2004; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005). At ECU, members of the institution worked to provide as many extracurricular and social opportunities for students as possible, including various clubs and speaking events. The campus may have been geographically small, but it never felt quiet. Dr. Anderson, who has taught at multiple college campuses, also commented on how great it was that there were so many social activities. Student testimonials on ECU’s website—e.g., “[student] felt welcomed at ECU, like it was her home away from home”; “Experiencing new people and the hustle of city life, ECU has been a friendly and welcoming atmosphere for [student] to learn”; “When he came to ECU, the first thing [student] noticed was the sense of community and the diversity on campus”—suggested that the institution provides a welcoming environment to students from diverse backgrounds. According to Dr. Ocampo, tolerance and inclusion were some of ECU’s strongest assets. He seemed surprised by the university putting together a diversity and tolerance committee because “this is one of the last places in the world where you would need [it].” To him, it was “almost like a waste of resources…because so many people are aware…there’s so much diversity that it’s much less of an issue than it is at most other places.” Dr. Anderson was similarly “impressed by the diversity” he noticed at ECU.

While ECU was ranked 2nd for “serving students in need” among colleges in the state (Washington Monthly, 2015), including veterans and international students, one support area that seemed to be a possible concern for faculty and students was advisement, particularly with transfer students. (I interviewed three transfer students at ECU, all enrolled in Dr. Anderson’s class, as indicated in Table 5 in Chapter 3.) Dr. Anderson noticed and shared with me that not every student was being adequately guided by their advisor. Ben, one of the students in his class whom I
interviewed, further substantiated this point. A first-year transfer student, he was rightly frustrated by the lengthy and confusing process he went through to find and secure an appointment with an advisor, only to end up enrolling in a course that his program no longer required.

Some of the students I interviewed said they chose to attend ECU because of location/commute (Gasman et al., 2015; Núñez & Bowers, 2011) as well as the low tuition and scholarship opportunities (Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005). Yet, in practice, the way scholarships were structured still may have disadvantaged students who historically have been excluded from higher education via traditional requirements for financial opportunities (e.g., GPA and standardized test scores). Although the university planned to implement a standardized test optional admissions policy in the year after the study took place (for students admitted in Fall 2020), students would still need to submit SAT scores to be considered for merit-based scholarships, for the Honors Program, and for any combined bachelor’s and master’s program. Similarly, transfer student scholarships are contingent on GPA. Adam (another transfer student I interviewed), who is Hispanic, only received a partial transfer scholarship due to his GPA.

Both of undergraduate students I interviewed at NSU reported that it was their top choice for college since middle school, with one reporting that it was her “dream school”:

**Liana:** I always knew this school was for me…. Not only [does] [NSU] give you experiences, it gives you opportunities to become someone that you thought maybe you wouldn’t become, and I guess, that’s always something that I’ve wanted…when I was…in middle school…. Everybody [knew] me as the girl who had problems because I had epilepsy, so my learning was not working [like] other people in my class. But I always knew…I want to go to [here] because I want to make something out of myself to prove to people that even with learning disabilities, even with all of the situations that people have now in the world, you can still make it in life.

**TG:** Yeah…what about the school…makes it your dream school?…What are the opportunities that are available here?

---

1 Data for this study—including the review of this policy—were collected mostly during the Fall 2019 semester, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which cancelled many SAT/ACT tests. As such, it is possible this policy was revised for applicants to these programs in Fall 2020.
Liana: They have so many events in the school that… I always try to look into… because I want to be able to experience these things, and they even have [a] job fair here… even for the people that commute. I commute myself, and they always do something for the commuters to show their appreciation…. So, [NSU] doesn’t only make you feel like home. They make you feel like, this is not only the home for people that live here. It’s a home also for the commuters.

This feeling of home was significant, as the majority of students (just over 75%) were commuters (NSU website), which is similar to the percentage of students at ECU who commute (88%) (U.S. News & World Report). Additionally, in walking around NSU’s campus, I noticed multiple flyers for student opportunities, such as hosting a Clean and Sustainable Energy summit and various activities associated with the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Education Project (e.g., Burkholder, 2018). Dr. Ruben also shared that the music, art, and drama departments at NSU did an excellent job providing opportunities for student engagement.

NSU also has a wide variety of student services, such as a center for career services, as mentioned by the above student, and an LGBTQ Center. Nine years after the latter center’s opening, NSU was named one of the Top 30 LGBTQ-Friendly Colleges (NSU website). The LGBTQ Center is housed in an office specifically for “social justice and diversity,” which also has a Multicultural Center, a Women’s Center, and a Center for Faith and Spirituality. However, such initiatives may have been limited in fostering an inclusive campus environment, especially around politically charged diversity conversations. For example, while the Council for Faith and Spirituality (within the Center) was an “an interfaith umbrella organization promoting tolerance, understanding, and education with an open mind,” working to “support all religious and spiritual traditions” (NSU website), the Israel-Palestine conflict was often portrayed in campus media as one-sided. In 2014, the student government issued an order to the “Students for Justice in Palestine” to “cease and desist” political speech and threatened them with a fine (Volokh, 2014). While the order was reversed on the grounds of free speech, in 2017, the student government
voted against supporting the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement (Frommer, 2017; Ginsberg, 2017).

Moreover, Dr. Ruben questioned the “exaggerated growth” of student services and the “growing involvement of non-academics in the academic life of the students” for two reasons. First, while he agreed that some student services were necessary to support students with “needs” and “emotional situations,” he was concerned about the growth of some aspects of student services that seemed more concerned with entertaining the students and “solving [their] problems at the most minuscule levels” in ways that were too overprotective. Second, he felt these diversity priorities were guided by an “ideological slant.” While the college was voted one of the best for U.S. veterans (U.S. News & World Report, as cited on NSU’s website), Dr. Ruben, a veteran himself, said veterans were marginalized on campus,

But if it’s another type of group…I’m not saying that…we shouldn’t take care of…for instance, the LGBTQ group…but had that [marginalization] happened to the LGBTQ group, things would have been approached differently.

Dr. Ruben’s perspective that there is “a lot of investment in some…ideological projections that are not necessarily even with everyone’s needs” was substantiated by Liana, a student I interviewed. An 18-year-old Hispanic single mother from a low-income family, Liana was working part-time to support her full-time enrollment. She had made the decision to move out of her parents’ home, even though this meant losing access to childcare. NSU’s daycare would cost her $1,300/month. (The website indicated there is a discount for faculty, staff, and students; however, the amount was not publicized, and members of the NSU community need to call to find out more information.) ECU’s daycare by comparison was roughly $400-$500/month for the same number of days/hours, even though both institutions had similar tuition. Liana only
made $1,000/month when I interviewed her. Even if she continued to live at home, her income would not be enough to support this.

**Faculty Experiences: Shifting Priorities in Research and Teaching**

Even though both ECU and NSU were originally founded as schools for teachers, professors at both institutions had to manage conflicting and/or shifting priorities around research, which affected the ways in which they could prioritize teaching. At ECU, Dr. Ocampo described the students as “whatever the opposite of spoiled is…they really want a better life…. They work hard, and they’re willing to make sacrifices.” Thus, while Dr. Ocampo said that he would like the students to have stronger academic credentials, “there’s not a lot of other places [he’d] rather be.” Dr. Ocampo’s preference for the ECU student community might have been due to his own familiarity and experience teaching in secondary schools, or as he put it: “Generally speaking…those who have taught K-12 recently or extensively are better with our students.” As someone who had the extensive K-12 experience and described his students as “hungry to learn,” Dr. Anderson still found differentiating the instruction at ECU a “different beast” and more difficult than at some of the other institutions of higher education in which he has taught. He felt that “teaching at ECU is like teaching in an urban [K-12 school] district…you have to have a different skill set and a different passion.”

While Roberto, a student in Dr. Ocampo’s class, shared that “the professors here are really helpful…you get to learn a lot,” it seems there were no uniform commitments to meeting students’ (academic) needs across *all* the departments at ECU. This affected students at ECU preparing to be teachers, as they were also required to take courses outside of the COE. When I asked Ben, a transfer student in Dr. Anderson’s class, what knowledge and skills professors should have, he stated:
I’m trying to figure that out here [at ECU]. In the community college, they were clearly there, dedicated to make sure you went on to a four-year institution. It felt like they acted like…at least the professors I had, it was their responsibility to get you somewhere…and be able to hang in a four-year [institution]. ECU seems to be a bit in flux depending on what department you go to. There are some departments that are cutting back standards because either they’re not having enough people complete it or they’re too hard….

Ben’s perception that ECU was “in flux” across departments might be partially explained by what the university prioritized in attaining tenure. Dr. Ocampo shared that attaining tenure at ECU is mostly about research production, rather than service or teaching, despite ECU’s history as a teaching institution that “isn’t research heavy.” Still, the majority of full-time faculty at the time of the study were tenured (ECU Institutional Profile), in part because, as Dr. Ocampo shared, “other institutions are much more competitive…much more discriminating in terms of who gets promoted and who gets tenure.” However, Dr. Ocampo recognized that “it’s starting to change now…with the new administration, there’s been more of a focus on research.”

Thus, despite the university providing professional development opportunities for faculty around strengthening their pedagogy to meet the needs of the diverse student body, Dr. Ocampo expressed that he thought the university should not be investing its limited resources in these opportunities, not because they are not useful but because he saw “so few…professors…take it seriously and implement what they’ve learned.” He felt that the faculty who needed professional development the most—senior faculty outside of the COE, who had “never been taught how to teach,” and have already been tenured and promoted to full professor—were the least likely to attend. In fact, he admitted that while tenure was good for him, it was not necessarily what was good for the students.

The year after receiving the HSI label, NSU was also designated a state public research institution, and 2 years after that, it was recognized as a doctoral university with high research
activity. Aligned with these research labels, Dr. Ruben and Dr. Abbott communicated that the institution’s main priority when it came to faculty performance was publishing research. However, it seemed that NSU was more discriminating than ECU in terms of who received tenure and was promoted. The transition into a research category—that is premised on ideologies of meritocracy, individualism, and objectivity/neutrality (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw, 1991; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995)—has sometimes been used as a color-evasive tactic to deny the promotions of faculty of color at NSU. While Dr. Abbott received tenure, NSU’s transition into a research category legitimized blocking her promotion. Her Dean did not give Dr. Abbott a favorable review, claiming “something to the effect of…not feeling that [she] was doing the volume of work that [she] needed to do,” even though the requirements for promotion at the time were not specific in terms of what type of publications she needed:

   Nowhere did it say I needed to have tier one. It said I needed to have peer-reviewed published stuff, and that’s what I had. It didn’t say that I needed to do research. It said I needed to do scholarship.

The devaluation of Dr. Abbott’s scholarship is not unlike what happens to many African American women professors at PWIs (Jones et al., 2015; Reddick et al., 2021) and to Black women scholars utilizing Black feminist thought in their work (Collins, 1990/2003).

   While Dr. Abbott was eventually promoted to associate professor, she shared:

   I’ve heard, part of the experience of brown and Black people here [is]... We’ll bring you in. We’ll give you tenure, but...I have colleagues here who’ve been here longer than I have, and they are assistant professors.

An informal review of NSU’s institutional reports from the last 3 years corroborated Dr. Abbott’s testimony. While a greater percentage of Asian faculty (85%) and African American faculty were tenured (80%)—compared to white (73%) and Hispanic/Latinx (71%) faculty—there might have been anti-Black bias in terms of promotion, as rates were slightly slower for
African Americans, while Asian and white professors were more likely to be promoted without tenure. Moreover, these trends at NSU reflect a national pattern at research universities. While the representation of Black faculty with earned doctoral degrees has increased, they are disproportionately represented in the rank of assistant professor, compared to white faculty who are more likely to be tenured and at the rank of full professor for a longer period of time (Modica & Mamiseishvili, 2010).

While Dr. Abbott’s experience happened prior to the institution becoming an HSI, Dr. Ruben also shared that race and gender discrimination has continued to occur on campus, even with the HSI label:

The other day, just informally, we were sitting here with three [younger Latina faculty] …everyone has encountered, in one way or another, microaggressions…from faculty to faculty, from [academic] administration to faculty.

He also shared that supporting these faculty members was a priority even before NSU was an HSI, especially because in some ways he could understand how they felt, as an immigrant who had been a target of ethnic discrimination himself: “You get those things constantly, right, or these comments.” In other words, while he recognized that “a label of an institution brings a level…of legitimacy to that particular…identity”—which, in the case of NSU, was both the identities included in the HSI label and the identity of researcher—the faculty were still trying to figure out “what that [discrimination] means here,” especially in the contexts of supporting historically marginalized students in the classroom and increasing pressure to produce high-quality research.

Dr. Ruben explained in a member-checking conversation that the “associated prestige” with the research label “enables the obtention of a significant number of grants, which otherwise cannot be accessed, as most other universities also share such interest.” To him, this explained
why junior colleagues have been under increasing pressure to apply for external funding, even if the funds are used to support “projects that seldom are academic.” Dr. Abbott also expressed disappointment that some junior faculty seem to feel as though they need to kind of be a certain way or that there are certain expectations coming on them…that they have to attend meetings just because people are watching them or that they can’t say no to certain asks.

When the university was still a “research in the making” institution, teaching was taken more seriously, both in terms of evaluation, as well as among individual faculty members’ priorities. Yet even though the university “pay[s] attention supposedly” to teaching, as Dr. Ruben shared, and has a dedicated position in the provost’s office to the “scholarship of teaching,” Dr. Ruben felt:

When the university shifted…many started to feel that they were penalized because they were dedicating so much time to teaching…not penalized, but they were asked to teach more because they are not producing scholarship. It’s not a big deal if you love teaching…but it creates a difference between…[someone] teaching one or two classes a semester with someone who teaches four in the same department…. That dedication to teaching has been lost somehow.

As such, he felt that the Boyer model of scholarship would be a good option for NSU because it enables different faculty to choose under which category of scholarship they prefer to be evaluated. Therefore, it eliminates tensions and honors the variety of strengths that faculty bring to the table. In consequence, teaching is equally valued to other forms of scholarship.

The diminishing importance of teaching might have implications for teacher preparation specifically, especially when, as Dr. Ruben suggested, the university hired teacher educators whose “disciplinary identity goes through the primary role of maybe researching teacher education”:

It’s not that [the preparation of teachers] is abandoned, but it’s maybe not as central to the task as it could be…. I would like this institution to have…a retake on the tradition of people dedicated to teaching without having to distract the dedication [with research]. I’m not saying that the researcher cannot be an excellent teacher educator…. What I am
trying to say is that the culture of the institution has shifted in such a way in which it’s almost forcing people to prioritize their publications, their research, their scholarship in a way that I am scared that it might neglect the preparation aspects of practitioners.

While all four students I interviewed at NSU spoke highly of their professors, it was not surprising, then, that Amy, one of Dr. Ruben’s students who was enrolled in introductory courses both in and outside the COE, felt that her professors’ teaching styles, across all her classes, were more “traditional” and less “hands-on” than her K-12 teachers, “which is okay,” even though she felt she learned best by doing. When I asked her what skills and knowledge professors of education need to have, she stated:

Amy: They have to know what they’re teaching. They have to know about their subject. They have to love that subject and show their passion for what they’re teaching… so then maybe [the students, also] can get that sort of…spark into the subject.

TG: Okay, and do you feel like your professors here have that?

Amy: Yeah, all my professors have that spark.

In other words, Amy recognized that professors are passionate about the topics they teach, even if they are not teaching in the most accessible ways. Liana, another first-semester freshman in Dr. Ruben’s class, expressed that, across all of her classes, she felt like the professor treated all students as “equal in a sort of way”: “It was never really a professor saying [that what] …the student [said was] wrong.” Still, she felt that, in general, “professors are different. They don’t really care as much as [K-12] teachers would” when it came to student learning.

Amanda, a graduate student in Dr. Abbott’s class, stated that while “a lot of [her] professors are really great…really knowledgeable, and they know a lot about teaching and are really passionate,” she also felt that “a lot of professors really aren’t that understanding” with graduate students: “You have fieldwork hours, you have this, and…I’m trying to work full-time, too.” Cara similarly shared: “It’s a lot of work, and it’s stressful…trying to figure out how I’m going to work full-time and then also work another job and fit everything in.” Dr. Ruben also
said he has “heard…from some students, at the graduate level…complaints about faculty…mistreat[ing] them.” In other words, even if an HSI is a welcoming and supportive environment for students, it is possible that this support is constrained by an institution’s cultures of research and teaching.

**Serving Preservice Teachers**

Three of the five students I interviewed at ECU and three of the four students I interviewed at NSU shared that they chose to attend their respective universities specifically for their teacher preparation programs, rather than for reasons more commonly given for enrolling at an MSI, as documented in the literature (i.e., low tuition, location) (Conrad, 2015; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Raines, 1998), or for HSIs specifically (i.e., being Hispanic, location of the institution) (Núñez & Bowers, 2011). The graduate programs in education at NSU “were ranked among the nation’s best in *U.S. News & World Report*’s 2020 Best Education Schools” (NSU website). At ECU, Ameerah reported: “When we were doing all these college fairs, ECU was the only one who really went in depth for me when I would ask about the teacher program.”

Within these programs, the teaching of students with disabilities, in particular, was popular at both institutions. In 2019, 15% of the graduate students at ECU were enrolled in a special education program, making it the graduate program with the highest enrollment. At NSU, one student, Cara, specifically commented on how a lot of places in the area don’t have a master’s with…teaching students with disabilities [TSD] as…a joint program. So, I wanted to do the K-6 and the TSD, and this was one of the only places that offered what I wanted.

This particular program is one of the largest programs at NSU and, like other programs in their COE, has a high public school hiring rate, compared to graduates from other colleges in the state. In describing the ways in which ECU and NSU served students who wished to be teachers, I
utilized the following aspects of Garcia et al.’s (2019) “multidimensional conceptual framework”: internal organizational dimensions, which “include institutional policies and decision making as well as curricula, programs, and practices at the institution” (p. 18) that are within the control of the university, and external influences, or “factors beyond the control of the institution” (p. 14). As discussed in Chapter 3, the internal organizational dimension I describe is the curricular emphasis within the COEs, and the external influence I describe is how each institution navigated stringent state licensure exams.

**Internal Organizational Dimensions: Curricular Foci Within the COEs**

The COEs at ECU emphasized the importance of education in building a more equitable, democratic society via an informed citizenry and the importance of education in “accomplish[ing] social justice” (ECU website). At NSU, the COE worked to prepare educators “to work toward a healthier, better educated, more just society” (NSU website). As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the majority of the current literature on teacher preparation for social justice and/or equity links this goal to the importance of successfully addressing K-12 student diversity. However, the different student demographics and locations of ECU and NSU fueled different curricular foci and commitments within each institution’s COE. ECU was located in an urban area, and many of the students had attended K-12 urban schools themselves. NSU was located in a suburban area and, as such, some students described their neighborhoods as “not (having) a lot of diversity.”

**Preparing Urban Educators at ECU**

At ECU, Dr. Ocampo shared that “our goal is to prepare them to not just enter the field but to stay long term, and that’s one of the things our students do, compared to other colleges, is they stay, and they stay long term.” Moreover, ECU’s location in an urban setting fuels the
COE’s commitment to prepare teachers who can “address the needs of students in the contemporary urban, multicultural, and multilingual classroom” (ECU website). Student teaching, internship, and extracurricular opportunities offered to students are often in urban schools. In fact, it was this urban school focus that sometimes was the reason students chose to attend ECU. Ben—who felt he knew the suburban school system well through his daughter, who was a student, and his wife, who was a teacher—shared that part of why he chose ECU was “to kind of gauge [whether I want to work in an urban school]. I thought I would get more of an urban perspective from here because this is an urban area.” That the urban perspective was emphasized throughout courses within the COE was also substantiated by Allison, another transfer student commuting from a suburban area. Prior to enrolling at ECU, she “just never honestly thought I’d be teaching in an urban school. It just never went on my radar.”

In Dr. Ocampo’s experience, many of the education students at ECU expressed that they wanted to teach in an urban school when they graduated. While Dr. Ocampo felt that some of these students “just think that’s [teaching in an urban school] is their path,” given their limited exposure to suburban cities and areas, he also acknowledged that some expressed wanting to give back to the communities in which they grew up (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Roberto, a Hispanic student (who went to an urban school), specifically mentioned wanting to “make that change” for students “from [the] lower…income class” and for students of color who felt like they “did not receive the proper education from the system.” With the proper support in his preparation program, this stance has the potential to inspire a long career as a teacher for social justice in an urban school (Lee et al., 2019).

Additionally, students felt that diversity was more prominently addressed in their education courses than in courses they took in other departments. Ameerah, who was studying to
be a secondary English teacher, said: “You definitely learn about diversity through the education courses, more so than the English courses.” Dr. Ocampo also agreed:

Given who we are, who our students are, and where they’re teaching…I must say, it’s something we [as a department] do a good job of here is really, you know, not having diversity be, like James Banks talks about, the kind of add-on, bring a dish, or today we’re going to do Black history and then we’ll get back to the regular curriculum…where it becomes integrated.

Dr. Anderson incorporated the diversity of “who [the ECU] students are” in how he thought about goals for them: “I want them to have confidence because I know that there are other professors who aren’t going to look at them the way I do.” Yet, similar to PwIs, it seemed that not all faculty at ECU had the relevant urban school experience and/or preparation to address diversity and/or social justice fully (i.e., Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016), as discussed in Chapter 1. Dr. Ocampo, who was the chair of one of the education departments, reported that “a lot of our people who are teaching students how to teach have either never taught or have very, very limited teaching experience.” In recognizing that the reality of urban schools was “complex” (Farmer-Hinton et al., 2013; Rivers et al., 2021) and not all urban schools were the same, he felt that these faculty members had “overly simplified views of what’s wrong [in urban schools] and how to fix it.” In other words, they may not have the “skills and knowledge about…situations that you can’t just read out of a textbook and how to handle those situations,” which Ameerah felt all professors of education should have. Additionally, she reported that there was not as much deliberate focus across her classes on “how to connect [her prospective] students’ cultures, traditions, and beliefs into [her] own lessons.”

The fact that many students came from urban schools themselves positioned them well to actualize the COE’s commitment to working in an urban school. Dr. Ocampo considered students’ exposure to urban schools and life experiences when designing the curriculum for the
classroom management and assessment course that was observed as part of the study. When I asked him what, if anything, he would change about his teaching if working at a PWI, he stated:

They [the students] know more about that [urban school] environment than I do in a lot of ways. If it were a predominantly white group, and I’m assuming it would be in more of a suburban area, then I would spend a lot of time on the cultures of schools, what the stereotypes are compared to the reality, the importance of staying away from deficit thinking, even if it’s subtle in terms of comments and attitudes, the importance of being proactive and getting to know the community and getting to know the strengths of the community, not just focusing on what’s lacking and the negatives…. I would really work on them examining their belief systems, examining and reflecting on everything in terms of their assumptions.

Dr. Ocampo recognized that the above focus was not solely for white, suburban students and was “important for any student, but [with the] limited amount of time [you have in class], you pick and choose [what to focus on],” especially since, as he shared, “That’s the really interesting thing about working here as opposed to a lot of other institutions…. There’s not a lot of culture shock when they go into the schools.” To him, this familiarity with the urban school context explained the high levels of engagement in the classroom management and assessment methods course he taught, which I observed as part of the study:

They’re not up late the night before worried about how they’re going to grade a paper or how they’re going to explain a concept. They’re worried about…how is Jimmy going to be behaving and what is my response going to be and what if somebody’s observing me and the kids aren’t behaving…. They come in [to the class], [and] [classroom management] is already a concern of theirs…. It’s not a great analogy, but going to the doctor and you know what your ailment is as opposed to just going for a check-up…. They know that this is what their fear is, so…that’s the class they take the most notes in…. There’s not even a test, really, and they take notes…. If I say this is a good strategy, they write it down specifically…. It’s that whole thing of “I’m needing this very soon.” … It would be great if we could create that kind of relevance in all coursework.

Students certainly may have been worried about classroom management, as Roberto shared that “classroom management definitely was something that [he] considered [himself] to be weak in” upon enrolling in the course. Yet, the above quote also demonstrated that, as discussed in Chapter 1, Dr. Ocampo did not equate students’ experiences in K-12 urban schools, in and of
themselves, with evidence that they would intuitively know, how to manage a classroom or assess students (i.e., Brown, 2014; Jackson, 2015; Kohli, 2009). He recognized that they were still young, relative to the education and life experiences he felt all urban teachers should have: “In an ideal world, I think all teachers would have Ph.D.s and be in their 30s and 40s, but I understand that’s not realistic.” Thus, it seems that while some faculty may have been limited with their experience in urban schools, other faculty at ECU similarly worked against assuming students were experts of diversity, even if they attended an urban school. For example, Roberto, who was from a “Hispanic-dominated city” and attended a predominantly Hispanic secondary school, shared that:

I always assumed diversity just meant…ethnic background, and then they [education professors] explained it here. No, [it’s not just ethnic background] …there’s diversity of behavior, diversity in knowledge…diversity in the languages people speak.

Prepared Progressive Educators at NSU

NSU’s teacher preparation “conceptual framework,” as stated on their website, aligns with tenets of being a progressive educator, emphasizing the importance of K-12 teachers recognizing students, families, communities, and the identities and experiences they bring to their education (e.g., Goldfarb et al., 2017), as well as the role of education in disrupting societal inequities (Kumashiro, 2015, as cited in French, 2019). According to NSU’s website, the university’s standards for preservice teachers—of which NSU developed a university-wide system to assess—reflect components of culturally responsive pedagogy, universal design for learning, and inclusive education. While these components are important, regardless of the K-12 schooling context (suburban, urban, or rural), Cara, a graduate student in Dr. Abbott’s class, who had experience working in a charter school in an urban area prior to starting her program, stated that the curriculum at NSU reinforced what she learned in the classroom, such as using
manipulatives and teaching through multidisciplinary lessons. At the same time, however, the graduates of the teacher preparation programs at NSU are likely to be rated as “effective” or “highly effective” teachers (NSU website). Yet, as discussed in Chapter 1, “effective” practices are often constructed by white practitioners and researchers (i.e., Cullingford, 1995; Marshall, 2016; Stronge, 2018; Stronge et al., 2004). In other words, the analysis of NSU’s institutional documents suggested that students enrolled in a teacher preparation program may be exposed to a range of pedagogical practices (progressive, inclusive, culturally responsive, and/or “effective”).

That the NSU website displayed student accomplishments in terms of their ratings as teachers reflected a frustration of Dr. Ruben’s. He was “bitter” that some graduate programs in the COE were closed based on assumptions about prospective jobs, rather than on the type of education they could provide, even if these programs were the only ones offered at a public institution in the state and were nationally and internationally recognized. In other words, NSU was not remiss from what he called “this neoliberal business model” of “public universities” (Philip et al., 2019): “I really resent…the entrepreneurial nature…that our college has taken, trying to sell credentials…. The function of the university is not to make money. It’s to educate.”

All four of the students I interviewed at NSU stated that diversity was emphasized in their education courses. Cara stated, “I think in every class they focus on diversity. I think NSU is really big on diversity and…how to educate through a lens of diversity.” Amanda specifically discussed inclusive education when I asked her where and how she learns about diversity:

This program, I feel like actually exposes you to…a lot of things I didn’t even think about, especially with…UDL guidelines and preparing for people who have all different needs and accommodations.
Additionally, Amanda reported that UDL was included and emphasized in all her classes, including ones not specifically about teaching students with disabilities.

Yet, diversity in coursework at NSU did not always produce intended outcomes. In reviewing comprehensive exams, where students are asked to give a description of their practicum classroom, Dr. Abbott reviewed the work of someone who wrote, “There’s no diversity in her classroom,” despite there being students of different races, students who speak Spanish, and a male teacher. Dr. Abbott was disappointed that the student “fell short with understanding diversity, all these years that [she’s] been here [at NSU]” (emphasis added). Yet, Dr. Abbott also felt it was important for professors to know that “all the Black and brown people in front of you don’t have the same narrative” and to “then find ways to incorporate that into your curriculum, into your conversations, and into the things you assign on your syllabus.” In practice, however, this was sometimes difficult, even for Dr. Abbott herself. She recognized that the “affinity link and connection would possibly come in” between her and any of the few Black students who might be in her classes. However, given that Dr. Abbott was “not used to” having many students of color in her classes (the reasons are explained in the next section), she was still learning and being careful to include perspectives of students of color in authentic and culturally responsive ways:

I did have…a time when I connected with [a Black student] in that way, and I didn’t like that because I felt like I was disconnecting other people and asking them [the Black student] to do something that is discounted in the research. To have one person speak on behalf of everybody.

In fact, she shared that while she considered spending a semester or two teaching at an HBCU, she asked:

Who’s to say they would want me? I think I have something to offer, but they may or may not [think I have something to offer]. In that sense I don’t know…what I would do differently [than what I do here at NSU].
Dr. Ruben certainly worked to encourage students “to bring stories of their own into the discussion.” This approach was somewhat different than what he would do if he were teaching the class at a PwI, where he “would do a few more things exposing them…kind of forcing them to look closer at what diversity’s about” and “what is it like” to experience discrimination. However, these topics were not reserved only for the PwI context, as I observed in my visits to his class sessions. Thus, NSU’s status as a school that was still predominantly white, located in a suburban area, and oriented toward preparing progressive educators may have impacted how professors thought about serving and preparing their preservice candidates.

**External Influences: Navigating Stringent State Licensure Exams**

In September 2015, the state in which the study took place implemented stricter certification and employment requirements. First, students graduating on or after September 1, 2016, needed a 3.0 cumulative GPA in order to become certified. (For students graduating before September 1, 2016, the requirement was 2.75.) Additionally, in order to obtain a “certificate of eligibility,” which was required in the state to seek employment as a teacher, candidates needed to submit passing test scores on the Praxis CORE standardized test, even if they were currently enrolled in a traditional teacher preparation program. The Praxis CORE requirement was also true for people seeking a certificate of eligibility, who had not completed a traditional teacher preparation program. In fact, Allison, a student at ECU, had met all of the requirements for non-traditional teacher preparation program candidates, including passing the Praxis CORE, except the GPA requirement. ECU was the only school she found that would accept her as a transfer student, even though she already had a bachelor’s degree.
In response to these revised state mandates for the certificate of eligibility, the COEs at ECU and NSU had implemented admissions requirements for their teacher preparation programs that included the GPA and submitting passing Praxis CORE scores, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

**Teacher Preparation Program Admissions Requirements at ECU and NSU**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECU</th>
<th>NSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3.0 GPA*</td>
<td>-3.0 GPA if applying for a single certification or 3.25 for combined bachelor’s/master’s with dual certification*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-passing score on Praxis CORE or SAT, ACT, GRE waiver/equivalent*</td>
<td>-passing score on Praxis CORE or SAT, ACT, GRE waiver/equivalent*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Successful completion of all Phase 1 coursework with a grade of B- or above</td>
<td>-successful completion of prerequisite course requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-demonstrate evidence of satisfactory written and oral skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-letter of recommendation from faculty member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-admissions essay(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-résumé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-If their application passes the screening process, they then “are required to submit an impromptu writing sample and participate in an admission(s) interview with faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Can apply as a “supplemental candidate” with an optional essay if one does not meet the requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An * indicates a state requirement for employment and licensure.

While ECU’s website says the COE welcomes both “traditional and non-traditional students”—who often attend MSIs (Conrad, 2015; Gasman et al., 2015)—and works to “value the diverse backgrounds and learning styles of [its university] students and create an accessible learning environment (ECU website),” Dr. Ocampo recognized the “obvious” reasons students may not be admitted to the teacher preparation program and/or finish their degrees: ECU having lower retention and graduation rates as an institution, with many students being commuters, first-generation, parents, and/or working. However, he described the standardized tests (indicated in Table 8) as another significant barrier for students at ECU who want to be teachers:
Speaking generally, we have trouble with the standardized tests that are required. A lot of our students didn’t have the strongest K-12 experiences, so they’re usually pretty good at their major, but…I don’t know how many people I knew who wanted to be English teachers who would have been darn good English teachers, but they couldn’t pass the math portion of the Praxis.

Corroborating Dr. Ocampo’s perspective, Ameerah shared her experience preparing to be a secondary English teacher:

Ameerah: For me, it was difficult because I was struggling with the Praxis CORE math, so I found it difficult to move onto the next step of my education degree because…it was…blocked. If you didn’t pass, you couldn’t take any classes, and you couldn’t even start your internship. So, I kind of found that difficult…. I wanted to take classes, but I couldn’t because of the CORE.

TG: So, what did you do that semester? You just took general education classes or something? How did they help you with that?

Ameerah: I finished my English courses…and I took only one education class, which I was allowed. It was like a loophole that I found or something.

Ameerah said that, once enrolled, the professors from the beginning supported students by making sure they knew what was to come: “In phase I, I was being told about the Praxis, and I was being told about edTPA. So, I feel like I was always supported in some way, even if it wasn’t…official or…formal.” Yet, Dr. Ocampo felt that while the department did what they could, these supports were limited by, and somewhat contingent on, students’ prior experiences and educational backgrounds:

We, as a department…try to be very practical, so we say, okay this Praxis CORE is a real hurdle, so we’ve created workshops. We’ve created specialized classes to target [and] really drill down on whatever skills they need to pass those tests. It’s often difficult…because…(pause, slightly laughs/sighs). Often you’re trying to remediate 12 years of sub-par schooling in a semester, and so those courses and workshops and the tutoring, they’re helpful if students are close, and they just kind of need to be pulled across the finish line. But, if there are egregious issues or…if English isn’t their first language, or they’re recent immigrants, there’s just so much background knowledge they don’t have that…sometimes there’s nothing we can do, and students drop the program.

The students in Dr. Ocampo’s course at ECU, which was only open to those who had passed the Praxis CORE and were admitted to a teacher preparation program, showed very little evidence of
“sub-par [K-12] schooling.” My observations of students’ work that they submitted to the online portion of Dr. Ocampo’s class suggested that students who did not have mastery of “standard” English grammar, mechanics, and usage were not on the roster for this course. Commenting on how the programmatic requirements have weeded out students who might struggle academically, Dr. Ocampo described the students in the following way: “Relative to the school [ECU] and to everything else, they’re…strong academically.” As such, Dr. Ocampo did not find himself providing a lot of “formal academic support” for the students in the class. Relatedly, none of the students in the class had disclosed to Dr. Ocampo that they were registered with the Office of Disability Services to receive disability accommodations.

On the other hand, Dr. Anderson’s “Challenges in Urban Education” course was open to students across multiple departments at ECU, including those who had not yet been admitted to a teacher preparation program. When I asked Dr. Anderson to describe the student diversity of his class—in addition to students from both urban and suburban communities—Dr. Anderson said, “Kids with special needs…different religions…different political parties, and I would suspect that there’s some that…have varied sexual preferences as well.” We also discussed how some of his students were “adults…married, grandparents, and then some are…fresh out of high school, and then some are new to the country… [and English is a] new language [for them].” In sum, Dr. Anderson conceptualized diversity as school-based (i.e., “special needs”), as an identity embedded in larger systems of societal inequities (i.e., sexuality), as generational, as geographical, and as a difference of ideas/personal beliefs (i.e., “different political parties”). This diversity, in combination with the range of K-12 schooling experiences, presented challenges for Dr. Anderson:

The challenges that I face are pretty much the diversity that’s in the class. You have seniors, and you have freshmen, and the preparation…the prior knowledge…is real
interesting, and so when you give an assignment, [there is a] range in…levels, and so initially, I was thinking that I just need to grade and react a certain way, but I realized that’s on me, so whatever level they’re at, I need to consider that and then adjust…. I’m trying to simplify things, in terms of lessons and explanations and videos. I don’t want things to be real abstract. I’m trying to make them as concrete as possible. But, still, the feedback that I get is so varied that I just have to be considerate and realize that I need to expect more from the seniors than I do from the freshmen and sophomores, and so that’s the approach I’m taking. I’m not being judgmental of [students’ perspectives that they share in class].

Additionally, the certificate of eligibility requirements, according to Dr. Ocampo, “has reduced [their] enrollment [in the COE] drastically” over the last 4 years (e.g., Graham, 2013). He stated, “Just about the same number [of students] are starting [their programs], but fewer students [are being admitted to the teacher preparation program and] are getting to the end.” Indeed, the total number of students completing teacher preparation programs at ECU has declined from 162 during the 2015-2016 school year, to 117 during the 2016-2017 school year, to 94 during the 2017-2018 school year (Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data, 2019). Similarly, the total number of students admitted declined from 364 during the 2015-2016 school year, to 248 during the 2016-2017 school year, to 121 during the 2017-2018 school year (Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data, 2019). This likely explained why Dr. Anderson’s class had significantly more students (20) than Dr. Ocampo’s class. According to Dr. Ocampo, his course used to have around 25 students, which was the number at which most classes were capped at ECU. During the semester in which the study took place, only 12 students were on the roster, nine of whom showed up on the first day of class and two of whom were graduate students. Additionally, while Dr. Ocampo recognized the lower enrollment could be partially explained by changes in program requirements (e.g., early childhood students no longer needed to take this class), he attributed the lower enrollment to the more stringent teacher preparation admissions requirements.
These policies have had a disparate impact on students of color at ECU, in particular Hispanic and Black students. As mentioned earlier, both graduate and undergraduate students are enrolled in the teacher preparation program. In 2017, the combined undergraduate and graduate student demographics at ECU were as follows: 36.4% Hispanic or Latino, 25.3% white, 21.4% Black or African American, 7.62% Asian, 1.77% Two or more races, 0.483% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders, and 0.338% American Indian or Alaska Native (Data USA, 2020). Yet, during the 2017-2018 school year, around 32% of the teacher preparation enrollment in traditional programs at ECU was white (Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data, 2019), even though white students only accounted for about 25% of the combined undergraduate and graduate student population. Asian students made up 7.5% of teacher preparation students, and students identifying with Two or more races made up 1.7%, aligning with their enrollment on campus. By contrast, the representation of Hispanic/Latino of any race (including white)² (32%), American Indian or Alaska Native (0%), and Black students (19%) was lower than their representation relative to the combined undergraduate and graduate student populations. Thus, while the teacher preparation students at ECU were racially and ethnically diverse—as was also the case in Dr. Ocampo’s class, which he described as “ethnically…very diverse,” including students who were “white…Hispanic…Black…Asian…[and] Middle Eastern”—white students represented a greater share of the students enrolled in the teacher preparation programs at ECU, both generally and relative to their proportion of the total undergraduate and graduate student enrollment³ (see Table 2).

---

² In ECU’s institutional report, race and ethnicity were recorded separately.
³ One student identifying as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander was also enrolled in a teacher preparation program 2017-2018 school year, representing 0.8% of the enrollment. While this technically was greater than this racial group’s representation on campus, the increase seemed too small to include for the purposes of the point that is being made, especially since 0.483% of the total enrollment meant there were roughly 35 students total on campus identifying as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
The overrepresentation of white students in teacher preparation programs can likely be explained by the graduate student population at ECU, as the majority of graduate students were white. (While the institution did not report graduate student demographics separately during the 2017-2018 school year, the combined demographics compared to undergraduate demographics alone suggested this. In 2019-2020, ECU did publish graduate student demographics alone, which corroborated this finding: 40% white, 25% Hispanic, 16% Black, 6% Asian.) Additionally, the majority of this predominantly white group were studying education. (In the 2017-2018 school year, just under 60% of the master’s degrees awarded were in education.) By contrast, none of the top five most popular majors for undergraduate students were in education in Fall 2019 (ECU website).

Dr. Ocampo also noticed the low representation of African American men, both in this class (there was one Black male) and in the program at ECU. Still, African American men made up 3.8% of the students enrolled in teacher preparation programs at ECU during the 2017-2018 school year (Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data, 2019), which was higher than their representation in the elementary and secondary teacher workforce, nationally (1.5%) during the same school year (NCES, 2019). However, unlike the PwI previously mentioned (that was the same size as NSU with five times the endowment), ECU had yet to implement targeted mentorship and support for preservice Black male teachers and male teachers of color (Bristol & Goings, 2019).

NSU was also bound by the same, more stringent state requirements. Like ECU, students need to apply to for the teacher preparation program. However, the admissions process is lengthier, requiring many components outside of the state certification and employment requirements, as indicated in Table 8.
Like ECU, NSU also provides support for this admissions process, including multiple resources and workshops. As stated on their website, undergraduate students who have either not taken a standardized test or have taken one but did not meet the minimum score, are “encouraged to contact an admissions representative” for guidance on either selecting a test or re-testing. Additionally, students whose GPA is 0.25 below the requirement can “apply as a supplemental candidate” by completing the optional essay in the application. In other words, while the application process is lengthier than ECU’s, it seems there are more opportunities for students to apply (i.e., applying as a supplemental candidate), even if they have not yet met the criteria (i.e., passing all the state licensure exams).

The ways in which the teacher preparation program at NSU were responding to the more stringent state licensure requirements also impacted student enrollment in both of the courses I observed at NSU as part of the study. Dr. Ruben taught the foundations course I observed at NSU. Like Dr. Anderson, who taught the foundations course I observed at ECU, Dr. Ruben also commented on the wide range of academic skills and prior knowledge in his course. However, unlike Dr. Anderson’s course, in the semester in which the study took place, Dr. Ruben’s course was reserved for first-semester freshmen. In addition to race ("I have the impression that half of the class, at least…is from some kind of…non-traditionally white group"), gender ("The first piece of diversity is gender. That becomes extremely obvious…. There are…three young men in that class. The other 28, 29, or 30, they are all females"), and disability ("I have several students with different types of disabilities. I know that because they present me with the paper from the office for particular accommodations"), Dr. Ruben described “another diversity” among the students in his course that reflected the overall pattern that students who tend to enroll in 4-year HSIs are less academically prepared than students who do not (Núñez & Bowers, 2011), as
stated earlier: “If we talk about different experiences, which is, from which school district they are coming from, and what type of educational experience they have had, it is a notable difference…” Dr. Ruben felt that by the time students are juniors or seniors, the “college impact” has helped narrow some of those differences, but “now that [he] has such a large number of freshmen, first semester. G-d, you can see it.” Moreover, Dr. Ruben mentioned teaching first-semester freshmen with such a wide range of prior academic experiences as an obstacle he experienced with this group of students: “This is particularly challenging for me.”

On the other hand, when I asked Dr. Abbott to describe the diversity of her students in the methods course she taught that was part of the study, she mentioned educational background (“Superficially, we had students who were master’s students and undergraduate students”); regional/geographic (“Not everybody lived in the city or close by”); parental status (“I think there was a mom”); age (“Some students…were…older…maybe late 20s”); gender (“There were two guys in the class”); and jobs (“One woman was a mechanic”). Dr. Abbott confirmed that she “[doesn’t] ask age difference or diversity or identities…[she’s] just speculating… [she doesn’t] know about…gender identity or sexuality.” When I asked her if she had any students who had disclosed being registered with the Office of Disability Services to receive accommodations, she shared: “I know that I have some students. I don’t know if they’re in that class or the other [introductory] class [I am teaching this semester], which probably doesn’t bode well on me.”

Thus, similar to Dr. Ocampo, she did not mention prior K-12 experience or academic achievement as an area in which her students were diverse. However, my observations suggested that it is possible not all the students in the course had submitted passing standardized teaching licensure exam scores (i.e., Praxis CORE). Prior to the start of one of the course sessions I observed, a few students in the class were talking about how they had not yet passed the Praxis,
despite several attempts. While it is possible that they already met the requirement with the SAT or ACT, this is unlikely, as passing Praxis scores are correlated with higher SAT or ACT scores (Gitomer et al., 1999). That they were already either admitted to the teacher preparation program, or allowed to take this class without being admitted, may have been because, as discussed earlier, students may have been able to apply without standardized test scores and/or meeting the GPA requirement.

Yet, the teacher preparation admissions program process at NSU may not have had as similar an effect as ECU, in terms of the total number of students enrolled in the COE. Dr. Abbott’s methods course also had significantly fewer students than Dr. Ruben’s foundational course (similar to the difference between Dr. Ocampo’s methods course and Dr. Anderson’s foundational course at ECU), and it seems this was not always the case for her. Dr. Abbott shared that “the [methods] class [that was part of the study] is designed for larger groups. So [she] had to make some modifications” from its original design. Yet, a review of Title II reports showed that enrollment has fluctuated since the new state licensure and employment requirements, with 804 students being enrolled in 2015-2016, 896 being enrolled in 2016-2017, 686 being enrolled in 2017-2018, and 1,175 being enrolled in 2018-2019 (Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data, 2020).

The new state employment requirements did, however, have an effect on the racial demographics of students admitted to the COE at NSU. Like ECU, white students were overrepresented and Hispanic and Black students were underrepresented, relative to the combined undergraduate and graduate student populations. In 2018, the combined demographics at NSU were as follows: 28% Hispanic or Latino, 46% white, 14% Black, 6% Asian, 3% Two or more races, 0% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders, and 0% American Indian or Alaska
Native (Data USA, 2021). Yet, during the 2018-2019 school year, 64% of the teacher preparation enrollment in traditional programs at NSU was white (Title II Reports National Teacher Preparation Data, 2020), even though white students only accounted for about 46% of the combined undergraduate and graduate population. Asian students made up 5.4% of teacher preparation students, students identifying as multiracial made up 2.7% of teacher preparation students, and 0.4% students identified as Pacific Islander, aligning with their enrollment on campus. By contrast, the representation of Hispanic/Latino (15%) and Black students (5%) was lower than their representation (28% and 14%, respectively) (see Table 3).

NSU had a “Teacher of Color Grant Opportunity” to financially support teachers of color who work in “high-need school districts” upon graduation, and in 2018, a prominent news publication covering racial diversity in higher education named NSU a “Top Degree Producer” in conferring degrees to students of color. However, similar to ECU, none of the top five majors for undergraduates listed on NSU’s website were in education. Instead, and also similar to ECU, graduate students made up a sizable portion of the enrolled students in the COE. In Fall 2019, just under 50% of enrolled students in the COE were graduate students (NSU Website). Furthermore, while people of color were represented in the graduate student population—Hispanic/Latino (16%), Black/African American (11%), Asian (5%), Non-resident alien (6%), Two or more races (1%), Race/ethnicity unknown (6)—the majority were white (54%) [and women (73%)] (NSU website). The majority of graduate students (48%) were studying education during the 2019-2020 school year, compared to only 13.8% of undergraduates. All of the students in Dr. Abbott’s methods class appeared to be white, with over 75% of them being women.

---

4 I utilized the state Title II report, not NSU’s individual report, since the institution did not make it publicly available. The state Title II report did not distinguish between race and ethnicity.
Summary

Answering Research Question 1—How are teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs working toward racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force?—necessitated a conversation about conceptualizing what it means to be an HSI that is serving students who wish to become K-12 teachers. Compared to NSU, ECU is predominantly Hispanic and more racially diverse and has a higher percentage of students from low-income families and a higher acceptance rate, all of which affect the range of prior academic knowledge and skills that students bring to their education. Both institutions had a relatively low percentage of students registered with the Office of Disability Services. While ECU had been an HSI for at least 12 years, NSU only recently became an HSI after no longer requiring the SAT/ACT for admissions and the student population was still predominantly white (40%). Both institutions, like many HSIs, were working with limited financial resources to support their students (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2012, as cited in Núñez et al., 2015). In line with the fact that neither institution had an explicit mission of serving Hispanic students, professors at both institutions expressed that they were still trying to figure out what it means to be an HSI.

In this chapter, I used Garcia et al. (2019)’s “multidimensional conceptual framework” to describe how students at these two HSIs were being “served.” I used the themes of “outcomes” and “experiences” to describe how students were served across departments and programs. I also used the theme of “experiences” to focus on teaching and research, more broadly, at each institution, from faculty and student perspectives. While students are likely to return after their first year at both institutions, at ECU, they were less likely to finish and graduate from the institution. While both institutions worked to provide a welcoming environment and student support services, participants at both institutions expressed areas in which they could have used
more support academically. Additionally, while students and professors described ECU as an inclusive campus community, both Dr. Ruben and Dr. Abbott expressed concern that the inclusion of some groups at NSU was being prioritized over others. In terms of teaching, instructors at each institution, especially non-tenured assistant professors, were under increasing pressure to produce high-quality research. This may have affected the faculty pedagogy that students experienced at both institutions. At NSU in particular, the high research labels may have worked to legitimize racism experienced by Black and Hispanic faculty, which is also likely to affect their teaching (Modica & Mamiseishvili, 2010).

In describing how ECU and NSU were “serving” preservice teachers, I used the theme of “internal organizational dimensions” (Garcia et al., 2019) to describe the teacher education curriculum within each COE and the theme of “external influences” (Garcia et al., 2019) to describe the effects of state policies regarding teacher employment and licensure. The description of the teacher education curriculum within each COE was guided by subquestion (b) of Research Question 1—How do two professors at two 4-year public HSIs consider the marginalization and/or essentialization of students of color in coursework related to diversity? — and described ECU’s urban school focus and NSU’s progressive educator focus. While the COEs at both ECU and NSU had commitments to social justice and prioritized diversity, Dr. Abbott’s experiences suggested that coursework at NSU, even if guided by these commitments and priorities, was not necessarily enough to remove white students’ deficit thinking about urban schools and/or to prompt them to consider diversity in their field placements in whatever school context. This was different from the students at ECU, whom Dr. Ocampo described as wanting to work in urban schools upon graduation.
However, interview data across both institutions suggested that professors at these two HSIs were working against the marginalization and/or essentialization reported by students of color at PwIs in coursework related to diversity. Dr. Anderson utilized antideficit approaches, and Dr. Ruben encouraged students to bring their own perspectives into course conversations, without suggesting, at least to me, that he felt some students were experts on the experiences of all members of a marginalized group (Irizarry, 2011; Jones et al., 2002), as discussed in Chapter 1. Dr. Ocampo and other professors at ECU prioritized students’ prior experiences with urban schools. However, they did not assume that these experiences as students, in and of themselves, would be enough to teach them how to manage a class or to provide an expansive view of diversity beyond ethnic background. While Dr. Abbott was rarely in the position to teach a course to predominantly students of color, she also expressed care and nuance in how she approached the one or two Black students and/or students of color who enrolled in her courses.

The description of external influences on the ways in which teacher preparation programs could serve students at ECU and NSU was guided by subquestion (a) of Research Question 1—How do teacher preparation programs at two 4-year public HSIs account for, and respond to, barriers that have traditionally excluded preservice candidates of color from the profession? At both ECU and NSU, the state’s certificate of eligibility requirements to seek employment prompted stringent admissions criteria for teacher preparation programs within each institution’s COE. At each institution, this had the effect of weeding out students with “sub-par [K-12] schooling,” as described by Dr. Ocampo, and students of color (who disproportionately experience educational inequities, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2). Additionally, while older students were enrolled in Dr. Anderson’s class, Dr. Ocampo described the young group of students in his class as “a pretty representative sample in terms of their capacity and their
competence,” suggesting that the state licensure and employment requirements may also be excluding older students in the ECU community.

The overrepresentation of white students in the COE and the underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students also happened at NSU, even though students could apply as supplemental candidates if they did not meet the GPA or Praxis CORE requirements. However, only the professors teaching the foundational courses at each institution (Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben) discussed the wide range of academic skills as part of the diversity they noticed within their classes. Put differently, Dr. Abbot had white students in her methods class who had not yet passed the Praxis CORE. However, she did not perceive her class to be diverse in terms of prior K-12 schooling and/or academic skills, at least in the context of how she described the diversity of her class as a whole or the challenges she was having, the way Dr. Ruben and Dr. Anderson mentioned it.

That white students were overrepresented in each institution’s COE (due to the high number of graduate students, the majority of whom were white) and that Hispanic and Black students were underrepresented relative to their representation on campus, was more pronounced at NSU, given the higher representation of white students within their undergraduate population. Moreover, NSU’s status as still predominantly white meant that overrepresentation of white students did not have as strong of an effect on lowering student enrollment as it did at ECU. The underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students, which were the highest representation of students of color on each institution’s campus, suggested that these two HSIs may not have been making a substantial impact in racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force, even as MSIs as a whole produce significant numbers of teachers of color (John & Stage, 2014; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; Raines, 1998), as discussed in Chapter 1.
Chapter 5

DIVERSITY CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY IN THE HSI CONTEXT

In this chapter, I continue focusing on the theme of “internal organizational dimensions” (Garcia et al., 2019) by describing the diversity curriculum and pedagogy within the four focal professors’ courses. The data I collected—interviews with professors and students at both ECU and NSU, course observations, and curricular documents and artifacts—that led to the findings I present in this chapter were guided more broadly by Research Question 2—When teaching preservice teachers of color, how do two teacher educators at two 4-year public HSIs address the diversity of student abilities in their teacher education courses?—and Research Question 3—When teaching about diversity, how do two teacher educators at two 4-year public HSIs engage with the concept of dis/ability as it intersects with race and other categories of difference? The description of the data centers around three analytic themes. First, I describe how professors complicated essentialist understandings of identity and urban schools by simultaneously recognizing the individuality of students and emphasizing how the socially constructed identities one has impacts their (shared) experiences. Next, I describe how learning about diversity was also a focus on school change at both the individual level of the teacher and the broader level of policy, and how professors engaged in multiple pedagogical trajectories as they wrestled with the relationship between P-16 educational equity and broader societal change. Third, I describe how in creating pedagogical opportunities to expand experiences and perspectives, learning about diversity was an (incomplete, experiential) process. I conclude with a short summary of the findings in relation to Research Questions 2 and 3.

A Focus on Individuality, Situated within (Socially Constructed) Group Identities
The focal professors in this study explicitly called attention to multiple identities and experiences in their curriculum, including race, ethnicity, dis/ability, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, language, religion, political affiliation, and immigration status. (For more detail on what each course covered in this regard, see the course syllabi in Appendices F, G, H, and I.) For example, while Dr. Anderson focused on “the racial dynamics that have set up the urban versus suburban versus rural [schooling] systems that we’re presently experiencing,” he also made sure to remind his class that multiple systems impact the lives of K-12 students: “That’s institutionalized oppression, or more specifically, institutionalized sexism…we gotta talk about all the isms” (i.e., Crenshaw, 1991). Aligning with Annamma et al. (2013), in Dr. Ruben’s discussion of the bilingual education movement in class, he shared with the students:

Intersectionality. You cannot essentialize the category. There are a lot of differences…there was not a lot of talk within the groups about sexuality. Ability was not part of the conversation, but it is also a category that should be considered.

Dr. Ocampo made sure to include students with learning disabilities and English language learners in a hypothetical classroom that he assigned to the students to write seating charts. Dr. Abbott shared with me, “I try to make sure that we’re always talking about and attending to diversity.” In particular, she was satisfied with the semester’s intentional focus on Native American and Asian perspectives. In other words, diversity was not simply an afterthought for any of these professor participants, thereby aligning with each College of Education’s (COE’s) commitment to diversity, as described in Chapter 4.

At the same time, there was also a sense that focusing too much on diversity could be dehumanizing (Malcolm X & Haley, 1965), or as Dr. Abbott put it:

Sometimes when people pay attention to the diversity, [they] get weighed down and think there’s really something that needs to happen, and the reality is, you need to be respectful of the human beings in your classroom.
The ways in which professors shared how they thought and taught about diversity demonstrated a careful balance between simultaneously recognizing the individuality of students (and humans) (Collins, 1990/2003; Valenzuela, 1999) and being aware of how the socially constructed identities one has impacts their (shared) experiences (Noddings, 1998, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999).

Dr. Ocampo described this balance as “wiggle room” amid “an inherent conflict in studying and researching diversity”:

> On the one hand, we want to treat every child like an individual, apart from whatever identities they have and not stereotype them…but then, if the whole point of diversity studies and ethnic studies is to learn about the tendencies of certain groups, then what was the point of learning all that stuff to begin with? If I see an Asian student in my class, and Asian students tend to be quiet and defer to authority, do I just ignore that? Now, obviously what I tell my students is you put what you’ve learned or your assumptions or your research about an ethnic group, and you stick that in the back of your head…and then you interact with the student, and you can kind of get a sense of whether or not they match the research. So, there’s a little bit of wiggle room.

That there was the possibility, to Dr. Ocampo, that K-12 students may not “match” the research complicated the possible critique of his own use of the type of research (referenced in the above quote) that seems to be treating cultural differences of K-12 students as static, individual traits, dependent on racial and ethnic group membership, rather than as part of “varied participation in the practices of dynamic cultural communities” (Rogoff, 2003, as cited in Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 21). Rather, Dr. Ocampo recognized that “the minute we do that [use the research to address possible issues before they arise], we’re assuming things about them [the students].” His communication of this “wiggle room” during the in-person classroom management workshop to the ECU students—“We should be careful categorizing and labeling students, but you’re going to do that anyway in your mind. It’s only natural”—suggested that even amid the inevitable labeling of students that is necessitated by and ingrained within the very context of schooling (Youdell, 2006), there remains room to care for students.
Thus, in further detailing this analytic theme, I describe how professors struck this balance between simultaneously recognizing the individual and their group identities through a commitment to humanity and care. (See Chapter 2 for a description of a “caring stance/relation” in teaching that utilizes the multiple theorizations referenced in this chapter.) I first describe how this commitment flowed from their own life experiences of being constructed as “other” during their K-12 schooling. I then describe how this balance also complicated urban school narratives and essentialist understandings of identity.

**An Emphasis on Humanity and Care, Rooted in Lived Experience**

All four professors expressed that learning about diversity also meant developing a commitment to humanity and care, which at times meant de-emphasizing diversity. There was a relationship between this commitment and their own lived experiences (Collins, 1990/2003). In particular, all four of them had been framed by the institution of schooling as “other.”

Dr. Anderson at ECU shared that surviving Vietnam was the reason he went into teaching: “I promised myself that if I made it back, I would dedicate my life to working with kids so that they wouldn’t have to go through what I went through.” For Dr. Anderson, Vietnam felt like his only option after high school as he did not experience the type of caring relation that would have fostered his success (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Roberts, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). The football coach “killed [his] dream” when he would not allow him to try out for the team, and his (predominantly white) teachers did not express concern or care when he started falling behind in school (Valenzuela, 1999): “Not one time did a teacher ever put his arm around me and say, what’s going on? … I had two teachers that…said, ‘You’re not college material’ and ‘Kids like you don’t go to college.’”
Dr. Anderson wanted to work in urban schools “to be a role model for kids…[as] there was only one Black teacher in [his] [predominantly white] high school,” similar to many high schools that lost Black teachers during desegregation efforts, as discussed in Chapter 1. He started teaching physical education at a high school in Boston in 1974, during the first year of desegregation. While racial tensions were high and sometimes even violent in the school community, that first year of teaching held a special significance for Dr. Anderson: “It was like I had a magical gift…white kids, Black kids, Asian kids, Greek, all of them…they just all flocked to me…. I started believing that my life was spared to do this work.” Affinity became less about sharing the same racial background as his students and more about demonstrating that he was there to “nurture and develop…[their] spirits.” He challenges all of his students, regardless of “who [their] parents are” or their backgrounds to “make the path wider for those behind us.” Recalling his own gift as a K-12 teacher, he asked students upon graduation: “How are you going to give back? How are you going to pay it forward?... How are you going to utilize your gift to make life better?”

While Dr. Anderson readily shared his story, Dr. Ocampo did not share with me (or his students, from what I observed) that he himself had trouble in school. It was not until I read his scholarship and came across a chapter in one of his books that I learned about his own struggles as a student in both reading and math, that were marked by an absence of care (Alder, 2002):

I remember asking myself then [as a second or third grade student], which I continue to ask myself now, is why the teacher did not take the time to show me how to write a sentence, or at least recognize that the task was simply beyond my ability at the time. (Ocampo, 2004, p. 43)

Dr. Ocampo attributed his eventual success—transferring to a prestigious university for his undergraduate degree and completing his doctorate there in less than 4 years—to multiple “protective factors” rooted in his individual circumstances: his parents valuing education, his
peer group, the structure of extracurricular activities in high school, and care—the few teachers who believed in his academic potential (Valenzuela, 1999). He certainly questioned whether, as one of the few Hispanic students in his school, he was subject to racial bias. However, his own “academic resilience” has inspired his research, which he described in an interview as “studying students who, by all statistical predictors, aren’t supposed to succeed but do.” In his book, he both recognized that this simultaneously focuses on the context of diversity because students who are not predicted to do well statistically are often students of color and/or students from low-income families (i.e., Kendi, 2019) (described in Chapter 2)—while also focusing on the individuality of these students (Collins, 1990/2003) and how factors rooted in care and recognizing their humanity impact their success.

At NSU, Dr. Abbott’s commitment to helping preservice teachers simultaneously recognize “the diversity that exists” as well as the “humanity” in their classrooms (Valenzuela, 1999) meant preparing teachers to “work with people in ways that are respectful.” To her, respect meant responding to a child’s needs, especially if they are “hurting or hungry” and “tapping into who they are, but also making sure that they get what you’re supposed to give them, and that’s an education” (i.e., Alder, 2002; Noddings, 2012a; Roberts, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). Dr. Abbott described herself as “a firm believer in the standards,” which was apparent in the methods course I observed as part of the study. Students were not only required to include aspects of diversity in the pedagogical tools they made in class. They were also required to explain how such tools would be used to make sure their prospective K-12 students were meeting the state social studies standards. Yet, she also modelled the humanity to her NSU students that she hoped they would enact in their future classrooms. In
hearing that…another professor is giving an exam or paper every other week, that some folks will not accept your work if your name is not written in blue in the right-hand corner, that if you don’t sign in within the first 10 minutes [you are late or absent],

Dr. Abbott felt it was important that she provide a space in which students could “just, you know, relax. I’m a human being, you’re a human being…let’s just kind of…connect on that level.” Cara shared how Dr. Abbott “creates a low-risk classroom…. She just really wants you to learn, and you can feel that she cares just about your learning and not about it [the art projects] being perfect.”

Dr. Abbott’s simultaneous emphases on diversity, humanity, and academic rigor are related to her own K-12 schooling experience. She shared that she was put on the vocational technical track in high school (i.e., Oakes, 2005), along with “all the brown and Black kids.” While she attempted, as a graduate student, the “heavy lifting” of closing the high school (Milner, 2012) and undergraduate (Flores & Park, 2014; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Sleeter, 2017) opportunity gaps between herself and her classmates, she found she could not catch up to the “rigor that was involved” in law school and was eventually counseled out. Thus, the emphasis on rigor, coupled with Dr. Abbott’s understanding of humanity and respect, related to the lack of rigor in her own high school and college experience that ultimately left her unprepared for graduate school (Valenzuela, 1999). Additionally, her emphasis on “the Black experience”—asking students questions like “Where am I?” and making statements like “I am always looking for myself in the newspaper”—when talking about texts and assignments works against the dehumanization she experienced as a high school student.

Dr. Ruben described himself as a high school student in the following way: “I was not the model student. I mean I did well in my academics…but I would skip class, I would misbehave. I have what they will call authority issues, problems with authority.” More specifically, he did not
have problems with the authority rooted in academic knowledge or reciprocal trust in caring relationships, but rather with forms of institutional authority that are often dehumanizing and exist to maintain unequal power relations. Thus, like other students whom teachers perceive as “not caring,” Dr. Ruben shared that his behavior was “a form of resistance not to education, but to the irrelevant, uncaring, and controlling aspects of schooling” (Callahan, 1962, and LeCompte & Dworkin, 1991, as cited in Valenzuela, 1999, p. 94). His own experience as a student who did not fit into the construction of the compliant “good” student (Broderick & Leonardo, 2016) related to how, in a lesson I observed, he problematized the way schools “force students to fit into the institution. Seldom have we designed institutions that will fit the student based on who the students are.”

Dr. Ruben was the only focal professor who did not struggle with academics (and also the only professor who did not attend high school in the United States). Yet, he did not unequivocally accept academics, despite his ease with schoolwork, as measures of student learning and readiness to be a teacher: “Yes, I want them [as future teachers] to get A’s and to know your subject, but what do these A’s recognize? What do they represent? In a way, I want you as a human.” Thus, while Dr. Ruben’s class was the only one in this study to include a midterm and a final exam—more traditional academic assignments—he shared that his section of the course was “the easiest by far.” The students I interviewed noticed and appreciated the level of academic support Dr. Ruben provided, as Amy shared: “He didn’t surprise us, like most teachers do. They tell us it’s going to be there, and it’s not there…. He told us…what to make sure we focus on, and that’s how I passed [the midterm exam].” Amy not only passed. She was “very happy” to earn an A on her first midterm as a college student. Dr. Ruben hoped that modelling this type of care would provide an example to preservice teachers on how to treat their
future K-12 students with respect. After working with a student (not in his class) who failed her section and volunteering his time to help her finish the class with him via independent study, he encouraged her to remember this: “I told her, okay, when you have students struggling in your class...that’s what you have to do.”

Taken together, the relationship between professors’ lived experiences and their commitments to humanity and care demonstrate that while diversity was central to their own experiences and the curriculum of their courses, they were also hoping to inspire something else in their students that perhaps has not been, or cannot be, fully captured within discourses around diversity and teacher education. Notwithstanding the importance of identity in relation to educational and life experiences (see Chapter 2), their testimonies suggested that this focus can be limiting and, in some cases, dehumanizing. The following sections demonstrate how this balance complicated essentialist understandings of identity and narratives of urban schools.

Complicating Urban School Narratives in Teaching about Diversity

Dr. Anderson certainly understood the significance and importance of teachers of color (i.e., Brown, 2014; Gist, 2017). Given the disproportionate disciplining of Black children in school settings (Annamma, 2018; Gregory et al., 2010) and that urban schools are mostly staffed by white women (i.e., Sleeter, 2017) (see Chapters 1 and 2), he commented:

If you are a Black parent, and you are made aware of how your son or daughter has been mistreated by white teachers, you tend to think, “I would like him or her to have someone that looks like him [or her],” with hopes that that person will be more sensitive and more caring.

Yet, Dr. Anderson also shared the following experience with students:

I know of instances where teachers of color have been cruel and worse than a lot of white teachers, and it goes back to what Paulo Freire points out in Pedagogy of the Oppressed. It’s like when you’ve been oppressed, you take on the character of the oppressor when you get in [a] position [of power].
In other words, the role of affinity in developing caring relationships could be mitigated by the impact of larger social systems on one’s own experiences. While Dr. Abbott’s commitment to care often meant an emphasis on rigor, in her experience, this clashed with what students in urban schools felt they needed or wanted. Dr. Abbott “thought a lot about [her] identity as a role model for the students” when she was a middle school teacher. She described herself as “rigid,” in response to how larger systems of oppression impacted her experience as a Black teacher:

I think that was because...a lot of those kids looked like me...I thought about the things people did to mentor me...and I felt that [there] was not much room for flexibility because the world wasn’t going to be flexible with Black and brown kids or kids from the city.

However, she was not sure that her students viewed her as a role model:

They were hanging out in Veronica Richards’ classroom [after school] ...this German white woman, who...I guess she was fun.... If I’m this drill sergeant...even if I am from the community, and I look like the community, [students thought] I’m not trying to hang out with you after school.

Thus, while some students in urban middle schools interpret being strict as a way of caring (Alder, 2002), her noticing that students did not want to spend time with her solely because she was from the community “complicate[s] the portrayal of Black teachers as culturally synchronized othermothers, mentors, and role models for Black students” (Carrol, 2017, p. 115), described in Chapter 1.

Dr. Ocampo also felt that an emphasis on academic rigor was important, yet he was less conflicted by it than Dr. Abbott was. In discussing the importance of consistently enforcing the rules, he asked his students during the classroom management workshop:

Think back to all of your years of K-12 schooling. First, picture your favorite teacher. Then, picture the teacher you learned the most from. For how many of you are the first person the same as the second?

Only three of the 12 students raised their hands. He replied:
Your favorite teacher isn’t necessarily the one you learned the most from…we all know the teacher who is buddy-buddy [with the students], but there isn’t a lot of work being done. They might like you in the moment, but in the end you’re doing a disservice.

Dr. Abbott also used the term “disservice” to describe teachers who neglected to respond to students’ academic needs and/or felt like they needed to rescue students from their communities (Farmer-Hinton et al., 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

**Stretching Student Labels**

A major focus of research in diversity, equity, and social justice in education is the harmful effect of student labels (i.e., Hart et al., 2007). Yet, professors’ commitments to humanity and care meant that their use of such labels were often not fully indicative or representative of how they understood K-12 students or came to understand their own students. Put differently, their commitments to humanity and care stretched the rigidity of labels.

Dr. Ocampo’s understanding of “best practices”—“what works in a classroom and what doesn’t for the largest number of students”—translated, in the course I observed, into an emphasis on the education of the “middle” students rather than the few students who may need more time from the teacher. For example, he discussed with the students “A Teacher’s Dilemma” and whether the teacher should wake up a sleeping “knucklehead,” who is “not [inherently] a bad kid.” Dr. Ocampo partially agreed with the majority of the class who suggested waking up the “knucklehead”: “I know we need to teach all kids.” In this particular instance, however, he felt that teaching all students was an impossibility, which would inevitably put the teacher in a tough position:

Sometimes you have to go with the greater good. If I’m 99% sure that when I wake him up, the rest of the class will stop learning, I have a moral obligation to let him sleep…. Very often there are two or three kids that suck up all your time and energy. The rest of the kids, they pay the price. The way it works is there are 10% that are the behavior problems, 10% that are super academic, and then you have the kids in the
middle. The kids in the middle are the ones who get neglected…but they’re actually getting punished because your time and focus…that’s a value.

Dr. Ocampo’s suggestion to exclude the “knucklehead” could certainly be interpreted as problematic, as it absolves preservice teachers from examining how their pedagogy could be the reason the student is sleeping and how, as teachers, they will be “part of a system of power enacted in classrooms” (Annamma & Winn, 2019, p. 8). Though in practice, Dr. Ocampo stretched the term “knuckleheads” when talking to me about students at ECU. In commenting on how he assumed that most of the students in his methods class were the well-behaved students in their (urban) elementary and high schools, he said: “They’re very calm and respectful and participatory in class. The ones who were the real knuckleheads, for lack of a better term, aren’t in my class…trying to become teachers.” In acknowledging that he cannot think of a better term for disruptive students, “knuckleheads” becomes a placeholder for students who distract from the education of other students, rather than a fixed identity. Stretching the label here may also mean something indulgent toward the not-so-real “knuckleheads” at ECU. Certainly, when it came to students who did not submit work on time, Dr. Ocampo extended leniency: “I’m all bark and no bite. I talk a big game, but if you give me a sob story, I cave, for the most part.”

Dr. Ocampo also complicated the label of learning disability during the classroom management workshop. The dilemma of how to respond to this group of students—who may need more time from the teacher and were therefore not part of the “middle kids”—came up when students were asked to make seating charts of a hypothetical class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Dr. Ocampo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So, we tried to keep kids with learning disabilities in the front groups….</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally, kids with learning disabilities are supposed to be seated toward the front. If they have ADHD, you can help them maintain focus because you’re right there.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So, the rationale is that they have better access to you, and you have better access to them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

202
Students in the group nod/give nonverbal confirmation that this is correct.
Dr. Ocampo: That’s fine…but it’s a give and take...if the kids with learning disabilities are in the front, then the rest are in the back. How would you feel if your child was in the back?

Dr. Ocampo’s question—“How would you feel if your child was in the back?”—might be perceived as ableist from a disability studies perspective, as it (a) conceptualizes laws and/or policies that support people with disabilities as “special rights” that are inherently unfair to nondisabled people, rather than civil rights (Siebers, 2008), and (b) assumes his students’ children are nondisabled (since they would be sitting in the back). Though it may also demonstrate how he worked to “personalize [the instruction] and make it about [their] own children,” as a way to “get…across how important their jobs [as teachers] are.” In discussing teacher quality, once their own children come up, “they’re not so liberal with their assessments…. All of a sudden [they] want the criteria to be more stringent.” Invoking care for their own children complicates both current practices of preferential seating for students with disabilities—which is an (ambiguous) accommodation term around which there is a wide range of teacher interpretations (Byrnes, 2008)—as well as understandings of the “middle” children.

Dr. Ocampo’s question suggested that just because a “middle” child is not diagnosed as having a learning disability, it does not mean the child does not need a high level of access to the teacher. Even though Dr. Ocampo struggled academically, he did not receive the label of learning disability, even as he spent time in the “special classroom” one day a week for “‘special help’ with reading” (Ocampo, 2004, p. 43). He was not an English language learner; however, his identity as one of the few Hispanic students in his school could have triggered this assumption, thereby rendering him less likely to have received special education services should he have needed them (Artiles et al., 2005; Cioè-Peña, 2017a, 2017b). Thus, Dr. Ocampo presenting the
above scenario as a “give and take” could also be rooted in his own experiences, in which he was not treated with care.

Additionally, if all the students with learning disabilities are sitting in the front, they are still physically segregated from the rest of the class, thereby working against the very goals of inclusion toward which their placement in general education is aligned. One student referred to this as the “social ramifications” of seating students homogeneously by ability. Some students did argue for seating their students with learning disabilities among other students in heterogeneous small groups. In these instances, Dr. Ocampo shared that it might make it harder for them to differentiate instruction:

If [you] wanted [the students] to read different [texts], it would be more obvious [to the students that they are reading different level texts. If they are homogeneously grouped, the students are more likely not to know that one table is getting a different passage compared to another].

That Dr. Ocampo provided multiple approaches to where to seat students with learning disabilities—not only in the front row, while also suggesting the benefits of grouping them together—demonstrated the importance to him of “recogniz[ing] the individuality of students and not usually the one size fits all approach.” In other words, students with learning disabilities are a diverse group of students with different needs.

Dr. Anderson similarly stretched the assumption that biological deficiencies explain a lack of student learning (i.e., Baker, 2002) (see Chapter 2). In our second interview, we discussed Oliver, a Hispanic male student who might have been disabled but did not self-identify as such. Dr. Anderson “loved” him (Valenzuela, 1999), yet his homework was “always way off”: “I don’t know the chemistry, I don’t know what happens. How does he internalize things?” His invoking of chemistry here paralleled a similar mention of brain chemistry when describing his teaching philosophy:
All students have the capacity to learn unless they have a chemical imbalance, and it’s the responsibility of adults in their lives…to create opportunities for them to develop to their capacity.

These comments on brain chemistry seemed to suggest processes that were outside his realm of support, knowledge, and/or understanding. Upon reading one of Oliver’s homework assignments, Dr. Anderson shared: “It made me do some self-reflection. He said tribalism is when a group of people work together for the best interest of the group. Did I lead them to that? I mean, is that the path I wanted?” His enactment of a more inclusive stance toward Oliver in which he located Oliver’s incorrect answer in a possible path along which he might have led him, rather than due to an inherent deficit or chemical imbalance, aligns with the social model of disability (Connor et al., 2008) (see Chapter 2). It also demonstrates that Dr. Anderson did not ignore the classroom context and immediately equate Oliver’s academic performance to his possible disability, which often happens once students, especially those of color, are diagnosed (Keough & Speece, 1996, as cited in Harry & Klingner, 2006).

**Diversity as a Focus on Expanding Commitments to Equity**

While they did not use the specific language of “equity,” all four focal professors talked about how to enact change in schools and in society, both with me and with their students. Taken together, their perspectives surfaced tensions around the relationships between equity and diversity at both the K-12 and college levels. In detailing this analytic theme, I start with a description of how the perspectives they took on changemaking (individual or more bird’s-eye) impacted their curricular decision making. Within this description, I also detail how within these perspectives, commitments to equity did not necessarily mean a focus on all kinds of diversity. I also describe how, within these perspectives, a tension emerged around the extent to which K-12 teachers and schools impact society. I then describe how one way this tension was resolved was
through a focus on K-12 teacher practice rather than theory. I conclude with a description of how, in expanding their commitments to equity, tensions surfaced between meeting the needs of their college students or what they felt were the needs of their students’ future K-12 students.

**Relationship Between Perspectives on Changemaking and Diversity**

Three of the four professors focused their discussion of equity at the individual level of changemaking, meaning they described the impacts of individual teachers on students’ lives. One professor, Dr. Anderson, focused on a broader, more bird’s-eye view when it came to change, meaning he described the impacts of policy on students’ lives. Within each of these perspectives, there was a relationship between the ways in which they conceptualized change and their inclusion of diversity. Additionally, a tension emerged in the data around the extent to which K-12 teachers and schools can, and do, impact society when it comes to equity.

**Individual Focus**

Dr. Abbott shared that she wanted her students to be “responsive and…ready” for any child who was going to be in their classrooms. While this meant an emphasis on “the Black experience” (mentioned earlier), the way in which she described representation demonstrated that her understanding of diversity was evolving rather than static. She shared with me that her research interest in preparing teachers for LGBTQIA+ diversity came in 2009 when she learned about the suicides of two Black and brown students who were similarly “described as a little more flamboyant, but still not accepted and supported”: “These are 11-year-old kids. They could have been in my classroom, and I’m presenting myself as this person, this champion of diversity, and so that was the trigger for me.” In other words, a champion of diversity needs to consider all kinds of diversity and adopt a continuous stance of what diversity means, given the impact of school on young people’s lives and humanities.
Dr. Ocampo took what he described as a “practical” approach in discussing diversity and equity. A “huge believer in the power of education,” he shared:

Very practically, you can move somebody from generations of poverty into a solid middle class living [via education]. That’s incredible. That’s what my father was able to do, and I benefited from that, so I feel an obligation to pay it forward to a certain extent. As such, he communicated to his students that “your job as a teacher is to maximize time on task,” especially for students in low-income schools who are already behind, given the importance of grades/test scores/education:

I don’t mean to be dramatic, but it’s a form of child abuse. At the end of the day, what’s going to happen? They’ll score lower on SATs, they won’t get into a [good] college, [and] they won’t get a good job that can provide for their families.

When I asked Dr. Ocampo to define diversity, he related his definition directly to the importance of this pragmatic focus on economic improvement via education: “When I think of diversity, normally I’m thinking about ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic…gender to a lesser extent. Those are the things…most prevalent to closing the achievement gap.” Moreover, he cautioned against losing that focus: “I tend to limit it [diversity] because if you broaden it too much…if it starts to mean everything, then it means nothing.”

Within this focus on impacting individual lives, there emerged a tension between the impact K-12 teachers can make and the role of structures and outside systems that impact teaching and education (Noddings, 1997). In analyzing my interviews with Dr. Ruben and observations of his class, I coded “positive narrative of teachers as social change agents” seven times, such as when he shared with me in an interview:

Teachers…have an incredible responsibility because they have the potential to change the world, and it’s not just a naive dream. You can do it. Yes, there are global issues…. You have to change structures. But teaching enables you to change the day to day, the minute to minute.

Dr. Ocampo similarly emphasized the importance of the “day-to-day”:
If the research says that the most impactful school controllable variable for school success is the quality of the teacher…then we have an obligation to make sure we’re doing everything we can to make becoming a teacher challenging.

Dr. Ocampo recognized making teaching more challenging surfaced an inherent tension between wanting to make the teaching profession both more selective—albeit, through Eurocentric, masculinist understandings of knowledge validation (Collins, 1990/2003) and teacher quality (Souto-Manning, 2019) (see also Chapter 1)—and diverse (i.e., Cochran-Smith, 2016): “On the one hand we want teaching to be prestigious, but on the other hand we want everybody to be able to do it, and sometimes those things are just conflicting.” However, this tension was somewhat resolved in his describing how some students at ECU were counseled out of the education major upon meeting challenges in their student teaching, due to having other responsibilities during the semester (i.e., work, childcare) that their wealthier peers, who could do student teaching exclusively, did not have: “It’s always good because not everybody should be a teacher.”

Moreover, similar to Dr. Ruben’s comment about needing to change structures, Dr. Ocampo recognized that teachers could not fix every social problem and, therefore, reach every student. He described this position as something he taught in his classroom management class that “[he’s] never heard another college of ed teacher ever say”:

You can’t control every student. You can’t influence every student. Sometimes you have to lose the battle to win the war…it’s okay to say… “This student’s…got so many issues going on…I don’t have the capacity to solve all his problems right now,” and be okay with that.

In other words, the student described as a “knucklehead” (referenced earlier) may be sleeping for reasons that have little to do with what is happening at school. Dr. Ocampo felt it was “kind of arrogant” for teachers to think they “can reverse centuries of oppression” that may more accurately explain why such a student is sleeping, aligning with work demonstrating that
standardized test scores are more a reflection of students’ socioeconomic status and access to resources than the result of hard work and studying (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Kendi, 2019).

**Broader Bird’s-eye/Policy View**

While what Dr. Anderson enjoyed the most was being a high school teacher and coach, he felt that in order to address the cultural disconnect he noticed between his students and many of their teachers (Delpit, 1995, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999), he “needed to get in a position of policy”: “If you can impact one school, you should be able to impact the city. So, then I went back to school to get my Ph.D. to become a superintendent so I could impact larger numbers.”

Dr. Anderson remained a fierce advocate for equity when working with groups of teachers:

> What do you see…when you look at your students?... What do you think? Do you sift and sort mentally? Do you think that these are the ones that are going to make it? Do you buy into that bell curve bullshit?

In other words, a broader bird’s-eye view of equity shifted the focus away from the fact that some students cannot be reached, as suggested by Dr. Ocampo.

This broader bird’s-eye view of change was evident in the ways Dr. Anderson developed the curriculum for the “Challenges in Urban Education” course that was part of the study:

> The syllabus that was handed to me…tended to focus on…solely issues on urban education and how to be an effective urban teacher…. I felt that it didn’t…spend any time on the path…the historical piece, and so I felt it was necessary to keep it in perspective.

In particular, Dr. Anderson wanted his students as aspiring teachers to understand that “America is caught up in this whole race thing, when race is just a social construct” and “the system has been set up from the beginning to only educate certain folks” (Tyack, 1974). Focusing on “the path” that created distinct urban, suburban, and rural education systems in the United States meant focusing on the “root cause of racism” and the “engine behind slavery”:

In particular, Dr. Anderson wanted his students as aspiring teachers to understand that “America is caught up in this whole race thing, when race is just a social construct” and “the system has been set up from the beginning to only educate certain folks” (Tyack, 1974). Focusing on “the path” that created distinct urban, suburban, and rural education systems in the United States meant focusing on the “root cause of racism” and the “engine behind slavery”:
It’s economics. It’s greed, and once you understand that…then you realize that…we’re all being controlled by those who make the money, and the strategy is to keep people preoccupied with insignificant [race] stuff.

In other words, despite having “grown up in a racist city and experiencing…unimaginable racism,” he wanted students to understand how race is strategically used to maintain political and economic power (Kendi, 2019; Lopez, 2014) and that diversity was a distraction from “the root” causes and “real conditions” that sustained inequity:

I don’t know that racial discrimination is that complex. That’s why I try to focus on…why were people acting like that at that time?... Do you think that all white men were that smart? They weren’t! Just the people with money…[asking] how do I get this crop grown?... If you’ve never been around Black folks, it’s like, maybe they are animals…. Give me six of them. They can work the field…. This country’s been so caught up in the racial thing…that we lose sight of what were the conditions that made it possible? Because the same thing’s happening right now.

Dr. Anderson’s statement that “the same thing’s happening right now” suggested that focusing on the conditions may be more impactful when it comes to change rather than focusing on “the racial thing,” given that these conditions seem to be remaining the same across time. Some students left the class deeply reflecting on their role in these conditions as future teachers. Ben shared:

I really believe that there is that real battle between socialism and neoliberalism, and where is that going? How am I putting myself in the middle of that as someone who’s going to try to teach public school kids?

Yet, similar to professors who took an individual perspective on changemaking, Dr. Anderson also felt that “making the path wider” necessitated a focus beyond academics, even at the policy level:

You have to do more than just tell kids…if you study hard, then you’ll get a good job. No, you’ve got to understand where you are in this world, that you’re a citizen of a global environment.
In other words, even the soundest educational policies that increased student achievement may not fully prepare students for life after graduation:

One of the mistakes that we make in America is we teach kids and test kids individually and then expect them to go off to work as a member of a team, and for many that’s a difficult adjustment because they haven’t been trained to do so.

This perspective aligns with work demonstrating that school often reinforces the economic, capitalist status quo, rather than providing students with the tools for economic mobility (Anyon, 1980; Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

Focus on K-12 Teacher Practice over Theory

As the previous section demonstrates, conceptualizations of and commitments to equity—whether in terms of the impact of individuals and/or policies—brought up an inherent tension around the significance of (certain types of) diversity and responsibilities of teachers and K-12 schools. One way this tension was resolved in the foundational courses (taught by Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben) was by focusing on K-12 teacher practice, as it related to the course goals and expanding students’ understanding of diversity and/or equity. In the methods courses, a similar focus on K-12 teacher practice also helped professors (Dr. Abbott and Dr. Ocampo) address topics of diversity around which there was political contention.

Opening Possibilities in Foundational Courses

The focus on K-12 teacher practice in the foundational courses opened possibilities for students to think about their roles as change agents within schools and within society. Dr. Ruben spent time in his class both historicizing progressive practices, as well as emphasizing that the term “progressive” does not always imply progressive thinking. In the first lesson I observed, he problematized the way “progressive” was used to rationalize racial segregation in the 1850s, based on unfounded assumptions that Black students had lower intellectual abilities (Anderson,
1988). He also traced such thinking to today’s classrooms, where in one lesson I observed, he explained how the progressive practice of the teacher sitting in a circle with the students “gives the idea that we are more progressive…. Everyone [both teacher and students] is supposedly at the same level…. It could be an illusion. It might work, but it might not.” In this way, he was working toward one of the goals he had for his students “to read critically.” Moreover, this line of thinking and questioning sparked interest in a class that was not typically very participatory, as indicated in Chapter 4. For example, Dr. Ruben shared that one lesson in which students felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and where “they made some very interesting connections” was around the different traditions of progressive education. This gave Dr. Ruben opportunities to ask follow-up questions—“Why do you think so?... Can you give me an example?”—which were not always available when students did not readily share their thoughts. Additionally, it expanded the discourse on progressivism more broadly: “It gave me an opportunity to talk about some of the tensions and say yes, there are those who were extremely dogmatic. There are those who continue to be very dogmatic.”

While Dr. Anderson took a more bird’s-eye approach to social change, there were moments where his focus on K-12 teacher practice opened up possibilities for thinking about both the course content and K-12 students’ agency. After a class screening of the film Race: The Power of an Illusion, which illustrates the idea of race as a social construct (i.e., Hall, 1997) (described in Chapter 2), Dr. Anderson shared an example from his 43 years as a teacher, administrator, and school leader in urban schools about how he worked to debunk racialized thinking around smartness with high school students. When his former Black students told him that Chinese students did better on standardized tests because they are Chinese, Dr. Anderson spoke with the Black students about how the Chinese students did better because they spent more
time studying after school. He framed the Chinese students’ test scores as a result of “putting in
more time and more effort” rather than intelligence, in order to encourage the Black students that
they, too, could do well on standardized tests. This anecdote focused on K-12 teacher practice
aligned with Dr. Anderson’s overall aims of inspiring change agents at ECU who would “make
the path wider.” Adam, a student, shared he “really liked” this story because it would help him
respond to future students who had also internalized these (racist ability) norms (Annamma et al.,
2013) about both themselves and other groups of students.

On one hand, Dr. Anderson’s example demonstrated the influence of environment on
educational outcomes (i.e., Harris, 1993). On the other hand, it emphasized individual hard work
as the pathway to educational achievement, despite research that argued against perpetuating
meritocracy as the sole reason for someone’s success (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Hurn, 1993),
as described in Chapter 2. When I pointed out this contradiction to Adam, he reconciled it by
saying that what students experience both in and out of school affects their success. This
contradiction, as well as how Adam worked to resolve it in his interview, suggested that students
in Dr. Anderson’s class learned the importance of simultaneously viewing Black students as
agentic rather than victims of their own circumstances, while also keeping in mind the outside
factors that impact students’ lives. In other words, the moments in Dr. Anderson’s class in which
he referenced K-12 teacher practice extends conversations within critical theory that can feel
overly deterministic (i.e., Bell, 1980, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

Depoliticizing Diversity in Methods Courses

Focusing on K-12 teacher practice in the methods courses rendered it less contentious for
professors to incorporate topics of diversity around which there may have been (political)
disagreement. Dr. Ocampo felt it was important to emphasize “the practical,” rather than what
his own undergraduate experience emphasized: “It was more political than anything else. They were kind of pushing an agenda, and I describe myself as a liberal progressive, but I’m also a realist.” More specifically, he shared that the faculty were preparing him to go into a “utopian educational setting where students were self-motivated and driven and had all their other needs met,” and that in such a setting, imposing structure and rules in the classroom would be “forcing people to assimilate and curtailing creativity.” In his experience, without structure and with too much freedom, students in urban schools “didn’t do much,” and they “needed…[and] craved structure.” Pushing a political agenda would also be a “disservice to teachers” since it is detached from the reality of [some] urban schools that he described as “chaotic”: “It’s liberal ignorance to assume that all students need the same classrooms, and those classrooms should be these free places where people get to do whatever they want to do.” In other words, pushing a political agenda closed off possibilities to differentiate structure within a school.

Aligned with the idea that classrooms need individualized levels of structure, in practice, Dr. Ocampo presented a range of classroom management stances and encouraged the students to figure out what aligned best with their personality and individual teaching situation. During the in-person workshop, he shared that teachers tend to fall somewhere on the “Democracy-Dictatorship” continuum, and he had the students answer a series of questions to help them figure out where on the continuum they were. Thus, while he felt a high degree of structure was important, he did not necessarily present this as the only option to his ECU students. Rather, he presented multiple perspectives, even as his own personal perspective “[went] against the grain [of] a lot of progressive, liberal teacher preparation faculty.”

Dr. Abbott similarly shared that she did not feel the college classroom was the place for discussing political ideologies:
In those ways I try to stay neutral, and I don’t like it when I have peers and colleagues who are just very intentional in that way. I think it’s bad enough that we’re singing this whole democracy song and inclusion and all that kind of stuff, but then, I don’t know, just to kind of bring in the heavy political stuff…. I don’t do that.

The above quote—“it’s bad enough we’re singing this whole democracy song and inclusion”—suggested an understanding of the college classroom and/or campus as an inherently unequal space. Thus, a focus on K-12 teacher practice may have also worked to level the playing field for students who may never feel “safe” in the college classroom (i.e., Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009). It also expanded how and what topics of diversity entered the classroom conversation. For example, as Dr. Abbott realized the importance of addressing LGBTQIA+ diversity (referenced earlier), she thought about how to address that in preservice teacher coursework in ways that were welcoming: “I started looking at children’s literature, and then I figured that would be an easier way to kind of bring the narrative and the conversation into the classroom.” The focus of this narrative was not to engage in a political or an ideological debate about the (legal) rights and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ people, which is not only a particularly divisive topic in the United States (and in many parts of the world); it was also overwhelming conversations about diversity on NSU’s campus, as mentioned by Dr. Ruben’s comment in Chapter 4 about an “ideological slant” or projection onto what types of diversity are important to the NSU community.

Rather, the focus on LGBTQIA+ narratives was related to her understanding of the impact of school and teachers on young people’s lives (mentioned earlier):

I still have folks who are uncomfortable…but if you’ve got young people losing their lives because they feel teachers are not supportive, we need to figure out a way to have these conversations and to be supportive.

Moreover, she related this discomfort to people’s prior experiences rather than to conservative politics:
It’s what’s unknown to you, right. So maybe you don’t know that aspect of the community and the diversity, and then you certainly don’t know…how you’re going to bring that conversation and the content into the classroom.

In other words, Dr. Abbott rooted people’s understanding of diversity in their own exposure and experiences (Collins, 1990/2003) (an idea which is further discussed later in this chapter).

Moreover, her emphasis on K-12 teacher practice reflected her belief in a scaffolded approach about how and when teachers could address diversity. Referring to a recent state mandate requiring teachers in Grades 6-12 to teach LGBTQIA+ history, she shared: “We need to start in first grade…lay the foundation, so that when children get to the sixth grade…there’s not a big learning curve.” This stance was evident in how she approached Holocaust education as Amanda, a student, reflected on how she “learned to approach topics that [she] would think are controversial in a better way”:

I didn’t realize how young you can start teaching it [the Holocaust] and the way to introduce it…. Just like teaching them to be cognizant of what’s going on in the world around them, which I think is a big thing.

Thus, rather than utilizing the language of antisemitism—another politically divisive topic—Dr. Abbott focused on larger ideas that suggested the ways in which diversity could evolve as a concept across grade levels.

**Dilemmas in Expanding Notions of Equity in Teacher Education Practice**

As demonstrated thus far, the professors in this study both deeply cared for K-12 students and believed that teachers and schools had the potential to impact their lives in positive or negative ways. They also considered how the college classroom and/or higher education could impact the lives of their college students, some of whom were former urban school students themselves (in the case of ECU). At times, they were faced with a tension that emerged between
meeting their current college students’ needs and what they believed to be the needs of their college students’ future K-12 students.

Part of why Dr. Ocampo felt it was important to tell his students that not every K-12 student can be influenced and/or included (referenced earlier) was because he felt it was a “disservice” to teach his ECU students that this was even a possibility: “They get out into the field, and they’re like, ‘Well, I must be doing something wrong because this is supposed to work,’ and they are kind of set up for failure to begin with.” Making sure that ECU students were set up for success as teachers was especially important to Dr. Ocampo, given that many came from low-income households and had attended urban schools themselves: “I want my students to become successful teachers for two reasons. One is so they can impact students in the community, and two is so that they can stabilize themselves financially.” At times, both of these reasons surfaced in how he described the methods he was teaching. For example, in describing the importance of the classroom management part of his course, he shared: “It’s going to dictate so much of their emotional life at school and their careers, and that’s going to dictate whether or not they stay.” Yet his emphasis on structure and rules was not only to make his ECU students’ lives easier as teachers; it was also in service of what he felt K-12 students needed, as described by his emphasis on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as a driving theory behind the methods he modelled in class:

If they [the students] don’t feel safe and secure, then they’re not going to give a shit about anything having to do with academics…. Those physiological and emotional needs need to be met first, and ultimately the overriding purpose of classroom management is safety.

In practice, Dr. Ocampo shared with his students during the classroom management workshop: “I think the best approach [to classroom management] is benevolent dictator…. The rules don’t have to be harsh. They just have to be enforced constantly.” Although K-12 students may
perceive a plethora of constantly enforced rules as unreasonable and unfair (Annamma, 2018; Graham, 2020), students in urban schools have also reported that they appreciate the “relatively calm, orderly, and safe” (Graham, 2020, p. 670) environment that rules can provide, especially in “really, really serious” (p. 670) or egregious situations.

Yet, in discussing the need to make the process of becoming a teacher more challenging (described earlier), Dr. Ocampo also recognized that it was difficult for professors at ECU to “teach [their] students…to be more rigorous with their [K-12] students…given [that] sometimes they [ECU students] are not the strongest students, and they haven’t experienced a lot of rigor.” As he shared this, a tension surfaced between the two reasons he wanted his students to be successful:

Is my job to get my students jobs? Or is my job to get the best teachers possible in this area? And sometimes those things conflict…. I’d like to think the two aren’t mutually exclusive, but I’ll give you a perfect, honest example. I’ve written glowing recommendations for students who maybe I didn’t think would be the best teachers, but I really wanted them to get jobs. I would never put a student out there who was a poor teacher…[but] sometimes the recommendation isn’t exactly in line, but I feel for that student. I think…a lot of us [at ECU] would agree that’s…a conflict that we experience.

While Dr. Ocampo did not state this explicitly, his decision to write the above students recommendation letters has the effect of pushing against “what Britzman (1986) called the ‘cultural myth’ of teacher education which assumes that preservice teacher education should result in fully developed teachers rather than regarding teachers as ‘life-long’ professionals” (Teacher Education Exchange, 2017, as cited in Philip et al., 2019, p. 252). That Dr. Ocampo “[felt] for that student”—and acted on those feelings—meant the student’s trajectory within the teaching profession was not determined solely as a result of his/her/their performance in a teacher preparation program. Additionally, it meant that students who may not perform as well in their program due to additional experiences they may bring to their studies—i.e., having to work
or support a family (as discussed in Chapter 4 by Dr. Ocampo and in Chapter 1)—are still given a chance to enter the profession, even if their student teaching evaluations or GPAs were not the highest in their class. Moreover, that Dr. Ocampo recognized that poor teachers could be admitted to the teacher preparation program and graduate from ECU indicated an understanding that there is more to being a high-quality teacher than meeting the Praxis and GPA requirements (i.e., Sleeter, 2017) (see Chapter 1).

At NSU—where students were not described by the focal professors as coming from urban schools themselves—Dr. Abbott was not faced with the same dilemma as Dr. Ocampo in terms of thinking about equity. Thus, at the K-12 level, she went “maybe...beyond just being a [student-centered] progressive educator”:

I worked a little bit more for change, so where there were injustices or inequities with regard to the students in my classroom, I was more willing to work on their behalf and advocate and serve as an ally for them. I know I don’t do much of that on this level.

Still, even within this different context, Dr. Abbott at times had to resolve this tension between meeting the needs of her NSU students, who all appeared white in the class I observed as part of the study, and the needs of students in their future classrooms who might “look like [her].” For example, one of the assignments aligned with “the Black experience” was a multicultural art and literature Black history “study buddy” assignment (see Appendix I). For this assignment, Dr. Abbott “banned, [she] call[s] them, the Big 4, no Martin, no Rosa, no Harriet, and no slavery,” in order to expand both future teachers’ and K-12 students’ knowledge of the possibilities of what constitutes “the Black experience.” I observed in the class, however, that some of the students made a “study buddy” that was on a banned topic.

Dr. Abbott did not automatically assume they were intentionally defying the directions. In fact, when Cara shared with me that her study buddy was on the topic of slavery, nothing in
her response indicated she deliberately or purposefully did not follow the rules. When I asked Dr. Abbott if there were any consequences for making a study buddy about one of the Big 4, she shared: “There’s no penalty, and if I were braver, I would have maybe more directly called them out on that. My fear is, in doing that, people will shut down, or they get defensive.” “Bravery,” then, for Dr. Abbott meant negotiating the defensive resistance white students often display when engaging in topics of diversity—which has been well documented in the literature (i.e., McHatton et al., 2009; Pohan & Mathison, 1998; Ukpokodu, 2003) (see Chapter 2)—and the shutting down (Enumah, 2021) or silence of white students that can act as a “weapon or way to defy and deny the legitimacy of the teacher and/or knowledge” (Ladson-Billings, 1996, p. 82). It also meant bringing in topics related to “the Black experience” that were personal to her, which was not always easy: “I still struggle and work with that.... It’s gotten easier, but...I’m not there yet with...the interpersonal piece [of teaching].” Yet ultimately if either of these things happened—shutting down or getting defensive—her NSU students would not learn, which held significance for Dr. Abbott, given her positionality relative to her students:

When I started here, I felt like I needed to be a hard ass because...that’s kind of what the professors do...and then one of my colleagues said, “Students want to know you, and especially our students want to know you,” right?

Thus, despite the obstacles, Dr. Abbott continuously worked to “[be] more intentional with the narratives that [she] bring[s] into the classroom.”

Diversity as Process: Creating Opportunities to Expand Experiences and Perspectives

In addition to the impact of their own experiences as K-12 students on their commitments in the classroom (referenced earlier), the ways in which professors described how their curriculum and pedagogy shifted alongside their evolving understandings of diversity—such as in Dr. Abbott’s incorporation of LGBTQIA+ diversity—suggested the importance of experience
in coming to understand diversity (Collins, 1990/2003). Dr. Ruben recognized that what students experienced in class was sometimes a stronger teaching tool than what they read in preparation. For example, the attention he gave to dis/ability during class sessions was informed by the fact that he “can never really find good [reading] to use…because…the language in which [many DS/E scholars] write is not always accessible for the undergraduate student.” In a similar discussion on the impact of reading about diversity on student learning, Dr. Anderson got the sense that his students were not staying up with the reading in his class, due to “hav[ing] so many other obligations [outside of class]…. That’s why I try to make the class time a real learning opportunity for them.”

In detailing the impact and importance of experience in learning about diversity, I start with describing how classroom interactions became an important source of learning as professors worked to expose students to multiple perspectives and ideas. Next, I describe how professors’ own role in these interactions demonstrated a tension between affirming students’ experiences, while also challenging them and providing them a context to learn something new. Taken together, I work to show how professors approached learning about diversity as an incomplete, experiential process that may extend beyond the temporal boundaries of the semester, especially given the limitations of the higher education context in learning about diversity.

**Exposing Students to Multiple Perspectives and Ideas**

The professors in this study worked to create pedagogical opportunities that exposed students to multiple perspectives and ideas. As such, classroom interactions became significant sources of learning as students shared their own experiences in relation to the content. At NSU, Dr. Abbott felt:

We all come from our own familiarities and our own experiences, and if you haven’t had a chance to move away from that, especially before you take a job to work with folks
who might come from other places or have had different experiences, it’s going to be challenging.

In this regard, she felt her class was “very important” because it provided some of these opportunities for students who “research says…[have] had very little interaction with people of color, or Black folks” and who sometimes shied away from talking about race and ethnicity when Dr. Abbott asked them “Where am I?” in the text: “Some of the students [say], ‘Well, there’s some women here’…but the race and ethnicity stuff doesn’t typically appear.”

However, race and ethnicity appeared, at least implicitly, in other courses Dr. Abbott has taught. For instance, there was a required field component in a course that was not part of this study. Dr. Abbott shared that many of the (white) students resisted doing fieldwork in schools in Black and brown neighborhoods and sometimes had deficit assumptions about urban schools (e.g., that they are dangerous), which is not unlike what can happen with white students at a PwI (Hampton et al., 2008). Yet, when Black and brown students were enrolled, it was not always up to Dr. Abbott herself to address what her white students may not have experienced themselves:

What I have found is that the brown and Black students are from [the predominantly Black and brown city where the fieldwork is taking place], right? And I’ve had one or two folks that say, “No that is not right, I actually went to that school as a young person,” or “I live around the corner from that school, and that [stereotype] is not true, so you all need to work through that stuff.” … They kind of refute those things…for the students.

Dr. Ruben recalled similar instances in his class where “particularly…the ethnic minorities, they immediately pick up” topics related to race. He shared how they were reading what was considered at the time a progressive children’s story called *The Kind Negro* from the 1850s. The “ethnic minorities” immediately responded to the beginning of the story that said something along the lines of “[The main character] is Black, but she’s a wonderful person,” particularly the word “but.” However, he also felt that, in some instances, the space of higher education may
impact or limit what students say and/or feel comfortable sharing. Regarding the “couple of… white students that pick up on the issues that many others will not,” Dr. Ruben explained:

I don’t know if they are privileged or not because I have no idea about their backgrounds, but at least they have a little bit more of the cultural capital and probably are more used to…feel[ing] safe raising [certain] questions.

In his experience, feeling “safe” was not always in response to what professors may think, but what other students may think. For example, in a class I observed, Dr. Ruben shared the story about how, as department chair, he had to respond to a student who plagiarized in an online discussion board because, as the student shared: “If I really say what I think…I will be ostracized by all my classmates and friends…. I am very conservative, and I have the feeling that…the vast majority of my peers are liberal.” Thus, classroom interactions at NSU were shaped by how students negotiated their positionalities and perspectives in relation to those of both their professors and classmates.

At ECU, when students shared perspectives that may not have been widely held, Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ocampo weighed their own relative experiences in their responses. While Dr. Anderson “pepper[ed] [the students] with questions” about their perspectives, as Ben described it— “He’s constantly trying to draw more out of us”—only rarely did he share his own point of view on the topic. After watching Race: The Power of an Illusion, Dr. Anderson asked the class: “What does race have to do with urban education?” One white student, Allison, shared how her parents grew up in an urban area, had nothing, and were able to move to the suburbs through hard work: “Basically, it doesn’t matter where you come from. As long as you work hard, you can do it.” Dr. Anderson replied by drawing on his own family history, as the descendent of slaves in North Carolina:

So, you think it’s just determination or hard work…[that] determines if you live in a suburban area or urban area?... My family has been here for 400 years…and I’m the first
one to go to college. So, my grandfather and my great-great-grandfather didn’t work hard?

One student of color agreed, stating:

This is why it’s important to understand [the] history of institutionalized racism…. We sell the myth that you just have to work hard…but there are people with power, [or the] invisible hand, [as] you said in the first class…and they will always [be in] control…

When Dr. Anderson began to say, in response, “But some people don’t think [that]…” Allison cut him off by saying, “You’re trying to bring it back to race.”

Allison’s response is not necessarily surprising, given the defensiveness that white students demonstrate during conversations about diversity and inequity (e.g., McHatton et al., 2009) (discussed in Chapter 2), and race in particular (Ladson-Billings, 1996; Milner, 2008).

When I asked Dr. Anderson about this interaction, he reflected on the role of experience in coming to understand diversity: “She feels the way she does because that’s the path…she’s been exposed to…and that’s probably what her parents told her. ‘We worked hard,’ and they probably did.” In other words, Dr. Anderson did not portray Allison as being color-evasive in her response or “purposeful[ly]…fail[ing] to address [the] material conditions” (Annamma et al., 2017, p. 154) of racial inequity. Rather, he tried to humanize her and suggest that with continuous exposure to, and experience with, a different path or way of thinking, she may develop the necessary empathy to think differently (Collins, 1990/2003). Additionally, this example demonstrated that in some cases, sharing his own experiences may have prompted students of color to present opposing perspectives, or counter-stories, to dominant (white) narratives (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002b) (see Chapter 3). The student of color may not have even made that comment if this class were in a PwI and/or taught by a white professor, given that students of color at PwIs have reported that their (white) professors did not always know how to manage diversity conversations (e.g., Tolbert & Eichelberger, 2016) (see Chapter 1).
Dr. Ocampo felt he was limited in how he could respond to students’ perspectives if he did not have the relevant experience himself. While he “continually emphasized that their coming from urban backgrounds is a net positive,” Dr. Ocampo shared that some students still said things like, “I went to an urban high school. I hated it. The kids fooled around constantly…. I feel like I didn’t learn as much as I could learn. They were animals.” Dr. Ocampo did not feel it was his place to challenge these perspectives that located the problems of urban schools within the students: “Now, what am I supposed to do with that? Because she [the student] knows more than I do.” While Dr. Ocampo taught in an urban school for 3 years and has spent the majority of his 15-year career as a professor researching urban schools, Dr. Ocampo grew up in a “suburban…middle class…and exceptionally [racially] diverse” area.

Dr. Ocampo’s hesitancy to respond to deficit perspectives was further complicated by the fact that he shared: “I think they [the ECU students] assume I did [attend an urban school], and it’s like instant credibility.” Certainly, Roberto, a Hispanic student in Dr. Ocampo’s class, who was from a “Hispanic-dominated city” and attended a predominantly Hispanic secondary school, shared that he looked up to Dr. Ocampo, in part, because he perceived Dr. Ocampo to “come from a similar background.” Thus, while Dr. Ocampo certainly valued research as a way to legitimize perspectives (as indicated earlier in his perspective on the importance of teachers), at times it seemed that, in some cases, personal experience transcended research. As such, Dr. Ocampo seemed constantly to be striking a balance between affirming and/or legitimizing the experiences of his students (and himself), as well as what he has learned through research.

**Tensions in Simultaneously Affirming and Changing Student Perspectives**

As the previous section begins to demonstrate, in recognizing the importance of being exposed to multiple experiences, perspectives, and views, the professors balanced when they
should or should not intervene when students said things that went either against their own perspectives or the goals they had for their students. Together, their range of perspectives on this balance illustrated the tension they experienced between affirming students’ experiences, in order to increase their engagement, and providing them with the context for them to learn something new that may go against the original perspectives they brought to the course. Thus, in some cases, learning about diversity was an incomplete process.

Dr. Abbott sat somewhere in the middle of this tension. As a student-centered educator who did not tell students “what [they] need to do and how they should think,” she instead “tr[ied] to present them with different realities or [her] interpretation of those realities and allow people to think and kind of decide for themselves.” She incorporated this openness (Noddings, 2006) into the time she spent with students “process[ing] and figur[ing] out what’s happening here” in the activities they worked on in class, as Cara shared: “She keeps you thinking about ways that you can teach your students…. It’s not just like, oh this is what you should do. It’s like, let’s figure out as a class how to employ these techniques.”

Yet, it seemed that for Dr. Abbott, there were some student utterances that should be addressed, in terms of what those utterances might have represented with regard to what students were thinking. While at the time of the study Dr. Abbott was “feeling more confident and comfortable…in having some of those difficult conversations” about diversity, this was not always the case: “Five years ago, I would struggle to have a conversation about race or about LGBTQ diversity…because…I don’t want to get called a racist or [receive] negative responses” on teaching evaluations, such as being called lazy, which is unfortunately common in white students’ evaluations of African American women professors (Jones et al., 2015). Moreover, Dr. Abbott shared that students “rarely [said negative things] to [her face], but the shit that’s out
there on the internet” told a different story. Thus, Dr. Abbott had learned not to interpret her “white students’…silence” during course sessions as “agreement and common understanding about what is being read and discussed” (Ladson-Billings, 1996, pp. 82-83). Yet, even as she described being called racist and/or unwelcoming of alternative viewpoints in the past, Dr. Abbott still worked to address some student comments that she perceived as overtly problematic:

Sometimes [on] the formal course evaluations, [students have said], “Oh, she’s racist, or she doesn’t consider other people’s point of view,” and I’m thinking, well, if I’m here to help people to grow, and something you’re saying is wrong, I have to tell you that, right? So, I learned to maybe say it with a smile and then, maybe I’m not as mean or as racist?...so that’s been…a balancing act for me to try to figure out how we have those difficult conversations…in a way that’s not going to point negatively...[at] me.

For example, in one lesson I observed where the students were making friendship bracelets during the anti-bullying Talk and Teach demonstration (see Appendix I), one student called them “Chinese ladders.” When Dr. Abbott gave the student a “chance to self-correct” rather than pushing her (Enumah, 2021), the student eventually said, “I probably shouldn’t say Chinese ladder.” This provided Dr. Abbott an opening through which to talk with the student about her response. Moreover, Dr. Abbott’s response was not only gentle, but it was also so gentle that I did not even notice the interaction during the observation.¹ Still, throughout our time together, Dr. Abbott did not locate students’ responses solely in the challenges she may have faced as a Black woman professor; instead, she thought about how intentional she was in communicating the purpose of what

¹ I wrote the following in my researcher journal after the interview:
Before she shared this story with me about the “Chinese ladders” during the interview, she asked me if I realized that happened. I hadn’t. I’m not sure if it’s because I was trying to focus more on Dr. Abbott during observations, rather than the students, or because I was tired. (I get up at 5:30 am to observe this class). But I’m also wondering if I didn’t notice because she did it so kindly. I’m wondering if my positionality as a white woman influenced my not noticing this. Subconsciously, maybe I notice Black women more when they are “angry,” or living up to other stereotypes. After the interview, I paid attention to this aspect of her pedagogy and noted many more instances of her addressing comments like this in the observations that followed.
she was asking them to do. For example, in reflecting on how students used their gender pronouns to introduce themselves, she shared it was “maybe because [she] spent a little bit more time with it.”

Dr. Ruben similarly considered his role in helping students grow, which to him meant learning how to “look at things from multiple perspectives,” “how to think about the issues in a critical way,” and how to be confident “with the idea…that what’s true for me now…I am open to change and to learn more.” As such, he felt that not all experiences or perspectives should necessarily be affirmed in class conversations:

Sometimes I am fearful of having the class become some kind of Jerry [Springer] talk show, “It is this way because that’s how I experienced that.” ... How do I manage those boundaries at the same time that I want them to develop critical reading skills and… historical interest?

In other words, Dr. Ruben recognized the role and importance of personal experience when learning the history of education, as he expressed his disappointment that the classroom community in his section of first-semester freshmen was taking a long time to “crystallize,” and therefore students were not readily sharing “their own personal experiences…frustrations or their fears” in relation to the content. However, at times, he felt emphasizing experience could close pedagogical opportunities to learn something new.

When Dr. Ruben sensed the latter was a possibility, he made choices in how he framed the conversation. For example, the class watched a video about Jane Elliot’s 1970s pedagogical experiment in her elementary school classroom, where she spent one day granting disproportionate privileges to students with blue eyes and the next day to students with brown eyes, in order to teach her white, predominantly Christian group of students about racial prejudice. The discussion after the video focused on the techniques Elliot used to make the “privileged” students feel discriminated against, thereby framing racism as acts of individual bias.
rather than a larger, deliberate system that benefits white people at the expense of people of color (Bell, 1992; Leonardo, 2004; Tatum, 1997/2017), as discussed in Chapter 2. In this case, it was the benefit of attending an all-white, well-funded school that was not fighting for educational resources (Kozol, 1967, 1991, 2005). In a member-check conversation, I asked Dr. Ruben about this focus. He shared that, in addition to this “contextual and systemic analysis vis-à-vis blacks” occurring at other points in the semester,

I have some issues with the present dominant discourse about race relations, and I am fearful of falling into the political trap of engaging in a dogmatic debate among the muted. How much time and what levels of theoretical background are needed to unpack experience and look at how this intersects with systemic and structural conditions? Therefore, I make choices, and…I am not afraid of not being politically correct.

In other words, a discussion on white privilege would be dogmatic, as his students may not have the theoretical background and tools to engage in a more robust discussion that engages multiple perspectives. Thus, while experience was important, it may be limited in facilitating student learning and reflection. This concern was not completely unfounded, as I noticed in Dr. Anderson’s class that some students tried to legitimize their perspectives by making themselves appear “closer” to issues they may not have personally experienced, yet they might have felt needed challenging. For example, when Dr. Anderson asked the students for examples of internalized oppression during one lesson I observed, Hillary, a white student from Australia who moved to a U.S. suburb, shared, “At the risk of being offensive…women wearing hijabs.” When an older student from Iran replied, “I’m a Muslim, but I don’t see it as you see it…,” Hillary interrupted: “Not to cut you off, but I am married to a Muslim man and my mother-in-law is Muslim. People think I’m Muslim. So, I’m closer to the issue than I appear to be.”

---
2 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our member-check conversation was via e-mail. “Blacks” here is lower-case as that was how it was typed in the email.
Allison similarly emphasized her closeness to racism in bringing up her Black brother-in-law during both a class session I observed and her interview with me (referenced later in this chapter). Yet, the above interaction about the hijab was precisely what Dr. Anderson felt needed to happen in order to prompt growth: “To me only, if and when, folks can express their opinions can you have growth because people need to be able to share their perspective.” He worked to develop a “climate and culture…where [the students are] comfortable expressing their opinions” by setting and modelling the expectation that everyone needed to participate and that “as long as they’re respectful and considerate of others,” their perspectives were welcome. The students similarly agreed in their interviews that more students participated in discussing sensitive and/or politically charged topics and they were able to learn more about certain issues because Dr. Anderson was intentional throughout the entire semester in maintaining an open classroom community. For them, it was rare that a professor would be able to maintain this, with Adam stating that he “[had not] heard any other professor say something like that.”

Dr. Anderson referred to this focus on intention as “the experience” of the class, in which students could become “enlightened in some way” by the class conversations rather than learning specific content objectives. In other words, knowledge was to be fostered through dialogue and connection within the classroom community rather than attained individually (Collins, 1990/2003). Dr. Anderson maintained what he and the students referred to as a “safe room” or a “good environment” by not explicitly correcting students and/or taking one student’s side in class discussions, since there are “so many versions” of history and views on urban schools: “I don’t want any kid to walk out of there feeling like, I raised my hand, and I was wrong. I looked stupid in front of everybody…because part of what they were saying was true.” This pedagogical commitment reflects not only his sensitivity toward his students’ feelings and recognition of their
competence (Biklen & Burke, 2006), but also an understanding that his perspective on the history of urban schools is one of many: “History is so…his-story…even what I’m saying doesn’t mean it’s true…where did I get it from? Who told me that, and how do we know?”

Allison described this as:

it wasn’t really him telling you the right answer and moving on. It was the class coming together to realize what the answers were… and different reasonings behind [them]. Other teachers…you give them the right answer.

The effects of Dr. Anderson’s approach—“peppering” students with questions (mentioned earlier) rather than “correcting” them or closing off certain avenues of discussion—resulted in “high participation/engagement,” which I coded 52 times in my fieldnotes across my four visits to Dr. Anderson’s class. Instances that received this code occurred when a student would chime in without any prompting from Dr. Anderson. Yet given the high level of student engagement, there would inevitably be instances when students would discuss course topics in competing and/or contradictory ways. After watching the first segment of Race: The Power of an Illusion, some students said they learned from the video that “race has nothing to do with biology.” Others, however, reported learning that “there’s no such thing as race” and, since race was a social construction, achievement was solely dependent on “how much effort you put into something.” I asked Dr. Anderson about some of these student responses a few weeks later and whether he thought there had been a shift in students whose thinking was rooted in the myth of meritocracy (e.g., Hurn, 1993). He shared: “I don’t know. I hope so…[but] it’s not just about me trying to turn suburban kids’ minds. It’s like, what have you learned since you’ve been here?”

That Dr. Anderson was not simply trying to change minds or have students say the “right” things during class or in their written work (Zembylas, 2015) suggested that learning about race and
diversity may be incomplete at the end of the semester. In describing what she learned in the class, Allison shared how a student of color challenged something she shared in class:

They turned around and [said,] “Well you don’t understand because you’re white.” … Not that I have anything against them, but…you don’t know my background, you don’t know my family, like my sister [who is married to a Black man]….Yes, I’m white. I went to a suburban school…but…that was one of the whole points [of the class]. That race has nothing to do with your biology…but because in society, everything is based on your race and then your economic status…people just make assumptions, and…it’s his class where you can’t. You have to get rid of those filters that you have on…and just see everybody as a whole…. I didn’t obviously say anything back, but…it stuck with me for a couple of days, and it did kind of annoy me.

In emphasizing the importance of understanding people “as a whole” and conceptualizing diversity as “those filters,” Allison’s response demonstrated the difficulty of focusing simultaneously on the individual and the larger social context in which diversity comes to be known (referenced earlier). The above quote also suggested that Allison’s suburban mind was not yet completely “turned,” as Dr. Anderson described it. She had not fully come to terms with her white privilege (i.e., McIntosh, 1989) (see Chapter 2). Yet, the fact that she “didn’t obviously say anything back,” despite also sharing that the class was open to multiple perspectives, suggested on some level that she was uncomfortable defending her perspective. While Allison told me that the comment only “stuck with [her] for a couple of days,” the fact that she brought up the story to me during an interview that took place during the end of the semester suggests that the comment was still sticking with her in some way. To discredit the above quote, then, as learning on Allison’s part neglects to take into account that another experience in the future may prompt her to remember this interaction in Dr. Anderson’s class and to make further connections that deepen her understanding of race in the United States (Davis & Steyn, 2012), especially since this was not the first time Allison’s beliefs were challenged (as demonstrated in the dialogue referenced earlier about hard work and opportunities).
Conceptualizing learning as an ongoing process that may extend beyond the temporal confines of the semester surfaced an understanding of the limits of the higher education context in learning about diversity (McHatton et al., 2009; Noddings, 2006; Tejeda, 2008). Dr. Anderson’s focus on “making the path wider” after graduation was rooted in his understanding of higher education as a means to an end: “The course is insignificant…it’s a scripted curriculum to get a degree.” Even the curriculum that he had designed himself he interpreted as “scripted” or predetermined (as evidenced in his wondering about the path on which he might have led Oliver, referenced earlier), suggesting an understanding that students’ motivation and interest could simply be a reflection of their wanting to graduate. Dr. Ruben similarly interpreted his students’ positive responses, when he asked them how they felt about the class, as limited: “I told them, listen, you can be honest. Of course, it’s very difficult for me to know whether…what they are saying is just to please me as the professor or it is indeed the case.” Dr. Abbott reviewed exit tickets with a similar level of skepticism:

On one level, I should just accept what’s here because that’s what they wrote, right? But then I’m thinking, are they just writing it because they think that’s what I want to hear?... The truth really comes when they have their own classrooms, and I’m not there.

Summary

The three analytic themes that emerged in my exploration of the diversity curriculum and pedagogy in four teacher education courses across two HSIs surfaced tensions around diversity in relation to understandings of identity and commitments to equity. The professors’ lived experiences as multiply marginalized people who were constructed as “other” in school meant that a focus on diversity and identity should not come at the expense of losing sight of the humanity and individuality of K-12 students (Collins, 1990/2003; Valenzuela, 1999). In practice, this complicated how research informs practice; the assumed determinism of student labels;
essentialist narratives of teachers of color, students of color, and students with disabilities; and the necessity of academic rigor.

Questions and tensions surfaced within the ways professors conceptualized learning about diversity as a focus on social change. Should commitments to equity encompass all kinds of diversity? To what extent can teachers and schools impact the lives and change the life trajectories of young people? Can all students be reached/included? One way these tensions were resolved was through a focus on K-12 teacher practice rather than on ideology or theory about diversity. In foundational coursework, this focus opened up possibilities for thinking about progressive ideas beyond dogmatism (in Dr. Ruben’s class) and critical theory beyond determinism (in Dr. Anderson’s class). In the methods courses, it provided ways of thinking about diversity topics that were more politically contentious in ways that did not simply affirm liberal “knee-jerk clichés,” in the words of Dr. Ocampo.

Given the importance of experience as a lever for an evolving understanding of diversity (Collins, 1990/2003), the professors worked to make classroom interactions significant sources of learning that exposed students to multiple perspectives. Inevitably, a tension emerged in the professors’ pedagogies between affirming students’ experiences and providing them the context to learn something new. Professors weighed several factors in responding to this tension, including: their own experiences and perspectives, relative to their students; the goals they had for the class; and their understanding of the possibilities and limitations of the higher education context in learning about diversity. At NSU, in classes of all-white students, as a progressive student-centered educator, Dr. Abbott had to consider carefully how she responded to perspectives that she felt were overtly problematic, such as racial microaggressions. When Black and brown students were enrolled in her classes, they sometimes served as this source of
learning, as Dr. Ruben similarly reported. While ECU was located in an urban area, multiple perspectives and narratives surfaced around race, equity, and urban schools. In practice, both Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Anderson did not outwardly “correct” or disagree with deficit or problematic statements about urban school students as “animals” (Dr. Ocampo); Muslim people (Dr. Anderson); or equality of opportunities for different racial groups (Dr. Anderson) (Noddings, 2005; 2010; Zeymbylas, 2012). Even though the students perceived Dr. Ocampo as Hispanic and having attended an urban school, Dr. Ocampo did not respond to comments around which he did not have direct experience, even as someone who valued research. Put differently, even though there may exist research that discredits students’ experiences, he still did not deem it appropriate to share alternative points of view without having certain experiences himself. Dr. Anderson did not respond to comments that race did not matter, not only because, for some people, it does not (Tejeda, 2008). It also would have gone against the type of participatory classroom environment and community that he felt would lead to student learning (Collins, 1990/2003). Put differently, Dr. Anderson thought that any and all ideas, perspectives, and experiences should be surfaced, as he was less focused on what students said and wrote in that moment (Zembylas, 2015) and more on the potential of class conversions to inspire action after graduation (Davis & Steyn, 2012). Dr. Ruben felt that while experience was important, it was limited in providing students with the tools to engage in learning something new.

The professors recognized the impact of the higher education context, in particular, on their work teaching about diversity and equity. Dr. Abbott and Dr. Ocampo sometimes had to resolve contradictory equity aims for their own college students and their students’ future K-12 students. Dr. Ocampo, in particular, weighed ECU students’ positions as former urban, low-income students, which in practice pushed against the idea that colleges should be graduating
fully developed teachers (Britzman, 1986, as cited in Philip et al., 2019). In these instances, they often erred on the side of supporting their college students, perhaps in light of the fact that, as Dr. Abbott shared, the results of their work would not be apparent until their college students had their own classrooms. Part of this was due to an inherent power dynamic between college student and professor, which Dr. Anderson suggested in his conceptualization of his own curriculum as “scripted.” Dr. Abbott and Dr. Ruben also took into the account that “safety” may not be possible in the higher education context (i.e., Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009), in thinking about what students might be comfortable sharing and/or learning in class. Across all four professors’ classes, then, learning about diversity was an experiential, incomplete process.
Chapter 6

DISCUSSION

This dissertation was grounded in the continued dearth of teachers of color in K-12 urban schools in the United States (Gist, 2017; Haddix, 2017) and the disparate impact this has on Black and brown K-12 students (Brown, 2014); my own experience as a white teacher educator at ECU; the role of experience, as related to identity, and what one can come to know about diversity (Collins, 1990/2003); how (historically and multiply marginalized) college students display and communicate what they know about diversity in the context of university-based teacher education; and the assumption that teaching diverse K-12 populations is inherently related to notions of equity and social justice. In short, this study focused on two larger questions: (a) What does it mean to serve historically marginalized students who wish to be teachers? and (b) Is there something to “get” when it comes to diversity in teacher education, and how do we know that students “get” it?

This study was conducted in response to how these aims and questions—in particular, the second question above—often exclude preservice teachers of color (Milner, 2008), preservice teachers at MSIs and HSIs, and other identities and experiences that K-12 students claim (i.e., disability). As such, it was simultaneously grounded in the promise of MSIs and HSIs to robustly prepare and graduate teachers of color (John & Stage, 2014; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; Raines, 1998) and the premise that while representation is an important and necessary first step in addressing diversity, equity, and/or social justice in K-12 urban schools, it is not enough to radically alter praxis (Gay, 2000, as cited in Milner, 2008; Kendi, 2019). A DisCrit framework guided the work of keeping both this promise and premise in the foreground of my mind as the professors in this study opened their classroom doors to me. The four themes Garcia et al. (2019)
identified in the current literature on HSIs—outcomes, experiences, internal organizational dimensions, and external influences—guided discussions of the ways in which ECU and NSU were serving historically and multiply marginalized undergraduate students and preservice teacher candidates (see Chapter 3). Thus, while “servingness” can still be read as an elusive (Garcia et al., 2019) and sometimes perplexing (Blake, 2017) concept, these themes allowed me to point to ways that the field can concretely define and understand how HSIs work toward advancing racial equity in higher education and teacher education.

As discussed in Chapter 3, I collected multiple types of data with an eye toward how professors’ and students’ experiences were situated within each institutional context as well as larger systems of power and privilege. Moreover, as I further discuss, the research design allowed findings to emerge that contribute to the literature on HSIs in two ways. First, the demographics of my professor participants contribute faculty voices of color “who can influence servingness” (Garcia et al., 2019, pp. 18-19) at HSIs. Second, Núñez et al. (2016) shared that “[f]uture studies should address the local historical contexts within which different HSIs function” (p. 74). Examining teacher preparation programs in this study responded to this call, as both ECU and NSU share the historical context of being schools that train teachers and the present context of attracting students via their education programs, as illustrated in Chapter 4.

That I was able to observe one introductory, foundational-level course (open to students across departments) and one advanced methods course (restricted to admitted teacher education students/preservice teachers) at each institution shaped the direction of the inquiry. I noticed how, at both institutions, the exclusionary effects of more stringent state licensure and employment requirements contributed to the declining overall enrollment of students in each institution’s College of Education (COE) and the underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black
students and the overrepresentation of white students in each COE. The latter became glaringly apparent when I walked into Dr. Abbott’s methods class for my first observation and saw that every student appeared to be white. This prompted a deeper investigation of institutional and publicly available documents at both research sites to investigate factors that might explain the racial demographics of each institution’s COE. In Chapter 4, I situated this finding, alongside professor and student interviews at each institution, within the broader landscape of research on HSIs and what it means to “serve” students of color who wish to be teachers and to prepare them for the increasing racial, ethnic, and ability diversity of today’s K-12 urban schools. The testimonies of Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben (who taught the introductory courses) enriched the conversation on serving undergraduate classes, in which the range of students’ prior academic knowledge and experiences is a prime pedagogical challenge.

In Chapter 5, I took a deeper look within each classroom in this study, where I analyzed professor and student interviews, observations, and curricular documents and artifacts to describe the diversity curriculum and pedagogy within each professor’s course. I did not recruit professor participants intentionally by race (or any other identity) for several reasons. First, I did not want to essentialize professors of color as diversity experts (e.g., Jackson, 2015), due solely to their race (see Chapter 1), or assume that being a person of color inherently means one is even interested in diversity (Malcolm X & Haley, 1965). Second, I did not want to assume that experiences of being marginalized along one line of difference, such as race, meant that professors would inherently understand being marginalized along any line of difference (Schwitzman, 2019). Third, as stated in Chapter 2, being a person of color does not mean that one is being antiracist all the time (Kendi, 2019). Yet, three of the four professors who volunteered to participate in my study were people of color, and the one white (appearing)
professor who volunteered identified as Latino, Jewish, and an immigrant. What emerged in Chapter 5 were: (a) a focus on individuality, situated within (socially constructed) group identities, that necessitated an emphasis on humanity and care and that complicated urban school narratives and essentialist understandings of teachers of color, students of color, and students with disabilities; (b) an illustration of how expansive commitments to equity surfaced tensions around the extent to which K-12 teachers and schools impact society—which were resolved via a (less deterministic) focus on K-12 teacher practice, rather than theory—and dilemmas when college students’ needs clashed with what professors believed were the needs of future K-12 students; and (c) a pedagogical stance of diversity learning as an incomplete, experiential process. On one hand, this pedagogical stance had the potential to extend diversity learning beyond the temporality of the semester. Yet, on the other, it meant that the professors grappled with whether they could, or should, respond to student understandings of diversity that (a) work against a more equitable and/or socially just society, and (b) still emerged within two HSIs that worked to be welcoming spaces for students of color and had COEs committed to diversity, equity, and social justice, as illustrated in Chapter 4.

In this chapter, I start by discussing three broader themes around the data presented in Chapters 4 and 5: whiteness and ability as property in teacher education in the HSI context, grassroots approach to equity and social justice, and diversity as (im)moral curriculum. I then use this discussion to address implications for practice and policy and to suggest future research in teacher education and higher education. I end with concluding thoughts about the study.

**Whiteness and Ability as Property in Teacher Education in the HSI Context**

While many schools of education are insufficiently threading disability, diversity, and inclusive education throughout the curriculum (see Chapter 2), the data presented in Chapters 4
and 5 demonstrated that HSIs (at least, these two institutions) are working to provide multiple opportunities to expose students meaningfully to a variety of identities and experiences at both the institutional and classroom levels (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018; Rodgers, 2013). Yet, the data also demonstrated that both ECU and NSU were contending with the historical legacy of the whiteness of teacher education (Sleeter 2017). Guided by Tenet 6 of DisCrit—which “recognizes whiteness and Ability as property and that gains for people labeled with dis/abilities have largely been made as the result of interest convergence of white, middle-class citizens” (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11)—I discuss three aspects of data at the institutional and classroom levels that suggested that ECU and NSU were also contending with the ways in which policies and practices that promote the knowledge and interests of white people remain unquestioned, normalized aspects of teacher preparation. First, I discuss how the relationship between the racial diversity of each institution’s COE and how the focal professors described the diversity of their students suggested that whiteness and respect/ability as forms of property constructed a normative undergraduate student and a normative preservice teacher candidate. I then utilize the concept of interest convergence to discuss how the relationship between the COEs and each institution also worked to maintain the whiteness of teacher education.

**Whiteness and Respect/ability as Property of Admitted Preservice Teachers**

As stated in Chapter 4, the underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students (who were the highest representation of students of color at each institution) in each COE, relative to their population on campus (see Chapter 4), suggested that these two HSIs may not have been making a substantial impact on racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force, even as MSIs, as a whole, produce significant numbers of teachers of color (John & Stage, 2014). That white students were overrepresented in each institution’s COE (in part, due to the high number of graduate students,
the majority of whom were white), relative to their representation on campus, was more pronounced at NSU, given the higher representation of white students within their undergraduate population. Moreover, NSU’s status as still predominantly white meant that the overrepresentation of white students did not have as strong of an effect on lowering total student enrollment in the COE as it did at ECU. Thus, the findings in this dissertation suggested that the teacher education programs at both HSIs are maintaining the production of an abundance of white teachers (Sleeter, 2017), albeit through different mechanisms, at the core of which was respect/ability as a form of property.

**De jure and De facto Segregation of Hispanic and Black Teachers**

While NSU had a lengthier admissions process compared to ECU, they were more lenient, admitting students without minimum standardized test scores and/or grades. Yet, the analysis of institutional and publicly available documents, alongside observational data from Dr. Abbott’s methods class (see Chapter 4), suggested that this leniency was mostly benefitting white preservice teachers at NSU. As racism is constantly redefining itself (Kendi, 2019), whiteness “morphs and shifts according to context and history” (Prashad, 2000, as cited in Leonardo & Broderick, 2011, p. 2209). As described in Chapters 3 and 4, the history and context of each of these HSIs were different, thus influencing the ways in which the whiteness of each teacher preparation program (Sleeter, 2017) was maintained in terms of the demographics of their preservice teacher candidates. While both institutions were 4-year public HSIs, ECU was located in an urban area and served more students of color and more low-income students, and was a less selective institution than NSU, which was located in a suburban area and had only recently become an HSI.
As mentioned in Chapter 1, DisCrit leaves space to consider additional categories of difference and systems of oppression in addition to race/racism and ability/ableism (Annamma et al., 2013; Gillborn et al., 2016). In the case of ECU and NSU, social class (the percentage of students from low-income families) as well as location (urban vs. suburban location) are additional lenses through which to suggest how whiteness is operating, in terms of who is represented in each institution’s teacher preparation program. One way to think about how whiteness morphed between the different contexts of ECU and NSU is through the concept of de jure vs. de facto segregation. Use of this legal concept aligns with Tenet 5 of DisCrit, which “considers legal and historical aspects of dis/ability and race and how both have been used separately and together to deny the rights of some citizens” (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11).

The term de jure has been used to define segregation that is “lawful, legitimate, or by right” (Young, 2015b, p. 326). De facto segregation, on the other hand, “occurs as a matter of fact and not as result of intentional government action” (Young, 2015a, p. 324). These terms have generally been used to describe racial segregation. For example, Jim Crow laws would be de jure, as they legally permitted segregation against Black people. However, the current disproportionate representation of Black and brown students in special education (Harry & Klingner, 2006) would be de facto segregation, as there is nothing explicitly written in the law about excluding Black and brown students from general education.

As discussed in Chapter 1, prior work has argued that licensure exams exclude students of color from the teaching profession (i.e., Rogers-Ard et al., 2012). Through the lens of race alone, the disparate impact of teacher preparation program admissions policies requiring Praxis exam scores on Hispanic and Black students would be described as de facto segregation, as there is no explicit law/policy of exclusion from teacher education based on race. However, a DisCrit
frame contends that racial segregation cannot happen without ableism and could thus be used to argue that such segregation is de jure based on ability/academic achievement. There is an explicit commitment to exclude students from teacher preparation programs with certain test scores and grades. De jure segregation based on “smartness” (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011) is inherently de jure segregation based on race (Annamma et al., 2013). As such, a DisCrit lens argues that academic achievement/smartness as property cannot be constructed without, or independent of, race/whiteness as property.

At ECU, the exclusion from the teacher preparation program was de jure segregation. Students were excluded based explicitly on Praxis test scores and/or GPA, and there were no exceptions. At NSU, however, segregation was de facto. Hispanic and Black students without passing test scores could apply (as supplemental candidates). Additionally, as listed on their website, NSU’s “Teacher of Color Grant Opportunity” (mentioned in Chapter 4) that encouraged their students of color to work in “high-need school districts” upon graduation provided “individualized admission and academic advisement.” This would, theoretically, include support through the teacher preparation program admissions process. However, current data suggested that Hispanic and Black students at NSU either (a) are not applying to the extent that white students are; (b) are applying more relative to their proportion on campus and being denied admission more often than white students; or (c) are applying but not receiving support from the grant opportunity, as they do not wish to work in an urban school. De facto segregation—in particular, the second possibility listed above—is much harder to prove (Bell, 1992), especially since all three of these possibilities could be contributing to the current racial demographics in NSU’s COE.
Raced Respect/ability as Property Inherent in Undergraduate Student and Preservice Candidate Diversity

As the whiteness of teacher education is maintained in terms of the racial diversity of each institution’s COE, so too is whiteness as a form of property (Harris, 1993) that constructs a normative undergraduate student (enrolled in foundational, introductory coursework) and a normative preservice teacher candidate (admitted to a teacher preparation program) who is ready for the field. Tenet 6 of DisCrit maintains that ability is also a form of property that works to maintain whiteness, which works to maintain ability. Ability as a form of property that constructs a normative undergraduate student (in this case, not yet admitted to a teacher preparation program) was evident in the ways Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben, who taught the introductory/foundational courses, described the diversity of their students. Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben were both teaching more racially diverse classes than Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Abbott and described differentiating for a range of student abilities as a significant challenge. Even across different institutional contexts in terms of acceptance rate/(academic) selectivity (see Table 1)—that in theory might suggest that students at NSU are more academically prepared than those at ECU—Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben were both contending with ability as a form of property. In other words, their challenges centered around multiple ability deviations from a normative undergraduate student with an assumed level of prior academic knowledge and skills. These ability deviations, or wide range of abilities, are inextricably linked to race and class, as students of color and/or students from low-income families (see Chapters 1 and 2), as well as students who choose to enroll in 4-year HSIs (Núñez & Bowers, 2011) (see Chapters 2 and 3), are often denied access to a robust K-12 education that would adequately prepare one for college.

Ability as a form of property, inherently tied to whiteness, that constructs a normative preservice teacher candidate was also evident in the ways Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Abbott described
the diversity of their students/preservice candidates and their readiness for the field. In describing
their methods classes, Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Abbott did not discuss differentiation or students’
prior (academic) knowledge as a challenge, even though the racial demographics and academic
achievement of their classes differed from each other. As discussed in Chapter 4, Dr. Ocampo’s
class at ECU was ethnically and racially diverse—although not as diverse as Dr. Anderson’s—
while all of the students in Dr. Abbott’s class at NSU appeared to be white. At ECU, students
could not apply to a teacher preparation program without *Praxis* scores and a 3.0 GPA (see
Chapter 4), or the academic/ability criteria that (a) works together to construct a (white,
nondisabled) candidate who can be admitted to a preparation program (see Chapter 1), and
(b) maintains whiteness (and ability) as property in teacher education. Subsequently, Dr.
Ocampo shared that he assumed his students, all of whom had submitted passing *Praxis*
scores and a 3.0 GPA, had been both “scholarly” and well-behaved as students in K-12 urban schools.
Compared to the “knuckleheads” outside of the COE (who were not teacher candidates), they
were “respectful.” Thus, the whiteness and ability property of the teacher preparation program
admissions requirements constructed Dr. Ocampo’s students of color as respectable candidates
(Harris, 2014). Consequently, ECU may have been admitting and graduating more teachers of
color than NSU because it was a more racially diverse institution located in an urban area.
However, they were students who could approximate, to some extent, respectability (Harris,
2014), or “goodness” (Broderick & Leonardo, 2016) and “smartness” (Leonardo & Broderick,
2011) via *Praxis* exam scores and a 3.0 GPA, all of which are inherently tied to whiteness.

Conversely, as stated earlier, Dr. Abbott did not express ability deviations around a
normative, admitted preservice teacher candidate with an assumed level of academic
achievement, even though she had students in her class who had not yet passed the *Praxis*.
(Students at NSU could apply to a teacher preparation program as a supplemental candidate without passing Praxis scores, as explained in Chapter 4.) Thus, she was not contending with ability as a form of property among her all-white (appearing) students the way Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben were among their racially diverse classes, even though all three professors were teaching classes with students who had not yet passed the Praxis. Moreover, while Dr. Ocampo described his students as “respectful,” Dr. Abbott shared how she had to negotiate her students’ resistance (see Chapter 5). Yet, she did not link this resistance to their potential to be teachers in the same way Dr. Ocampo linked his students’ respectful nature in class to their potential. Thus, Dr. Abbott’s all-white (appearing) class was constructed as good, respectable candidates, even when being resistant and even without the prior academic achievement of Dr. Ocampo’s.

It is possible that Dr. Ocampo would assume the same of students in his methods class who had not yet submitted Praxis scores and a 3.0 GPA, if the institution allowed them to enroll. Similarly, it is possible that (a) other factors explain Dr. Abbott’s perception of her students, including the fact that the Praxis may not be a relevant marker in terms of students’ academic readiness for college; or (b) she would have described her class in the same way, in terms of student abilities and/or behavior, even if students of color had been enrolled. Importantly, illustrating whiteness and respect/ability as interrelated forms of property that construct undergraduate students and teacher candidates is not meant to critique professors’ practice or to suggest a certain degree of direct influence the teacher preparation program admissions process has on professors’ understanding of their students. Rather, this illustration is meant to demonstrate how even institutional contexts (HSIs) that work to be welcoming spaces for students of color also contend with the historical legacies of whiteness and ability as forms of property in teacher education.
This illustration also reinforces an argument made in Chapter 2 that, while the preparation of teachers of color is often conceptualized as an issue of diversity, equity, and/or social justice (Kohli, 2009), the preparation of disabled teachers is an area of scholarship that has yet to even be realized. Disabled teachers—whether having a school-based disability (e.g., learning disability) or another kind of disability—are rarely positioned as necessary for combatting inequities and promoting social justice in K-12 schools. In addition to the fact that students in both methods classes could approximate (white) respect/ability norms, Dr. Ocampo reported that none of his students had presented documentation from the Office of Disability Services for accommodations, and Dr. Abbott could not remember if any of her students had disclosed similar documentation to her (see Chapter 4), suggesting ability/academic knowledge was not a salient aspect in the ways professors of the methods classes thought about student diversity. Thus, it is possible that the teachers (of color) graduating from both institutions may not have the relevant K-12 schooling experiences to relate to their future students who may have either high or low incidence disabilities. The testimonies of the focal professors’ own experiences in school in Chapter 5 suggested that such experiences being cast as “other” in terms of ability/achievement—in addition to race—may prove necessary in developing caring relations with students.

**Interest Convergence in the Relationship Between COEs and HSIs**

Derrick Bell (1980) wrote, “[T]his principle of ‘interest convergence’ provides: The interest of [B]lacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of whites” (p. 523). However, my purpose in using Tenet 6 of DisCrit and “interest convergence” as an “analytic, explanatory, and conceptual tool in the study and analyses of policies and practices in teacher education” (Milner, 2008, p. 332) is not from a place
of critique or pessimism about the permanence of racism (Bell, 1992) (see Chapter 2). Rather, it is from the understanding that “in the pursuit of convergence and in our working toward convergence through the exposure of racism and inequity, strides can be made toward reducing inequity, racism, and hegemony” (Milner, 2008, p. 342). To be sure, the pursuit of convergence is not without critique. Utilizing this concept can (a) perpetuate narrow, essentialist understandings of “white interests” and “black interests” that neglect to take into consideration people’s intersecting identities and complex motivations for their perspectives; and (b) can limit possibilities for and understandings of agency (Driver, 2011).

Aligned with how the field of teacher education has focused on the ways in which whiteness is maintained in the PwI context—often to the exclusion of MSIs—Sleeter’s (2017) work in utilizing CRT to describe the ways that interest convergence operates to maintain the whiteness of teacher education focuses on college classrooms in which the majority of preservice teacher candidates are white. I have argued that it is problematic to assume that the presence alone of more preservice teachers of color at MSIs is enough to combat the whiteness of teacher education (see Chapter 1). The findings from Chapter 4 demonstrated that the whiteness of teacher education—as manifested in what Sleeter (2017) termed “the relationship between teacher education programs and the university” (p. 158)—cannot be attributed solely to the racial demographics of an institution. I discuss two aspects of this relationship, in relation to the teacher education programs at ECU and NSU, keeping in mind both the affordances (i.e., Milner, 2008; Sleeter, 2017) and limitations (i.e., Driver, 2011) of the analytic tool of interest convergence. First, I discuss the role of teacher education programs in the HSI context, in terms of student enrollment and revenue. Next, I discuss the relationship between teaching, tenure, and promotion requirements, in relation to the diversity curriculum at ECU and NSU.
Sleeter (2017) wrote that teacher education programs at PwIs “serve large numbers of students in relatively low-cost programs, generating university revenue, and they provide support to other programs such as English by offering graduates a career path” (p. 159). As referenced in Chapter 4, three of the five students I interviewed at ECU and three of the four students I interviewed at NSU shared that they chose to attend their respective universities specifically for their teacher preparation programs, rather than for reasons more commonly given for enrolling at an MSI documented in the literature (i.e., low tuition, location) (Conrad, 2015; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Raines, 1998). In other words, while students at both institutions reported feeling at “home” at each institution, they were drawn specifically to their COEs.

While the above finding contributes to the literature on MSIs and HSIs by demonstrating that students’ program of study also influences their decision to enroll in HSIs, it also suggested that the teacher preparation programs at both ECU and NSU are a significant source of student enrollment and revenue. Both Dr. Ocampo at ECU and Dr. Ruben at NSU were the chairs of their departments, and as such, they shared additional insight into the way in which the COE was functioning in terms of student enrollment and revenue. At NSU, in addition to questioning the exaggerated growth of student services and perhaps disingenuous commitment to diversity on campus (see Chapter 4), Dr. Ruben was similarly critical as Sleeter (2017) in his frustration that the COE was operating in a business-like way, trying to sell teaching credentials.

At ECU, Dr. Ocampo shared that the COE worked to provide support for the Praxis exam, including specialized classes, as described in Chapter 4. However, the Praxis was not the only barrier for students at ECU on their road to becoming teachers. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Dr. Ocampo shared how the traditional model of student teaching exacerbated issues affecting
students from low-income homes. Yet, the only support available to students at this juncture in their programs was to counsel them out of the education program if the stress was interfering with their student teaching performance. Thus, while the university ensured that students could still graduate with a liberal arts degree once counseled out of the COE, there did not seem to be additional support for aspects of teacher preparation beyond admission to the program. Put differently, the focus of university-wide supports within the COE at ECU is on the Praxis, an aspect of teacher education that boosts COE enrollment and, therefore, revenue.

Milner (2008) reminded us that the convergence of interests is shaped by “contextual nuances” (p. 340), or that the landscape of teacher education in HSIs is different than in PwIs and other MSIs. Given that both HSIs were working with limited financial resources (see Chapter 4), a focus on revenue inevitably serves a different need and purpose compared to institutions with more financial resources and higher endowments. The focus on the Praxis exam, in particular, at ECU may also reflect “multiple motivations” (Driver, 2011, p. 169) on the part of department faculty and administrators beyond increasing revenue. In particular, it could be read as an interest in an additional demographic dimension that characterizes many of their students: that they tend to be less academically prepared (Núñez & Bowers, 2011) (see Chapters 1 and 4). Focusing on this trend reflects the research demonstrating the relationship between a high-quality K-12 education and difficulty with Praxis test questions (Bennett et al., 2006). Put differently, it is important to focus on the Praxis at ECU, given that students may enter their programs needing more support to pass the exams than students at other institutions.

Teaching, Tenure, and Promotion Requirements at ECU and NSU

In describing interest convergence and the whiteness of teacher education, Sleeter (2017) expressed concern about the curriculum within teacher preparation programs at PwIs. Reflecting
the “troubling history” that the field of education research has endured, in terms of being seen as legitimate relative to other disciplines (Lagemann, 2000), tenure and promotion requirements often emphasize publication, rather than spending significant time in schools. As described in Chapter 4, while each institution had a similar history of being a school for teachers, professors of education at both ECU and NSU were under increasing pressure to produce high-quality research. At ECU, Dr. Ocampo reported that many faculty members in the COE had limited teaching experience and that the institution was becoming more discriminating in terms of who received tenure and promotion. At NSU, Dr. Ruben expressed concern that the preparation of practitioners was neglected. Additionally, Dr. Abbott shared how the shift into a “high research” category at NSU resulted in legitimizing the denial of promotion to Black faculty members, while Dr. Ruben shared that Latina junior faculty had experienced microaggressions. Thus, like professors at other HSIs, they “recognized that they were still being evaluated and judged based on dominant Eurocentric male ideologies” (Ek et al., 2010, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019, p. 17) reflective of “a white-male-controlled academic community…[and] knowledge validation process” (Collins, 1990/2003, p. 50).

In other words, interest convergence around (Eurocentric) research production maintained whiteness as “a concept based on relations of power” (Harris, 1993, p. 1761) at ECU and NSU, demonstrating that whiteness is “an aspect of racial identity, surely, but it is much more” (p. 1761). However, that Latina junior faculty felt comfortable sharing their experiences with Dr. Ruben (see Chapter 4) suggested that NSU, like other HSIs, may have also been—or had the potential to be—a place where “access to like-minded [Latino/as] …empower[ed] [faculty] to challenge racism and sexism at the institution” (Ek et al., 2010, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019, pp. 17-18). Additionally, access to more like-minded faculty of color at HSIs has been
linked to strengthening the faculty research skills necessary to achieve tenure (Ek et al., 2010, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019). In other words, whiteness may still be “smog in the air” (Tatum, 1997/2017, p. 86) at HSIs; however, its dismantling in this context requires an in-depth understanding of the “history of…particular [teacher education] programs [at HSIs] …[and] the idiosyncrasies embedded in the program and institution that can impede progress” (Milner, 2008, p. 340).

In response to faculty who discuss the distance between COEs and K-12 school communities, Sleeter (2017) wrote: “When I have suggested spending more time in schools and communities, I have been reminded that the university does not reward faculty members for doing so” (pp. 159-160). Yet, the professors in this study demonstrated agency (Driver, 2011) by complicating the notion that faculty (of color) prioritize things for which they are rewarded. Dr. Ocampo, Dr. Anderson, and Dr. Abbott continued to spend time in K-12 school communities in their roles as professors. All four professor participants also demonstrated that despite institutional pressures, they worked against the marginalization and/or essentialization that students of color have reported at PwIs. Thus, while shifting research and teaching priorities may signal a layer of whiteness as property in the HSI context, as described earlier, in this study, such shifts were not necessarily deterministic in the effects they had on professors’ pedagogy and/or the importance they placed on spending time in, and experiencing, diverse K-12 school communities. That these professors of color and from other historically marginalized backgrounds demonstrated resilience (Driver, 2011) to this aspect of whiteness further confirmed the necessity of “determin[ing] the best ways to recruit faculty, staff, and administrators of color who can influence servingness” (Garcia et al., 2019, p. 19), especially given that, as mentioned in Chapter 2, some research has suggested that few faculty at an HSI may be enacting culturally
responsive pedagogy (Nieto, 1999, as cited in Brooks et al., 2012). Thus, the professors in this study, like professors at other HSIs (Garcia et al., 2019), “disrupt[ed] dominant, raced interests” (Milner, 2008, p. 339) in research and teaching in teacher education and “ultimately locate[d] spaces of negotiation” (p. 339) within their institutional contexts.

**Grassroots Approach to Equity and Social Justice**

As described in Chapter 5, diversity also meant (a) a focus on expanding commitments to equity and justice at both K-12 and higher education levels, and (b) tensions around the significance of teachers, schools, and educational policy on students’ lives. These expansive commitments relate to critical race theorists’ understanding of approaches to equity as idealist—which focuses on the use of language and beliefs in bringing about change—realist/economic determinist—which focuses on structural change and material conditions as related to racism—and middle ground—which focuses on considering both cultural and structural forces in antiracist work (Bennett et al., 2019; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) (see Chapter 2). Across the data, professors might take idealist approaches to equity such as when Dr. Abbott focused on her student’s language of “Chinese ladders”; realist approaches to equity such as Dr. Anderson’s focus on the “careful look at conditions prevailing at different times in history” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 22), as a way to better “understand the ebb and flow of racial progress and retrenchment” (p. 22); and middle ground approaches to equity, such as when Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Ruben simultaneously focused on the “day-to-day” of teaching as well as the need to change larger societal structures.

Yet, combined with the professors’ focus on humanity, care, experience, and K-12 teacher practice over theory, the fact that diversity was also an incomplete, experiential process (see Chapter 5) meant that students—especially white students—may have exited these courses
with understandings of diversity that are decontextualized from larger systems of power and privilege (e.g., Allison’s belief that race does not matter when it comes to improving one’s life conditions). In exploring the implications of these findings, I start by utilizing a theorization of care as a moral commitment, as described in Chapter 2, to discuss the professors’ emphasis on (individual) experience in relation to the research that has argued for more purposefully incorporating critical theory in preservice teacher education (e.g., Philip et al., 2019), as also described in Chapter 2. I then discuss how the data presented in Chapter 5 responded to a realist/economic determinist critique within the field of critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) by opening up possibilities for a grassroots approach to equity in teacher education.

**Breaking from Current (Critical) Trends in Teacher Education for Diversity**

Much research in the field of teacher education has highlighted “the political nature of teaching” (Beaubeuf-Lafontant, 2002, p. 83), the importance of purposely linking diversity to equity and social justice (Brown & Brown, 2019; Philip et al., 2019; Valenzuela, 1999), and the need to utilize a realist perspective that “address[es] systemic inequities with goals of inspiring systemic reform” (Bennett et al., 2019, p. 912). As discussed in Chapter 2, Rowan et al. (2021) conceptualized this as “teaching for diversity,” or spending more time studying very particular combinations of theoretically informed knowledge and skills around diversity, such as feminist theory, postcolonial theory, critical race theory, and disability studies. Yet, spending more time on theory—and some critical theories in particular—was not a pedagogical priority for the professors in this study. Dr. Ocampo was more focused on spending time discussing specific classroom management and assessment strategies, rather than how “the teaching process [is] complex [and] vested in power relations” (Brown & Brown, 2019, p. 1). Expressing concern
about the “dominant discourse” of race relations and the ways in which conservative students felt marginalized on campus, Dr. Ruben shared he was “not afraid of not being politically correct.” Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Abbott explicitly shared that they did not believe teacher education should be political.

Thus, Rowan et al. (2021) may analyze the data presented in Chapter 5 as teaching about or catering to diversity (see Chapter 2), which would open the focal professors in this study up for critique from an equity and/or social justice perspective. Yet to argue that these teacher educators’ pedagogical choices and commitments reflected a lack of “epistemically focused reflexivity” (Brownlee et al., 2017, as cited Rowan et al., 2021, p. 149) discredits the ways in which their lived experiences as members of historically marginalized groups over the course of several decades—prior to when, for example, CRT became foundational to the academic study of equity and justice in schools in the early 1990s (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) or when disability studies in education emerged as a field problematizing the medical model in special education in the early 2000s (Connor et al., 2008)—impacted their understandings of diversity, equity, and/or social justice. In their experience, too much focus on diversity could be dehumanizing (see Chapter 5). Likewise, their emphasis on the individuality of students can be conceptualized as both caring (Alder, 2002; Collins, 1990/2003) and antiracist (Kendi, 2019) (see Chapter 2).

That the four professors in this study did not necessarily agree with claims that they should unequivocally embrace teaching for diversity (Rowan et al. 2021) and/or explicitly address politically charged topics of diversity (see Chapter 5) was not surprising, given that the field has been “relatively silent on issues relating to the skills and knowledge of teacher educators themselves with regard to topics of diversity and teacher preparation” (Rowan et al,
In other words, the field has yet to engage fully with professors’ commitments to teach about/to/for diversity. Yet, none of the questions Rowan et al. (2021) suggested future research ask of teacher educators consider how their historically marginalized identities impact their understandings of K-12 schools, teacher preparation, and social justice. The knowledge that the field has acknowledged that teacher educators of color do bring centers on constraints they experience when teaching about/to/for diversity, such as “the role racism and sexism play in student feedback” (Evans-Winters, 2011, p. 461, as cited in Rowan et al., 2021, p. 143), or that students may perceive their teaching as racially and/or politically motivated (Ladson-Billings, 1996; Ukpokodu, 2003). While Dr. Abbott certainly contended with these constraints, the field has yet to acknowledge and try to better understand how the diversity of political perspectives and personal experiences among teacher educators and, in particular, among teacher educators of color and/or from historically marginalized backgrounds, impacts the work they do with preservice teachers.

Rowan et al. (2021) wrote that “it is interesting to note that the attitudes/beliefs of teacher educators are not subjected to the same level of scrutiny” (p. 145) as preservice teachers. However, if such scrutiny is premised on understandings of diversity, equity, and/or social justice that are confined to particular theoretical and/or political knowledge at this point in time, then the field of teacher education may potentially exclude the knowledge and perspectives of teacher educators of color and other historically marginalized backgrounds, such as the professor participants in this study, who have actually lived as marginalized students across a range of sociopolitical and temporal contexts. Notwithstanding the importance and need for increased representation of teacher educators of color—especially in the HSI context (Garcia et al., 2019)—the professors in this study pushed against the conceptualization of a universalized
teacher educator of color who utilizes critical theories to prepare preservice teachers for diversity.

Rather, the professors “danc[ed] with the dilemma” between student-centered practices and critical pedagogies, as described by Tejeda (2008):

Decolonizing pedagogy is concerned with both theorizing and teaching toward specific aims…. [However,] I insist that students arrive at their own conclusions and commit to their own positions. To tell students what or how to think, or to structure and conduct a course in a manner that does so, is antithetical to a pedagogy that aims toward decolonization. (pp. 1-4) (see also, Davis & Steyn, 2012; Rodgers, 2013)

All four professors felt it was important to emphasize dialogue across different perspectives and experiences in order to create more democratic educational spaces (Giroux, 1997; Noddings, 2005) that can foster the type of empathy (Collins, 1990/2003), interpersonal connections, and deep listening that lead to genuine (knowledge) transformation (Collins, 1990/2003; Meyer & Leonard, 2018; Noddings, 2012a, 2012b, 2018; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Rodgers, 2013). Rather than dogmatic (as expressed by Dr. Ruben) or “dictatorial means” (Noddings, 1998, p. 481) that externally impose (critical) beliefs about social justice onto students (Amsler, 2011; Rodgers, 2013; Zembylas, 2015), the professors recognized that to model the caring they felt they did not receive in their own schooling experiences, they “must be on both sides” (Noddings, 2010, p. 395) of politically contentious issues (Zembylas, 2012) and respond sensitively, positively, and empathetically to both historically and multiply marginalized students and students who express unacceptable, immoral, or offensive views (Noddings, 2005; Zembylas, 2012). Notably, these two groups of students may not be mutually exclusive, further complicating professors’ responses. Noddings (2010) referred to this as a “care-driven conception of justice,” which “start[s] with a somewhat vague notion that people committed to justice are dedicated to doing right by everyone” (p. 392). Thus, while Dr. Anderson did not
necessarily respond *positively* to Allison when she expressed that race did not matter, he responded in a way that at least worked to maintain the caring relation he had with her (Noddings, 2012a) and assumed the best of her motivations (Noddings, 2010). When a student of color responded that meritocracy was a myth, Dr. Anderson replied that “some people” did not believe that, rather than calling out Allison directly.

Dr. Anderson’s use of his own story—“So, my grandfather and my great-great-grandfather didn’t work hard?”—in this exchange from Chapter 5 to push against Allison’s perspective reminds us that empathizing with students who say problematic things is not the same as endorsing their views (Noddings, 2010; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Zembylas, 2012). Dr. Abbott expressed a similar perspective in not telling students what to think and presenting as many perspectives as possible (Noddings, 2006), while also feeling that some diversity utterances (e.g., “Chinese ladder”) needed to be addressed in order to not be affirmed (Davis & Steyn, 2012). More specifically, these questioning tactics—also utilized by Dr. Ocampo in presenting multiple perspectives on where to seat students with disabilities and by Dr. Ruben in questioning students about progressive education—can be described as “strategic empathy.” The professors engaged with students’ “troubled knowledge” by re-stating their perspectives and asking follow-up questions that led them to continue to unpack the roots of their beliefs (Rodgers, 2013; Zembylas, 2012; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017), while at the same time not prescribing a particular perspective (Zembylas, 2015). This relational approach (Noddings, 2012a; Zembylas, 2012) deals with the inevitable and necessary discomfort in learning about diversity and injustice (Davis & Steyn, 2012; Kumashiro, 2015; Mintz, 2013; Zembylas, 2015) in a productive way that eventually may lead to more socially just beliefs (Zembylas, 2012; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017), even if such beliefs are not publicly espoused/produced in
class (Zembylas, 2015). Allison was clearly still working through what a student of color said to her about being white. Without the dialogic classroom context (Collins, 1990/2003) rooted in “strategic empathy” fostered by Dr. Anderson, it is possible Allison may have just written off this comment completely (Kumashiro, 2015). In other words, Allison’s learning may have been incomplete (as demonstrated in her interview with me), but it also may continue past the semester, which may not have happened if Dr. Anderson or another student forced her to contend with her white privilege at that moment in time.

When learning about diversity and social justice is conceptualized as ongoing, incomplete, and unable to take place within the short, limited confines of the semester (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018; Rodgers, 2013), there is an inherent “ethic of risk” (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002). Not all students may respond to care, strategic empathy, or decolonizing pedagogies in ways that critically move them toward justice (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Tejeda, 2008; Zembylas, 2012; Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017). Instead, strategic empathy may result in resistance, as evidenced in Allison’s behavior in class (“You’re trying to bring it back to race”) and in her interview with me. The literature demonstrated that such resistance has certainly been displayed in the HSI context with teacher educators committed to antiracist teaching (Enumah, 2021). Yet, such resistance and defensiveness may not necessarily represent a failure on the part of professors at HSIs to safeguard against the whiteness of education. Rather, it may demonstrate that students are engaged if one “surrender[s] [the] need for immediate affirmation of successful teaching…and accept[s] that students may not appreciate the value of a certain standpoint or process straight away” (hooks, 1994, as cited in Davis & Steyn, 2012, p. 31).

Yet, as described in Chapter 2, professors’ emphasis on humanity and care must also “advance moral ends” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017, p. 182). Stated differently, “authentic caring
[must] be infused with political clarity” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 110), or “deliberately bringing issues of race, difference, and power into central focus” (p. 109) when engaging with “students’ cultural world and their structural position[s]” (p. 109). In particular, Black feminist and womanist theories of caring conceptualize these moral ends and political clarity as an intentional, collective effort in working toward social justice and dismantling racial inequities (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Knight, 2004; Roberts, 2010) (see Chapter 2). Noddings (1998), like Tejeda (2008), asked whether an emphasis on process can lead to an immoral product: “Dewey has told us much more about the ethical conduct of education than about the ethical product…will these procedures produce recognizable moral goods?” (p. 486). This question was certainly a concern for Dr. Ruben, who worried that if there were no boundaries in what students could say or share about their own experiences, his class would be more about freedom of discussion than the critical thinking necessary to change society. Stated differently: “[Will] truth always win in such encounters [when students can say whatever they want]?... how high a price should [people] be willing to pay for the great boon of freedom of discussion?” (Berlin, 1969, as cited in Noddings, 2018, p. 336). This question becomes even more necessary to consider among classes with racially diverse students, as the role of adversarial debate—which could be mistaken for “freedom of discussion”—that is characteristic of the positivist epistemology valued in academia asks “African-American women [and other multiply marginalized people] to…confront in an adversarial relationship those with more social, economic, and professional power” (Collins, 1990/2003, p. 52). While the professors at both NSU and ECU contended with the challenge of classrooms with diverse student populations who have experienced different levels of injustice (Mintz, 2013), this question about the price of freedom of discussion seemed more prevalent in the classrooms at NSU, an HSI that had more white students, students from the suburbs, and
fewer students from low-income families. For Dr. Ruben, recognizing that an uncritical use of dialogue and experience may not be enough to foster transformation and engage in a structural analysis of issues (Davis & Steyn, 2012), experience was a vehicle for/to (the) truth. Dr. Abbott similarly questioned whether dialogue could occur on equal grounds that can foster genuine listening on behalf of more privileged students (Collins, 1990/2003; Davis & Steyn, 2012). By contrast, at ECU, experience for Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ocampo was one of many possible truths. This was evident in Dr. Anderson’s assessment of what Allison’s parents taught her as (possibly) true—“’We worked hard,’ and they probably did.”—and in Dr. Ocampo questioning how he could respond to students with deficit views of urban schools whose experience differed from his own.

**Teaching Amid Materialist Critique of Critical (Race) Theory**

One critique within CRT is that the movement is becoming “excessively preoccupied with issues of identity” and “straying away from its materialist roots and dwelling overly on matters of concern to middle-class minorities—microaggressions, racial insults, unconscious discrimination, and affirmative action in higher education—” that “do little for the underlying structures of inequality, much less the plight of the deeply poor” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 107). At ECU, where many of the students were from low-income families, Dr. Ocampo paid heightened attention to students’ socioeconomic status. His view of teaching as a way to move students up the socioeconomic ladder and emphasis on structure and rules differs from how professors at some elite institutions approach classroom management, and teaching as a profession, through a justice orientation (Annamma & Winn, 2019):

I [Annamma] encourage course participants to 1) think of discipline as a tool for learning, 2) understand how systems of power shape our responses to multiply-marginalized children’s behaviors, and 3) replace ideas of managing behavior to practicing solidarity with multiply marginalized students. Most participants begin to see
themselves as part of a system of power enacted in classrooms and start to reimagine themselves as tools for transformation. (p. 8)

Referencing how discussions of power take place in methods courses at elite institutions is not to argue that justice-oriented teacher education is an elitist, liberal project, as some conservatives may contend (Jussim, 2012), or that the above researchers would not employ similar techniques if they were teaching classrooms with more multiply marginalized students from low-income families. Additionally, I am not arguing that students at ECU are not being “served,” relative to students at elite institutions (Garcia et al., 2019). Rather, the comparison between Dr. Ocampo’s approach to classroom management and Annamma and Winn’s suggests that the way power is or is not discussed in class might have implications for how preservice teachers understand the teaching profession—as a middle-class job or as a profession with incredible sociopolitical responsibility, in the case of students in Annamma and Winn’s study. Additionally, the comparison cautions against justice-oriented teacher education becoming a form of social or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) for white students, students who attend elite institutions, and/or students from higher-income backgrounds (as also problematized in my positionality statement in Chapter 3) who may be more likely to see teaching as short-term, “missionary-style ‘tourism’ for elites en route to higher status careers” (Philip et al., 2019, p. 254), compared to students at institutions like ECU who, according to Dr. Ocampo, stayed in the field long-term. Thus, the comparison cautions against social justice and equity becoming knowledge that can help college students garner academic credentials (e.g., a bachelor’s or master’s degree) rewarded in the labor market (Bourdieu, 1986; Schwitzman, 2018), which may not actually change the conditions in K-12 schools if justice-oriented candidates utilize this knowledge to teach short-term and then leave the field, or as Bell (1996) said of ideas of equity and justice: “All too often…these
symbols lack the potential for actually delivering our daily bread—meaning employment, shelter, education, healthcare…” (p. 185) (see also Malcolm X & Haley, 1965).

For the professors in this study, part of why the “symbols” and language of equity and justice were limiting was due to the inherent power relations between professor and student in higher education (Giroux, 1997; Rodgers, 2013; Zembylas, 2015) (see Chapter 5). They pushed against the idea that commitments to diversity, equity, and/or justice can be accurately assessed in higher education, especially since students may say things in class or write things in their assignments to get approval from the professor (Tejeda, 2008; Zembylas, 2015). Put differently, how did Annamma and Winn (2019) know that students see themselves as “tools for transformation”? Is it possible that students understand that in order to pass their class, they need to write and speak about discipline and solidarity in particular (justice-oriented) ways (McHatton et al., 2009)? In line with the literature mentioned in Chapter 2 on the difficulty of assessing preservice teachers’ beliefs (Leonard & Leonard, 2006; Rowan et al., 2021) and putting beliefs into practice (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Gehrke & Cocchiarella, 2013; Naraian & Schlessinger, 2017; Siebers, 2008), Rodgers (2013) similarly asked:

While many teacher education programs today advocate a critical stance, insisting that their teacher-students be committed to looking at the social and political consequences of [his or her] teaching…what if students of teaching don’t care? Is in-depth consideration of such issues enough to awaken a dormant social consciousness or create one where none existed? (p. 37)

Given the complex context of higher education in fostering teacher stances toward justice, to say that the professors in this study were fully engaging with the materialist strand of CRT would be misleading. As diversity was an incomplete, experiential process, so too is the possibility that the students in the classes I observed were not yet fully equipped to address systemic reform. Thus, “grassroots” may be a more appropriate term to describe the professors’ approach toward equity
and social justice rather than justice-oriented or purely materialist. They were rooted in the material realities and diverse range of lived experiences of their current students, as evidenced by how Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Abbott erred on the side of their college students’ needs when those needs were in conflict with the needs of their future K-12 students (see Chapter 5).

Yet, professors’ limited engagement with theory and/or politics/policy may have left students unequipped to act as change agents (Kumashiro, 2015). While an ethic of caring from an Afrocentric feminist perspective articulates “developing the capacity for empathy” (Collins, 1990/2003, p. 63) and “shar[ing] the experiences that led the person to form [their] ideas” (p. 57), mere exposure to different experiences and beliefs in and of itself does not lead to transformative thinking (Meyer & Leonardi, 2018; Mintz, 2013), even if such exposure initially produces discomfort (Zembylas & Papamichael, 2017) (see Chapter 2). Put differently, it is not the initial “crisis” that takes place when students are exposed to experiences that contradict what they currently know, but rather the ways in which educators provide opportunities to navigate this (un)learning that results in new knowledge and understanding (Kumashiro, 2015). While sometimes students may empathize with historically marginalized others upon exposure to their experiences, Boler (1999) termed this unproductive empathy as “passive” when students do not seem themselves as implicated in the larger systems of power that affect the “others” they are learning about (see also, Davis & Steyn 2012) (see Chapter 2). This was certainly evident in how Allison and Hillary utilized experience to empathize passively and make themselves closer to people of color in their lives, rather than to examine how they themselves are implicated in racism as white women.

While critical theory can help inspire preservice teachers to understand their positionalities relative to the work of necessary reform and address inequitable conditions both
within and outside of schools (Bennett et al., 2019; Davis & Steyn, 2012; Giroux, 1997; Rodgers, 2013), Dr. Ruben recognized that the (critical) boundaries he was putting on his class were not fostering the type of environment in which students could share their emotions, in particular their “frustrations or their fears” in relation to the content. Additionally, his recognition reflected that any moral education, educated toward justice, needs both intellectual reasoning and feeling in relation to others, in order to better understand the complexity of such diversity issues (Amsler, 2011; Noddings, 2006, 2012a, 2012b; Noddings & Brooks, 2017). It also reflected Collins’ (1990/2003) articulation of an ethic of caring from an Afrocentric feminist epistemology in which “emotions…are central to the knowledge validation process” (p. 62) and Kumashiro’s (2015) assertion that students need not only knowledge of oppression but also an understanding of the “political, social, emotional reasons why oppression so often plays out invisibly and unchallenged in our lives” (pp. 27-28). Professors’ emphases on humanity and care remind us that “the living other is more important than any other theory, and…theory must be subordinate to the caring relationship” (Noddings, 2005, p. xviii). Yet, critical pedagogies tend to “treat race and racism less as a complex affective experience than as a set of social and political issues to be addressed through systematic analysis” (Zembylas, 2012, p. 118). As suggested through the data in Chapter 5, such analyses can sometimes feel deterministic and produce “educated despair” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017, p. 7). By engaging experience as a “criterion for credibility” (Collins, 1990/2003, p. 55), while also “not assum[ing] that lived experiences can be inferred automatically from structural determinations” (Giroux, 1997, p. 139), the teacher educators in this study worked to “engage schools as sites of possibility…as places where students can be educated to take their places in society from a position of empowerment rather than from a position of ideological and economic subordination” (p. 120; see also, Mintz, 2013). This
nuanced emphasis on experience over discourse has also been observed with other professors teaching about diversity and social justice with preservice teachers in the HSI context (Enumah, 2021) and safeguards against an over-intellectualization of race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) and other aspects of diversity that speak little to the “material and psychological impacts of being labeled as raced or dis/abled, which sets one outside of the western cultural norms” (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11).

Rather than “sacrific[ing] the child to theory” (Noddings, 2005, p. xix), Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Anderson stretched language (i.e., “knucklehead”) (see Chapter 5) that scholars using intersectional theories such as DisCrit and CRT would (rightly) find problematic (i.e., Annamma et al., 2017). Yet, while the “specifically political” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1298) work of “lay[ing] bare some of the contradictions between language and epistemological commitments” (Annamma et al., 2018, p. 52) is important in advancing equity and social justice (see Chapter 2), Dr. Ocampo’s and Dr. Anderson’s commitments to humanity and care suggested this work is limited, as their language was not fully indicative of their practice. Noddings (2005) similarly stated: “Objections that are basically ideological can rarely be met to the satisfaction of the objectors” (p. 175). In other words, it becomes more difficult to critique Dr. Ocampo’s language when, in practice, “knucklehead” may not refer to an actual student.

**Diversity as (Im)moral Curriculum**

In line with professors’ emphases on humanity, Malcolm X advocated for actions that are “sincerely motivated from a deep sense of humanism and moral responsibility [to]… get at the basic causes that produce the racial explosions in America today” (Malcolm X & Haley, 1965, p. 377). From this perspective, teachers’ critical thinking about diversity “must be guided by a moral commitment” (Noddings & Brooks, 2017, p. 7) and political clarity (Bartolomé, 1994, as
cited in Valenzuela, 1999) made possible by an authentic, relational, interpersonal ethic of caring (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Collier, 2005; Noddings, 2010, 2012b; Valenzuela, 1999) (described in Chapter 2). The analytic themes connecting the data in Chapter 5 surfaced tensions around addressing diversity in teacher education from this moral perspective. In order to further understand these tensions, I use DisCrit and a theorization of caring as a moral commitment to read Dr. Abbott’s and Dr. Ocampo’s competing views on diversity and inclusion as both moral and immoral, as well as to surface tensions around the relationship between reflection and social action, the purpose of education, and potentials for curricular transformation. More specifically, I first discuss Dr. Abbott’s focus on being a “champion of diversity” in the context of a critical and culturally relevant senses of care. Next, I discuss Dr. Abbott’s and Dr. Ocampo’s emphasis on rigor. I conclude by discussing Dr. Ocampo’s premise that some students cannot be reached.

**Being a “Champion of Diversity”**

Dr. Abbott’s focus on being a “champion of diversity” who considers all kinds of diversity and adopts a continuous, evolving stance of what diversity means reflected what Stevens and Miretzky (2014) termed “transferrable” skills, or broader teaching strategies and dispositions for any historically marginalized student (see Chapter 2), as opposed to Dr. Ocampo’s focus on specific facets of diversity related to the achievement gap, which he felt included “ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic…gender to a lesser extent.” As illustrated in Chapter 5, Dr. Ocampo worried that if diversity (in teacher education) meant everything, or any kind of identity/experience, then it would eventually mean nothing. In other words, Dr. Ocampo linked diversity to an issue of equity (the achievement gap), which aligns with a critical understanding of diversity, as explained in Chapter 2, and with a sense of urgency indicative of an understanding of the larger systemic problems impacting urban students (Valenzuela, 1999). Yet,
at the same time, looking at race, for example, through the lens of equity/the achievement gap alone can sometimes encourage static, non-intersectional, and perhaps dehumanizing understandings of difference—such as Asian students “tend[ing] to be quiet and defer[ring] to authority”—that position “the burden of responsibility and the struggle for change as…residing first with the students, their families, and the community” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 65).

Dr. Abbott’s use of these “transferrable” skills did not end in diversity meaning nothing, as Dr. Ocampo worried. Rather, Dr. Abbott utilized these “transferrable” skills in deepening her understanding of the diversity that exists within the Black community, as reflected in her interest in LGBTQIA+ diversity (see Chapter 5) and her sharing that professors need to recognize that not all Black and brown people have the same narrative (see Chapter 4). Moreover, reading from a culturally relevant sense of care, her focus on “the Black experience,” instead of being essentialist, (a) pushes against a color-evasive understanding of care; (b) recognizes Black children need to be cared for in ways that differ from white children and other children of color (Knight, 2004; Roberts, 2010); and (c) understands that humanizing and expecting greatness from Black children, who too often are denigrated by society, is in and of itself a political act (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002). A realist critical stance may read Dr. Abbott’s idealist focus on “the Black experience” as immoral, as she was not explicitly addressing how teachers can address/change individual, school, and societal conditions for Black students (Bennett et al., 2019). In other words, she may be engaging in authentic caring without the political clarity necessary to negate the subtractive schooling experiences of multiply marginalized youth (Valenzuela, 1999), as described in Chapter 2. However, reading Dr. Abbott’s idealist stance toward equity and emphasis on “the Black experience” from a culturally relevant sense of care complicates the binary in critical teacher education between thoughts/beliefs and action. In
particular, conceptualizing humanizing and expecting greatness from Black children as a political signifies the necessary stance for social action that is transformative, rather than the “missionary-like zeal” (Hytten & Warren, 2003, p. 74, as cited in Bennett et al., 2019, p. 909) that can accompany calls for action without reflection.

**Emphasis on Rigor**

Reading Dr. Ocampo’s and Dr. Abbott’s emphasis on rigor and the standards from critical, authentic (Valenzuela, 1999), and culturally relevant senses of care complicates moral questions around the purpose(s) of education (academic, moral, spiritual, economic, etc.) (Noddings, 1997). Critical perspectives might read how Dr. Ocampo linked rigor via grades and test scores to economic improvement as immoral, as scholars both in (Rodgers, 2013) and out (Bell, 1996; Harris, 2014) of education have problematized wealth and economic mobility as antithetical to equity and justice, as Noddings (1997) wrote:

> [Meeting standards is not helpful] when we know that the educational status of parents is the single strongest predictor of how children will do in school…education by itself is not the solution to poverty. (p. 2)

Moreover, an emphasis on the standards, GPA, and/or SATs can “close off an important avenue of advancement for many potentially productive youth” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 99) when universities and colleges insist on evidence of student conformity to the high school curriculum, regardless of whether that curriculum is challenging and supportive or degrading and meaningless. (p. 99)

While caring does not neglect academic achievement (Alder, 2002; Noddings, 2012a; Roberts, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999) (see Chapter 2), here Noddings (1997) and other scholars were operating from the assumption that the moral aims of education should be focused on educating the “whole child” (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Knight, 2004) by teaching the importance of community, caring for others, good citizenship, and living a happy life (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Knight,
2004; Noddings, 1997, 2012a; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Rodgers, 2013) and by “abandoning the notion of a color-blind curriculum” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 109). These moral aims are understood as antithetical to notions of education and schooling that are geared towards improving one’s economic status (Noddings & Brooks, 2017), especially when such aspects work against the caring relation necessary for student success (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999).

Dr. Ocampo’s and Dr. Abbott’s emphases on rigor, therefore, operated from a different set of assumptions around the purpose and place of education and complicated the moral-immoral binary derived from bifurcating education for “the whole child” and education for economic mobility. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, Dr. Abbott was similarly concerned with a culturally relevant sense of care’s emphasis on the “whole child” (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Knight, 2004) in her discussion of meeting students’ needs. However, her emphasis on rigor was also rooted in the fact that she felt it was a “disservice” to neglect students’ academic needs and/or feel that students need to be rescued from their communities. Urban students themselves have “interpreted…teachers’ willingness to be strict…and pressure students into getting work done as the highest forms of care” (Alder, 2002, p. 250). Thus, attending to students’ academic needs is an important aspect of completing the caring relation with students, even if such attention on academics may rest on an individualist/capitalist ideology (Collins, 1990/2003). Additionally, her concern with (white) saviorism complicated the physical place (of school buildings) in which (moral) education can occur. Dr. Abbott’s reminders to NSU students to stay focused on academics and that children do not need to be rescued from their communities implicitly framed the community as equipped to provide children with tools for democratic engagement and other types of (nonacademic) education (moral, spiritual, etc.). In this way, an emphasis on rigor and academics pushed against a dehumanizing form of (critical) care that was
forced on others (Erevelles & Minear, 2010; Kendi, 2019; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018) and may (unintentionally) construct students’ families and communities as ill-equipped to supplement their children’s (moral) education.

Moreover, given the critique that critical race theory may not “take adequate account of economic democracy” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 108) and “has yet to develop a comprehensive theory of class” (p. 115), the question arises whether emphasizing economic improvement, in relation to rigor and the standards, is mutually exclusive from moral imperatives around community, care, democratic citizenship, and happiness. Unemployment is a stronger predictor of experiencing violence than race (Kendi, 2019), and a college degree is associated with better economic outcomes later in life (Blake, 2017; Reuss, 2001/2016). Thus, the impact of economics on one’s experiences and the relationship between education and economic mobility would inherently impact a child’s sense of community, citizenship, happiness, and belief in democracy, thus rendering economic mobility a necessary consideration in the context of (school-based) education of students from low-income families. This moral question is further complicated when considering whether students’, teachers,’ and professors’ understandings of economic mobility align with, or reinforce, “the dominant narrative of mobility in U.S. society” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 55) of leaving the inner-city neighborhood, regardless of whether one gives back to their community (Valenzuela, 1999). Even as Dr. Ocampo seemed to emphasize GPA and SAT scores unproblematically, economic mobility was only one of the two goals he had for his students. That he also wanted them to impact students in the community (see Chapter 5) aligns with preparing teachers who use culturally relevant methods, as such teachers “see themselves as part of the community and they see teaching as giving back to the community” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 28). In other words, holding
simultaneous goals of both economic improvement and community involvement for his students pushes against a deficit narrative of the inner city as a place that should be left.

**Inclusion as (Im)moral**

From disability studies, DisCrit, and inclusive education perspectives (see Chapter 2), Dr. Ocampo’s emphasis on “the middle students” and stance that the “knucklehead” cannot be reached can be read as immoral and exclusionary (see Chapter 5). Notwithstanding the question of whether teachers emphasizing control is “‘moral authority’…[or] oppression” (Alder, 2002, p. 262), Dr. Ocampo’s approach to students can also be read as moral, as urban students have interpreted “control over disruptive behavior” (p. 250) and the removal of disruptive students as forms of care. Both of these readings, however, reinscribe the general education classroom as a place that is a “fixed, bounded, naturalized entity…inextricably tied [to the learning needs of students]” (Naraian, 2016, p. 4). The removal of “knuckleheads” and other (disruptive) students is legitimized because they cannot meet the “[behavioral] requirements of the [general education] place” (p. 2) and because they “interfere with the learning of students without disabilities” (p. 18). Notably, Naraian (2016) found in her study that when learning need was “intertwined” with student connectedness as “the organizing logic of inclusive places,” there remained a more likely “potential for deeper transformative effects on curriculum and pedagogy” (p. 24). Conversely, learning need was “theoretically incompatible” (p. 25) with inclusion when “[a]n exclusive focus on learning need [became] the fundamental premise for place creation” (p. 25). Moreover, this exclusive focus “weakens the possibility of…large-scale” (p. 3) “curricular [and pedagogical] transformations” (p. 24) within schools. That Dr. Ocampo’s approach can be read as simultaneously moral and immoral from both teachers’ and students’ perspectives, while also reinscribing a fixed understanding of learning need that works against more transformative
curriculum and pedagogy, illustrates the prevalence of the ideology of ability (Siebers, 2008) in the “causally significant social realities” (Naraian, 2016, p. 32) that (materially) structure schools in ways that work against a more collective sense of authentic, relational caring, and subsequent moral education (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999).

Graham and Slee (2008) similarly troubled inclusion as dependent on the place of general education when they asked: “When we talk of including, into what do we seek to include?” (p. 277). This question, coupled with Naraian’s (2016) “diasporic response to inclusion”—that is “much more sensitive to the complexities of lived experiences across [general and special education] boundaries” (p. 32)—surfaces moral commitments that hold great “potential for radical school [and curricular] reform” (p. 32) within seemingly fixed, immoral understandings of students’ learning needs. More specifically, Dr. Ocampo’s emphasis on “the middle students” and subsequent understanding of some students as unreachable also escapes the moral/immoral binary for two reasons. First, an emphasis on “all children can learn” does little to problematize a curriculum that prioritizes liberal arts over skills for the workforce (Noddings, 2005) or one that “dismisses or derogates [students’] language, culture, and community” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 62). Coercing students to learn certain material goes against preparing students for democratic life (Noddings, 1997, 2005), especially when emphasizing subjects such as history has done little to help them understand themselves in relation to others (Boler, 1999; Noddings, 2005). Second, an emphasis on “all children can learn,” especially when such slogans are used to justify a focus on the achievement gap (Philip et al., 2019) or the standards (Noddings, 1997), neglects the inequitable structures outside of schools that give rise to educational disparities (Noddings, 1997, 2005, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999) and that are a greater predictor of educational achievement (Noddings & Brooks, 2017). Moreover, if all children can learn, then pathologizing discourses
about students (McDermott & Raley, 2009; Philip et al., 2019; Valenzuela, 1999) and/or teachers (Noddings, 1997; Philip et al., 2019) are used to explain children who cannot learn. The professors’ questioning about the extent to which teachers and schools can impact individual students’ lives (see Chapter 5) reflected this moral questioning and recognition of the “challenge to care in schools” (Noddings, 2005, p. 20) as they are currently structured, in ways that can positively change the life trajectories of young people.

Implications

The implications from this study suggest several recommendations for policy and practice in both higher education and teacher education. These implications are guided by the question: What does it mean to serve historically marginalized students who wish to be teachers? As discussed in Chapter 1, more students of color are enrolling in institutions of higher education (Conrad, 2015; Flores & Park, 2013; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; Raines, 1998); however, the majority of college graduates are still white (Flores & Park, 2014; O’Brien & Zudak, 1998; Sleeter, 2017). This was also evident in the two HSIs in this study. ECU, which enrolled more Hispanic and Black students than NSU, also had a lower retention and graduation rate than NSU, demonstrating that the HSI label by itself may not be enough to work against the racial achievement gap in higher education. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter 4, while MSIs, as a whole, graduate many teachers of color (John & Stage, 2014), these two HSIs may not have been making a substantial contribution to racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force. Additionally, they were not remiss from whiteness and respect/ability as property in the teaching profession. As such, the following recommendations for practice and policy are suggestions for working toward racial equity in both higher education and teacher education, within the MSI and HSI contexts specifically.
Serving Historically Marginalized Undergraduate Students in Higher Education

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students and the overrepresentation of white students enrolled in each institution’s COE surfaced dilemmas around serving undergraduate students of color in the HSI/MSI context. These dilemmas were not as prominent regarding the graduate population at each institution, given that the majority of graduate students at each institution were white. Thus, recommendations for practice and policy consider better ways to serve undergraduate students of color in the HSI and MSI contexts.

Recommendations for Practice: Departmental Goals Within HSIs

The overrepresentation of white students, and underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students, in both ECU’s and NSU’s teacher preparation programs suggested that some colleges, programs, and/or departments at HSIs are doing a better job of meeting the needs of Hispanic and Black undergraduate students than others. In the 2019-2020 school year, the top undergraduate majors/programs at ECU were in biology, management, criminal justice, psychology, and nursing (ECU website). In the 2018-2019 school year, the top undergraduate majors/programs at NSU were similar: business administration, psychology, biology, family science and human development, and justice studies (NSU website).

Currently, to qualify for HSI status, only the race/ethnicity (at least 25% Hispanic) and socioeconomic backgrounds (at least 50% low-income) of the undergraduate population, as a whole, are considered. The disproportionate representation of white and graduate students in each HSI’s COE suggested that HSIs might benefit from setting goals for each college/school/department within the institution—in terms of race and class demographics of undergraduate students—that support being identified as an HSI. Ideally, each college/school/department’s race
and class representation at the undergraduate level would closely mirror the entire institution. These data can serve as a starting point for each college/school/department to reflect on how they are serving its undergraduate student population. While COEs may still have a slightly higher percentage of white students than other colleges/departments/programs, given the enrollment of graduate students, this would help them increase their racial diversity overall.

**Recommendations for Policy: “Black Serving Institution” (BSI) Label**

While both ECU and NSU were still figuring out what it meant to be an HSI, Dr. Ruben and Dr. Abbott expressed that their campus may not have been as inclusive and tolerant as ECU’s. More specifically, Dr. Abbott shared that other African American professors were upset that the institution received the HSI label, but not a label to signal the Black student population. As mentioned in Chapter 4, neither institution qualified for the label of Predominantly Black Institution (PBI). It is also possible they may not want this label, given that nothing in the wording suggests a commitment to serve Black students. The HBCU label also does not apply to either institution, given that neither ECU nor NSU were developed explicitly to serve Black students and to right a historical wrong of educational exclusion.

While simultaneously recognizing the importance of labels, and also recognizing that a label is limited in what it can provide, I suggest that higher education policy may benefit from the label of “Black Serving Institution” (BSI). The requirements would be similar to the 25% Hispanic population required for HSI status and would take into account that while 18.5% of the U.S. population in 2019 identified as Hispanic, only 13.5% identified as Black or African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Thus, the BSI label would require 20% of the student body to identify as Black or African American, rather than the 40% currently needed to qualify as a PBI. ECU could be a BSI as 23% of their undergraduate student population identified as
Black or African American in the 2018-2019 school year and 24% in the 2019-2020 school year. Additionally, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) also identified “non-profit, degree-granting institutions with full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate Hispanic student enrollment of at least 15% but less than 25%” (HACU website) as “emerging HSIs.” Keeping in mind the overall U.S. population, if a similar parallel opportunity existed with the BSI label, an “emerging BSI” may require at least 10% but less than 20% of the population to be Black or African American. NSU could be an “emerging BSI,” with 13% of their undergraduate student population identifying as Black or African American in the 2018-2019 school year and 14% in the 2019-2020 school year.

The label of BSI would affirm institutions that see an increase in their Black student population that is not directly tied to an institution’s history (like the HBCU label). Ideally, the label of BSI would provide more opportunities to secure grants and funding, which of course are not without complications, as Dr. Ruben suggested. Moreover, the label of BSI is already somewhat reflected implicitly in the literature on HSIs, as HSIs “enroll larger numbers of Black and Native American students than HBCUs and TCUs whose historical mission it is to target those specific populations” (Cuellar, 2019, and Núñez et al., 2015, as cited in Garcia et al., 2019, p. 2). Thus, higher education is likely to see institutions with both the HSI and BSI labels, thereby expanding notions of “serving” that only take into account one racial demographic.

**Serving Students and Faculty at HSIs in Teacher Education**

The data presented in Chapter 4—which discussed multiple aspects of “servingness” in relation to student and faculty experiences—surfaced recommendations for policy at the institutional levels. The data presented in Chapter 5 surfaced recommendations for practice at the
classroom level. Taken together, they suggested ways of strengthening teacher education for diversity in the HSI context.

**Recommendations for Policy: Teacher Preparation Requirements**

The earlier discussion about de facto and de jure segregation showed the necessity of decoupling licensure exams not only from certification and employment at the state level, but also from the admissions process to the teacher preparation program at the institutional level. As the data demonstrated, teacher preparation programs differentially interpret and apply these standards in ways that maintain the whiteness and respect/ability of the teaching profession. Importantly, this de jure vs. de facto difference between ECU and NSU does not tell the whole story. Students’ experiences are an important indicator of “servingness” (Garcia et al., 2019). As Ameerah and Roberto shared at ECU, they felt supported, even in this more “de jure” context. Roberto shared that the professors were very helpful, and Ameerah’s professors helped her find a “loophole” that allowed her to at least take one education class. Additionally, she valued the unofficial, or informal, support. At NSU, even with leniency in the admissions process, both Cara and Amanda reported feeling stressed, with Amanda sharing that professors were not very understanding toward students with full-time work obligations. Dr. Ruben corroborated their testimonies. Thus, while the race, class, ability/achievement, and location of the university may impact the ways in which teacher preparation programs differentially apply state employment and licensure requirements to their teacher preparation programs, it is not necessarily indicative of the support students experience in their programs. Similarly, as stated earlier, it is possible ECU had not developed support for student teaching. Thus, support for students should be integrated throughout the program—prior to licensure exams, with licensure exams, throughout
student teaching, and getting ready to enter the profession—and should take into consideration students’ experiences and obligations outside of school.

**Recommendations for Policy: Teaching and Tenure Requirements**

Both ECU and NSU were contending with the historical legacies of whiteness in higher education in terms of requirements of teaching and tenure. The increasing pressure to publish, at both institutions, meant that faculty did not have as much time to devote to teaching, and at NSU, this pressure to publish was possibly used to legitimize denying tenure and/or promotion to Black professors. Thus, teaching and tenure requirements in the HSI context should be more aligned with both the needs of the students and the strengths of individual faculty, as Dr. Ruben suggested. Tenure requirements for faculty preparing teachers should similarly be aligned with the needs of the community and the amount of work faculty are putting into the surrounding school communities, as Dr. Ocampo and Ameerah shared that some faculty, even at ECU, still did not have as much familiarity and/or in-depth experience with the urban context.

**Recommendations for Practice: Care-driven Teacher Education**

The field has called not only for a “more comprehensive definition of teacher care” (Roberts, 2010, p. 450), but also for a clearer articulation of care in teacher education, specifically (Knight, 2004). The data presented in Chapter 5 demonstrated that a care-driven conception of preparing teachers for diversity, equity, and social justice depends, in part, on the context of the institution of higher education, just as the situation and context of schooling impact whether/how teachers can enact a relational sense of care in K-12 education (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). At ECU, Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Anderson weighed students’ experiences differently than Dr. Abbott and Dr. Ruben at NSU, in relation to putting critical boundaries in/on their classroom.
That diversity was an incomplete, experiential process suggested that teacher educators may not “know” or be able to truly assess students’ beliefs and how those beliefs will (or will not) be put into practice in future classrooms. The power differential between teacher and student does not go away simply because the professor is a person of color or from a historically marginalized background. In fact, given the student demographics at HSIs, that power differential may have more of an impact on student learning than in institutions where students may have, as Dr. Ruben suggested, more cultural capital. Thus, this study suggests the importance of giving students multiple opportunities to experience the content and making sure that those opportunities are not linked to high-stakes assessments rooted in Eurocentric, masculinist ways of validating knowledge (Collins, 1990/2003; Souto-Manning, 2019).

This is not to suggest that learning about diversity, equity, and social justice in teacher preparation is a low-stakes situation. Rather, when teacher educators utilize strategies like “strategic empathy” and conceptualize learning about diversity as incomplete, that learning has the potential to be longer lasting and extend past the temporal boundaries of the semester. If Dr. Anderson had told Allison more explicitly that her perspective upheld racist ideas, or if Dr. Ocampo told his students who called urban students “animals” that they were promoting deficit views, these students may have shut down or, worse, held more firmly to these problematic statements (Kumashiro, 2015). Thus, given that the field of teacher education also has a moral responsibility to future K-12 students and schools, this study pointed to the importance of positioning students to continue revisiting their beliefs throughout their careers, the way Allison was continuing to work through her experience in her interview with me.

Noddings (2006) wrote: “Most teachers are not critical thinkers because they have not been asked to think critically” (p. 9). The previous discussion of critical theory suggested that
critical thinking should also be extended to critical theories like CRT and DisCrit, which are not remiss from being used for dogmatic purposes that go against democratic goals of schooling. Critical theory should be seen as one of many tools to help teacher education students understand diversity and orient them toward justice. Moreover, the professors’ grassroots approach to equity suggests the importance of making sure opportunities for engaging critical theory are linked to the expressed needs of the communities in which students will be teaching. Giroux (1997) further warned us of the risk of emphasizing ideological critique, detached from the needs of multiply marginalized people:

[R]adical education theory has abandoned the language of possibility for the language of critique…in their failure to develop an educational theory that posits real alternatives within schools, radical educators remain politically powerless to combat the conservative forces which have adroitly exploited and appropriated popular concerns over public education. (p. 120)

We see this in today’s conservative attacks on CRT that commonly utilize whitewashed portrayals of Dr. King—that fail to mention his harsh critique of the U.S. government’s involvement in Vietnam, his anti-capitalist beliefs, the fact that he was hated by many white people when he was alive, and that he did not support racial integration of U.S. schools for fear of how white teachers would view and treat Black children (Kendi, 2019)—to advocate for multiculturalism, rather than antiracism, in curriculum (e.g., Paslay, 2020). Yet, what seems to be becoming increasingly uncommon—as evidenced in Dr. Ocampo’s description of himself as “going against the grain [of] a lot of progressive, liberal teacher preparation faculty”—are teacher educators who can productively respond to Paslay’s conservative arguments that “antiracist education is indoctrination” (p. 5) outside the language of critique (Zembylas, 2012) and/or the framing that maintains racial (and other) inequities (Kumashiro, 2020). That all four professors in this study were not, as Dr. Anderson put it, interested in simply “turning suburban
students’ minds,” yet still affirming the importance of diversity, suggests ways of responding to conservative backlash against CRT.

While certainly upsetting, Paslay’s (2020) conceptualization of CRT and antiracism as “indoctrination” is not completely unfounded, given the field’s roots in critical legal studies (Crenshaw, 1991; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Critical race theorists propose that storytelling leads to a “conversion process” that can then mobilize politicians to change racist laws (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 51). Kendi (2019) argued for a somewhat opposite approach. Change racist policies first—even if they do not have majority buy-in—and once people live through the egalitarian effects of such new laws, their minds will be turned. While this approach may be appropriate from a law/legal/policy standpoint, and not discrediting the lengths that marginalized people have undertaken in order to fight for their legal rights (Noddings & Brooks, 2017), civil rights laws are limited in promoting equity, access, and inclusion (Bell, 1996; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018), especially if oppressive systems are designed to reproduce themselves within the structure of the law (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Lopez, 2014). Consequently, a grassroots emphasis on caring and humanity may not inspire teachers to be activists for law and/or policy. Caring may even be in conflict with policy activism (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018). Yet, by focusing on justice beyond simply the access of (civil) rights, the professors in this study suggested it is possible to inspire a stance in which social justice does not depend on (educational) policy.

**Future Research**

Several lines of future inquiry have emerged from this dissertation regarding research with teacher education students, research with teacher educators, and research on HSIs. The first line of inquiry (research with students at HSIs who wish to be teachers) emerged from the
research design, as this study did not permit as much time with the students enrolled in each course as it did with the teacher educators. The second and third lines of inquiry (research with teacher educators and research on HSIs) emerged in response to the findings of this study.

**Research with Students Who Wish to Be Teachers at HSIs**

Given the diversity that exists within the HSI label across race, class, academic achievement, and other identities, I did not recruit students based solely on race, class, dis/ability, and/or other identities. The study was open to any student who wanted to participate. Yet, given the predominantly white student population at NSU—or maybe in response to my own positionality as a white researcher—this meant that six of the nine students who participated in the study were white, one of whom was Hispanic and one of whom was Muslim. None of the students I interviewed were Black. A more intentional focus on students—rather than this study’s focus on professors—would allow the researcher to engage in a more reciprocal relationship with the student participants—what Mohanty (2003) theorized as a “politics of solidarity” (p. 4), as described in Chapter 3—which may be more inviting to students from historically marginalized backgrounds. Put differently, while I could offer the students a snack or any advice on teaching, the students were really the ones helping *me*, not the other way around. A more deliberate focus on them and their experiences—both with learning about diversity and with the teacher preparation program admissions process—would enrich the data and the field, as well as provide support to the students in teacher education who may need it the most, which could potentially work against the “burdens of representation” (Luttrell, 2009, p. 9), as the researcher would not be the only one benefiting from the research.

**Learning about Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice**
Future research might seek to ascertain how students’ knowledge of diversity, equity, and/or social justice shifts, if at all, throughout the semester in a given course. This can be done by interviewing them several times over the course of the semester, rather than just once, as in this study. Future studies could also utilize a more longitudinal approach with a cohort of students over the course of several semesters to learn how diversity, equity, and/or social justice are spiraled throughout the curriculum and how students’ views on diversity change throughout their program. This work could also extend into students’ first years of teaching to better understand the role of university-based teacher preparation in relation to novice teachers’ understandings of diversity.

**Teacher Preparation Program Admissions Process**

At ECU, Ameerah’s and Dr. Ocampo’s testimonies regarding the Praxis in Chapter 4 affirmed the necessity of decoupling licensure exams not only from certification and employment at the state level, but also from the admissions process to the teacher preparation program at the institutional level. As the data demonstrated, teacher preparation programs differently interpret and apply these standards in ways that maintain the whiteness and respect/ability of the teaching profession. While prior work has focused on Hispanic and Black students’ experiences with the Praxis and other state licensure exams (e.g., Bennett et al., 2006; Graham, 2013), future research is needed on the experiences of Hispanic and Black college students with the admissions process as a whole to the institution’s COE. Bennett et al. (2006) recommended provisionally admitting students who have high GPAs to an institution’s COE. While NSU had taken up this recommendation, in practice it ended up benefitting white candidates. Thus, it is necessary to understand how Hispanic and Black college students are making sense of the admissions process within their institutional contexts. Perhaps the “de jure”
process at ECU seems more straightforward and the increased opportunities and application requirements at NSU more overwhelming. Or maybe Hispanic and Black students at NSU are simply not interested, or less interested, in being teachers, compared to Hispanic and Black students at ECU or other HSIs. Such insight is necessary in thinking about expanding access for Hispanic and Black undergraduate students attending HSIs and for racially diversifying the K-12 teaching force.

**Research with Teacher Educators**

As Milner (2008) wrote: “The racial and ethnic background of teacher educators, their students, and their interests are those that have been considered and should continue to be raised in raced studies in teacher education” (p. 335). These considerations drive the suggestions presented here for future research with teacher educators. These areas of future inquiry emerged as a result of my methodological memos and the findings from this study.

**Understanding the Identities and Experiences of Teacher Educators (of Color)**

While the majority of my participants were people of color, the majority of the faculty were still white at both institutions.\(^1\) Perhaps unsurprisingly, white and/or female faculty were less likely to respond to me during the recruitment process.\(^2\) I emailed 10 white professors (two of whom were Latino/a), 11 professors of color, and six professors whose racial identities I did not know. Sixteen of the 27 professors (59%) I emailed responded to me. Of the professors who responded (and either declined or accepted), seven were white and nine were professors of color. This means that 70% (7/10) of white professors responded (including the white Latino/as) and

---

\(^1\) I am classifying faculty as white or people of color based on their photos on the institution’s website and recognize there is room for error in this method.

\(^2\) I realize my positionality as a white woman may have also affected professors’ willingness to respond. (I did not openly identify as a white woman in my email. However, there is an avatar on the TC email account I used to recruit professors at NSU. ECU professors could have searched me on the faculty web page and looked at my headshot.) Additionally, I am also not certain how my last name signaling I am Jewish may or may not have affected professors’ willingness to respond.
82% (9/11) of professors of color responded. In other words, professors of color were more likely to respond to my recruitment emails, even if they could not participate themselves. Moreover, men were more likely to respond, which was also reflected in my professor participant sample. It seems that historically marginalized faculty members—and multiply marginalized, in the case of Dr. Abbott—are still doing diversity work at both schools (Malcolm X & Haley, 1965). Yet, for these professors in particular, it was not so much the content of the study that was driving their participation. When I asked the professors why they agreed to participate in the study, the one answer they all had in common was that they had been in my shoes, and they wanted to help. In other words, their participation was rooted somewhat in their enacting a caring relation toward me as a doctoral student. Thus, the dissertation genre may be well suited to continue this work.

The field certainly needs more research centering the voices of faculty of color. However, in the HSI context specifically, future studies that have both white professors and professors of color may provide richer insight into preparing teachers, as well as faculty experiences (which is an indicator of “servingness”) in this context. Furthermore, in addition to race, ethnicity, dis/ability, and gender, future research should also consider the age/generation of teacher educators. I am a millennial and was 33 years old during the semester of data collection, compared to my participants who spanned from their 50s (Dr. Ocampo and Dr. Abbott) to late 60s/early 70s (Dr. Ruben and Dr. Anderson). As described in Chapter 3, my understandings of diversity, equity, and/or social justice are shaped by my experiences as a white, Jewish, middle-class, nondisabled, nonqueer woman born in the United States (second generation) at the start of Reaganomics and a child of the Clinton administration’s color-evasive tough-on-crime stance (cf., Kendi, 2019). I was not bussed to school like Dr. Abbott or pushed to Vietnam like Dr.
Anderson. Such experiences strongly impact how one understands the world and diversity, equity, and/or social justice.

**Methodological Considerations**

Future research with teacher educators can be guided by two methodological considerations that emerged from this study. First, my use of playwriting as an analytic tool suggested that focus group interviews with teacher educators may be useful in understanding professors’ stances toward diversity, equity, and/or social justice. The play allowed me to see connections across very different views and perspectives. Focus group interviews would strengthen these connections in future studies.

Second, with the help of my “critical friends” (Bambino, 2002; Dingus, 2008; Horvat, 2013) during the data analysis stage of this study (see Chapter 3), I learned how difficult it was for me to enact a caring stance toward my participants when it came to the observations. Even though this study focused on professors, given my own experience at ECU, from the very beginning of Chapter 1, I aligned myself with the students, especially those I perceived to be struggling (through the story of Yasmeen). Additionally, while data collection was taking place, I was also working as a student teaching supervisor, where my classroom observations were clearly more evaluative in nature. Thus, it was difficult for me to approach the observations in this study from the perspective of the professor, even as an adjunct professor at ECU myself.

Future research with teacher educators that utilizes observational data—even if those data are not the primary source/are used to contextualize the interviews as done in this study—can utilize co-teaching and participant observations rather than the more traditional approach I took here. If I had been able to co-teach with my participants, I could have gained further insight and understanding into their classrooms. By experiencing students alongside the professors, future
researchers may be less inclined to be evaluative during observations in a way that limits pedagogical insights into professors’ practice.

**Research on HSIs**

Future research on HSIs can help the fields of both higher education and teacher education better understand “servingness.” One line of inquiry utilizing larger, quantitative studies could examine servingness from a more bird’s-eye perspective. Qualitative research can be used to examine servingness from a more localized, individual perspective.

**Larger-scale Studies on “Servingness” in Teacher Education and Higher Education**

The fields of teacher education and higher education would benefit from larger-scale quantitative and/or mixed-methods studies on the role of various departments within HSIs in serving the needs of their students. Larger-scale projects could examine the racial demographics of each department, relative to the undergraduate population of the entire institution. Within teacher education specifically, more research on the particular teacher preparation admissions criteria, and the ways in which programs respond to state requirements for employment and licensure, across a large number of HSIs could contribute to understanding the mechanisms through which certain racial demographics are over- or underrepresented.

**Examining Typology in Relation to Servingness**

Núñez et al. (2016) identified six types of Hispanic Institutions; two of the six types were 4-year HSIs. They argued:

> By considering forms of diversity not employed in the most common institutional classification approach, these findings distinguish HSIs in arguably more meaningful and useful ways. For instance, results suggest that institution control (public versus private) may be less relevant in distinguishing among four-year HSI when additional forms of diversity are considered. (p. 73)
While ECU and NSU would both be classified as “Big Systems” 4-year institutions using the above-mentioned typology (as mentioned in Chapter 3), an intersectional lens throughout this study demonstrated that social class and location were differing and distinguishing factors between these two institutions. Thus, future research may more closely examine the diversity within the “Big Systems” typology in relation to “servingness.” Yet, the similar challenges Dr. Anderson and Dr. Ruben faced in two very different 4-year public HSIs—regarding the range of students’ prior academic knowledge and skills in introductory coursework—suggested that “servingness” can/should be examined not only across HSIs but also across different levels of courses within departments. In relation to teacher education, serving historically marginalized students who are interested in teaching is different from serving historically marginalized students who have already been admitted to a teacher preparation program.

**Conclusion**

In concluding this study, I return to one of my interviews with Dr. Anderson:

I tell [students]…about when I was at [university] working on my doctorate…there was an Indigenous Native American from a reservation in Maine. He and I were the only two minorities in this…33-student cohort. And, at the time, he was like 60 [years old] … and I used to go to him during the breaks and say…why can’t we just study what we want? Why do we have to take this scripted curriculum? There are so many things in the university to learn…. I was so eager to learn…and I said, what is this bullshit, man?... You take…these bullshit boring courses. You pay all this money to get a degree so that we can work for somebody else…. What is the purpose of life? And he said…my tribe believes that the purpose of life is to make the path wider for those behind us. And I never heard…it articulated like that. My tribe believes that the purpose of life is to make the path wider for those coming behind us. And so, you know, I point out to the students, whether they’re here or K-12 students or at [another university] …somebody has made the path wider for you…. Once you get this degree, what are you going to do? How are you going to give back? How are you going to pay it forward?

As was the case in my interviews with Dr. Anderson, I was not excused from answering such questions that he posed to his own students. While wary of the (academic, social, economic) privileges that writing about racial inequities provides (white) academics (Schwitzman, 2018),
this study was my attempt at making the path wider. In the midst of a polarized political climate in which teachers and schools are too often blamed for society’s problems, it is my hope that the insights of these professors provide hope and possibility in ways that: simultaneously uphold the democratic ideals of schooling and productively respond to (conservative) pathologizing discourses about people of color; move beyond critical critique; and (re)prioritize the humanity of both K-12 and college students.
REFERENCES


Booker urges Senate, McConnell to renew funding for minority-serving institutions of higher education. (2019, November 5). *Insider NJ*. https://www.insidernj.com


295


Crenshaw, K. (2015, Spring). Black girls matter: When national initiatives to help youth of color focus only on boys, the needs of our most vulnerable young women become invisible. https://www.feminist.org.


Erickson, F. (1986). *Qualitative methods in research on teaching*. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd edition). Macmillan.


Hughes, J. A. (2010). What teacher preparation programs can do to better prepare teachers to meet the challenges of educating students living in poverty. *Action in Teacher Education, 32*(1), 54-64.


https://www.washingtonpost.com


Watson, J. E. (2015, December 31). Studies show that MSIs are the best value in higher education. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education, 8*.


Appendix A
Professor/Teacher Educator Interview Protocols

Following Seidman’s (2013) structure for interviewing, each interview lasted between 45-90 minutes, depending on professors’ availability and/or how talkative they were. Interview #1 took place at the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester, interview #2 took place in the middle of the Fall 2019 semester, and interview #3 took place at the end of the Fall 2019 semester. (See Table 6 for dates and length of each professor interview.) As I worked to let professors’ responses shape the direction of the interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), the protocols that took place in practice were not identical for each professor interview. As such, here I include the questions that I asked to most, if not all, of the professor/teacher educator participants in each interview. Prior to each interview, I explained the overall purpose of each conversation.

Interview #1:
This interview focused on professors’ life histories and teaching philosophies.

1. Tell me a little bit about who you are, both as a professor and as a person.
   a. How do you identify?
   b. What is your teaching philosophy?
2. Tell me a little bit about how you became a professor of education.
   a. How have you developed your stance as a teacher educator?
   b. Were there other careers that you considered? What ultimately led you here?
3. Tell me a little bit about your dissertation work and your own research.
   a. What has your research trajectory been like?
   b. How, if at all, does your dissertation and/or current research inform your teaching?
4. What were you doing, personally and professionally, prior to becoming a professor of education?
   a. Tell me a little bit about your K-12 teaching experience.
5. What events in your life have been significant in your decision to become a professor of education?
6. What goals do you have for your students? Have these goals shifted during your career, and if so how?
7. What goals do you have for yourself as an educator? Have these goals shifted during your career, and if so how?
8. How do you define diversity?

Interview #2:
The second interview protocol focused on their instruction and was guided by the literature on preparing teachers for K-12 diversity (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015), the literature on preparing teachers of color (e.g., Kohli, 2009), and the literature on inclusive pedagogy (Valle & Connor, 2011) (outlined in Chapters 1 and 2). In other words, I asked them questions about both the curricular content and accessibility of their courses. I also asked them follow-up questions about
interview #1 and things I observed in their classes and/or the institution. (Given that these follow-up questions were unique to each individual participant and could potentially reveal participant and/or institutional identities, they are not included in this protocol.)

1. Tell me a little bit about the course you are currently teaching this semester that I am observing. How do you think it is going?
2. Tell me a little bit about your students this semester.
   a. How are they doing?
   b. As a class, what do you feel are you students’ biggest strengths and weaknesses?
   c. Are there any particular students who stick out to you as struggling a lot or doing extremely well compared to the rest of the group?
3. When do education students take this course/How does this course fit into the teacher preparation curriculum, in terms of preparing students for diversity?
4. How has this course shifted or evolved throughout your career as a teacher educator?
   a. Have you taught this course previously at ECU/NSU? If so, how does this semester compare to previous semesters?
   b. Have you taught a course like this at another institution? If so, how is it similar and/or different?
5. What are some of the obstacles and/or challenges you have faced in teaching this course this semester? How are these obstacles similar and/or different to prior semesters?
6. What type of textbook do you use? (scholarly, practitioner based, etc.) Do you feel like your students are doing the reading? Does it matter?
7. What have been some highlights and/or moments of success this semester?
   a. Describe a teaching moment this semester that you feel went really well.
8. How accessible do you think this course is?
   a. Do you provide any academic supports for this course? Why or why not? And if so, what, if any, accessibility measures or tools have you put in place for students?
   b. Are there any students in the course registered with office of disability services as having a disability and/or needing accommodations?
9. How culturally relevant, responsive, and/or sustaining do you think this course is?
   a. What, if any, culturally relevant, responsive, and/or sustaining teaching strategies do you use?
10. What do you think are the most important skills and/or knowledge that teachers need to successfully teach in urban K-12 schools?
    a. How do you address these skills and/or knowledge in the courses you teach/the course I am visiting?
11. About planning: How much do you plan/prepare for this course? How much do you deviate from the plan and why?
    a. How does this compare to other courses you’ve taught, in terms of how you approach it?
12. Do you think it is easier to address “diversity” in some types of courses over others?
13. Will knowledge of diversity in and of itself lead to equitable teaching? Both in K-12 and higher education?

Interview #3:

320
The final interview asked them to reflect on the semester and was also guided by the literature on HSIs, where I asked them questions about how they felt the institution was serving its students (Garcia et al., 2019). I also asked them follow-up questions about interviews #1 and #2 and things I observed in their classes and/or the institution. (Given that these follow-up questions were unique to each individual participant, and could potentially reveal participant and/or institutional identities, they are not included in this protocol.)

1. How do you feel this semester went, overall?
2. If you could have changed something about how this course went, what would it be and why?
3. What, if anything, would you change about this class if you were teaching it at a Predominantly white Institution?1
4. Describe the diversity of your current students/class.
5. How do you feel about the HSI label? For this school and/or for other schools? How does it impact your work?
6. How do you like working here at ECU/NSU? What are some of the positives and negatives?
   a. What types of professional development opportunities are available?
   b. Do you feel supported?
7. How important do you think coursework, in general, is for preservice teachers? How important do you think your course is for preservice teachers?
8. In the first interview I asked what types of skills K-12 teachers need to be successful. In a similar vein, what are the important skills professors of education need to have in preparing teachers of color? Are these different than skills needed in preparing white preservice teachers and/or students not from historically underrepresented identities?
9. This is more of a methods class. Have you taught theoretical, historical, and/or foundational classes? If so, what, if anything, do you differently? (For Dr. Ruben and Dr. Anderson, I asked the reverse, given that they were teaching a historical/foundational course as part of the study.)
10. Do you think the notion of “best practices” could be used to close the college achievement gap?
11. One thing I have also been doing throughout this study is keeping an eye on current events both on campus, nationally, and globally. Are there any particular events that happened either here at ECU/NSU, in the United States, and/or globally during this semester/recently that may be affecting your teaching and/or your students?
12. One thing I have thought about throughout this study is sample selection and recruitment, so I have some questions related to that:
   a. Why were you interested in participating?
   b. Would you have agreed to be in this study if you weren’t tenured? /Do you think tenure plays a role in this? / Do you have tenure?

---

1 Given the all-white (appearing) demographics of Dr. Abbott’s class, I instead asked her: “What, if anything, would you change about this class if it had predominantly students of color?”
Appendix B

Student Interview Protocol

Following Spradley’s (1979) structure for interviewing, I conducted one 30–45-minute interview with the student participants, toward the end of the semester after I had gained their trust. (For more information about the student participants, see Table 5.) At ECU, interviews took place in my adjunct office. At NSU, interviews took place in the student café. Prior to starting the interviews, I reminded the students that I will protect their anonymity and asked them if they had any questions about the study. At the end of the interview, I provided my contact information in case they had any follow up questions about the study and/or if I could provide them with any advice or support as they moved through their teaching programs and early careers. Here I include questions that I asked to all of the student participants, as well the questions that were specific to each instructor’s course and added to this protocol in response to/to learn about other data — professor interviews, observations, curricular documents, etc.

1. Why did you choose to attend ECU/NSU?
2. Why do you want to be a teacher? /Did you consider another major?
3. Tell me what it is like to be an education major here/student interested in studying education.
   a. What major/program are you in?
   b. What year are you/Where are you in your program?
4. How do you define diversity?
5. Where/how do you learn about diversity in teaching/your program?
   a. In terms of coursework, is the way diversity is addressed across the courses you have taken similar and/or different?
   b. (If they mention being around “diverse” people, prompt them to describe how that helps them a little bit more.)
   c. (If they mention fieldwork, ask how coursework has helped with those experiences.)
6. How important do you think coursework, in general, is for preservice teachers?
7. How important and/or useful do you think this particular course is for preparing teachers?
   a. How does this class compare to other classes you have taken at ECU/NSU in terms of difficulty and/or importance and/or usefulness?
8. What have you learned in this course that I am observing/studying?
   a. How is diversity addressed in this course specifically, through assignments, classroom activities, reading, exams, etc.?
9. Where do you see yourself/your identities/your experiences represented in the class materials and/or discussions (if at all)?
10. What skills and knowledge do you think K-12 teachers need to have to be successful?
11. What skills and knowledge do you think professors of education should have?
12. How are you doing in this class?
13. How do you feel [professor] supports you in this course and/or in general?
14. How useful is [professor’s] feedback on assignments and/or to in-class comments/activities?
15. What was your favorite course session/lesson and/or assignment and why?
16. How familiar were you with the course content prior to this class?
17. How does [professor’s] teaching compare to other professors here?
18. How helpful are the professor’s personal stories/anecdotes in furthering your understanding of the material?

Additional Questions Asked to Dr. Anderson’s Students (ECU)

1. At the end of each class, Dr. Anderson assigns terms for you to research for the next week. How helpful is this in helping you understand the material? Is there anything you would change about the homework?
2. Did you like the videos on race/how did you feel about spending class time watching them? What did you learn from them?
3. Do you feel this class is welcoming of different perspectives?
   a. If so, how did this happen? / How did Dr. Anderson help make this happen? How did this become a “safe space” to talk about controversial issues?
4. (In response to inclusion of students with disabilities in the syllabus) – What have you learned about students with disabilities and/or disability in general? What kind of focus did disability receive in the course?

Additional Questions Asked to Dr. Ocampo’s Students (ECU)

1. Would you have liked the online component to have required you to write responses to your classmates? Why or why not?
2. What have been the most useful aspects of the online component of this course? What have been the most useful parts of the in-person classroom management workshop component of the course?
3. In particular, how useful did you find learning about the 6 soft spots?
4. How familiar were you with classroom management and/or assessment prior to this course?
   a. Was your prior knowledge addressed in your coursework? In your field experiences? Or both?

Additional Questions Asked to Dr. Ruben’s Students (NSU)

1. How did you do on the midterm exam?
2. How helpful/useful was the review session for the midterm?
3. Is doing the Chapter Based Questions (homework prior to class) useful in helping you prepare for class?

Additional Questions Asked to Dr. Abbott’s Students (NSU)

1. I’m curious about the course session on disability (that I could not attend, as it took place prior to Dr. Abbott joining the study). What did you do in class? What did you learn? How will you use it in your teaching? What does it mean in terms of diversity?
a. Had you ever heard about UDL, inclusive education, and/or disability prior to this course? If so, when/where/in what classes?
2. How did you feel about the speakers on the last day of class?
3. The syllabus indicates that you had the opportunity to explore and examine lesson plans. Did you turn in lesson plans? What happened to those lesson plans you turned in?
4. Did you receive the rubrics for the assignment prior to the due date?
5. What was your favorite art project (either done in class or at home)?
Appendix C

Researcher Journal Entry on Time When Observational Data Were Collected

Taken from my researcher journal, Table 9 details how the dates and general time frame I spent in each classroom might have impacted what I observed, and how what I observed might have been different if I visited at different points in the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor Participant and Time Period of Observation</th>
<th>How Time Period Might Have Impacted What I Observed</th>
<th>How Data Might Have Been Different if I Observed at a Different Point in the Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ocampo (ECU)—Beginning of the Semester (9/3/19, 9/3/19, 9/3/19 10/28/19)</td>
<td>The bulk of my observational hours for Dr. Ocampo came from the first day of the semester during a 4-hour in-person classroom management workshop. (I classified this 4-hour workshop as “worth” 3 observations, in terms of time spent in the classroom.) The students take this class while they are student teaching, but at the time of the observation, they had not yet started their student teaching. Dr. Ocampo mentioned they come in already nervous about classroom management/knowing it is going to impact their teaching. Thus, the students were very invested in the material. While they might have been a little anxious, they were not yet tired from student teaching and the semester. Their nerves about classroom management and that the semester had not worn down on them yet was evident in their continued interest throughout the session.</td>
<td>Had I observed Dr. Ocampo in late October/early November, the students might have been tired from student teaching and preparing for and submitting their edTPA assessments. They may have even resisted some of what he was teaching, if they felt like they had a student or class that was just impossible to manage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Anderson (ECU) – Mostly beginning of the semester (9/26/19, 10/3/19, 10/10/19, 11/21/19)</td>
<td>The bulk of my observations happened at the end of September/early October. Dr. Anderson asked me to wait until the last week of September to visit, after they had all gotten a chance to get to know each other/build a community. Thus, on the first day I visited, the community had been established, but the students did not seem too tired yet from the end of the semester. In a way, I feel like I got both Dr. Anderson and his students in their prime. The last observation was late November. The rigor had already relaxed, somewhat.</td>
<td>While I think aspects of the positive classroom community would have remained the same, I think if I was observing Dr. Anderson later in the semester, the academic rigor might have declined. The last session started with students negotiating the time the class would finish, even though half of the class was going to be devoted to a celebration/party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ruben (NSU) – Throughout the semester (9/26/19, 10/15/19, 10/22/19, 11/19/19, 12/3/19, 12/5/19)</td>
<td>I observed Dr. Ruben 3 times before the midterm exam and 3 times after. I feel I was able to watch him and the students grow together throughout the semester, which was ideal.</td>
<td>As Dr. Ruben shared in Chapter 5, it took a long time for this classroom community to “crystallize.” Had I spent more time in the beginning of the semester, I might have seen less participation from the students. The students did seem to get more comfortable as the semester progressed. Had I spent more time at the end of the semester, I might have seen more student engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Abbott (NSU) – End of the semester (10/24/19, 11/7/19, 11/14/19, 12/5/19)</td>
<td>My observations for Dr. Abbott were later in the semester, due to recruitment. She was the last professor who agreed to participate in the study in mid-October. Routines and norms had been fully established. The students seemed somewhat tired from the semester and not as fresh and excited about the material.</td>
<td>Had I observed Dr. Abbott earlier in the semester, I might have been able to see how norms and routines were established and the processes behind those. The students may have also had a little more energy and been more willing to participate in instances where I noted they were not.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Information Used for Informal Review of Sample of Institutions of Higher Education in the State in Which the Study Took Place*

*See Chapter 3 for more details on how the informal review was conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School &amp; PwI/MSI Status, Percentage of Pell Grant Recipients, Type of School, &amp; Endowment</th>
<th>Fall 2018 Admissions Requirements</th>
<th>Acceptance Rate (2017-2018)</th>
<th>Graduation Rate and Outcomes (2017-2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECU: MSI-HSI (became HSI before 2008); 65% of undergraduate students received federal Pell grant in 2017-2018; public, 4-year; $12.5 million endowment in 2018</td>
<td>1.HS GPA &amp; transcript 2.recommendations 3.SAT/ACT (SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-430 &amp; 75th percentile score-530; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 420 &amp; 75th percentile score-530) 4.TOEFL</td>
<td>96% acceptance rate, 23% of accepted students enrolled</td>
<td>73% retention rate for full-time students vs. 32% retention rate for part-time students; 39% Overall graduation rate &amp; 31% transfer-out rate within 150% of “normal time” to completion of their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 43% Asian, 32% Black or African American, 42% Hispanic/Latinx, 43% white, 33% two or more races, 43% race/ethnicity unknown, 0% non-resident alien, 0% American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSU: MSI-HSI (became an HSI in March 2016); 44% of undergraduate students received federal Pell grant in 2017-2018; public, 4-year; $43.9 million endowment (US News) in 2018</td>
<td>1.HS GPA &amp; transcript 2.Completion of college-preparatory program 3.recommendations 4.TOEFL</td>
<td>SAT scores are optional. 41% of enrolled first-time students submitted scores. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-500 &amp; 75th percentile score-590; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 490 &amp; 75th percentile score-580</td>
<td>71% acceptance rate; 31% of accepted students enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution #3: MSI-HSI (became HSI in 2011-2012 school year); 27% of students received federal Pell grant; private, 4-year; $87.7 million endowment in 2018</td>
<td>1. HS GPA &amp; record completion of college-preparatory program 3. Recommendations 4. TOEFL 89% acceptance rate: 14% of accepted students enrolled</td>
<td>80% retention rate for full-time students vs. 43% retention rate for part-time students; 46% overall graduation rate &amp; 35% transfer-out rate within 150 years of “normal time” to completion of their program; 6-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity: 66% Asian, 41% Black, 52% Hispanic/Latinx, 50% Native Hawaiian or other, 68% white, 44% two or more races, 42% race/ethnicity unknown, 70% non-resident alien</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Institutions #4, #5, #6 (multiple campuses): MSI-HSI (became HSI in 2015-2016 school year); 58% of students received federal Pell grant; public, 4-year; $1.33 billion endowment in 2018 | 1. HS GPA & transcript completion of college-preparatory program 3. SAT/ACT (95% of enrolled first-time students submitted SAT score. 10% of students submitted ACT score. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-510 & 75th percentile score-590; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 510 & 75th percentile score-600. ACT composite (25th percentile-19, 75th percentile-24), ACT English (18, 24), ACT Math (18, 25) 4. TOEFL 63% acceptance rate: 16% of accepted students enrolled | 88% retention rate for full-time students vs. 50% retention rate for part-time students. 64% overall graduation rate and 21% transfer-out rate within 150% of “normal” time to completion for their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 72% Asian, 61% Black, 55% Hispanic/Latinx, 67% Native Hawaiian, 68% white, 56% two or more races, 52% race/ethnicity unknown, 53% non-resident alien |

| Institution #7: MSI-HSI (became HSI in 2010-2011 school year); In 2016-2017, 64% of freshman students received some type of financial aid either in the form of grant or scholarship from the federal, state, or local government and the institution; public; 2-year; $16.9 million endowment in 2017 | Open admission policy N/A | 68% retention rate for full-time students, and 48% retention rate for part-time students; 30% graduation rate and 12% transfer-out rate for students within 150% of “normal time” to completion of their program; Overall graduation rates by race/ethnicity: 33% American Indian, 45% Asian, 24% Black, 31% Hispanic/Latinx, 33% Native Hawaiian, 34% white, 37% Two or more races, 30% race/ethnicity unknown, 29% non-resident alien |
| Institution #8 | Open admission policy | N/A | 57% retention rate for full-time students, and 39% retention rate for part-time students. 10% overall graduation rate, and 12% transfer-out rate for students within 150% of “normal time” to completion for their program; Overall graduation rates by race/ethnicity: 10% Asian, 7% Black, 11% Hispanic/Latinx, 0% American Indian, 0% Native Hawaiian, 12% white, 16% two or more races, 7% race/ethnicity unknown, 0% non-resident alien. |
| Institution #9 | 1.HS GPA & transcript 2.recommendations 3.TOEFL SAT is not required. 77% of enrolled first-time students submitted SAT, and 7% submitted ACT. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-430 & 75th percentile score-530; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 430 & 75th percentile score-5300. ACT composite (25th percentile-16, 75th percentile- 19), ACT English (15, 20), ACT Math (16, 18) | 61% acceptance rate; 17% of accepted students enrolled | 60% retention rate for full-time students (no data for part-time); 34% overall graduation (transfer-out rate not reported) within 150% of “normal time” to completion of their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 50% American Indian or Alaska Native; 60% Asian; 32% Black or African American; 37% Hispanic/Latinx; 34% white; 50% Two or more races; 23% race/ethnicity unknown; and 30% non-resident alien |
| Institution #10 | 1.HS GPA & transcript 2.Completion of college-preparatory program 3. Formal demonstration of competencies 4. SAT/ACT (95% of enrolled first-time students submitted SAT, and 9% submitted ACT. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-450 & 75th percentile score-550; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 430 & 75th percentile score-540. ACT composite (25th percentile-16, 75th percentile- 23), ACT English (15, 23), ACT Math (16, 23) Letters of rec and TOEFL are recommended, but not required. | 93% acceptance rate; 22% of accepted students enrolled | 70% retention rate for full-time students, and 17% retention rate for part-time students. 52% overall graduation rate (and no transfer rate reported) within 150% of “normal time” to completion of their degree program; 6-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity: 100% American Indian, 62% Asian, 43% Black, 49% Hispanic/Latinx, 55% white, 44% two or more races, 42% race/ethnicity unknown, 100% non-resident alien |
### Institution #11:
PwI; 19% of students received federal Pell grant (US News; public, 4-year; $39.6 million endowment in 2018)

1. HS record/transcript
2. SAT/ACT (87% of enrolled first-time students submitted SAT, and 25% submitted ACT. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-580 & 75th percentile score-670; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 580 & 75th percentile score-680. ACT composite (25th percentile-25, 75th percentile- 30), ACT English (25, 30), ACT Math (25, 30)
3. TOEFL

GPA, completion of college-preparatory program, and recommendations are recommended, but not required

50% acceptance rate; 23% of accepted students enrolled

93% retention rate for full-time students and 100% retention rate for part-time students; 86% overall graduation rate and 10% transfer-out rate within 150% of “normal time” to completion for their program; 6-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity: 100% American Indian, 87% Asian, 72% Black, 82% Hispanic/Latinx, 67% Native Hawaiian, 88% white, 80% two or more races, 88% race/ethnicity unknown, 67% non-resident alien

### Institution #12:
PwI; 33% of undergraduates receive federal Pell grant; public, 4-year; $207.2 million endowment in 2018

1. HS GPA & transcript
2. Formal demonstration of competencies
3. SAT/ACT (94% of enrolled first-time students submitted SAT, and 12% submitted ACT. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-520 & 75th percentile score-620; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 488 & 75th percentile score-603. ACT composite (25th percentile-20, 75th percentile- 27) ACT English (20, 27), ACT Math (21, 27)
4. TOEFL

College-preparatory program and letters of recommendation are recommended

73% acceptance rate, 26% of those accepted enrolled

84% retention rate for full-time students and 38% retention rate for part-time students; 72% overall graduation rate and 16% transfer-out rate within 150% of “normal time” to complete their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 67% American Indian, 62% Asian, 52% Black, 61% Hispanic/Latinx, 100% Native Hawaiian, 76% white, 71% two or more races, 67% race/ethnicity unknown, 80% non-resident alien
| Institution #13: PwI (Ivy League); 24% of undergraduate students in Fall 2019 received Pell grant; private, 4-year; $25.4 billion endowment in 2018 | 1.HS record 2.recommendations 3.SAT/ACT. 68% of enrolled first-time students submitted SAT, and 55% submitted ACT. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-710 & 75th percentile score-770; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 730 & 75th percentile score-800. ACT composite (25th percentile-32, 75th percentile- 35) ACT English (34, 36), ACT Math (30, 35) | 5% acceptance rate, 69% of accepted students enrolled | 98% retention rate for full-time students; 96% overall graduation rate (no transfer-out rate reported); within 150% of “normal time” to completion for their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 100% American Indian, 97% Asian, 94% Black, 94% Hispanic/Latinx, 97% white, 95% two or more races, 85% race/ethnicity unknown, 95% non-resident alien |
| Institution #14: PwI; 31% of undergraduate students received a federal Pell grant; private; 4-year, $64.3 million endowment in 2018 | 1.GPA & transcript 2.completion of college-preparatory program 3.recommendations 4.formal demonstrations of competencies SAT/ACT are recommended, not required. 92% of students submitted SAT scores. 16% submitted ACT scores. SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 25th percentile score-500 & 75th percentile score-600; SAT Math: 25th percentile score - 500 & 75th percentile score-590. ACT composite (25th percentile-20, 75th percentile- 25) ACT English (20, 25), ACT Math (18, 24) | 70% acceptance rate; 14% of accepted students enrolled | 78% retention rate for full-time students. 33% retention rate for part-time students. 65% overall graduation rate (no transfer-out rate reported) within 150% of “normal time” to completion for their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 100% American Indian, 55% Asian, 52% Black, 53% Hispanic/Latinx, 100% Native Hawaiian, 70% white, 59% two or more races, 75% race/ethnicity unknown, 50% non-resident alien. |
| Institution #15 (Community College): PwI; 66% of students receive federal Pell grant; public, 2-year; could not find endowment information | Open admission policy | N/A | 66% retention rate for full-time students and 40% retention rate for part-time students; 43% overall graduation rate and 14% transfer-out rate within 150% of “normal time” to completion of their program; 6-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity: 0% American Indian, 67% Asian, 21% Black, 44% Hispanic/Latinx, 50% Native Hawaiian, 47% white, 38% two or more races, 46% race/ethnicity unknown, 100% non-resident alien |
Appendix E

Diversity Curriculum and Pedagogy in the HSI Context: A (Data Analysis) Play

(As described in Chapter 3, italicized text indicates that the words were added for interpretive purposes and were not part of an interview, informal conversation, or observation.)

TG: I’ve talked with each of you in depth about your lives and your teaching, and I have truly enjoyed spending time with you and your students. I have spent the last year trying to write about our conversations and what I observed. I know there is much to learn from all of you, but I am having a hard time writing about it without imposing my own lens or the lenses of the literature that I have read. So, I thought it would be helpful for us to come together to talk. I appreciate that you all made the trip into the city, especially with COVID-19 and everything.

Dr. Ruben: Of course. Research is an important, but sometimes difficult, endeavor. I got a good feeling from you when you reached out to me to participate in the study, and I believe your intentions are sincere. I am happy to help.

Dr. Anderson: Likewise. I’ve been in your shoes as a grad student. Just remember us when you’re famous and out there in the world, after you get this degree.

Dr. Ocampo: I loved the research process and being a doctoral student, so I am also happy to help and make sure you have that experience.

Dr. Abbott: I like helping people, and I’ve been in your shoes. This is not a heavy lift. I’m happy to be here, too.

TG: Great, thank you. Okay, so why don’t we start with each of you introducing yourselves? Just a little bit about who you are and the class you are teaching that is part of this study.

Dr. Abbott: (looks around before answering) Hello, my name is Dr. Abbott, and I am teaching the social studies and the arts in the elementary classroom methods class at NSU... what else did you want us to say?

TG: Just a little bit about who you are.

Dr. Abbott: Oh, sure. I’m a Black heterosexual woman from Massachusetts. I’ve recently been labeling myself as a creative. I don’t have a formal background in the fine arts, but I can make things. And so, I try to bring that into the classroom at NSU. It also helps me bring in the personal, since I’m still working on that interpersonal piece of teaching. Especially with only nine students in the class...I’m used to larger groups. The level of intimacy with smaller groups is challenging for me.

Dr. Ocampo: I’m Dr. Ocampo. I teach the classroom management and assessment methods course at ECU. I identify as a Hispanic male. I’m very interested in race and ethnicity. In fact, I
just had my DNA done, and I found out that I’m actually 60% Italian, and 40% Hispanic. However, in the United States in 2019, what you look like is more important than what you are in a lot of ways. So, that’s how I identify because that’s how a lot of my students identify, and I think it’s just helpful.

Dr. Ruben: I’m Dr. Ruben, and I teach the history of education course at NSU that is part of the study. I am Latino and Jewish. Originally born in Argentina and lived part of my early years in Uruguay before joining the Israel Defense Forces. So, my first teaching experience was actually in the army, and after realizing I had some talent there, I decided to double major in history and education. I met my wife in Israel, and we came here to the United States for graduate school, never thinking of staying here, to be brutally honest. But here we are however many years later. And I can somewhat relate to what you are saying, Dr. Ocampo. In my role as a Latino professor, I understand a lot about where the students are coming from, especially those from immigrant families, and I try to support them how I can. Some of them seek me out when they need guidance. But, for me, their presence is also validating. It is great to see the growth in the Latino population on campus, even if the university doesn’t know how to handle such growth from a budget perspective. Anyway, I think my class is going okay, not great according to my criteria. I have all first semester freshmen, and this is new for me. Challenging, in terms of classroom participation and doing a close read of the text in class. It’s not that I’m not enjoying the students. I think they could just get more out of the class if they had a bit more prior experience.

Dr. Anderson: I’m Dr. Anderson, and I’m teaching the challenges in urban education course at ECU that is part of the study. I’m proud of the classroom environment and culture that we’ve developed. But, like you Dr. Ruben, there is such a wide range of academic skills and prior knowledge. I realize that’s on me, though, and while I need to expect more from the seniors than I do from the freshmen, I have to meet everyone where they are at. So, I’m trying to make things as concrete as possible, and I try to make sure everyone is successful in some capacity…a little about me, I’m an African American male. Forty-three years of experience in K-12 and higher education, mostly in the Boston area as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent. Who am I? I don’t think we have enough time for that.

TG: Thank you. Okay, let’s just dive right into it, if that’s okay. How do you teach about diversity in your courses at your respective HSIs?

Dr. Abbott: I certainly don’t reference the HSI label in my class, and I’m not even sure where that’s represented in my students. But, in my class, we are always attending to diversity. And as a progressive educator, diversity should really be throughout the entire curriculum, not just a separate lesson. This semester, I am really happy with the intentional focus on Native American and Asian perspectives, and students are required to incorporate one of those perspectives in their News Talks. I use children’s literature to help introduce them to the ideas of students who learn differently, or students with disabilities, and LGBTQ diversity. The focus on LGBTQ diversity aligns with my research. I didn’t focus so much on that when I did my dissertation. But the interest came, I think 2009, when I learned about Carl Joseph Walker-Hoover. An 11-year-old kid out of Springfield, Massachusetts. He didn’t identify as gay, but his gender expression was maybe a little more effeminate. A Black kid out of Massachusetts…. he had hanged himself,
and so when I learned that story, and then I’d say three or four months later, a brown kid, I think he’s out of Florida, similar situation in school. He was described as a little more flamboyant, but still not accepted and supported, and he killed himself. So, when I learned those two stories, these are 11-year-old kids. They could have been in my classroom, right? And I’m presenting myself as this person, this champion of diversity and multicultural ed, and I’m not talking about this aspect of diversity, so that was the trigger for me. I started looking at children’s literature, and then I figured that would be an easier way to kind of bring the narrative and the conversation into the classroom. But I still have folks who are uncomfortable, you know, “I can’t talk about that,” or, you know, “What am I supposed to do with it?” And I say, but if you’ve got young people losing their lives because they feel teachers are not supportive, we need to figure out a way to have these conversations and to be supportive. Relatedly, I am also happy that the students in my social studies class have also begun introducing themselves with their PGPs…

**Dr. Anderson:** PGP?

**Dr. Abbott:** Preferred gender pronouns.

**Dr. Anderson:** Oh, right. Yes, I am sure there are varied sexual preferences among the students in my class, as well.

Dr. Abbott: Interesting. Yeah, I don’t ask about my students’ identities or differences…

Dr. Ocampo: Yeah, I don’t take a poll.

Dr. Ruben: Right, I only know about their diversity based on how they are presenting themselves.

Dr. Anderson: I don’t even try to define the diversity. I appreciate it, especially here at ECU. I recognize the challenges, but I don’t define it. **I just hadn’t heard about this PGP.**

Dr. Ruben: I don’t really address sexuality in my classes. Part of that is because we have so many resources on campus for the LGBT community and for teaching about LGBT diversity, and if the students are in the teacher preparation program, they will take a class on gender. But part of that also is that I don’t really know much about it. I come from such a narrow, machista world.

Dr. Ocampo: Well, also, if diversity means everything, then it means nothing. When it comes to diversity, I’m focused a little bit on gender, but more on race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, since that is what is related to the achievement gap.

Dr. Anderson: I think it’s also important to focus on the historical conditions that led to the achievement gap. I think it’s important for teachers to understand that the system was set up from the beginning to only educate certain folks.

Dr. Ocampo: I believe the hidden curriculum, school as factory thing, to an extent. But the structures of schools in terms of classes and bells and teachers being in charge and students
striving for grades is pretty much the same in any neighborhood. So, I’m more focused on the practical and how students can succeed in school as a pathway to the middle class. That’s what my father was able to do, and I’m trying to pay that forward for the students here at ECU and their future students. I want my students to become successful teachers for two reasons. One is so they can impact students in the community, and two so that they can stabilize themselves financially. They can get good health insurance and raise their families in a healthy way. But I think that one of the things that we need to do is teach our students, who are going to be teachers, to be more rigorous with their students in the field. Which is really difficult to do because given that sometimes they’re not the strongest students, and they haven’t experienced a lot of rigor, it’s hard to expect them to do the same, but we need to start raising the bar in terms of expectations for everybody, and urban schools in general, and probably the students, I think they’re just really used to kind of mediocrity, and just kind of getting by, so trying to change that dynamic a little bit.

Dr. Anderson: So, you think we should just ignore the history in our courses?

Dr. Ocampo: I don’t think teachers can reverse centuries of oppression. You can reverse centuries of oppression or generations of drug addiction and prison, whatever the case may be, divorce, trauma... you can reverse all that because of your exceptional personality? That’s arrogant.

Dr. Ruben: Of course, you need to change structures. But teachers can change the minute-to-minute. The history of education is made through practitioners, so what teachers do in the classroom impacts that history. Teachers have an incredible role and responsibility in our society.

Dr. Ocampo: Of course, and I agree. The most impactful variable for student success is the quality of the teacher. We know that’s true. So, we need to do everything we can to make becoming a teacher challenging. But I guess where I need to do some more thinking is that sometimes I am conflicted between putting the best teachers out there and making sure my own students get jobs. I’d never put someone out there that I thought would be a poor teacher. But I’ve written glowing recommendations for students who I didn’t think would be the best teacher, and sometimes the recommendation isn’t quite in line.

Dr. Anderson: I wouldn’t worry too much about that. Because even if teachers meet more rigorous standards and are the best, what matters also is the school leadership. Just like teachers have a responsibility to nourish and develop all kids, school administrators have a responsibility to nourish and develop the teachers. Just like a teacher needs to differentiate in their classroom, a school leader needs to differentiate and provide each teacher with what they need to be successful.

Dr. Abbott: I think I’m focused less on the standards for becoming a teacher and more on making sure my students are responsive and ready for any student who is going to be in their classroom. I know they don’t plan to work with students who look like me. That’s why I think my class is important. It gives students an opportunity to move away from their own familiarities and experiences.
Dr. Anderson: Yes, it is so important for everyone to be exposed to other perspectives...

Dr. Ruben: And be open to changing how you think and to learning more…

Dr. Anderson: Yes. I hope that my students become enlightened in some way by the conversations we have in class. But it is not my job to just turn suburban students’ minds...

Dr. Ocampo: You have students from the suburbs in your class?

Dr. Anderson: Not many, but a few. There is this one young lady in particular who lives in a gated community. She has said that it is hard work that contributes to your life’s outcomes. And not race or anything else. That’s probably what she was taught by her parents, and from their perspective, they did work hard. So, their reality is that everyone has the same opportunities.

Dr. Abbott: Even though it’s probably hard to hear that, given our lived experiences, I take a similar approach with my students. I present multiple interpretations of the realities I see and let them decide for themselves.

Dr. Ruben: But then doesn’t the classroom become like a Jerry Springer talk show? “It is this way because I experienced it.” Surely we want students to relate to the content, and admittedly in my own class of all first semester freshmen, I wish the classroom community was more crystallized so students would feel comfortable sharing their frustrations and fears in relation to the content. But how are they developing an interest and learning something new if the entire class becomes only about affirming everyone’s point of view?

Dr. Anderson: I think it’s more about the experience than the content. That’s why I’m never going to tell a student they are wrong because they are partially right. History is so…. His-story. Even what I’m saying doesn’t mean it’s true. Where did I learn that, and who told me? Besides, your class isn’t going to be the thing that changes the world. We’re not making an atom bomb here. The curriculum is scripted so you can get a degree. I focus on what comes after the degree. No matter what school I’m teaching at, I ask students, once you get this degree, how are you going to make the path wider for those coming behind you? How are you going to pay it forward? You have a gift, and you have an obligation to use your gift to better this world, no matter who you are or what your upbringing is.

Dr. Abbott: Well, I think sometimes you need to tell students what they are saying is wrong. Surely not about political ideas or contentious topics. But basic things like racial microaggressions, I feel I need to point out to the students. I used to be afraid to address them, given who I am and who my students are. But I’ve gotten more comfortable over the years. Of course, I still have to be delicate with how I talk to the students and think about how what I say may point negatively at me.

Dr. Ocampo: I guess that’s what’s different about working at ECU. I mean, for the most part, our students come from urban schools, so rarely do I need to help them unpack their assumptions. Of course, thinking about assumptions and biases is important for any student, but with limited time you pick and choose. The curriculum is a limited resource. So many people who work in schools
who are from privileged backgrounds say things that they don’t even realize are hurtful or inappropriate.

Dr. Anderson: *Not even just teachers from privileged backgrounds.* I know of instances where teachers of color have been cruel and worse than a lot of white teachers, and it goes back to what Paulo Freire points out in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* It’s like when you’ve been oppressed, you take on the character of the oppressor when you get in a position of power because you think that this is how things are done, and you even start to hate yourself, you know, because you’ve been made to think that you’re less than, and then when you achieve something, then you look at others who look like you, and you think of them as less than, so it’s like a vicious cycle.

Dr. Ocampo: *Yes, now that you mention it,* every once in a while I do get a student who went to an urban school who also has pretty negative views of them. I try to frame students’ experiences in urban schools as a net positive, but sometimes they have very specific reasons about why it was negative. “The other kids were animals and fooled around constantly. I couldn’t get anything done. I feel like I didn’t learn as much as I could.” Now, what am I supposed to do with that? I’m not going to argue with her because she knows more than I do. I can’t say, “Well, that’s inappropriate.” Who am I to say that? I didn’t go to an urban school.

Dr. Ruben: And, as I shared with my students this semester, Freire reminds us that “the educator is not only educating. They are also a learner. And at times, the student who is normally a learner is also a teacher. Teaching and learning are lifelong enterprises, but also there is always something we can learn from our students.” So, *in your case, Dr. Ocampo, there is something to be learned from that student.*

Dr. Ocampo: Yeah, I’ve done a lot of research and consulting on classroom management, but I learn a lot about urban schools from the students here at ECU. They aren’t that far removed from them.

Dr. Abbott: *Wherever they’re going to teach,* we need to make sure that students certainly recognize diversity and process that alongside their lived experiences. But we need to not get weighed down with the diversity and think that all this extra stuff needs to happen, and remember that we have humanity in our classrooms. And students, who are certainly other people’s children, to borrow from Delpit, need to be treated with respect.

Dr. Anderson: *I mean, that’s the reason I went into teaching.* I wanted to be someone who nurtures and develops kids, rather than crushes their spirits the way my coach and teachers crushed mine when I was in a college prep high school. The coach said I didn’t look like a football player, and the teachers told me I needed to go to trade school since I wasn’t college material. They destroyed my dreams. And when I started skipping school, not one time did a teacher ever put his arm around me and say, you know, what’s going on. So, Vietnam was my only option after barely graduating from high school. And, after coming home, when I started teaching in Boston at the height of desegregation, kids of all races and backgrounds just flocked to me. It was like I had a gift. And, in that first year my mother’s words came back to me from when I was in Vietnam and thought I wasn’t coming home – “G-d has a plan for you.” – and I
realized I survived the war so I could dedicate my life to working with kids. So that no kid would have to go through what I went through.

Dr. Abbott: Wow. I mean, I grew up in the Boston area, also. And, while I didn’t end up in Vietnam, I was certainly tracked into vocational type courses in high school. I did graduate from college, but I was not at all prepared for the level of rigor in law school, which was how I ended up becoming a teacher. My mom was a teacher, and when I was living at home after being counseled out of law school, she told me to sign up to be a sub. I didn’t want to do it, but I needed a paycheck...

Dr. Ocampo: I mean I can certainly relate. I had a lot of trouble in elementary school, and I remember as a young child wondering why the teacher wasn’t explaining the assignments to me. And I also spent time in a segregated classroom, and I didn’t understand why I was put there. I was one of the only Hispanic kids in my school, and I certainly wondered if that played a role in how teachers viewed me...

TG: Dr. Ocampo, you never told me that in our time together last year.

Dr. Ocampo: Well, it didn’t seem completely relevant to the questions you were asking. Surely if you asked me outright if I had trouble in school I would have been honest. I have nothing to hide.

Dr. Ruben: It’s interesting you say it is not relevant. I think for the rest of us, this was something that came up immediately in our interviews.

Dr. Abbott: Mmhm.

Dr. Ruben: Myself, I didn’t struggle with my academics, but I was a behavior problem and had problems with authority figures.

Dr. Anderson: Yes. First question she asked. I can’t tell anyone about myself without also talking about what happened to me in high school.

Dr. Ocampo: I guess I’m just really focused on the practical. My story is one of academic resilience. I attribute my eventual success in school to my peer group, family, and also I had a teacher or two who really believed in me.

Dr. Anderson: Exactly. Teachers can nurture and develop kids, or they can crush their spirits.

Dr. Ocampo: But we can’t reach every kid. One thing I’ve never heard a professor of education say, that I taught in my classroom management class, is you can’t reach everyone. Sometimes teachers need to be okay saying, “You know what, this kid has too much going on in his life right now.” Sometimes you have to lose the battle to win the war.

Dr. Anderson: So, are you encouraging teachers to sift and sort kids, and say these are the ones who are going to make it, and these are the ones who won’t?
Dr. Ocampo: Of course not. I’m talking about the one or two “knuckleheads,” for lack of a better term. When we were doing the seating chart activity in my class, I told students we want to be careful labeling kids, but you’re going to do it in your mind anyway. It’s only natural. And this brings up an inherent conflict in studying and researching diversity. On the one hand, we want to treat every child like an individual, apart from whatever identities they have and not stereotype them. I don’t think anyone would disagree with that. But, then if the whole point of diversity studies and ethnic studies is to learn about the tendencies of certain groups, then what was the point of learning all that stuff to begin with? If I see an Asian student in my class, and Asian students tend to be quiet and defer to authority, do I just ignore that? Now, obviously what I tell my students is you put what you’ve learned, or your, you know, your assumptions or your research about an ethnic group and you stick that in the back of your head, you know it’s there. And then you interact with the student, and you can kind of get a sense of whether or not they match the research. So, there’s a little bit of wiggle room, but generally speaking, if we think, you know, lower SES students generally suffer from this, and we have a school full of lower SES students, right, then we’re going to address that before it becomes an issue because we know it based on the research. But the minute we do that we’re assuming things about them.

Dr. Ruben: It is interesting to me that you unequivocally accept what the research says, when in reality, we can design any instrument to measure what it is we want it to measure. I have seen this here with my colleagues at NSU and how they approach assessing the strengths of our teaching program. We want to believe certain things about our program in spite of what the data says or what it doesn’t.

Dr. Anderson: Right, I mean look at the study of eugenics! All that research—and we talked about this in my class—all that research that said Black folks were less than...

Dr. Ocampo: Well, and this is where having valuable practical experience is important. I don’t believe every research study is perfect. But I’ve spent enough time in schools to have developed an understanding of best practices, or what works for the largest number of students. The research does happen to support what I think, but I work backwards, starting with my experience in the schools.

Dr. Anderson: Man, look, I’m not naive enough to think that schools can reach every kid. Or even that school itself can solve our world’s problems. My quest is like, how do I break the cycle of poverty, you know. You have to do more than just tell kids you gotta read and write, you know, reading, writing, and arithmetic. If you study hard, then you’ll get a good job. It’s like, no, you’ve got to understand where you are in this world, that you’re a citizen of a global environment and that you have a responsibility and an obligation to try to make a difference, you know, it’s not just about improving yourself. It’s about making the, it sounds corny, making the path wider for those coming behind you.

Dr. Abbott: As future teachers, though, my students have an obligation to do what it is the state has hired them to do. Which is to teach the state standards. I’m a firm believer in the standards. And where you do a disservice to students is when you are focusing more on trying to rescue people than educating them. Sometimes I’ve actually said in my classes that students have their own lives and families, and you don’t need you to rescue them. I haven’t said that in the social
studies class, but maybe that’s because it hasn’t really come up. But at least every activity we do, they need to explain how the pedagogical tool they are making connects back to one of the state standards for social studies.

Dr. Ocampo: I told my students in the classroom management course, that the purpose of classroom management is maximizing time on task. Students in urban schools don’t have time to waste, and when you are wasting time, it’s a disservice. It’s child abuse. They are too far behind. And look, we value group work...but when you do the SATs...can you work with a group? Forget what people say and look at what they measure and what they value. That’s the kind of stuff you need to focus on in your teaching, and classroom management is a tool for that.

Dr. Anderson: Look, as a school administrator in Boston, I experienced a lot of success creating teams that were successful, and, not just athletic teams, but academic teams. I ended up being Massachusetts Principal of the Year, National Distinguished Principal. I was invited to the White House like six times for the work that we did, and I think that’s why the universities wanted me to work with them. As a school leader in Boston, the superintendent asked me to take a bigger school that was surrounded by five housing projects and then we ended up winning the Blue Ribbon Award, and highest reading and math scores in the city and all that. But I still think one of the biggest mistakes that we make in America is we teach kids and test kids individually, and then expect them to go off to work as a member of a team, and for many that’s a difficult adjustment because they haven’t been trained to do so.

Dr. Ruben: Yes, there are certainly hegemonic understandings and norms of schools, and one of them is certainly around meeting the state standards and getting certain scores on standardized tests. Certainly, at the college level, yes I want my students at NSU to get A’s, but I ask them what do those A’s represent?

Dr. Abbott: I’ve also tried to get my students at NSU to question the meaning of grades, but they don’t want to hear it. My students are very concerned about grades.

TG: Yes, I’ve noticed that, too, Dr. Abbott. Sometimes it seems they miss the point of the assignments because they are so concerned about their grades.

Dr. Abbott: Whether or not they missed the point, the real test is always when they get to their own classrooms, and I’m not there. What they say and write in their reflections is, in some part, guided by the fact that they are still trying to be good students.

Dr. Ocampo: Well, I don’t know about the college level, but certainly in K-12, kids are being punished if we don’t give them grades. I shared that with my students at ECU. And even though the real test comes when they are on their own, I think I can get a sense of how someone is going to be as a teacher when they are a student at ECU. I think I can also get a sense of how they were as a high school student.

Dr. Anderson: Oh really?
Dr. Ocampo: Yeah, I mean the real “knuckleheads,” for lack of a better term, aren’t sitting in my class. They’re not trying to become teachers. Besides, the state has weeded them out with the stricter requirements to be a teacher.

Dr. Anderson: Well, I’m not sure they are in my class either, even though there are no state requirements to be in my class! It’s all about perspective and believing that every student has the capacity to learn, unless they have a chemical imbalance, and it is up to the adults in their lives to help them realize that capacity.

Dr. Ruben: Along that line, in my class, I presented to my class an alternative point of view from the researchers in the 70s and 80s in the new sociology of education… [who felt] defeated because they were feeling like we can’t change schools until we change society. Actually, teachers have a lot of power. The question is how they use power…how you have agency, how you can go counter hegemonic so you can really open possibilities for students.

Dr. Abbott: I think I tried as a middle school teacher to do that. To open up possibilities. I even went, maybe beyond what being a progressive educator does, and when possible, I tried to serve as an ally and act for change on behalf of my students. But, I was also rigid, and I think that was because…a lot of those kids looked like me…I thought about the things people did to mentor me and get me to wherever I was, and I felt that [there] was not much room for flexibility because the world wasn’t going to be flexible with Black and brown kids or kids from the city…I always made sure that I was professionally dressed…I never wore sneakers. I didn’t wear jeans because…my thought was, there’s going to be one child here who left the house and mom was in rollers and a bathrobe, so they’re going to get to see a Black woman who is looking professional and presents herself in that way…I thought a lot about my identity as a role model for the students. Sadly, I don’t know that they viewed me as such… I say that because…when the day was over, people weren’t hanging out in my classroom. They were hanging out in Veronica Richards’ classroom… this German white woman, who…I guess she was fun…If I’m this drill sergeant…even if I am from the community, and I look like the community, students thought I’m not trying to hang out with you after school… because that doesn’t seem like fun…there were a few occasions when…some students would look to me in that way… some of them would see me in the community, so in school, the students might ask to spend some time with me, and where I could make that happen, I certainly would.

Dr. Ocampo: Well, I asked my students in the classroom management class, “Think back to all of your years of K-12 schooling. First, picture your favorite teacher. Then, picture the teacher you learned the most from. For how many of you is the first person the same as the second?” And only three students raised their hands, out of 12 students. So, your favorite teacher isn’t necessarily the one you learned the most from…the ultimate goal is not to be the favorite…we all know the teacher who is buddy-buddy with the students, but there isn’t a lot of work being done. They might like you in the moment, but in the end you’re doing a disservice. Structure is incredibly valuable, particularly for students who maybe come from very unstructured households, and again, it’s liberal ignorance to assume that all students need the same classrooms, and those classrooms should be these free places where people get to do whatever they want to do, and “You don’t understand, your students if you think that’s what they need.” But, first of all, so many inner city schools are so chaotic, I don’t mean for the teacher, I mean
for the students, that some of them are probably so refreshed, even if they can’t articulate it, to have this orderly environment, and if you look at the research on what makes students successful, a lot of it is about discipline and self-restraint, and delaying gratification and persistence and grit and all those things take discipline. If you’re wealthy and you have all these safety nets and all these opportunities when you’re done with school, you can probably get away without having too much discipline. But if you want to change your socioeconomic status you can’t. So, I think that people have these knee jerk clichés that they spew forth that often don’t hold a lot of weight.

Dr. Anderson: (chuckling) My man with what the research says!

Dr. Ocampo: Obviously I’m generalizing here. Not all kids come from unstructured households…

Dr. Anderson: Well, when I look back on my time as a teacher in urban schools, I’m thinking about the teachers’ lounge…

Dr. Ocampo: The worst place. The only thing that happens there is a lot of whining and complaining...

Dr. Anderson: Right, exactly. What I enjoyed the most of all the roles I’ve had in schools – teacher, assistant principal, principal, superintendent— was being a teacher and a coach, but because of my relationship with kids, I would hear them talking about teachers in the building and how teachers were treating them unfair. I also had the opportunity, because I was a teacher, to sit in the teachers’ rooms. And I’d hear the teachers—teachers’ rooms are toxic—and I’d hear them talking badly about the kids and about the kids’ parents, and I realized there’s a disconnect between many of the teachers and many of the kids. And I approached the headmaster about it, but I realized that I needed to get in a position of policy. Like I need to be able to impact policy and change some things. That’s when I went back to school and got my master’s degree, and I became assistant principal and then eventually my PhD to become a superintendent…

Dr. Ruben: And those teachers may have been engaging in, at the time, was considered progressive practices. That’s something I emphasize in my class. That progressive does not always mean truly progressive or without its problems. Even back in the 1850s, “progressive” was used to rationalize racial segregation. As I shared with my students, “[they said] it’s good for the Black kids to go to separate schools… they will be very frustrated going to school with white kids because they don’t have the intellectual capacity… They were convinced it was good for them…This is what some of us call benevolent discrimination. But benevolent or not, it’s still discrimination!” However, it’s still important to not be a revisionist when reading history and not read it in the present.

Dr. Anderson: And I don’t know that racial discrimination is that complex. That’s why I try to focus on, like what do we think was the root? Why were people acting like that at that time? I mean I grew up in a racist city and experienced racism, unimaginable racism, and for a long time, you know, embraced that, and felt hatred towards Irish Catholic and South Boston boys. And then you have the Afro-centric perspective, too, you know, about we were kings, and we
were taken from our lands, and the white man did this to us. It’s like, man hold on a minute, everyone wasn’t a king, number one. But, then it’s like do you think that all white men were that smart? They weren’t! Just the people with money! They were looking at; how do I get this crop grown? And what’s the most economical way to grow this crop so I can get paid. What? I can buy folks in, you know, if you’ve never been around Black folks, it’s like, maybe they are animals. They speak a different language; they don’t act like I do. Like, shit, give me six of them. They can work the field! It’s like, I don’t even think it was that deep. And then what they did is they took poor white folks and made them the overseers, you know, like you’re not going to make money. We’re making money, but you’re better than they are because you’re white, you know. So, it’s a white-Black thing versus an economic thing, you know. They’re still poor white. They’re poor Black. You’ll get a little bit better condition than they do, but you’re white. Put that white badge on, you know. “I’m white!” But you’re broke, you know, they’re making the money. They’re buying up everything. So, this country’s been so caught up in the racial thing, you know, back and forth that we lose sight of what were the conditions that made it possible? Like what were the real conditions because the same thing’s happening right now. They’re doing it differently, you know. You got the school-to-prison pipeline, and you’ve got the war economy, and meantime, folks who have stock in those war industries, they’re getting richer and richer and richer, and their kids aren’t going off to fight and die. And then you got ignorant, poor Black and Spanish kids who are being funneled to these privately owned prisons, and they’re making products, they’re making furniture…it’s the new slavery…it’s a different model, but it’s all based on economics. You don’t need to pick cotton now.

TG: I have my students at ECU read part of The New Jim Crow in our class.

Dr. Anderson: Mmmhm.

TG: So, they should read the whole book, but I also had them just read…

Dr. Anderson: But why? Why don’t you have them read the whole thing?

TG: I really should have the whole thing, and you know what, I think maybe next time I teach this class, we’re just going to read books. (Dr. Anderson laughing)

Dr. Ocampo: But, also, it’s not always practical for her to assign the whole thing. I know that, for the most part, they’re only going to read as much as they need to. So, I try to make it so that what they need to read is enough to get them through, you know what I mean, to make that link about why it’s important. It always struck me as odd, and I tell my students this all the time, when I was in school, like walking to history class and looking at the syllabus and it would say, like, okay for Tuesday read pages 12-116 and then, who is doing all that reading? So, I figured, I’m going to give them fewer, less reading with the hopes that they’ll actually do it…‘cause if you tell me to read 5 pages, 10 pages, okay. If you tell me to read 120 pages, I’m not even going to read 5 pages. I’m going to be overwhelmed.

Dr. Anderson: Yeah, I mean, I don’t think my students are keeping up with the reading. They have so many other things going on, and some of them don’t have that discipline or that focus yet. That’s why I try to make our time together a real learning opportunity for them.
Dr. Ruben: Yes, but my question from earlier remains. Listen, Dr. Anderson, I certainly wish I had more of the classroom environment that you have at ECU with my students at NSU. And, when I’ve had classes of upperclassmen, I’ve had more participation and engagement with the text than I do with this group of first semester freshmen. But how are they learning if what everyone says goes in your class? I mean, Dr. Ocampo, you mentioned liberal clichés earlier, and I certainly have issues with the present dominant discourse on race relations. So, I would never suggest a dogmatic approach to talking about diversity. I’m a leftist, but I’m not one of these intolerant left people, and I’m not saying you should tell this woman from the suburbs that she is quote “wrong.” But what is she learning from your class, exactly, if the message she took away is that everyone has the same opportunities?

Dr. Anderson: Well, one student of color did respond to her perspective and suggested there were things this young lady did not understand because she was white.

Dr. Abbott: What did she take away from that interaction?

TG: I spoke with this white student, actually. She said, “It’s not that I have anything against the person who said that to me, but I’m like, you don’t know my background, you don’t know, like my family, you don’t know, like [my sister who is married to a Black man]. Yes, I’m white. I went to a suburban school. I live in a little private lake community that I’ve talked about, but that’s the whole point of the class. You can’t judge a book by its cover because you never know somebody’s background. So, like, at that point, I felt like she was kind of saying, you’re privileged, you just don’t get it, what they’re relating to...It’s hard not to take it as a jab, but that’s like, that was like one of the whole points. That race has nothing to do with your biology, like race is, you know, where your roots are from, but because in society, everything is based on your race and then your economic status, like, everything is based on that and people just make assumptions, and like, it’s his class where you can’t. You have to get rid of those filters that you have on where you’re like oh, oh, oh, oh and just see everybody as a whole. And like that one comment, I was just like, okay, so I guess everybody thinks I’m a spoiled white chick. I came from the suburban area, like I don’t know what I’m getting myself into being at a school that’s in an urban area type thing.”

Dr. Ocampo: It sounds like for the first time she was experiencing what it’s like to be stereotyped.

TG: Yes. As a fellow white woman, I can relate to that feeling of defensiveness. I was defensive in an interview with Dr. Anderson when he suggested it’s possible students have dropped my class because I’m too hard on them, and they need to know I believe that they can do it…

Dr. Anderson: I wasn’t trying to make you feel bad...

TG: No, it’s okay! I needed to hear that, and I appreciate that you aren’t afraid to ask me hard questions like why I don’t assign students the whole book. In that moment, I was defensive, and I sense that I’ve been having these race and other difficult conversations much longer than this student. I guess the difference is that moment made me reflect. I’m not sure this girl is there yet.
Dr. Anderson: How do you know if she is there or not?

TG: Well, I asked her whether that changed her experience in the class or whether this was an isolated incident. She shared, “No, it was like a one-off thing, and I know they didn’t really mean it like that. Like, I didn’t obviously say anything back, but it just was like a comment that was made. It stuck with me for a couple of days, and it did kind of annoy me. But it was just a comment that was made that I was like, this is the whole point of the class. Like he’s opening our eyes to, like, everything that you’re taught, or what you think you know, is not true.”

Dr. Abbott: Well, it does sound like she was at least a little bit reflective. She said the comment stuck with her for a couple of days, and the fact that she was bringing it up again, at the end of the semester, means maybe she is still thinking about it.

TG: That’s true. I guess I’m also just wondering how students of color feel in Dr. Anderson’s class when the white women take up so much of the class time talking about how race doesn’t matter… or like, Dr. Anderson, when Hillary got so defensive after suggesting that the hijab is oppressive, and the older Muslim student in the class from Iran said she doesn’t see it that way. And Hillary got all offended and legitimized her perspective because she is married to a Muslim man, and that she’s “closer to the issue than she appears to be.” It was similar to Allison referencing her Black brother-in-law as a reason she may understand race and privilege more than her classmates of color thinks she does...

Dr. Anderson: Well, did you talk to any of the students of color in my class?

TG: I did talk to two Hispanic students, one of whom was white. But none of the Black students. In fact, none of my student participants in this study were Black.

Dr. Anderson: What did the Hispanic students say?

TG: They said the class was open to multiple perspectives.

Dr. Anderson: I mean, I tell everyone, look as long as your intentions are good, and you are respectful, then everyone has a right to express their perspective. Only then can you have growth. That’s like with Oliver admitting he was a Republican; I shouldn’t have shown any surprise. I did, but I shouldn’t have.

Dr. Abbott: I think Black folks, too. We’re so used to this...

Dr. Ruben: And same for Latinos. We’re so used to microaggressions and things of the like. They happen constantly...

Dr. Abbott: In the other class I teach where there is a practicum component, a lot of the white students say stereotypical or even racist things about [City], or doing their practicum at a school in [City], that they don’t even realize are racist. And what I have found is that the brown and Black students are from [City], right. And I’ve had one or two folks that say, “No, that is not right, I actually went to that school as a young person,” or “I live around the corner from that
school, and that is not true, so you all need to work through that stuff.” I’d say, without a fault, that tends to happen with most of the Black and brown kids that I have in the classroom. So, they kind of refute those things and kind of buck that for the students.

Dr. Ruben: Yes, the ethnic minorities usually pick up on things. Like we were reading a children’s story from the 1850s. It’s called “The Kind Negro,” and it starts with, I don’t remember the name of the character, but something like, she’s Black, but she’s a wonderful person. So, she’s Black, but, of course, particularly the students, you know, the ethnic minorities, they immediately pick up that but. What do you mean by but?

TG: Are there ever any white students who will say, like, they pick up on the, oh you said, but, or, you know, like she’s a Black woman, but?

Dr. Ruben: Uh (pause)

TG: Or is it usually…

Dr. Ruben: Yeah, there are some white students that pick up the issues that many others will not even do that maybe because of their own, kind of, I don’t know if they are privileged or not because I have no idea about their backgrounds, but, at least they have a little bit more of the cultural capital and probably are more used to be able to feel safe raising questions about issues that others, perhaps, have not. Of course, the issue of safety is a whole other conversation. Sometimes safety just leads to tangents, rather than staying focused on gaining critical thinking skills about the topic of discussion...but anyway...

Dr. Abbott: And, so, maybe that was shocking or upsetting for you, TG, that the white women from the suburbs were taking up so much of Dr. Anderson’s classroom space. Or that you perceived that as what was happening. Especially in an institution in which white students are the minority. But as women of color, and Black women, if we internalized and got upset over every problematic thing that was said, we’d never survive. Maybe you are projecting your own insecurities onto the women in Dr. Anderson’s class...

TG: That’s certainly possible, and I appreciate your saying that. And now that I think about it, it may be significant that students of color even felt comfortable enough to say something in Dr. Anderson’s class. I think, too, it seemed to go against what Dr. Ocampo mentioned to me about this campus being so inclusive and tolerant of diversity and difference.

Dr. Ocampo: Right, but then doesn’t that include our white students, too? I mean, at least at ECU, most of our white students are still working class, first generation, and also from the urban schools. In some ways, there isn’t much difference between them and our students of color in terms of our ultimate goal of helping them move up to the middle class via teaching. These one or two girls sound like just two bad apples. No school or classroom is perfect.

Dr. Ruben: Yes, I mean this is my issue with dogmatic ways of talking about white privilege. It muffles the white students or anyone who doesn’t talk about white people in a certain way. White people are not a monolith, and some white people at one point in time were not even
considered white! And I’m not afraid of not being politically correct. *That’s not why I don’t want to talk about white privilege.* I just don’t want to fall into the trap of having a dogmatic debate among the muffled. How much time and what levels of theoretical background are needed to unpack experience and look at how this intersects with systemic and structural conditions? Therefore, I make choices about the direction of class discussions. I think of myself as a leftist, right, and actually if you read my writing, it’s extremely provocative...

Dr. Anderson: *But why are we talking about white folks at all? Like I said earlier, we need to just stay focused on the conditions that make these racial categories possible...and to me, that’s capitalism, greed, and neoliberalism.*

Dr. Ocampo: *Right, but also, we need to be giving our students tools to overcome the obstacles that come from these conditions. That seems, to me, a more practical approach.*

Dr. Anderson: *That’s right. It’s like how I tell my students the story of how when I was working in the schools, and the Black students thought the Chinese students did better on the standardized tests because they are Chinese. It’s like, no, you are playing basketball after school, and what do you think the Chinese kids are doing? They are studying…*

TG: Yes, one of the students I interviewed in your class, Dr. Anderson, mentioned that anecdote and said it was helpful in thinking about how he might approach his future students who may engage in similar thinking.

Dr. Ocampo: *Right. Too much of the conversation about urban schools is focused on student failures, rather than their successes. And it’s not saying these oppressive systems don’t exist, or even saying it is okay that these oppressive systems exist, which I feel like is the pushback I get by focusing on academic resilience. But I’d rather focus on what we can do now.*

TG: *It’s less deterministic, kind of. Like if all we are teaching students is that these all-powerful systems have already determined their life outcomes, then where is the room for resistance and change?*

Dr. Abbott: *And, also, these conditions sometimes fall under the umbrella of heavy political stuff. I work hard to try to not bring so much of that into my class. Part of that too is I’m not a psychologist or a psychiatrist, so if something comes heavy at me, how the hell am I going to respond that? I don’t know what to do with that. I’m not good with those things, so I try to pay attention to what I bring into the classroom. And then I also don’t want to be so biased. I didn’t talk about Trump any more than I did Obama in the classroom. Because it’s not my place, and I know that there was probably one person in the classroom who wasn’t happy that Obama won, and there’s probably one person in the classroom who wasn’t happy that Trump won. And, again, it’s not a political...It’s not a debate class. There’s certainly, in a social studies class, room and opportunity for that, but in those ways I try to stay neutral, and I don’t like it when I have peers and colleagues who are just very intentional in that way. I think it’s bad enough that we’re singing this whole democracy song, and inclusion and all that kind of stuff. But then, I don’t know, just to kind of bring in the heavy political stuff...I don’t do that.*
Dr. Ruben: Well, and certainly you can give students the tools to navigate the current sociopolitical climate without appearing to be biased. I live in a state of anxiety as I don’t remember for a long time. I think from, since my times of being in the army and being at war I don’t experience this level of anxiety because of the larger context of things. Not personal, but really, I feel responsible for my generation screwing up everything. That we are having globally a return to fascism in some ways, neofascism, populism some will choose to call it. The political context gives me a great level of anxiety, even though I am in a good situation… the environment, climate change, is giving me a great level of anxiety, not for me because by, you know, how many years, maybe do I have left? I mean, hopefully, 20, 30…It might not happen in my lifetime. It will happen to my grandchildren. I feel that anxiety, and in a way I am trying to channelize some of those into the urgency for my students here to understand that they, if they choose to become teachers, they have an incredible responsibility because they have the potential to change the world, and it’s not just a naive dream. You can do it. I’m not going to spend time on the impeachment of Donald Trump. There are more important things, particularly when I know what the outcome will be, so do I want to get even more depressed? (laughing) Instead I try to give them a little more social theory to help them understand and unpack what is going on here… And larger issues, we have discussed. We have discussed the issues of the polarization of those who have and those who have not and the access to quality education. We have dealt with issues of ethnicity and race and gender, not totally in depth. It’s an introductory class. But at least, that’s why I spend a little bit more time than I have done in the past, and I have incorporated a little bit more of social theory…to provide them tools to unpack things, to learn something that can then be transferred and used to understand a particular context.

Dr. Ocampo: I mean, once Trump won the election, I stopped watching the news.

Dr. Anderson: Well, Trump is only the symptom of much larger problems. And until we really address those problems, democracy and inclusion are going to seem like farses. Like Dr. Abbott was saying.

Dr. Ocampo: I mean, is full inclusion in the classroom even possible? There are some students whose needs just cannot be accommodated in the general education classroom, and it’s a disservice to teachers when their preparation programs tell them that is possible. They think, “I must be doing something wrong because this is supposed to work.” At least, that’s how it happened for me. I learned how to teach by watching other teachers in the school where I worked, rather than focusing on what was taught in my undergraduate program.

Dr. Abbott: But it doesn’t mean we can’t still emphasize lived experiences and diversity in our courses. The assumption that I have is that my students have not been around Black folks. So, I try to emphasize “the Black experience” and give students a sense of myself, which isn’t always easy for me. Mostly through the songs listed in the syllabus. Those are the soundtracks of my lived experience. What I haven’t done, because I’m afraid, is ask the students what they are learning about me and/or the Black experience from the songs. But, also, I’ve noticed that they shy away from race and ethnicity at times. Like, when they are sharing their pennant assignments, I’m like, so where am I? And then some of the students, well there’s some women here. I’m like, okay, they’re thinking in that way, or there’s somebody who had a connection to Massachusetts. I’m like uhhh, okay. But the race and the ethnicity stuff doesn’t typically appear.
Dr. Anderson: Why are you afraid?

Dr. Abbott: Sometimes the formal course evaluations, “Oh, she’s racist,” or, “She doesn’t consider other people’s point of view.” And I’m thinking, well, if I’m here to help people to grow, and something you’re saying is wrong, I have to tell you that, right? So, and I learned to maybe say it with a smile and then, maybe I’m not as mean or as racist? So that’s been a balancing act for me to try to figure out how do I have those difficult conversations with students in a way that’s not going to, you know, point negatively, or impact me in a way.

Dr. Ocampo: Sometimes you don’t even have to emphasize the diversity or call attention to it. At least at ECU. TG was telling me that my students, when she talked to them, didn’t think diversity was addressed in my class. And, no, I didn’t always call attention to it in the examples and anecdotes I gave in class. But, given who we are, who our students are and where they’re teaching it’s kind of pervasive... it’s kind of just implied.

TG: Well, one student thought it was addressed in the assessment portion of the course, in terms of the prior knowledge students will bring. But, right, neither of them thought diversity was addressed in the classroom management part of the course.

Dr. Ocampo: Well, classroom management is a prerequisite to everything, and it is going to dictate so much of their emotional life at school. I don’t combine it with assessment or anything else because I don’t want it muddled.

Dr. Abbott: Do you think diversity would muddle it?

Dr. Ocampo: Not necessarily. But I tend to draw on theories of behaviorism and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, which I guess maybe don’t talk a lot about diversity. But I draw on those theories because it’s commonsensical. Students need to have their physical and emotional needs met before anything else, or they aren’t going to care about academics. The overriding purpose of classroom management, in addition to maximizing time on task, is physical and emotional safety.

Dr. Anderson: But also, it’s not just about academics. Students need to know you care about them, and that is why you are working on their behalf to get their needs met.

Dr. Ruben: Yes, we talked about this in TG’s first visit to my class. We discussed teaching’s crucial role and teachers as caring and critical cultural and political workers. Caring means creating an environment where you love them as students... you don’t necessarily need to love them as people, but you need to love them as students. One of our alumni here at NSU...[scholar] she complicates caring...but we can all agree there is a basic sense of solidarity, interest, importance...and critical because you question how things work...and who benefits and who doesn’t...We need to educate everyone, regardless of the environment they come from. And the way to do that is to embrace democracy and inclusion, even if it doesn’t feel like a reality.

Dr. Abbott: What does that mean? Political worker?
Dr. Ruben: Embracing things like diversity, inclusion, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, *that is a political act*. Even just saying that being American nowadays incorporates a lot of cosmopolitanism is something the alt right disagrees with. *There is no apolitical when it comes to teaching.*

Dr. Anderson: *Cosmopolitanism...yes, one of the young ladies of color in my class was saying the other day, her perspective is, “There is one race. The human race. But this race thing was created to keep people in groups...for ideological oppression.”*

TG: And what was interesting was this was in response to your question, “What is race, and where did it come from?” And Hillary was saying, “Race is the color of the skin based on where you are from.” And you asked her, “What does that mean?” And she said, “Whether your parents are from Nigeria or Switzerland is your race.” And you replied, “I have a grandparent from a plantation in [one of the Carolinas, in the United States] and [another country]. So, what’s my race?” And she said something vague, along the lines of people in different places can have the same race...and even after the student of color made that comment, she said, that from a very “scientific point of view,” race is where you are from.

Dr. Anderson: Well, she said that before we watched *Race: The Power of an Illusion*. And maybe she didn’t get completely there by the end of the class. But it doesn’t mean she didn't’ learn anything... like Dr. Abbott said. The real test comes after she graduates and whether she can make the path wider for those coming behind her.

Dr. Ocampo: *And even if teaching is never apolitical*, that doesn’t mean we should be pushing a political agenda in our classes. We need to look at each individual case and adopt a unique approach, rather than stay caught up on politics or worrying about offending people by saying things like students need structure or we can’t reach every student, or generally speaking, the education in urban schools is not as good as it could be or should be. There’s a reason why Black and brown families head to the suburbs when they can.

Dr. Anderson: Well, it’s not rocket science why kids in the suburbs perform better...

TG: Yes, and one of the students I spoke with in Dr. Anderson’s class shared with me that no matter what school he ends up teaching in, it’s important to learn about the conditions that make urban schools what they are. And that he’d even try to combat deficit thinking in suburban students’ minds about students or people in urban areas. Interestingly, he also said, “I’m going to figure students in suburbs may be going to go for high positions in jobs, and some of them might influence urban schools. So, I’d really like them to try and get them to that mindset that they realize that there are problems that create those problems in urban schools and areas, and that they can possibly fix them by doing certain things.”

Dr. Abbott: *That really does show the power and importance of being exposed to multiple perspectives and things beyond your own experiences.*

TG: Yes, and Dr. Abbott, one of your students was sharing how she learned that having these difficult conversations can happen at a younger age than she thought. She said, “One big thing I
learned that I really took away from Dr. Abbott’s class was teaching kids about the Holocaust, but I didn’t realize how young you can start teaching it and the way to introduce it, as well as other things. Just like teaching them to be cognizant of what’s going on in the world around them, which I think is a big thing.”

Dr. Abbott: That’s great. I guess it’s good to hear that because I was feeling a little disappointed with the “Taking Informed Action” part of their Talk and Teach demonstrations. I wished that aspect had been more substantive. So, when we did the signage around the campus with the Earth Day Group about recycling, I would have loved for that to have been more meaningful and purposeful. And with the bullying and antibullying group, we signed that pledge, but we didn’t really do anything with it.

TG: Yeah, I kinda gasped in my head when one of the girls in the Earth Day group said it didn’t matter if the signs got taken down because they already did their part for the project.

Dr. Abbott: Interesting. I’m not even sure I registered that comment in that way. I guess, you know, there are always places or opportunities for improvement. Like after that second lesson you observed, TG, I know you came to mind, or your focus, and I’m thinking, you know what? The stuff about diversity was not even included there, so maybe it comes in in other kinds of ways, like me being in the classroom and just having some conversations. And when students don’t see the larger point or picture in things—like when I get pushback for us spending time making things in class—I feel like it’s because I haven’t done a good job explaining the importance. You know, didn’t get resistance with the pronoun introductions, for example. I was very intentional about why we were doing that.

TG: And that perspective gives you, and the students for that matter, a lot more agency. Rather than my perspective, which, of course, is rooted in the literature on Black women professors and getting more pushback. But my perspective also constructs a particular Black woman professor dealing with particular resistant white students. I need to stop wondering what your class would have been like if you were white and/or male and instead look at it for what it is. I did get the sense that students got a lot out of your class. I mean, one of the student(s) I interviewed said you were definitely one of the better teachers she had because you constantly kept emphasizing ways to reach future K-12 students.

Dr. Abbott: Well, that’s of course great to hear. Of course, I want to hear good things.

Dr. Ocampo: Right, I mean that should be the purpose of any methods class. Giving our students as big a toolbox as possible for when they walk into their student teaching and their future classrooms. I think that at ECU we should do more courses in methods and less on, they call it, foundational or background stuff because what our kids need is a really big toolbox with tools that they know how to use well.

Dr. Anderson: But, also, any good teacher is going to have to, or should, consider who’s sitting in front of them. It doesn’t matter how knowledgeable they are with their content if they can’t reach the kids, and depending on your culture or your background or your language, you know,
the teacher’s content may just bounce off your head if it’s not presented to you in a way that you can understand it.

Dr. Ocampo: Well, right, let me be clear. Just because the students at ECU come from the neighborhood schools, it doesn’t mean they are all unequivocally ready to teach. Some of our students, first of all, recognize they aren’t a good fit to teach, dispositionally. But more often than you might think, we end up counseling people out of the program. And this is after they pass the Praxis and are admitted into the program. Student teaching is really designed for people who can do it full time. And so, with our students, who are sometimes juggling other responsibilities with student teaching, the stress exacerbates interpersonal issues, and we get complaints from the cooperating teacher. The cooperating teachers have very high standards, as they should. And, you know what, it’s okay because not everyone needs to be a teacher!

Dr. Ruben: And I think that’s where the value comes from classes like mine and Dr. Anderson’s. Because at least in our classes they are learning things that are useful and important, whether or not they end up teaching. Not just about the history of schooling, but how to gain the levels of confidence for them to start gaining a public voice on those matters that are more professional and engage in a dialogue. Which, it sounds like they are learning more of the dialogue and public voice piece in Dr. Anderson’s class. But, in my class at least, I’ve been trying to help them with their writing and help them with the exams… of all the sections of the history of education, mine is the easiest by far, in terms of the amount of work!

TG: Yes, one of your students, Dr. Ruben, shared how you don’t trick them like most teachers do. What you said was going to be on the test was on the test. And both students shared that they felt like you cared about them…

Dr. Ruben: And some of the instructors at NSU, I would like it if they would be far more accommodating when you have students that have some major needs or problems. Just the other day, there was a student who was failing her section of the history class, so I told the instructor, give the student an Incomplete, and I will complete the class with her, so I gave her a whole new plan of work with her that we are going to work over the break and everything, and also I told her, okay, when you will have students struggling in your class, you’ll remember this. The best way you can say thank you to me is if you approach your own students in this way. Now we do have some good people who engage in this way at NSU, but I wish we had more.

Dr. Ocampo: Yeah, I mean once people get tenure, they have little incentive to try to improve their teaching. At least, that’s been my experience at ECU. Listen, I love tenure for me, but is it what’s best for the students? The people who show up willingly to PDs on teaching are the ones who don’t need it.

TG: Well, tenured or not, all four of you do good work on behalf of your students. And I feel like you’d do that anyway even if your schools weren’t HSIs. Especially since at both campuses, it’s like the one thing you all have in common is that you’re still trying to figure out what it means to be an HSI.
Dr. Anderson: Yeah, I mean I shared with you I hadn’t heard of that designation until you mentioned it. And it has no impact on how I feel or what I do with the students. No matter where I’m teaching, it’s like how are you going to make the path wider for those coming behind you…

Dr. Ocampo: I mean, you asked whether I would teach this class differently if at a PwI. And, I said I would. But also, I’m assuming that PwI is in a suburban area. Like I said earlier, many of the white students at ECU are also from urban schools.

TG: But what I appreciate about you, Dr. Ocampo, is that you also described your students as inexperienced. So, you aren’t saying that they are necessarily experts on teaching in urban schools. Just that they have lived experiences as students that is helpful.

Dr. Abbott: Right. It’s that role of lived experience. That’s what is most important. And continuously working on expanding that and learning more about folks who might not have the same background as you.

TG: And, I think as professors, you all capitalize on that. Or at least, you share parts of your own lived experiences, and even that is a form of teaching.

Dr. Ocampo: And sometimes that sharing is subconscious. You know, I didn’t grow up in an urban area. But the students assume I did, which is like instant credibility…

TG: Right, the Hispanic male student I interviewed said he felt connected to you in that way.

Dr. Ocampo: And I did teach in an urban area…

TG: Right, and he wasn’t just connected to you because you were Hispanic. It was because of your credentials, too, and your experience teaching in the Bronx. In fact, he told me that he thinks professors of education should have 20-25 years of K-12 teaching experience in one specific area or subject.

Dr. Ocampo: I mean, yes I only taught for 3 years in the high school classroom, and more time in the K-12 classroom would certainly make any of us better teachers. But I did do it—which can’t be said of all my colleagues—and I’m still in the schools researching and consulting. It’s way harder teaching K-12 than college. I wouldn’t want to go back to that!

Dr. Abbott: Interesting. I see the value in what your student is saying. And, personally, I didn’t go to graduate school with the intent of being a professor. I was planning on going back to the classroom, but some of my colleagues were applying for professor jobs, and so I applied, too. So, in that way, I became a professor of education by happenstance. I did end up focusing on middle school in my K-12 teaching. That was where I needed to land. But prior to that I had a wide range of experience across multiple grades and content areas. As a sub, I just wanted to go where I was needed—even in bilingual classrooms where I didn’t speak the language. I think that helped me learn the landscape of teaching and education, where children are, who children are.
Dr. Anderson: I mean, I’m a grassroots kind of guy. I’ve never been in higher education full time.

Dr. Abbott: I mean, I do work in higher education full time, but I’ve always viewed my role here at the university as...the university is not for me. I work here, and I’m an instructor, but the university, I think, is more for students, so you know, they would be involved in, kind of, the speak outs and the engagement and the activism in that way.

Dr. Ruben: Well, and I think you’d agree with me, Dr. Abbott, the sense of student activism on campus at NSU is certainly dwindling. The university, in general, does some stuff. They have a day on social justice, but it’s not really. It doesn’t engage that much, right. They do, it’s not that they don’t try. I don’t know, it used to be more active. Even about 10 years ago, before Obama, there was a little bit more of an activist presence. For instance, when Bush was the president, and there was going to be an election, and students became more active, and we were all having a little bit more of, kind of a, life. I don’t see that happening here. I think this generation is spending more time on the telephone. Not necessarily is that a bad thing, but the telephone can certainly stupefy.

Dr. Anderson: Right, bread and circus. We talked about that in my class...not the role of cell phones in particular, but the idea.

Dr. Abbott: Yes, maybe it’s dwindling. But, again, it’s not my place to encourage that or not to encourage that. I mean, again, even with the Earth Day signage exercise in my class. I tried to bring up activism. We were talking about whether students needed to permission to post the signs, and I suggested we could just do it anyway and see what happens. But that if we do that, we probably shouldn’t put our names on it. A student commented that they shouldn’t put their names on it, and I shared: “And activists have to give thought to that. To what extent are you going to go against [the rule]? Is it loss of a sign [that we are making] or loss of a liberty?” But, as TG mentioned, the student may not have gotten the point and said, “The worst-case scenario is it gets torn down. I mean we did our part of our project.”

TG: I mean, now that I think about it, I’m not really sure what you or I or anyone else could have done with that.

Dr. Ocampo: Right. I mean from her perspective, this is a graded assignment. And she’s not necessarily wrong to see it in that way. I’m not saying the assignment shouldn’t be graded...

Dr. Anderson: And maybe down the road, she’ll understand things differently. You know at first, I didn’t believe my mom when she said “G-d has a plan for you” when we were on the phone in Vietnam. Everyone around me was dying, and she said I was coming home because I was special. I was like, “Mom, I’m putting pieces of special people in bags,” and I hung up on her. It wasn’t until I started teaching in Boston many years later that I believed her words to me.

Dr. Ruben: Right. Our courses do not happen in isolation. They happen alongside other courses and our students’ lives and the larger sociopolitical context. And, as Dr. Anderson is saying, they may even carry over into the future.
TG: *That’s why it felt weird to me, Dr. Anderson*, when I asked you in our second interview when is the next time you will be assessing your students’ understanding of race and opportunity. *Assessment might imply there is one right way to understand that.* I realized in that moment that *assess* was the wrong word…

Dr. Anderson: *Right. It’s like what have you learned since you’ve been here?*
Appendix F

Dr. Anderson’s Syllabus (ECU)*

*Information that would reveal the identities of the participants or the institution has been redacted or removed.
○ Education policy and government reform efforts in the USA.
○ Academic accountability, and the standards movement.
○ The privatization of public schools in the USA.

**Teachers:**

○ The history of the teaching profession in the USA.
○ Teachers as public servants charged with the academic, social, and emotional development of youth.
○ Teacher Unions and other support systems.
○ Teaching for equity and social justice.

**Students:**

○ Students as socio-cultural and linguistic individuals.
○ Social and educative stratification of students by race, ethnicity, social class, national origin, and language.
○ Students with disabilities, special education students, students with individualized education plans (IEPs) and educational accommodations (504 plans).

**Parents:**

○ Strategies to enlist parents as partners in the learning process.

**Course Objectives:**

○ To gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing teachers or youth workers in urban communities.
○ To develop knowledge, a repertoire of skills, and the disposition needed for success in the urban arena.
○ Critically analyze and critique the ways schools function to promote or inhibit student learning.
○ Reflect on one’s own schooling experiences and how one’s school experience has influenced their perspective.
○ Formulate an emergent philosophy of education attentive to the conceptual portrait of historically marginalized people and their communities.
○ Develop oral and written presentation skills.

**Required text:**


***Freire's text may be available on Blackboard.***

Woodson, C.G., (1933 revised) *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, Amazon

-Other readings will be made available electronically.

**Course Policies:**

The use of cell phones, smart phones, computers, or other mobile communication devices for non-instructional purposes is prohibited (without approval from the professor). Students are expected to have their devices turned off or silenced and put away during class. Any student who uses any device for non-instructional purposes (texting in class, checking your phone for messages, emails, social media or engaging in other non-class related activities) will have the final grade reduced. If students use a laptop for taking notes it is to be used for that purpose only. If students are using any electronic devices for non-instructional purposes, the instructor will ask that student to leave for the remainder of the class session. To reiterate, USING ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR ANY NON-INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSE IS PROHIBITED.

The assignments for this course should be carefully prepared, edited, proofread, and submitted on time. Be sure to save the work on your computer. Work submitted late will be penalized. Assignments are to be submitted as indicated by the instructor. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with how to submit work via email and Blackboard. Lack of familiarity with Blackboard and/or email is not a valid excuse for assignments not submitted or submitted tardy. The instructor reserves the right to amend any portion of this syllabus at any time.

**Methods of evaluation for course:**

25% Attendance, Homework, Individual participation, Group participation

25% Field Observations and Observation Report (Autobiography/Community Study Observation)

25% Midterm Project

25% Final Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Requirements:

Class participation: Students are expected to report to class prepared, having read all assigned readings prior to the start of class. Students are expected to work respectfully in assigned groups. All students are expected to engage in civil, respectful dialogue. Respect for individual differences and viewpoints must be maintained. Student participation is a reflection of having engaged with the assigned course readings.

Homework: Each week, students are expected to have completed the assigned readings and activities. Students must submit a reflection of the assigned readings for each week. Reflections should be one page in length, double spaced Times New Roman 12 pt. font. The reflection is a discussion of the reading and should indicate a critical understand of the author’s intent, not a reflection of one’s personal experiences or stories.

Field Observations and Observation Report: To fulfill the State of __________ requirements for preservice teachers, students are required to complete 24 hours of classroom visits. These visits can be in any schoolgrades K-12. At least one of the 24 hours should be in a special education setting. Students will be provided an official letter to present to potential school leaders for admission and approval. Students should observe classes in the age group and subject areas they intend to seek certification in. However, students may visit any classroom in any school, public or private, of their choosing. Students are to use the provided log to keep track of their classroom visits. Students are to actively observe during the classroom visits, analyzing the classroom and learning environment in consideration of the course content with a focus on how children in the classroom are, or are not, learning. Students must upload their observation hours onto __________ by the indicated due dates. Students must include the name of the school, the subject, and grade in the uploaded hours.

Students will analyze their field observations for the observation report. The observation report is to be typed (12 pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced) and between 1200-1400 words in length. Students should make certain that they proof-read their work and run spell check. Hand written reports will not be accepted. Students are to use the provided rubric and field observations/observation report guidelines to complete the assignment.

Midterm Project: The midterm exam will cover all of the course content up to the scheduled exam date. Students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the course content, its relationship to the current issues and challenges in urban education, and the role of teachers in today’s schools, and orally present their project to the class as a member of an educational research team.

Attendance: Two excused absences are permitted in this course. Students must notify the professor in advance of an absence and make necessary arrangements with a classmate to obtain the missed classwork. Failure to follow procedure will be deemed an unexcused absence.

Students are strongly urged NOT to be absent during scheduled exam/presentation dates. Absence during an exam date may result in no credit for the exam.

Punctual arrival to class is expected. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes after the scheduled class time are considered tardy without exception. Students who are habitually tardy as decided by the instructor may have their final grade reduced or fail the course.
**Final Group Presentation:** Students will present on an urban education issue discussed in class. Students will be expected to present the pros and cons of the issue, and argue a position based on their research. Their position should include the benefit to students and teachers in the urban arena. Each student group must propose, and receive approval for their topic of choice prior to beginning their project. Each student group must include three current articles (newspaper, magazine, or internet) in their proposal. These articles (along with the course content) will inform the presentation. The paper/presentation should be 25-30 pages.

Each presentation will be a minimum of 20 minutes. Each group member must actively participate in the presentation. Students are to use the provided guidelines and rubric to inform the creation of the presentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | **Course Introduction**  
- Syllabus overview  
- Expectations for the course  
- Classroom observations TK20 | Assignment #1  
Please bring a personal artifact that has special meaning to you, and be prepared to share its meaning as well as your professional hopes and dreams.  
Books for consideration:  
b. *Pedagogy of The Oppressed.* Paulo Freire  
| 2.   | **Topic: The Important Role of a Teacher**  
Trusted with every family’s most precious possession. The importance of passion and purposefulness, PPT  
Teachers have the power to shape, mold, nourish, and develop the hearts and minds of youth. They also have the power to crush and destroy a scholar’s spirit. How will you be remembered?  
Community Building: Who are we, and why are we all in the same space? What are our hopes and dreams for the future? As a teacher, do we have an obligation or any responsibility to society? If so, why, and what is it? If not, why not?  
The importance of collaboration. Tentative group assignments. | Assignment #2  
Research schooling in the 1600’s and write a brief synopsis of its evolution. i.e. How were people educated? Who was educated, and for what purpose? One page, 12 pt font, Times New Roman.  
Research Horace Mann and The Common School Movement and be prepared to argue its pros and cons. |
| 3.   | **Topic: The History of Schooling in the USA** | Assignment #3 |
What role did politics play in the educational design of schools in the USA?
What was the thinking behind the Common School?
Who were schools in America designed to educate, and why?

*Video: Horace Mann and The Prussian System*

1. **Read chapter 2 Freire’s Pedagogy of The Oppressed, research the terms below and write a one page brief on how they manifest in our society. Be prepared to discuss your perspective in class.**

   Define: Colonialism, Democracy, Oppression and be prepared to discuss in class.

---

**Assignment #4**

Write a one page reflection on the two court decisions listed below and be prepared to discuss them in class.

1. Plessy v. Ferguson
2. Brown v. Board of Education

*View: YouTube: Eyes On The Prize episode 13 Busing in Boston, Massachusetts*

---

**Assignment #5**

Research and write a one page reflection paper on

1. 1819 Indian Civilization Act
2. 1889 Chinese Exclusion act

Be prepared to share your perspective in class.

---

**Assignment #6**

Research and write a one page paper on Levittown and Hicksville, New York. Describe how federal legislation (FHA) led to poverty, classism, discrimination, and the inequality that presently exists (two-tiered schools and communities (urban and suburban) in America today)

*View: “Granito de Arena”
https://vimeo.com/123456789*

---

4. **Topic: The “Whys” of Education in the USA:**

   Why do we have schools today?
   What is the purpose of education?
   Who decides what is to be taught and to whom?
   Does America have a two-tiered or dual educational system?
   What is the significance difference between private, parochial, and public schools?
   Does curricula matter? Are curricula the same in private, public, and parochial schools?
   Is education for the masses or a few?
   The American Dream (Pulling oneself up by one’s bootstraps
   History or His-story?
   Socrates & Imhotep in the K-12 curriculum.

   *Video: Pedagogy of The Oppressed Banking Theory of Education*

---

5. **Topic: Race, Poverty, and The American Dream**

   Does race matter?
   What is race?
   What is racism?
   U.S. courts and education equity: desegregation of public schools.
   Desegregation of public schools “Eyes On The Prize”

   *Video: The Untold History of The United States*

---

6. **Topic: Poverty-The Adverse Affects of Poverty:**

   US Indian Boarding Schools
   The two-tiered educational system in the USA.
   Does race determine ability? (intelligence, athleticism, artistic ability)

   *Video: “Race: The Power of An Illusion #1, 2.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic: <strong>Urban vs. Suburban Schools and Communities</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You can’t teach what you don’t know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWC/TAG and LAB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth vs. Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mis-Education of The Negro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Video: “Race: The Power of An Illusion #3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment #7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research disproportionality in public schools. Write a brief paper that compares and contrasts percentages of suspensions, expulsions, in urban and suburban schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read: Prof John Ogbu’s theory of voluntary and involuntary minorities in the USA. Be prepared to discuss the pros and cons of his theory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic: <strong>Racism, Classism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread and Circuses: The new Jim Crow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do cotton plantations, prisons, the NBA and the NFL have in common?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCLB, RTTT and standardized testing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Video: What is neoliberalism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment # 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research <em>The Eugenics Movement</em> and write brief paper that traces it to the present Planned Parenthood movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research the following Federal Education Legislation initiatives and be prepared to discuss them in class..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title IX, ESEA, IDEA, FERPA, NCLB, RTTT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic: <strong>Standardized Testing, Education Reform, and Neoliberalism in the USA</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What has been the role of the federal government in educational policy to date? How has standardized testing improved outcomes for scholars?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Students as flower seeds”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment # 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and write a paper outlining the USA’s world standing in Reading, Math, and Science.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic: <strong>The Achievement Gap &amp; Educational Reform In the USA and around the world.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PISA: Assessment: Measuring what matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative and summative assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic achievement gap/academic debt and high-stakes testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status, poverty, and student achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The privatization of public schools-the charter school movement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment # 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research neoliberalism and schooling and write a brief paper on the intersectionality of neoliberalism and education reform in the USA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read Chapter 4 of Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and be prepared to discuss “praxis” as a solution to oppression.

**FIELD OBSERVATIONS AND OBSERVATION REPORT DUE HOURS UPLOADED ON**
Parental Involvement-Parents As Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Topic: Neoliberalism and Immigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E Pluribus Unum-Immigration: Building the Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making America Great Again: for whom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. Topic: Preparation for Final Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14. FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- "What did you learn that you didn’t know before?"
- Did you see a balance of the three concepts, racial, and cultural background as student, teacher, and learner? Did you feel it was helpful and meaningful in your identity development, on an integration? Why or why not?

- What were the challenges you encountered during your schooling experience? What made your experience valuable?

- How did you determine what student you are?

- Did you find the roles you expected in your schooling experience?

- Why or why not?

- Did you experience any advantage or disadvantage in your schooling experience?

- Why or why not?

- Did you feel you were a learner or a teacher?

- How did your view change over time?

- Did your view change over time?

- What did you experience as a teacher or learner?

- How did your experience as a teacher or learner change over time?

- Why or why not?

- What kind of an educator do you want to be, and how do you want to be perceived as a teacher?
Autobiography/Community Study Essay Instructions

- Begin by discussing the context in which you went to school. Was it an urban or suburban district? What was the population like (ethnicity, race, languages spoken)?

- What was your home language? Was it the same as that spoken in school? How did your language background influence your ability to engage in the work of school? Did the schools you attended affirm or support your home language, or was it unacknowledged?

- Reflect on your family structure. Who did you live with? What is your family’s education and economic background? Thinking about social class and schooling, how or in what ways did your socio-economic background help or hinder your academic career?

- How would you describe the schools you attended? How do you think school funding impacted the quality of schooling?

- How well and in what ways did your schools prepare you for college?

- What were your teachers like? Did you have teachers of the same cultural, racial, or language background as yourself? Did teachers exhibit any prejudices or biases while teaching? Did you feel included and valued in your learning experiences, or marginalized? Why or why not?

- What was challenging about your schooling experiences? What came easy? How did you overcome the challenges or obstacles?

- Do you think the schools you attended reflected meritocracy? Why or why not? Do you think you have been at an advantage or disadvantage in relation to cultural or linguistic background and school success? Do these backgrounds align with the norms of schools?

- How did you view yourself as a student? Did this view change? Do you feel you are solely responsible for the success and challenges you experienced? Why or why not? If not, who or what else was involved in your schooling to help or hinder success?

- In what ways do you think your schooling experiences will inform the work you do as a teacher? How have these experiences contributed to your understanding of education and educating children/young adults? What kind of an educator do you want to be, and how do you want to be recognized as a teacher?

Requisite elements of the essay:

- The essay IS NOT a summary of your educative experiences. It is an analysis of these experiences in relation to course content, discussions, and activities.
Autobiography/Community Study Essay Instructions

- The essay must cite a minimum of five different sources used in this course.
- The essay demonstrates your ability to critically reflect on and consider your schooling experiences in relation to the social, political, and economic conditions of U.S. society.
- The essay provides evidence of understanding the complex influences of social contexts on teachers and students.
- The essay reflects and integrates course content to analyze and discuss your schooling experiences, particularly in relation to how schools attend to students of diverse cultural, racial, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- The essay is proof-read, spell-checked, and conforms to the conventions of standard English.
## Autobiography/Community Study Essay Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>1-2 Points</th>
<th>3-4 Points</th>
<th>5-6 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The essay demonstrates the candidate's ability to critically examine and reflect upon her/his schooling experiences, background, and the connections between these and academic success.</strong></td>
<td>The essay fails to articulate the candidate's schooling experiences and/or background.</td>
<td>The essay provides a summation of schooling experiences and/or the candidate’s background. The essay fails to provide an analysis on the connection between these and academic success.</td>
<td>The essay provides a critical examination of the candidate’s schooling experiences and background. General connections between these and academic success are noted.</td>
<td>The essay provides a critical examination of the candidate’s schooling experiences and background with examples of these and articulates explicit connections between these and academic success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The essay demonstrates the candidate's ability to discuss the complex social influences on teachers and students.</strong></td>
<td>The essay does not provide examples of social influences on teachers or students nor considers how these impact teaching and learning.</td>
<td>The essay provides examples of social influences on teachers or students, but fails to consider how these impact teaching and learning.</td>
<td>The essay provides examples of social influences on teachers and students, considering how these impact teaching and learning.</td>
<td>The essay provides examples of and critically discusses social influences on teachers and students, considering how these impact teaching and learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Autobiography/Community Study Essay Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>1-2 Points</th>
<th>3-4 Points</th>
<th>5-6 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The essay demonstrates evidence of course readings and employs course content, theories, and materials as the analysis of the candidate’s schooling experiences and the implications for the educative experiences of today’s students.</strong></td>
<td>The essay provides no examples nor cites course content, theories, and materials. The essay does not incorporate course material in the analysis of the candidate’s schooling experiences and provides no examples of implications for the educative experiences of today’s students.</td>
<td>The essay provides general examples and cites course content, theories, and materials (1 OR 2 CITATIONS). The essay minimally incorporates these in the analysis of the candidate’s schooling experiences and provides few examples on the implications for the educative experiences of today’s students.</td>
<td>The essay provides specific examples and cites course content, theories, and materials (A MINIMUM OF 5 CITATIONS). The essay explicitly incorporates those in the analysis of the candidate’s schooling experiences and provides substantive examples on the implications for the educative experiences of today’s students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The essay demonstrates the candidate’s ability to connect course content critically to examine how former schooling experiences will inform their future practice as a teacher and become the kind of teacher she/he wants to be.</strong></td>
<td>The essay does not articulate how the candidate’s former schooling experiences connect with the course content. The candidate does not connect former schooling experiences with literature from the course. The candidate does not discuss the kind of teacher she/he wants to be.</td>
<td>The essay articulates how the candidate’s former schooling experiences connect with the course content. The candidate connects former schooling experiences with literature from the course. The candidate fails to describe and explain how such connections would inform the kind of teacher she/he wants to be.</td>
<td>The essay articulates how the candidate’s former schooling experiences connect with the course content. The candidate connects former schooling experiences with course literature in general. The candidate describes and explains how these connections inform the kind of teacher she/he wants to be.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The essay conforms to the conventions of standard English, has been proof-read, checked for spelling, and typed (12 pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced). The essay is between 1200-1400 words in length. The assignment is submitted by the due date.</td>
<td>0 Points</td>
<td>1-2 Points</td>
<td>3-4 Points</td>
<td>5-6 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The essay fails to conform to the conventions of standard English. There are numerous spelling errors and the essay has not been proof-read. The document is not typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The essay is not double spaced. The essay word length is not between 1200-1400 words. The essay is submitted late.</td>
<td>Portions of the essay conform to the conventions of standard English. There are numerous spelling errors. The document is not typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The essay is not double spaced. The essay word length is not between 1200-1400 words. The essay is submitted late.</td>
<td>The overwhelming majority of the essay conforms to the conventions of standard English. There are minimal spelling errors. The document is typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font and is double spaced. The essay is between 1200-1400 words in length. The essay is submitted by the due date.</td>
<td>The entire essay conforms to the conventions of standard English. There are no spelling errors. The document is typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font and is double spaced. The essay is between 1200-1400 words in length. The essay is submitted by the due date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation Report Instructions

Field Observations, Observation Report and Observation Log

30% of Final Grade

Directions: To fulfill the State of [State] requirements for preservice teachers, students are required to complete 24 hours of classroom visits. These visits can be in any school/grade K-12. At least one of the 24 hours should be in a special education setting. Students should observe classes in the age group and subject areas they intend to seek certification in. However, students may visit any classroom in any school, public or private, of their choosing. Students are to use the provided log to keep track of their classroom visits. Students are to actively observe during the classroom visits, analyzing the classroom and learning environment in consideration of the course content with a focus on how, and whether children in the classroom are learning.

Students will review their field observations and provide an analysis for the observation report. The total observation report is to be typed (12 pt, Times New Roman font, double spaced) and between 1200-1400 words in length. Students should make certain that they proof-read their work and run spell check. Hand written reports will not be accepted. Students will submit the observation report AND the observation log.

Guidelines for conducting the observations

As students conduct the observations, it is strongly suggested that they take notes and document what they observe. During the actual observations students should focus on what is observable, not engage in interpretation of what is taking place in the classroom.

The following are areas to consider when observing:

- Teacher/student interactions
- Student/student interactions
- Classroom procedures (transitions, materials and supplies)
- Managing student behavior (monitoring student behavior and teacher response to student behavior)
- Organization of the physical space
- Question and answer techniques or procedures
- How the teacher communicates with students (provides directions, explains content, uses oral and/or written language)
- Uses assessment (monitors student learning, feedback to students)
- Student engagement (student grouping, work with activities and materials, participation in learning activities)
Observation Report Instructions

Observation report format:
Begin the essay by indicating the school (or schools), grade level, and subjects observed. Then write your analysis of the observed lessons by RESPONDING TO THE SPECIFIC GUIDING QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW. The emphasis and intent of the essay is to provide an analysis of what you observed, not a summation. Structure the essay by labeling each section of the paper as a response to each of the guiding questions.

The following are specific guiding questions to attend to in your analysis for the observed lessons:

1. Were the students learning what the teacher intended them to learn? Provide evidence to support your response.
2. How do the selected observations inform your understanding of what you need to learn, do, and become in order to succeed as a teacher in an urban context and support student learning in urban districts?
3. How are course content, readings, and discussions reflected in the observations? Provide specific examples to support your argument.
4. Were students from diverse backgrounds and/or with different abilities made to feel valued, able to achieve academically, included as members of the classroom community during the observed lessons? Provide evidence to support your answer.
5. What struck you as surprising or intrigued your most about you observed during the lesson? Explain why.
### Observation Report Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The report indicates what the students were learning and if it aligned with what the teacher intended them to learn. Evidence is provided to support the argument provided.</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>1-2 Points</th>
<th>3-4 Points</th>
<th>5 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The report provides a summation of what was observed but no analysis. No evidence is presented. No commentary is provided on whether learning was aligned with what the teacher intended.</td>
<td>The report provides a summation of what was observed but no analysis. Evidence provided does not support the argument presented. No commentary is provided on whether learning was aligned with what the teacher intended.</td>
<td>The report provides some analysis of student learning. Some evidence is provided to support the argument made. Minimal commentary is provided on whether learning was aligned with what the teacher intended.</td>
<td>The report critically analyzes student learning, provides numerous detailed reasons (evidence) to support the argument made, and discusses whether learning was aligned with what the teacher intended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The report demonstrates an understanding of what the candidate needs to learn, do, and become in order to succeed as a teacher in an urban context and support student learning in urban districts.</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>1-2 Points</th>
<th>3-4 Points</th>
<th>5 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The report fails to provide any examples or explanations on what the candidate knows, needs to learn, and the skills to possess and develop for future engagement as a teacher. The candidate fails to connect these to supporting student learning in their future classroom.</td>
<td>The report provides one general example or explanation on what the candidate knows, needs to learn, or the skills to possess and develop for future engagement as a teacher. The candidate connects this to supporting student learning or inclusion in their future classroom, but not both.</td>
<td>The report provides general examples and explanations on what the candidate knows, needs to learn, and the skills to possess and develop for future engagement as a teacher. The candidate connects these to supporting student learning and inclusion in their future classroom.</td>
<td>The report provides specific examples and explanations on what the candidate knows, needs to learn, and the skills to possess and develop for future engagement as a teacher. The candidate connects these to supporting student learning and inclusion in their future classroom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Observation Report Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course content, readings, and discussions are reflected in the analysis of the observations with specific examples to support the arguments made.</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>1-2 Points</th>
<th>3-4 Points</th>
<th>5 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course content, readings, and discussions are neither referred to or used in the report. No examples are provided.</td>
<td>The report discusses whether students from diverse backgrounds and/or with different abilities were made to feel valued, able to achieve academically, or included as members of the classroom community during the observed lesson.</td>
<td>The report references students from diverse backgrounds and/or with different abilities.</td>
<td>The report discusses whether students from diverse backgrounds and/or with different abilities were made to feel valued, able to achieve academically, or included as members of the classroom community during the observed lesson. Evidence is provided to support the argument.</td>
<td>Specific course content, readings, and discussions are discussed in the report and employed to analyze the observations. Specific examples are used to support the points the candidate proposes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Observation Report Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>1-2 Point</th>
<th>3-4 Points</th>
<th>5 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The report attends to what was surprising or intriguing about the observed lessons with an explanation.</strong></td>
<td>The report fails to consider what the candidate found surprising or intriguing during the observed lessons.</td>
<td>The report marginally references what the candidate found surprising or intriguing during the observed lessons with no explanation as to why.</td>
<td>The report discusses what the candidate found surprising or intriguing during the observed lessons but no explanation as to why.</td>
<td>The report discusses what the candidate found surprising or intriguing during the observed lessons with an explanation as to why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>The report</em> conforms to the conventions of standard English, has been proof-read, checked for spelling, and typed (12 pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced). The report is between 1200-1400 words in length. The report and observation log are submitted by the due date.</em>*</td>
<td>The report fails to conform to the conventions of standard English. There are numerous spelling errors and the essay has not been proof-read. The document is not typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The report is not double spaced. The essay word length is not between 1200-1400 words. The essay and/or log is submitted late.</td>
<td>Portions of the report conform to the conventions of standard English. There are numerous spelling errors. The document is not typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The report is not double spaced. The essay word length is not between 1200-1400 words. The essay and/or log is submitted late.</td>
<td>The overwhelming majority of the report conforms to the conventions of standard English. There are few spelling errors. The report is typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font and is double spaced. The report is between 1200-1400 words in length. The essay and log are submitted by the due date.</td>
<td>The entire report conforms to the conventions of standard English. There are no spelling errors. The document is typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font and is double spaced. The report is between 1200-1400 words in length. The essay and log are submitted by the due date.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Report refers to the essay itself, not the observation log.*
Final Group Presentation Guidelines

Directions/Guidelines:

Students will be grouped and collaborate with their group members to present on an urban education related topic or current event. Topics might include standardized assessments (such as the PARCC assessment), differentiated instruction, teaching English Learners in general education/mainstream classrooms, inclusion (the placement of students with IEPs in general education classrooms), the role/influence of early childhood education programs in urban communities, multicultural approaches to teaching specific content areas (such as math or science) or strengthening the home-school-community relationship in urban school districts.

Each group is to identify 3 current articles (newspaper, magazine, or internet) on their topic and provide them to the instructor on the day of the presentation. These articles (along with the course content) will inform the presentation. The articles should have been published no more than 3 years ago.

Each presentation will be 15 minutes. Each group member will present her/himself. Each group will create a PowerPoint to accompany their presentation. Groups will be assessed with the group presentation rubric.
### Scoring Rubric for Final Group Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Total Possible Points</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong> (2 points)</td>
<td>The type of presentation is appropriate for the topic and audience. Information is presented in a logical sequence. The presentation appropriately cites course content and 3 other references.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong> (4 points)</td>
<td>Introduction is attention-getting, lays out the topic well, and establishes a framework for the rest of the presentation. The content is presented in a way that is easy to understand and demonstrates the students' knowledge of the topic. The presentation contains accurate information. Appropriate amount of material is prepared, and points made reflect their relative importance. Materials and examples provided are relevant to the overall message/purpose of the presentation.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong> (4 points)</td>
<td>Speakers maintain good eye contact with the audience, are appropriately animated (e.g., gestures, moving around, etc.), and use a clear, audible voice. Each group member presents to the class curing the presentation. The Powerpoint is well prepared, proofread and informative. The presentation is 15th minutes in length. Information is well communicated.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total: 10 points**
Bibliography


Appendix G

Dr. Ocampo’s Syllabus (ECU)*

*Information that would reveal the identities of the participants or the institution has been redacted.

---

**Fall 2019**

*Classroom Management Workshop (1cr)*

*Management and Assessment (2cr)*

**Course Description:** This practical course is intended to provide teaching candidates with practical, “hands on” strategies for managing their classrooms. There will be a focus on working with diverse students from a variety of racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Technology, group work, roles, plays and class discussion are used to explore relevant issues.

To accommodate students doing their clinical experiences, the first class will be in person and the remaining classes online via BlackBoard.

**Text (Required forRecommended for**


ISBN: 0-13-705074-7 (You may use a later or newer edition, the section headings will be similar but the exact page numbers may be different)

**Overview of Topics: Tuesday, September 3, 2019 (9:55AM – 2:00PM)**

- Introductions/Review of Syllabus/BlackBoard protocols
- “Real” students and youth culture
- Seating arrangement (Ch. 6)
- Establishing Rules and Discipline (Ch. 9)
- Views on Changing Behavior (Ch. 16)
- Developing “Withitness” *Kounin, 1977
- Consistency in all things
- Bullying
- Overview of “Assertive Discipline” techniques
- Explanation of Classroom Management Mini-Research project
Overview of Topics: Wednesday, September 4, 2019 (Online)
- 6 "Soft Spots" of disciplining
- Causes of Misbehavior (Ch. 17)
- Preventing Discipline Problems before they Start (Ch 18)
- Creating a Positive Classroom Climate (Ch 19)

Overview of Topics: Thursday, September 4, 2019 (Online)
- Good and Bad Nonverbal Strategies (Ch. 20)
- Strategic Discipline: Working with Disruptive Students: Some Strategies for Success
- Preventing Discipline Problems before they Start (Ch 18)
- Creating a Positive Classroom Climate (Ch 19)

Friday, Thursday, September 4, 2019 (Online)
- Psycho/social nature of disruptive behavior.
- Developing "Withitness* " *Kounin, 1977
- Consistency in all things
- Bullying
**BlackBoard Online.** Respond to questions below. Make sure responses are proof-read, detailed, and comprehensive. Additionally, cut and paste assignments into Discussion Board, do not just attach them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>(due by midnight on due date)</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1. PowerPoint Reflection:</strong> Based on the class PowerPoint, identify 10 practical classroom management strategies/ideas/concepts you feel would be effective, describe each in detail, and provide a hypothetical example illustrating how each might work in an actual classroom. (Preferably, using the subject/grade of your certification/focus for the hypothetical). Length is approximately four typed double-spaced pages. Cut and paste onto Discussion Board. (PowerPoint will be available on BlackBoard in “Content” tab)</td>
<td>W 9/4/19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2. 6 Teacher Personality Traits That Make Classroom Management More Difficult.</strong> Review the six traits discussed in the article, and for each one evaluate the degree to which that trait is an issue for you and classroom management. Then describe what steps you could take to improve in each of the areas. Length is approximately two typed double-spaced pages. Cut and paste onto Discussion Board. <em>(Article Available in Syllabus)</em></td>
<td>Th 9/5/19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A3. Generating Academic Urgency report.</strong> Reviewing the “10 Specific Issues, Importance, and Possible Solutions” starting on page 8 of the “Generating Academic Urgency through Improved Classroom Management” report, describe why each is important, then evaluate how effective you believe the proposed solutions would be. Then select five solutions you could see yourself applying in your classroom and why. Length is approximately four typed double-spaced pages. Cut and paste onto Discussion Board. <em>(Document will be available on BlackBoard “Content” tab)</em></td>
<td>F 9/6/19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A4. Bullying Law Puts New Jersey Schools on Spot.</strong> Read the article on bullying legislation and respond to the following: a. Do you believe that schools should be putting this much time and resources into combating bullying, and do you think it will be effective? Explain why.</td>
<td>W 9/9/19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. One concern raised in the article is that, “unintended consequence of the new law could be that students, or their parents, will find it easier to label minor squabbles bullying than to find ways to work out their differences.” To what extent do you believe this may be true? How can you tell what is “bullying” and what is harmless fun? Explain.
c. What can you do to make sure you are ready to effectively handle bullying in your classroom?
Length is approximately three typed double-spaced pages. Cut and paste onto Discussion Board.
(Article Available in Syllabus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A5. Classroom Management Mini-research</th>
<th>F 9/13/19</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(See description in syllabus) Length</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is approximately four typed double-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spaced pages. Cut and paste onto</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board and as attachment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| A6. Understanding and Utilizing the Six Soft Spots of Student Discipline | M 9/16/19 | 10 |
| Review the Six Soft Spots concepts, explain how and why it could be effective, and provide a hypothetical example illustrating how three of them might work in an actual classroom (Preferably, using the subject/grade of your certification/focus for the hypothetical). Length is approximately three typed double-spaced pages. Cut and paste onto Discussion Board.  |
| (Handout Available in Syllabus) |          |    |

| A7. EDU Final Exam. Open Notebook. See Description in syllabus. NOTE: FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT ONLY, DO NOT POST ON DISCUSSION BOARD- SEND DIRECTLY TO PROFESSOR VIA BLACKBOARD MESSENGER.  | M 9/23/19 | 30 |
| (Note: a7 is final assignment for students) |          |    |

| Total | 100 |

| Students ONLY (Assessment Portion) Fall 2019  |
| (Done Via Blackboard) |

Assessment Portion

- Use BlackBoard to complete the following five assignments within the time frame indicated.
- What is an assessment?... An assessment is any form of evaluating student learning, competence, aptitude, or ability. Assessments can be formal or informal. They can also be **formative** (measuring how student learning is evolving) or **summative** (measuring the learning outcome).

Read Kronowitz Units 6 “Engaging all Learners” and 7 “Assessing and Communicating”

(If you have a different edition of the book, look for these headings)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The assignments below are for EDU students only (not...</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1.</strong> Based on Kronowitz, define and evaluate each of the following types of assessments A) Norm referenced B) Authentic assessment/Performance based C) Portfolio assessment. Evaluate means provide your opinions of pros and cons. (Note: make certain to cut and paste assignments directly into text box on Blackboard, DO NOT just attach it.)</td>
<td>M 9/30/19 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2.</strong> Based on Chap. 30 Summarize Kronowitz’s 5 steps to authentic assessment (p. 318) and provide your opinion as to how well it would work. (Note: make certain to cut and paste assignments directly into text box on Blackboard, DO NOT just attach it.)</td>
<td>M 10/14/19 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B3.</strong> Choose a lesson plan* that you have, or will, (or want) to implement. For your students’ assignment resulting from your lesson plan, <em>create a rubric</em> (see p. 374-75 details) that you would use to evaluate that assignment. Submit both the lesson plan and the rubric. (Note: make certain to cut and paste assignments directly into text box on Blackboard, DO NOT just attach it.)</td>
<td>M 11/4/19 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B4. Choose a lesson plan* that you have, or will (or want) to implement. Create your own original test or quiz to measure what the students should have learned. Make certain that the quiz/test assesses what the students were supposed to have learned based on the lesson plan. Submit both the lesson plan and the quiz/test. (Note: make certain to cut and paste assignments directly into text box on Blackboard, DO NOT just attach it.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 11/25/19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B5. Review Kronowitz’s “Ten suggestions for Standardized Test Preparation” record each step, explain why each might be helpful and how you would implement it in your own classroom. Note this is the final assignment of the course. (Note: make certain to cut and paste assignments directly into text box on Blackboard, DO NOT just attach it.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 12/2/19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Possible Points

(for EDU students, total grades from first and second part of course will be averaged together)

*Lesson plans should use the edTPA aligned model included at the bottom of this syllabus. It does not have to be followed exactly, but as closely as possible. At a minimum, the following should be included.

1. Subject area/topic/grade
2. Lesson/learning objectives
3. State standards addressed
4. Procedure
5. Assessment method

Feel free to e-mail be asap if you have any questions about these assignments
A2. 6 Teacher Personality Traits That Make Classroom Management More Difficult

by Michael Linsin on July 2, 2011

If you’re struggling with classroom management and wondering why, one of the first areas to examine is the personality you bring with you to the classroom.

Many teachers become different people the minute their students walk through the door. Sometimes this is a good thing—if being around students makes you brighten like a Broadway singer or become as prenaturally calm as a mountain lake.

But for the vast number of teachers, the presence of a large and active group of students can, at least to some degree, bring about personality traits that are detrimental to classroom management success.

The good news is that with a simple two-minute routine you can condition yourself to eliminate those traits that work against you, and replace them with those that work in your favor.

The following six teacher personality traits make classroom management more difficult. You’ll do well to leave them outside your classroom door.

1. Impatience

Impatient teachers talk fast, move fast, and tend to either look the other way in the face of misbehavior, or react emotionally to it. They rush through lessons, gloss over instructions, and out of necessity have lower expectations for students. This produces a restless, excitable classroom that is primed to cause trouble.

2. Quick To Anger

A single flash of anger can undo weeks of rapport building with your students. When you yell, scold, use sarcasm, or otherwise lose your cool, you distance yourself from your students and undermine their trust and respect of you. You become less approachable, less likeable, and less influential—all critical keys to creating a well-behaved classroom.
3. Pessimism

Teachers who are pessimistic in nature are unable to create the well-behaved classroom they desire. Negative thoughts, feelings, and attitudes about students—particularly difficult students—are impossible to hide. They reveal themselves through your words, body language, and tone of voice and make building relationships with them an impossibility.

4. Irritability

Irritability (grouchiness, moodiness) communicates to students that they can’t trust you or depend on you. It creates resentment, confusion, and instability. It also causes you to be inconsistent—both with your classroom management plan and in your interactions with students—leading to more frequent and more severe misbehavior.

5. Overly Sensitive

Teachers with thin skin—those who take misbehavior personally—inevitably, and often subconsciously, seek revenge against their students. They can’t help themselves. Out of their resentment and spite they make the kind of classroom management mistakes like yelling, scolding, and holding grudges that result in a spiraling of student behavior.

6. Easily Frustrated

Frequent sighs, rolling eyes, red-faced lectures. Outward signs of frustration can cause enveloping, knife-cutting tension in your classroom. When you allow students to get under your skin, it not only makes your classroom unnerving and unpleasant, but it causes students to challenge your authority and test you whenever they get the chance.

A Simple Two-Minute Routine

The way you present yourself to your students has a monumental effect on classroom management—more so than most teachers realize. If you’re at all susceptible to one or more of the personality traits above, then you’ll be a more effective teacher if you get a handle on them.

The simplest way is to spend a couple of minutes before your students arrive each day with your eyes closed, visualizing your best self calmly and confidently managing your classroom.

Picture yourself responding to misbehavior with poise. Watch as you joyfully present your lessons to a responsive class. See yourself building rapport, loving your job, and following your classroom management plan to the letter.

Because when you choose to see only the best in yourself and in your students...

That’s exactly what you’ll get
Bullying Law Puts Schools on Spot

By WINNIE HU Published: August 30, 2011

Under a new state law in lunch-line bullies in the schools can be reported to the police by their classmates this fall through anonymous tips to the Crimestoppers hot line.

In children, including kindergartners, will spend six class periods learning, among other things, the difference between telling and tattling.

And at students will be told that there is no such thing as an innocent bystander when it comes to bullying: if they see it, they have a responsibility to try to stop it.

But while many parents and educators welcome the efforts to curb bullying both on campus and online, some superintendents and school board members across say the new law, which takes effect Sept. 1, reaches much too far, and complain that they have been given no additional resources to meet its mandates.

The law, known as the is considered the toughest legislation against bullying in the nation. Propelled by public outcry over the suicide of a Rutgers University freshman, Tyler Clementi, nearly a year ago, it demands that all public schools adopt comprehensive antibullying policies (there are 18 pages of “required components”), increase staff training and adhere to tight deadlines for reporting episodes.

Each school must designate an antibullying specialist to investigate complaints; each district must, in turn, have an antibullying coordinator; and the State Education Department will evaluate every effort, posting grades on its Web site. Superintendents said that educators who failed to comply could lose their licenses.
“I think this has gone well overboard,” executive director of the Association of School Administrators, said. “Now we have to police the community 24 hours a day. Where are the people and the resources to do this?”

In most cases, schools are tapping guidance counselors and social workers as the new antibullying specialists, raising questions of whether they have the time or experience to look into every complaint of harassment or intimidation and write the detailed reports required. Some administrators are also worried that making schools legally responsible for bullying on a wider scale will lead to more complaints and open the door to lawsuits from students and parents dissatisfied with the outcome.

But supporters of the law say that schools need to do more as conflicts spread from cafeterias and corridors to social media sites, magnifying the effects and making them much harder to shut down. Mr. Clementi jumped off the George Washington Bridge after his college roommate secretly used a webcam to capture an intimate encounter between Mr. Clementi and another man and stream it over the Internet, according to the police.

“It’s not the traditional bullying: the big kid in the schoolyard saying, ‘You’re going to do what I say,’ ” an assistant principal at High, said.

Dr., who investigates half a dozen complaints of bullying each month, said most involved both comments on the Internet and face-to-face confrontations on campus. “It’s gossip, innuendo, rumors — and people getting mad about it,” he said.

This summer, thousands of school employees attended training sessions on the new law; more than 200 districts have snapped up a $1,295 package put together by a consulting firm that includes a 100-page manual and a DVD.

At a three-hour workshop this month, Philip W. Nicastro, vice president of the firm, Strauss Esmay Associates, tried to reassure a group of newly named antibullying specialists and coordinators gathered in a darkened auditorium at High School.

“I know many of you came in here saying, ‘Holy cow, I’m going to be dealing with 10 reports a day because everything is bullying,’ ” he told the audience, some of whom laughed nervously.

Afterward, a counselor at the School in acknowledged that the new law was “a little overwhelming.” She said cyberbullying
increased at her school last year, with students texting or posting mean messages about classmates.

The law also requires districts to appoint a safety team at each school, made up of teachers, staff members and parents, to review complaints. It orders principals to begin an investigation within one school day of a bullying episode, and superintendents to provide reports to twice a year detailing all episodes. Statewide, there were 2,846 such reports in 2008-9, the most recent year for which a total was available.

In the district, the new partnership with Crimestoppers, a program of the county sheriff’s office, is intended to make reporting easier, but it also ups the ante by involving law enforcement rather than resolving issues in the principal’s office. Crimestoppers will accept anonymous text messages, calls or tips to its Web site, then forward the information to school and local police officials.

The district is also spending $3,000 to expand antibullying training to most of its staff, including substitute teachers, coaches, custodians and cafeteria aides. It is also planning its first Community Night of Respect for students and parents in October.

“We really want to be able to implement this new law and achieve results,” the district’s superintendent, said, though he added that the law’s “sheer scope may prove to be a bit unwieldy and may require some practical refinement.”

In antibullying efforts will start in the classroom, with a series of posters and programs, including role-playing exercises. In one lesson, students will study pictures of children’s faces and talk about the emotions expressed (annoyance, disappointment), while in another, they will practice saying phrases like “I am angry.”

“The whole push is to incorporate the antibullying process into the culture,” a school psychologist, said. “We’re empowering children to use the term ‘bullying’ and to speak up for themselves and for others.”

Even districts that have long made antibullying programs a priority are preparing to step up their efforts, in response to the greater reporting demands. “This gives a definite timeline,” the superintendent, said, noting the new one-day requirement. “Before, our rule was you need to do it as quickly as possible.”
But Dr. cautioned that an unintended consequence of the new law could be that students, or their parents, will find it easier to label minor squabbles bullying than to find ways to work out their differences.

“Kids have to learn to deal with conflict,” she said. “What a shame if they don’t know how to effectively interact with their peers when they have a disagreement.”

A5. Classroom Management Mini-research project description

Students will choose one classroom behavior issue (e.g. excessive talking, hitting, refusal to complete assignments, disrespecting teacher, cursing, etc…) relevant to the grade and environment of their choice. Once the issue is identified, students will research potential solutions, and ultimately list at least five quality solutions as well as reasons why these solutions should be effective. Finally, they will select the solution that they believe would be most effective and explain why.

Format

Classroom Behavior Issue:

Five possible solutions and why/how they should be effective:

- Solution 1 (description and rationale)
- Solution 2 (description and rationale)
- Solution 3 (description and rationale)
- Solution 4 (description and rationale)
- Solution 5 (description and rationale)

Identify which possible solution would work best and briefly state why:
A6 Understanding and Utilizing the Six Soft Spots of Student Discipline

- There are 6 "soft spots" that you can use.
- Just like with instruction, you must individualize instruction as much as possible.
- It will take some time, and trial and error, but if you can identify which students respond to which soft spot, you can handle almost any student.
- We will review when and how to use these. The key is to KNOW your students as well as possible.

1. PC (Parent Contact)

2. TG (Threat to Grades)
3. PR (Principal Referral)

4. RT (Reduction of Free/Fun Time)

5. PA (Personal Appeal)

6. DM (Deal Making)

A7. Final Exam

Final Exam:

Classroom management scenario: You are an eighth grade teacher. You have a student, Johnny, who is constantly disruptive. He talks out of turn, insults other students, gets out of his seat, and rarely does his work. You have called his parents, and while they admit he is a problem, they say that there is not much they can do. You bring the issue to your vice-principal. She tells you to write up a contract/behavior management plan to share with him and his parents. You are to write up the plan and include as many of the items below as possible:

- Outline behavioral expectations for Johnny
- Describe consequences for misbehavior
- Describe possible rewards for good behavior
- Describe the role that you would like for his parents to play and how you will communicate with his parents on an ongoing basis.

- Describe how you will construct the classroom to optimize the environment for learning.

- Describe specific learning activities you will implement to maximize engagement for Johnny.

- Include strategies for how you will treat Johnny in class when he is disruptive

- Include a timeline for how and when you will assess his progress

Note 1: Try to use as many of the ideas and strategies we discussed in class as well as any other ideas you have.

Note 2: Obviously you have limited information about this case, so feel free to add your own background details

Note 3: You may write this assignment in any format as long as you make your ideas clear.

Note 4: The assignment is the final, and should be extensive. The equivalent of about 4 to 5 double spaced pages should do it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. of students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Focus:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective(s):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content standards: (if relevant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance: (How will you make the material relevant/connect it to students’ lives and culture?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of the Lesson (include motivation for the lesson/how you will open students’ inquiry into the central focus, how you will motivate them to learn):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Middle of the Lesson (what activities and key questions will you use to engage your students in critical thinking and skills development around the central focus? How will students apply their knowledge?): |

| Conclusion of the Lesson (think about how you will sum up links among this lesson and others in the learning segment): |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative assessment (informal):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Summative (evaluative) assessment (formal): |

| Modifications/Accommodations (if any) (address IEP students, 504 students, ELL, gifted students, struggling learners, culturally diverse students, and other groups as relevant to the class): |
Appendix H

Dr. Ruben’s Syllabus (NSU)*

*Information that would reveal the identities of the participants or the institution has been redacted.

Fall 2019

Historical Foundations of American Education
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30-12:45

[Redacted]

Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00-11:30 and Wednesdays 11:00-12:00.

Required Book


The book can be found online: [https://he.kendallhunt.com/grinberg-schwarzer](https://he.kendallhunt.com/grinberg-schwarzer)

You must have your textbook available for discussion in class (print or online)

Readings: Other readings are available in the Canvas site for this class under the “files” category.

Catalog description

This course offers students a crucial sequence of ideas that constitute one of the central themes in American society and culture. Since its beginnings, American thinkers have seen education as the key to an informed citizenry. Major themes in American education will be looked at through the reading of primary and secondary sources.

Purposes

This class will focus on the social, cultural, and political history of education. The objectives of this class are:
(1) To present students with knowledge of enduring themes in the social history of American education including curricular and pedagogical dimensions in schools.

(2) To introduce students to content knowledge in social theory, cultural studies, economy and political theory as analytical tools to understand education.

(3) To provide students with understandings of how historical, political, economic, sociological, and cultural perspectives contribute to the design, analysis, and implementation of educational policies, pedagogies, and curriculum, in and out of formal and non-formal organizations, institutions, and communities.

This course incorporates lectures with the use of primary documents and scholarly sources designed so that students can also have a glimpse at how to study the past and present of education. Historians’ research is mostly done with primary sources, such as official government policy statements, state educational policies, laws and regulations, school curricula, curricular materials, course syllabi, catalogs, documents defining political positions of interest groups, letters, interviews, oral histories, and pictures among many other sources. Furthermore, occasionally literary fiction, music, and film can provide information and directions that aid the historian in her/his research.

Therefore, historians of education analyze “context” in order to understand “facts,” from multiple points of view informed by social, economic, political, and cultural theories. We will do this type of discussion and analysis in class.

**Format:** The format of this course includes a combination of lectures, discussions, and documentary movies.

**Course Policies and Evaluation**

**Participation:** It is expected that participants will attend all meetings, come on time, and will come prepared for class. Poor attendance and/or tardiness will result in a lower grade.

**Supporting Reading:** Readings are important for background knowledge, for discussions, and for support of the lectures and discussions. You will get more out of the course if you consistently keep up with the readings.

**Exams:** The exams cover lecture presentations, book chapters, and other readings, as well as discussions brought up in class. Details will be provided in class.

**CBQ (Chapter Based Questions):** You have short CBQ assignments to complete online (CANVAS). You need to respond to posted questions about documents, book chapters, and/or articles as outlined below in the class schedule. Late posted responses will receive lower grades. See the form below after the calendar to know how to structure each CBQ assignment.
Academic integrity standards will be strictly enforced. Plagiarism or cheating on exams will result in failing grade for the course. Please consult official policies.

**Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>50 points (25 points each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBQs</td>
<td>40 points (5 points each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tentative Calendar**

**September 5**
Introductions, class objectives, expectations

**September 10 and 12**
Education, Democracy, and the Modern Nation-State
Ideology, Access to Knowledge and the Role of Schooling for National and Economic Agendas.
Background reading:
- Price & Grinberg (2009), The foundations of, Chapter 1 (in Canvas)
- Horace Mann Reports, Chapter 9 (Canvas)

**September 17 and 19**
Americanization and Education
Background reading:
- Roosevelt Speech, 1916, starting with the section “A word to Americans of German blood” (in Canvas)
  DUE on 9/17 by 10:00 AM:

**September 24 and 26**
Contexts, Power, and Social Theories in Education
National Agendas and Immigration
DUE on 9/24 by 10:00 AM:

**October 1 (no regular class meeting)**
**Watch Online:**
As American as Public School:

**October 3**
Gender and Teaching: The Legacy of the Normal School
Background reading:
- Price & Grinberg (2009), Teachers, feminization, Chapter 6 (Canvas)
(Read, if you can do it in Spanish) - Grinberg (2015), Breve reseña histórica (in Spanish, Canvas)

October 8 and 10
Curriculum and Teaching
Comparative Education
Background reading:
- Maloney & Powell (2018), Redefining the Math Wars (book, chapter 8).
- Adler (1983), Everybody’s Business (Canvas)

October 15 and 17
School funding
Schools, Bureaucracy, and Equal Opportunity
DUE on 10/15 by 10:00 AM:
CBQ 4, Murray & Frank (2018), School Funding (book, chapter 7).

October 22
Review

October 24
EXAM 1

October 29 and 31
Documentary movie: Why Do These Kids Love School
The history of student-centered practices
Background reading:
- Price & Grinberg (2009), Progressive Perspectives, Chapter 21 (Canvas)

November 5 and 7
The legacy of progressivism in education
Life adjustment curriculum, Cold War and curricular reform
Background reading:
- Price & Grinberg (2009), Cold war reforms, Chapter 37 (Canvas)

November 12 and 14
The Coleman Report and the Great Society
Human Capital, Social Capital, and Cultural Capital
Social Stratification and Social Reproduction
Background reading:
- Grinberg, Price, & Naiditch (2009), Schooling and Social Class (Canvas)
- Barrios & Barrios, Understanding the Context of Parental Involvement (book, chapter 13)
DUE on 11/12 by 10:00 AM:
CBQ 6, Rivera-Rodas & Aufflant (2018), Beyond class (book, chapter 2).

November 19 and 21
Progressivism and critical pedagogy
Background reading:
November 26 (no regular class meeting)

Watch Online:
A Struggle for Educational Equality: 1950 to 1980:

December 3
Civil Rights
"A class divided" (short documentary)
Background reading:
- Brown vs Board of Education (Canvas)

December 5
Bilingual, Bicultural and Multicultural Education: The Historical development
The politics of Bilingual ESL education
Background reading:
- Crinberg & Saavedra (2000), Bilingual/ESL Education (Canvas)
DUE on 12/5 by 10:00 AM
- CBQ 8: Schwarzer & Kopeczynski (2018), From Bilingual to English Only to Multilingual (book, chapter 3).

December 10 and 12
Market-Based School Reforms since the 1980s
Background reading:
- Ed Week (2017) (Canvas),
- What are Charter Schools? (Canvas)
- Labree (2010), What Schools Can’t Do (Canvas)

December 17
Take-home exam available (NO class meeting)

CBQ: Chapter Based Questions (about 350 words)
Address the items listed below in complete sentences based on the assigned chapter/document. Upload this assignment on Canvas.
1- Title of chapter or document and Author/s names.
2- What is/are the overall argument/s or thesis/theses of the chapter or document? Provide page numbers when you cite or refer to the text. (about a paragraph).
3- List "evidence" in the chapter to support or prove the argument/s or thesis/theses and explain. Provide page numbers when you cite or refer to the text. (about a paragraph or two).
4- Write a question to the author/s, which could be also used for possible discussion in class.
Appendix I

Dr. Abbott’s Syllabus (NSU)*

*Information that would reveal the identities of the participants or the institution has been redacted.
Where appropriate, all homework and other assignments completed outside of class must be word processed in black ink 12 pt, Times/New Roman, Helvetica, or Garamond, with one inch margins and page numbers. Refer to APA Publication Manual (6th Ed) and the *Standards for Formal Written Work for Students* for basic writing and citation guidelines. You may find the following online guide useful: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01.

Academic integrity refers to the essential quality of the search for knowledge undertaken by a student. INCORPORATE INFORMATION FROM THE READINGS (include in-text reference and end-of-text), CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES, YOUR FIELD AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES INTO ALL CLASS WORK. These sources are the basis for grading. Papers, reports, lesson plans, research, and other work products submitted by students shall be your original work except as properly cited.

Unless otherwise noted, homework and other assignments “due” are expected at the start of class in hard copy. Failure to adhere to the submission guidelines will result in non-grading, or revising and resubmitting of the assignment at the professor’s discretion. Late homework will not be accepted. Late class assignments are subject to grade reductions. If you are absent on a homework due date, consider asking a classmate to submit your work or turn it in before your absence.

Attendance When you are absent, you diminish your learning opportunity and deny others the chance to benefit from you. Since this is neither a MOOC nor other online course, you may miss one (1) class without penalty. For each absence thereafter, you may lose up to five (5) points from your final participation grade. Excessive absences, regardless of the excuse, may result in course failure. Late arrivals and early departures will count the same as an absence. You are responsible for making up and obtaining missed assignments, class work, handouts, and lecture notes DURING OFFICE HOURS. If you anticipate missing multiple classes, please see the professor immediately to discuss whether this is a good time for you to take the course.

Please refrain from side conversations, rude, offensive, and potentially inappropriate comments during class. When you have your classroom, cell phone calls and texts will likely be limited if not prohibited. So in this classroom, avoid using your cell phone for personal matters during class. You are discouraged from completing personal assignments and tasks unrelated to the course during class time. Unrelated Internet and Social Media use are discouraged.

III. ACADEMIC COURSE EXPECTATIONS

**Participation includes:** (10 pts)
- Active independent reading of and interaction with texts, articles, and online materials/resources that result in meaningful papers and discussions;
- Significant attention to and completion of independent, collaborative, and whole group in-class work;
- Meaningful and informed lesson demonstrations, presentations, activities and other course tasks;
- Willingness to speak publicly and listen respectfully during formal and informal classroom activities;
- In-class volunteering and responding to questions;
- Use and submission of select homework which is why late homework will not be accepted.
- Regular and timely attendance

*While some people enjoy public speaking I understand that others are inhibited. However, classroom teachers are expected to speak to large groups and public audiences. The course is designed to develop your confidence and comfort."

**Assessment and grading standards:**

\[ \checkmark + \text{ outstanding} \quad \checkmark \text{satisfactory} \quad \checkmark - \text{unsatisfactory} \]
While you may devote significant time and effort to assignments, the integrity of work is the primary evaluative factor. Students are welcome to revise and resubmit poor and failing assignments (see above) BUT only within two weeks after initial grading. Resubmit the originally graded assignment along with revisions clearly showing new/changed ideas and responses to instructor’s comments. Students are urged to regularly monitor their grades on Canvas and meet with the instructor outside of class.

IV. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Barring potential harm, the person and perspective of each human being in this class is welcome. Since lived experience informs individual values and identity, have respect for the varied beliefs and values expressed by your classmates and instructor. Refrain from disparaging comments and offensive gestures. Instead, extend regard for similarities as well as the differences among us. Such differences include: economic and linguistic, gender and sexuality, ability and capacity, lineage and religion; race and ethnicity; nationality and political affiliation. Difficultly with adhering to these parameters may mean that this is NOT the course section for you.

In addition, course materials, assignments, and activities exist to support course goals/objectives as well as to enhance your growth. Advise the instructor of special needs, requirements, and considerations to facilitate your learning. The student life office provides assistance to students with physical, sensory, learning, psychological, neurological, and chronic medical disabilities. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate fully in class please contact as soon as possible. Room ___ (phone), Room ___, Room ___. The contact person plays the role of facilitator between your needs, faculty requirements, and administrative guidelines of the University. Disability-related information is not shared without the permission of the student.

Pantry ___ answer to food insecurity. If you need help with food items and personal hygiene products visit Room ___ during their business hours.

As a community of learners, everyone is expected to contribute to the whole. To that end, politely present your ideas, corrections and solutions especially relative to course goals and objectives. Praise is welcome; put-downs are not.

V. REQUIRED READINGS AND MATERIALS

- National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (NCSSS) http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands
- Learning Standards:
  - Visual and Performing Arts
  - Social Studies
• Taking Informed Action <https://www.socialstudies.org/publications/socialeducation/november-december2013/taking_informed_action_to_engage_students_in_civic_life>
• 30 Super Cool Art Techniques for Kids <https://bagyabdabd.com/super-cool-art-techniques-kids/>

*A full copy of Parker and Beck, the primary text for the course, is on 2-hour reserve in Sprague Library."

**Recommended Resources**

- Types of Rubrics <http://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching-guides/feedback-grading/rubrics/Pages/default.aspx>

**Perspective**

- Open mind, flexible disposition, and collaborative spirit

**YI, MAJOR COURSE TASKS and ASSIGNMENTS**

**INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS** (Homework—HW; Classwork—CW)

1. **County Pride Pennant (10pts)**—It often the burt of jokes and negativity. In 2017, FBI Hate Crimes Database ranked 11th in the US for LGBTQ bias incidents. Reports that in 2018 the most frequently targeted groups for bias incidents were Blacks (race), Jewish (religion), and Hispanics/Latinos (ethnicity). Misperception, misunderstanding and lack of awareness often play a role in hate crimes and offensive behavior. Your task is to create a Pride pennant highlighting the history, accomplishments, and contributions by non-SWM citizens by county. Use art elements, design principles, and integrate your assigned challenge media (e.g. aluminum foil, Neoprene, Velcro). On the back, create a key for the design principles and list references. **DUE: 9/26**

2. **WebQuest (10pts)**—A computer-based teaching and learning model, called a WebQuest, requires learners to engage in cooperative or perform tasks using the Internet. Once during the semester you will make and share your WebQuest with a classmate who will take and evaluate your WebQuest. Use Powerpoint, GoogleSlides, Prezi, YouTube or similar source to organize your information. Where possible, submit hardcopy or links. See handout and assigned readings. Use design principles. **CW Standards for Candidates in Initial Teacher Programs 1, 2, 8). DUE: 12/5**

**News Talk (10pts)**—Typically, the news reports controversial topics and dealings about the present day. Examining current events fosters an understanding of social studies. Each week 3 people will highlight a United States current event about Native American-Indigenous/Indian or Asian American Culture. Each person will use 3-5 minutes to: a) introduce themselves; b) discuss the current event; c) explain the current event's connection to ONE National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (NCSS) Theme—see [http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands-](http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands-); d) use a performing art; e) suggest ideas for applying ONE current event strategy—see Parker and Beck Chp 6 pp 180-189. AVOID verbatim reading of your news stories. **HW, CW VARIES**

*The performing arts are a division of art that includes any creative endeavor where the artist uses an aspect of their physical being, such as their body or voice, as the presentation medium in front of an audience—dance, theater, opera, music, magic, illusion, mime, spoken word, circus skill and puppetry are all considered types of performing arts.*

*403*
3. Multicultural Art and Literature Study Buddy (10pts)—According to Stephens & Jairells (2003), a “portable study buddy” is a self-directed learning center in a bag. Just as classroom learning centers target academic development, portable study buddies make learning mobile. Borrow from Stephens and Jairells’ suggestions to create an elementary level portable study buddy that uses art to foster literacy based on a multicultural children’s picture book. Standards for Candidates in Initial Teacher Programs 3,4,6,10) HW, CW DUE: 10/24

4. Talk and Teach Reflection (10pts)—Following each Talk and Teach Demonstration you will evaluate your experience. In 2-3 pages discuss: a) the scope, and b) sequence—see Parker and Beck pp. 6-7—c) the compelling question, d) strengths, e) challenges, f) possible classroom applications including opportunities for students with certain learning differences, g) new understandings you gained about i) the topic, ii) yourself. Each page should have 1-2 in text references and a reference list. See Canvas for guidelines. HW DUE: 11/14; 11/21

5. Lesson Plans (10)—Throughout the semester you will have opportunities to explore and examine lesson plans. HW, CW DUE: 10/10; 10/31

6. Enduring Understanding News Paper (10pts)—On our last day, you will design a newspaper to highlight your gains from the course. DUE: 12/5

GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

1. Talk and Teach (TnT) Demonstration (20 pts)—Working in random groups, you will explore and research an assigned topic related to course goals. Then, incorporate the arts to plan ONE interactive hour-long lesson to teach the class about your assigned topic. Make certain that each group member has a speaking part, that your TnT includes: (a) group member introductions, (b) 1-3 learning objective(s), (c) ONE great teaching strategy from Chap 9 an engaging launch to reveal your compelling question, (d) controversial content, (e) a quick and easy craft or super cool art technique, (f) movement, (g) a tangible takeaway, (h) youth orientated informed outreach/ action, (i) reference to for elementary (K-6) social studies—required, visual/performing arts—optional, (j) accommodations for a learner with ADHD, dyslexia, dysgraphia, anxiety, or autism, (k) “kid” appropriate, relevant joke or riddle. This is NOT a formal presentation so avoid talking to and lecturing the class for more than 10 minutes straight. Instead, consider this a professional workshop whereby we talk about stuff, do things, and have experiences. Refer to class activities, Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences, Dale’s Cone of Learning, Tips for Engaging Students in Learning http://bit.ly/2oMWpXR, Learning happens best when teaching is active Standards for Candidates in Initial Teacher Programs 1,4,5,6,11,12). HW, CW VARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verde</th>
<th>Rojo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bullying and Anti-bullying Techniques (rojo). ADHD. Like many states in the US has an HIB statute designed to keep all children safe in schools. What is HIB and how are these concepts defined? What obligations do educators have to prevent and respond to HIB, and in what contexts? Use yarn and/or a super cool art technique to teach self-esteem or confidence building strategies in schoolchildren. Lead class in a relevant extension activity that fosters friendship/kindness involving community engagement/taking informed action—see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt6J4tC3_TY; Task description handout. DUE: 11/7

Revised 9/6/19
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fecha</th>
<th>Tema y las Actividades de Hoy</th>
<th>la Tarea de Esta Noche</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/5/19</td>
<td>□ Your course goals</td>
<td>READ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Defining Social Studies, the Arts and a rationale for the integration</td>
<td>□ Parker and Beck Chp 1 Introduction to Social Studies Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ The Syllabus</td>
<td>MAKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Lites</td>
<td>□ Walking and Profile Silhouettes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Unaguireta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTGY4GH7HJs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTGY4GH7HJs</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BRING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Syllabus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Parker and Beck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Online Access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/12</td>
<td>□ Chp 1 Review</td>
<td>READ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Teaching Current Events</td>
<td>□ Social Studies (SS) Introductions pp. 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ News Talk Preparation</td>
<td>□ Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) Introductions pp. 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ NGSS Themes</td>
<td>□ Parker and Beck Chp 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Kinetic Art</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BRING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Profile and Walking Black Paper Silhouettes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>□ This Land is Your Land</td>
<td>MAKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Music Chart</td>
<td>□ NSWM™ County Pride Pennant — see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ SS and VPA Standards</td>
<td>• Important Black People and Places in History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ NSWM™ County Pride Pennant Preparation</td>
<td>• Afro-Americans in a Short History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Mnemonic devices</td>
<td>• Women’s Heritage Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.infoplease.com">www.infoplease.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• About N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• cartoon history on NSWM™ County Pride Pennant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Locate ONE &quot;fun fact&quot; and trivia question for your county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>□ Meet outside of [redacted] Diner</td>
<td>READ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Garden State of Mind</td>
<td>□ Parker &amp; Beck Chp 9 Five Great Teaching Strategies, prepare to demonstrate one based on children’s book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ NSWM™ County Pride Pennants</td>
<td>GET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Cooperative Learning Groups</td>
<td>□ LGBTQ Children’s Picture Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Learning Differently Read Alouds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wide Awake the Worry Machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I Can't Sit Still: Living with ADHD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I See Things Differently: A First Look at Autism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Terrific Teddy's Writing Wars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revised 9/6/19
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fecha</th>
<th>Tema y las Actividades de Hoy</th>
<th>la Tarea de Esta Noche</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>BRING * It's called Dystopia.</td>
<td>READ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pennant</td>
<td>- Parker and Beck Chp 2 Teaching in Diverse Classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- County Fun Fact and NGSS Paragraphs</td>
<td>VISIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lane Law</td>
<td>- Types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- News Talks</td>
<td>- 1. What is the Holocaust education law?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Five Great Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>- 2. What did you know about the law prior to reading it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lesson Plan #1</td>
<td>- 3. What's the rationale for the law? Why was it created?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>BRING - Carl Joseph, Jaheem, and Q</td>
<td>- 4. What are the goals or intended outcomes for the Holocaust education law—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- One great teaching strategy to demonstrate</td>
<td>- for students, teachers, the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- LGBTQ Children's Picture Book</td>
<td>- 5. What's your opinion of this legislation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 6. How does this content align with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>- Six 13 Bohemian Chorale</td>
<td>READ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Meetings from Chester Public Schools</td>
<td>- Can Controversial Topics be Taught in the Early Grades?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Buy Matis World</td>
<td>- <a href="https://bitly/2LZJiPI">https://bitly/2LZJiPI</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Visual Thinking Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>BRING - Holocaust Education Answers 1-6</td>
<td>FIND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Holocaust Children's Book</td>
<td>- Three facts about Indigenous Peoples Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lesson Plan #1</td>
<td>- Two facts about Columbus Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- One image for IDP or Columbus Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>- Love is in Need of Love</td>
<td>VISIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- News Talks</td>
<td>- Types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The Columbus Day Debate</td>
<td>- 1. What is the Holocaust education curriculum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Holidays</td>
<td>- 2. What did you know about curriculum before visiting the website?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teaching Controversial Topics in Early Grades</td>
<td>- 3. What's the rationale for the curriculum? Why was it created?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 4. What are the goals or intended outcomes for the curriculum for students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- teachers; the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 5. What's your opinion of this effort?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 6. How does this content align with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Black Man</td>
<td>GET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- News Talks</td>
<td>- Children's picture storybook about &quot;misperceived, muted, or expanded narrative&quot; in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- numbered heads together</td>
<td>- African/African American history—no MLK, RP, HT, Slavery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- MAKE—a &quot;study buddy&quot; portable learning center for use with your Holocaust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- A/A history book—see Stephens &amp; Jarrels (2003)—CV. Remember to incorporate art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- to foster literacy. Place easy to follow directions and ALL essential supplies within</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Diversity Websites—Tolerance, Facinghistory, GLSEN, ADL, others??</td>
<td>- a container.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lesson Plan #2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BRING - Curriculum Answers 1-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Black History Study Buddy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised 9/6/19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecha</td>
<td>Tema y las Actividades de Hoy</td>
<td>la Tarea de Esta Noche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/31</td>
<td>❡ TtI Demonstration Planning</td>
<td>FIND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Lesson Plan #2</td>
<td>Three facts about bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/7</td>
<td>❡ Where is the Law?</td>
<td>Two images of people being kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Finalize TtT Demonstration Planning 1hr</td>
<td>One article about an anti-bullying initiative/effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ BULLYING AND ANTI-BULLYING TECHNIQUES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ BRING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Bullying/ Anti-Bullying information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/14</td>
<td>❡ Mary, Mary Me</td>
<td>WRITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ News Talks</td>
<td>Reflection Paper #1 about Bullying and Anti-Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ EARTH DAY</td>
<td>Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Themes and Elements of Geography/Economics</td>
<td>Reflection Paper #2 about Earth Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ BRING</td>
<td>Reflection Paper #2 about Earth Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Bullying and Anti-Bullying Reflection Paper</td>
<td>Halat (2008); define short and long term WebQuest in your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Earth Day facts and information</td>
<td>resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21</td>
<td>❡ The National Day of Mourning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ WebQuests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ BRING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Earth Day Reflection Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Long and Short Term WebQuest definitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>❡ News Talks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Enduring Understanding News Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Storyboard That</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ BRING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ WebQuest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Inverted newspaper articles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❡ Storyboard graphic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIIIヘルプフルウェブサイト、データベースとリソース
For General Teaching
- Education World [http://www.educationworld.com](http://www.educationworld.com)
- ADP Center for Learning Technology
- Department of Education [http://www.education.foe.com](http://www.education.foe.com)
- The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)
  [https://www.glsen.org/educate/resources/guides?keyword=&s=5&i=5&d=3&g=3](https://www.glsen.org/educate/resources/guides?keyword=&s=5&i=5&d=3&g=3)

8

revised 9/6/19

407