THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS ON A PROGRAM ROOTED IN MULTICULTRAL SERVICE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

ADAM HOLMAN PERROW. The perceptions of pre-service teachers on a program rooted in multicultural service learning: A case study. (Under the direction of DR. JAE HOON LIM and DR. LISA MERRIWEATHER)

In response to diversifying classrooms, teacher education programs have focused efforts on multicultural service learning and culturally responsive teaching as mechanisms for delivering an orientation towards equity. Social justice teacher education programs further promote issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and school system and position education as a democratic institution. The purpose of this study was to explore the program experience of three pre-service teachers enrolled in a minor program focusing on urban youth and community, and rooted in social justice and multicultural service learning. There were three research questions: 1) what were the perceptions and overall experiences of three pre-service teachers enrolled in the program? 2) how did three pre-service teachers in the program view the impact of the program on their own growth and development?, and 3) how did three pre-service teachers in the program view its impact on their student teaching practices? A qualitative case study methodology was employed to collect data from three participants via semi structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Themes of social justice orientations, diversity, Whiteness, community building, and teaching practice emerged from the data. This study suggests that participants perceived a large impact by the program on their own teaching practice and growth and development, but did not fully internalize the implications of their own racial and economic identities. Further research

is needed to measure the impact of teaching practice on student achievement and the transition from student teaching to career educator.

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CHAPTER I: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Pre-service teachers in the United States often graduate and eventually work with students whose cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds are different from their own. (Sleeter, 2000). Classrooms in the United States continue to diversify both racially and culturally. The shift in student demographics is most evident in urban classrooms where the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) reports that the students of America's public schools are continuing to evolve. Between 1980 and 2008, the population of White students decreased from 80 to 66 percent (Aud, Fox & KewalRamani, 2010). This increase in non-White students in the classroom has provided opportunity for future educators, education professionals, and teacher education programs to learn more about instructional practices that aim to reach students from a variety of backgrounds, recognize each student's unique voice, and provide novice educators with the skill sets needed to succeed in the urban classroom. Unfortunately, many in the field have argued that teacher preparedness programs have been slow to address these new realities when implementing large-scale programmatic changes and thus the literature base is "relatively small but growing." (Beaudry, 2015, p. 30).

Although the increase in diverse students provides educators with opportunities for sharing of diverse voices, identities, and perspectives, it also presents a challenge to the field. The majority of the teacher workforce is made up of more than 80 percent White educators that have received little training in working with students of ethnicities

and backgrounds that differ (Sleeter, 2001). It is evident that additional training is needed for teachers to bridge the cultural gulf that may exist between their own personal lived experiences and those of their students. Many scholars have pointed towards pedagogical practices that can serve as a bridge and provide opportunities for meaningful exchange.

The development of teacher education programs that center on asset-based pedagogies that include multicultural education (Banks and Banks, 2009; Sleeter & Grant, 2007), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010; Ladson- Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), and multicultural service learning (Boyle-Baise, 2002), compels educators to attend to issues related to diversity and equity in order to position pre-service educators with the skillset and mindsets needed in developing responsive teaching practices. These pedagogical frameworks and approaches are all united in their effort to promote teaching for social justice. This orientation towards social justice education includes a small body of research that is often critiqued for providing "little empirical research illustrating how teacher education driven by this kind of compassionate, critical, justice-orientation might unfold in practice (Conklin and Hughes, 2016).

Many have studied the impact of multicultural education on curriculum (Howard, 1985; Banks & Banks, 2004; Banks & Lynch, 1986; McLaughlin & McLeod, 1996; Colón-Muñiz, Brady, & SooHoo, 2010) and how its prevalence and use may combat preconceptions, provide a solid knowledge base of other cultures, and equip learners with communication techniques and skills that allow them to navigate culturally diverse situations while remaining attuned and enlightened to lines of difference. Further

research has extended multicultural education to the teacher education realm and contends that this type of experience is part of the democratic process of schooling and helps teachers find appropriate strategies for working with diverse students (Stork & Sanders, 1996). While the merits of multicultural education have been explored and lauded by many, some have found that teachers that participate in these types of programs are still ill-equipped to respond with the challenges that await them in the classroom and that many of the programs are deeply rooted in "Whiteness" (Napper-Owen, Kovar, & Mehrhof, 1999; Sleeter, 2001).

The framework of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billing, 1995) has been shown to allow "pre-service teachers to use cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse student as conduits for effective teaching" (Culp, Chepyator-Thomson, & Hsu, 2009, p. 24). While creating pedagogical practices that provide for a more open and inclusive education for all students is certainly a worthy cause in itself, establishing pedagogy that is culturally relevant has as its hallmark greater student achievement (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). As public schools and legislative agendas continue to push standards based reforms, the need to address the staggering achievement gap between students continues to remain an important initiative. Many have argued that culturally responsive teachers (using culturally relevant pedagogy) provide the needed support that many students of color need (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Marx & Moss, 2011).

In addition to the development of asset-based pedagogical frameworks, universities and teacher preparedness programs have also often cited the use of

community or school-based service learning experiences as a vehicle for driving the foundational knowledge needed to train responsive educators. Proponents argue that these opportunities provide the space needed for White, pre-service candidates to build that cultural competency in an experiential manner (Gay and Howard, 2000; Villegas and Lucas, 2002). In doing so, pre-service candidates are thus able to affirm diversity, build community, and critically examine systemic inequities (Boyle-Baise, 2004).

Perceptions Challenged: First Year in the Classroom

As a young, White, male pre-service educator, I was nervous. *What was it going to be like? How prepared was I? Will my expectations be met?* The first public school classroom I stepped foot in was while enrolled in my Master's degree. I was training to become a teacher and I had yet to spend any time in the classrooms in which I would hopefully one day teach. I was the product of a private school education and had spent the majority of my young life surrounded by those that looked, sounded, and dressed just like me. While I understood that the students I would soon teach may look, sound, and dress different from me, I wasn't truly open to understanding how those differences would manifest themselves in my work with students. I had assumptions. I had preconceived notions. The archetypes of what I was expecting to experience in the public school classrooms were real and were challenged very early in my career.

The way I viewed the world (from a White, Eurocentric lens) was clear to my students but still muddy to me. After starting my teaching career as a high school Social Studies teacher, I quickly realized that the training I had received was woefully lacking. Sure, I could build a lesson plan or design an activity. And, I could create strong policies

and procedures. But, how do I relate to students that have disparate interests from my own? How do I build trust with parents and families that have vastly different lived experiences than my own? How do I work across lines of racial difference when I had never been asked to do so before? These questions and many others ruminated in my head during that first year in the classroom. Successful by many counts, I started to recognize that teaching was much more than the purely technical – that the way I approached the curriculum, the classroom management plan, the relationships with students and families – was impacting the results I was seeing (or not). While diversity was a standard I had to address in order to obtain licensure, the surface level unto which I had engaged with issues of inclusion and equity did not provide me a strong foundation.

I continued my understanding on issues of equity and inclusion during my doctoral course work. My archetypes were challenged. My mindset slowly shifted. As I reflected on the learning, dialogues, and experiences that this course work was providing and I returned to my own training as an educator. Why wasn't I asked to reflect on my own identity? Why wasn't I asked to learn about my student's culture beyond a mere interest inventory or survey? Why wasn't I ask to question the structures and systems at play in the public school system? This dissatisfaction was the impetus for my research. It is my hope that this research helps reshape the manner in which we train young educators for a most rewarding career – in an effort to best prepare ALL students for academic achievement and critical thinking.

Significance of the Problem

Given the growing diversity seen in public school classroom and acknowledging the status quo in regards to teachers prepared for the classroom - a disconnect is clear. The percentage of White students enrolled in public schools decreased from 61 to 56 in the early decade of the twenty-first century (Aud, Fox & KewalRamani, 2010,) while the proportion of Hispanic population increased to 15 percent; Black remained at 12 percent and Asian/Pacific Islander increased to 4 percent. Nowhere are the changing demographics of the country more evident than urban classrooms. A 2010 NCES report on the status and trends of racial and ethnic groups in public education reported that White students are more often found in suburban and rural areas in the nation, while Blacks, Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders are concentrated in urban areas (Aud, Fox & KewalRamani, 2010). While the nation as a whole is rapidly diversifying, the teaching profession has been ill-equipped to address the needs of culturally diverse learners.

Traditional teacher education programs have (and continue) to train majority White, female, middle-class teachers for the classrooms of America's public schools. However, very few teacher education programs have addressed the imbalance and those that have, often focus on ad hoc courses designed to tepidly address diversity and issues of inclusiveness. The development of culturally relevant pedagogical practices ushered in a new manner of teaching that seeks to utilize the shared knowledge of cultural groups in the learning process rather than mere inculcation. Culturally responsive teaching has been used by teacher educators as a manner for developing culturally aware and attuned pre-service teachers that are equipped to provide the support and learning needed by

culturally diverse students, while simultaneously exploring their own archetypes and biases (Gay, 2002).

Additionally, teaching for social justice (or social justice teacher education) has begun to emerge across the country as a mechanism for addressing such concerns. Building on multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching, teaching for social justice "addresses the social and institutional practices and structures that perpetuate injustice and inequity through activism [in an effort] to promote social change" (Rios & Markus, 2011). Scholars posit that teacher education programs are not providing consideration for teachers' understanding or connection to communities or schools. Koerner and Abdul-Tawwab (2006) argue that teachers spend little time learning about or engaging with the communities where they complete field experience or student teaching assignments. Thus, they are unable to learn about the culture and identities of the students that they teach – often times creating or holding beliefs about students and families that have the possibility of impacting and informing their instructional practice. A tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2001), it is important that teachers (especially those that do not share culture, language, or race) learn about the experiences of the communities and students in which they teach.

While many programs have addressed culturally responsive teaching and teaching for social justice through coursework, students often find the concept foreign and intangible (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007). Multicultural service learning serves as a bridge that connects pre-service teachers' theoretical learning in culturally responsive teaching and applies it in an authentic and meaningful way. These service

learning opportunities have been embedded into teacher education programs throughout the country in a variety of ways. The program studied for the purpose of this research embeds service learning in each course of the minor and provides a capstone research course with an intensive service learning component. This has as its aim, the preparation of teachers with skills and mindsets needed to work with culturally diverse student populations. The purpose of this study is to examine one such program and to identify the perceptions teachers that completed this program have on their experiences once situated in a classroom as a novice educator. Since the literature base on teacher education programs rooted in multicultural service learning with social justice orientations is narrow, this work has implications for educators and teacher education programs.

Research Questions

The teacher education minor of study was designed to provide service learning and civic engagement for students in an effort to promote students becoming informed and engaged citizens. Additionally, the minor aimed to prepare students to be change agents in their community and focused on a curriculum that was rooted in culturally relevant education, social justice, and multicultural service learning opportunities. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the impact of a teacher education minor rooted in culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, and multicultural service learning. In particular, the research addressed the following questions:

1. What were the perceptions and overall experiences of three pre-service teachers enrolled in the minor?

2. How did three pre-service teachers in the minor view the impact of the program on their own growth and development?
3. How did three pre-service teachers in the minor view the impact of the program on their student teaching practices?

Delimitations

While the purpose of this study was to examine how one teacher education minor focused on urban youths and communities prepare teachers for culturally diverse classrooms, there are noted delimitations that must be acknowledged. Because this study focused on one teacher education minor in the Southeast United States through three cases, the findings are unable to be generalized to a larger population. However, the employment of well-designed qualitative research methods provided robust and authentic data that aided in providing rich analyses regarding the aforementioned research questions. Another delimitation of the study was the small sample size chosen. This allowed the researcher to gain thick data that provided a more holistic image of the experiences of participants. A further delimitation was the selection of a program in the Southeast United States provided a narrower scope but again aided in the collection of data and summation of experience. While these delimitations are acknowledged, the use of data analysis techniques and triangulation, the delimitations' effects were mitigated.

Limitations

While certain delimitations were imposed, this study also included limitations that were beyond the control of the researcher. The voluntary nature of selection provided a challenge, while the inability to control for prior learning on the concepts of urban

education, culturally responsive teaching, and service learning limited the generalizability of results. Moreover, the limited time frame that the teacher education Minor in Urban Youths and Communities had been in existence provided a unique challenge in that a relatively small body of sample candidates was available for research.

Definitions and Assumptions

This research included assumptions that impacted data collection and analysis. This study assumed that the program of study that incorporated the minor includes as basic tenets the concepts of culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, multicultural service learning, and social justice education. For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will guide the research:

Culturally relevant pedagogy. For this research, I approach culturally relevant pedagogy through the lens of Ladson-Billings (1995) supposition of three major tenets: student academic success, a development or maintenance of student cultural competence, and the development of a cultural consciousness used to question the status quo.

Culturally responsive teaching. According to Gay (2002), culturally responsive teaching is defined as "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (p. 106). In this study, culturally responsive teaching is directly linked to the action of teaching students in a manner that is responsive and focuses on students being "taught through their own cultural and experiential filters" (Gay, 2002, p. 106).

Multicultural service learning. Boyle-Baise (2002) defines multicultural service learning as learning that "aims to affirm diversity, critique inequity, and build

community" (p. 447). For this study, multicultural service learning serves as the conceptual framework for the research.

Social justice education. Grant and Agosto (2008) purport that no singular understanding of social justice education has been defined. For this study, McDonald's (2010) definition of programs that "prepare teachers who are able to provide high-quality, equitable opportunities to learn to all students, who are able to advocate for the transformation of not only individual classrooms but whole schools and districts, and who are able to consider their work as being connected to broader social movements" will be used. (p. 452).

Summary

This study's purpose was to determine the perceptions of novice educators on a teacher education program rooted in culturally responsive teaching and multicultural service learning. The rapid diversification of America's schools has prompted teacher educators to develop programs of study, courses, and opportunities for experiential learning that aim to equip pre-service educators for culturally diverse classrooms. The utilization of culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, multicultural service learning, and social justice underpin the framework of the program and presented the researcher with an opportunity to explore teachers perceptions of the program, its ability to develop a cultural consciousness in students, and the impact of the service learning opportunity on the perceptions of urban communities.

The following chapters provide further illustration of the research. Chapter 2 discusses relevant literature to the topic and focuses primarily on asset-based frameworks

for teacher development, multicultural service learning, and the burgeoning research on social justice teacher education. Additionally, it provides relevant research on their employment in the field of teacher education. Chapter 3 provides the methodological and theoretical frameworks that underpin the work, while also providing a robust description of participants, the teacher education minor, and the research design. Chapter 4 provides a rich description of the three cases – their experience in the program and their perceptions on impact. Finally, Chapter 5 provides conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

While Chapter 1 underscored the rationale and purpose of the work at hand, Chapter 2 seeks to define and highlight key literature pertinent to the topic of teacher education programs that promote culturally relevant education and social justice through a multicultural service learning lens. As the purpose of this research is to understand the perceptions of teachers enrolled in an undergraduate minor that is rooted in culturally responsive education, multicultural service learning, and social justice, this chapter seeks to highlight literature in each of the focus areas. In particular, it looks to draw a synthesis between their interaction in undergraduate teacher education programs and pre-service field experiences. A close examination of culturally relevant education explores the foundations of asset based pedagogies and includes a discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching. Next, literature pertinent to teaching for social justice (or social justice education) is presented. Finally, the conceptual framework and literature pertinent to multicultural service learning is explored.

Culturally Relevant Education

Culturally relevant education aims to validate the lived experiences of students and approaches teaching and learning from an asset-based approach (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Culturally relevant education stems from the research of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) around culturally relevant pedagogy and Geneva Gay (2002) with culturally

responsive teaching. Further research by Villegas and Lucas (2002) has focused on the dispositions and skills needed for teacher educators to promote the approach Additionally, many have studied the impact of culturally responsive education efforts on classrooms across the country (Epstein, Mayorga, & Nelson, 2011; Kesler, 2011; Siwatu, 2011).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Culturally relevant pedagogy has become one of the most prolific frameworks of promoting cultural diversity within teacher education programs (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) purported that "current practical demonstrations of multicultural education in schools often reduce it to trivial examples and artifacts of cultures such as eating ethnic or cultural foods, singing songs or dancing, reading folktales, and other less than scholarly pursuits" (p. 61). Culturally relevant teaching is focused on preventing mere surface attempts to affirm culture so that they do not continue the devastating path of marginalizing diversity in the classroom. "A pedagogy of opposition not unlike critical pedagogy," culturally relevant pedagogy is focused on collective, not individual, empowerment (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160).

Ladson-Billings (1995) focused on creating pedagogy that is culturally relevant and that has as its hallmark increased levels of student achievement. Rooted in the belief that the attempts of educators to insert culture into education rather than inserting pedagogy into the culture of students is a major flaw, culturally relevant pedagogy is bound by three propositions: students' academic success, a maintained cultural competence, and the development of a critical consciousness. All three tents provide

maximum opportunity for students to achieve personally and academically while maintain their lived experiences. Further, by allowing students to maintain their cultural identity in the classroom, "culturally relevant teachers utilize students' culture as a vehicle for learning" rather than ignore its existence (Ladson-Billings, 1995). For Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally relevant teaching is not seen through new instructional strategies or teaching approaches, but is most notable for how students, parents, teachers and the community see themselves within the classroom and how they conceive the knowledge that is being taught. By creating classrooms that are equitable for all involved, teachers begin to open the classroom to critical analysis that focuses on community and relationships (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Through the creation of culturally relevant pedagogies, practitioners are able to focus on the success of each student.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Building on the culturally relevant work of Ladson-Billings and other, Paris (2012) questioned the scope of the terms culturally relevant and asks reflection on whether the terms go far enough "in their orientation to the languages and literacies and other cultural practices of communities marginalized by systematic inequalities to ensure the valuing and maintenance of our multiethnic and multilingual society" (p. 93). Defined as pedagogy that "seeks to perpetuate and foster – to sustain - linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling," culturally sustaining pedagogy is a direct response to the deficit approaches to teaching and learning for students of color in the 1960s and 1970s (Paris, 2012, p. 95). These early approaches created much of the deficit-based language still used in the United States, i.e.

at-risk students, and were seen as approached to overcoming the cultural shortages that students of color presented (Paris, 2012). Overcoming such ways of thought is a central component of culturally sustaining pedagogy.

With culturally sustaining pedagogy, a main aim is to address deficit views of thinking by extending previous asset-based pedagogies (culturally relevant and responsive) to demand "explicitly pluralist outcomes that are not centered on White, middle-class, monolingual, and monocultural norms of educational achievement" (Paris & Alim, 2014). As a critique of previous asset-based pedagogies, Paris (2012) contends that these strategies have focused on heritage practices of communities and may have led to a "simplification of asset pedagogies as being solely about considering the heritage or traditional practices of students of color in teaching" and thus offers the terms community practices and heritage practices as a contemporary understanding of the past and evolving future of communities (p. 90). Alim (2011) and Paris (2011) each studied youths and through research have shown the balance between youth of color navigating a nuanced balance between heritage practices and community practices simultaneously. Thus, it has become the evolved future of culturally sustaining pedagogies to "resist static, unidirectional notions of culture and race that reinforce traditional version of difference and (in) equality without attending to shifting and evolving ones" (Paris & Alim, 95)

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Many of the teaching practices, texts, and cultural norms that are found in today's classrooms are interpreted from the viewpoint of mainly White teachers and many of these teachers bring very little cross-cultural background, knowledge and experiences

with them to the classroom (Sleeter, 2001). Building upon culturally relevant pedagogy that pushed beyond mere multicultural education, Gay and Kirkland (2003) defined culturally responsive teaching as "using cultures, experiences, and perspectives of African, Native, Latino and Asian American students as filters through which to teach them academic knowledge and skills." Their work placed importance on lived student experiences that are used to make learning and knowledge more meaningful and they posit that achievement and results will improve when students' own cultural lens is used (Gay, 2002). Culturally responsive teaching is founded on the development of a knowledge base that is culturally diverse, a curriculum that is designed to be culturally relevant, the creation of a learning community that demonstrates cultural caring, the formation of cross-cultural communications, and the development of cultural congruity in classroom instruction (Gay, 2002). According to Gay, through this framework one is able to best prepare educators for culturally responsive teaching.

Additionally, culturally responsive teaching is bound by six dimensions, many of which echo the work of Ladson-Billings (1995) and culturally relevant pedagogy. The dimensions include: high expectations for all students; multidimensionality in requiring teachers to acknowledge cultural lived experiences and perspectives; a validation of all student cultures; focused on education of the whole child; transformative in nature in its use of students' existing knowledge bases to drive instruction; and emancipatory and liberating as it aims to question to status quo and overcome oppressive education practices and systems (Gay, 2010). These dimensions provide educators a framework for understanding how to better serve traditionally marginalized and oppressed students.

Culturally Responsive Teaching in Teacher Education

Many have argued that teacher education programs should be the impetus for change (Bennett, 2012; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Siwatu, 2011; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Gay and Kirkland (2003) argue that teachers should have a deep understanding of their own culture in order to provide culturally relevant teaching to their students. Their argument promotes self-reflection as paramount in the process of developing a cultural critical consciousness. By understanding one's own behaviors and teaching beliefs, Gay and Kirkland (2003) posit that educators will be better equipped to provide relevant and culturally appropriate teaching practices.

Many teacher education programs view teaching as an "objectifiable craft" where the technical nature of teaching is promoted (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). According to Gay and Kirkland (2003), the skills to develop a critical cultural consciousness are masked by various obstacles including the lack of opportunity or guided practice in the art of self-reflection. In many instances, teacher education students silence discussions about race and diversity citing ignorance or lack of exposure to diverse peoples. This view undermines the importance of using the classroom to explore race and diversity and sometimes manifests itself as "benevolent liberalism" or guilt (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). The colorblindness of many pre-service teachers can be discriminatory to students within a culturally diverse classroom and can be of a great detriment. In response to these obstacles, Gay and Kirkland (2003) purport that teacher education programs should create learning environments and expectations where self-reflection is routine and the

norm. By providing strategies and conversations that overcome the silence, pre-service teachers are given opportunities to see modeled processes that can guide their practice and provide a multitude of instruction possibilities in the classroom.

While Gay and Kirkland's (2003) call for the development of a critical cultural consciousness in teacher education programs resonates, others scholars provide methods beyond self-reflection. Sleeter (2001) posited that teacher recruitment and selection can work towards addressing the cultural gulf seen today between teacher and student. The majority of teacher education candidates today are White females and studies show that it is possible to recruit more students of color that can bring with them experiences, knowledge, and attitudes that will allow them to succeed in culturally diverse classroom settings (Sleeter, 2001). A second argument that focuses on the ability to create opportunities for cross-cultural immersion within communities has also shown a powerful impact. Pre-service teacher education students are given the ability to "grapple with being in the minority, [and they] do not necessarily know how to act, and are temporarily unable to retreat to the comfort of a culturally familiar setting" (Sleeter, 2001). These types of changes can provide opportunities for creating a more culturally diverse teaching profession and for providing opportunities for those in the majority to grapple with many of the challenges of those currently marginalized in our education system.

While these changes can occur within a teacher education program, they do not focus on the pedagogical and curricula transformation that may be needed within teacher education programs to solicit culturally responsive teachers. Sleeter (2001) argues that the introduction of stand-alone multicultural education courses can raise the awareness of

students about race, culture, and discrimination. Further, multicultural coursework that is embedded in field experiences has produced some positive results. Pre-service teacher education students (mostly White) are place into school of predominantly students of color (typically African American). These experiences can lead to changes in attitudes, although some instances have shown that they simply reinforced stereotypes (Sleeter, 2001). However, interventions within teacher education programs that are traditionally structured could provide results that are more definite (Sleeter, 2001).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) posit that as classrooms are becoming more and more diverse, teacher education programs are not responding correctly. Accordingly, typical response from programs has been the adoption of one or two multicultural education courses that can be problematic for two reasons. First, these courses are many times optional and not required and secondly, the "regular" curriculum of the program may be contradictory towards the theories and opinions offered by these courses (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Thus, teacher educations students are not left with a feeling of solidarity and culturally responsive teaching practices are neither reinforced nor expanded. Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue for the infusion of culturally responsive pedagogy through their six-strand framework. They argue that this framework would show the interconnectedness between the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to become a culturally responsive teacher.

The keystone of their work revolves around the first strand: sociocultural consciousness. Harkening back to Gay's (2002) cultural critical consciousness, Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue that teacher education students should recognize that their

perceived reality is shaped by their own social standing and location. By examining their own cultural identity and critically examining the stratification of American society and the role that schools play in that society, teacher education students will best be able to develop their consciousness (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The second strand for changing the curriculum of teacher education programs is to acknowledge the role teachers have in developing student knowledge. By holding affirming attitudes towards students, teachers show the confidence that they have in students reaching achievement levels and hold high expectations for achieving. The teacher education program can help pre-service teachers understand the importance of teacher attitude on student learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Further, pre-service teachers need to see the role that have in enacting change in the classroom of America. The third strand in their developed framework focuses on schools being the site for social transformations and emphasizes the role of the teacher in bringing about change. Teacher education programs need to develop their student's understandings of social justice and impart knowledge of how to enact change (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The fourth strand in the revised curriculum for culturally responsive teaching in teacher education programs revolves around the ideas of constructivist views of learning. Constructivist teachers believe that "knowledge about the world does not simply exist out there, waiting to be discovered, but is rather constructed by human beings in their interaction with the world" (Gordon, 2009). Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue that the knowledge that students bring to school is directly related to their personal and cultural experiences. Rather than simply casting this knowledge aside, as happens in the

traditional system of education, the culturally responsive teacher will be learned in using this knowledge as a resource within the classroom (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). They argue that constructivism is a worthy pedagogical tool because of its beliefs of all learners striving to make sense of new ideas, the promotion of critical thinking, collaboration, and rigorous thinking skills. They call for teacher education programs to use this mode of instruction with pre-service teachers. Modeling these strategies will make it more likely that teacher education students will use them when they are in their own classrooms (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The fifth strand of their framework relies on the teacher education student learning the importance of establishing relationships with their students. They argue that teachers should know about their students' lives outside of school and that "responsive teachers strive to know as much as possible about the children they teach to facilitate their learning" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). By conducting home visits, consulting community members and conferencing with parents and guardians, teachers can gain valuable insight through information garnered. Finally, the previous five strands need to relate back to classroom instruction. Teacher education students need to critically interrogate and analyze the curriculum and resources and teach their students in classroom environments that are safe and where all are encouraged to construct knowledge (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). By instructing students on culturally relevant teaching practices, teacher education programs can begin to education culturally responsive teachers.

Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Field

As scholarship on culturally responsive teaching built, research examined the purported benefits of the culturally responsive framework from within the classroom environs. Siwatu (2011) studied how the self-efficacy of teacher education students was shaped by their knowledge of culturally responsive teaching. Siwatu (2011) defines culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy (CRTSE) as "an individual's belief in his or her capabilities to execute the practices associate with culturally responsive teaching." Many teachers may not feel appropriately trained to deal with the diverse cultures, ethnicities, and races found in their classrooms. The belief in their own abilities will directly impact the types of experiences they provide for their students. Thus, it is clear that a high culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy is needed. In his research, Siwatu (2011) found that teachers were most efficacious in their ability to make students feel important, develop personal relationships with their students and to use student's interest to guide instruction. Clearly these "general teaching practices" are important, but the lack of self-efficacy regarding abilities specifically linked to culturally responsive teaching practices is worrisome (Siwatu, 2011).

Further research in core discipline courses has shown that culturally responsive teaching practices that are integrated into the state curriculum are most worthy (Kesler, 2011; Epstein, Mayorga, & Nelson, 2011). Kesler (2011) centered his approach on using the culturally responsive lens in an English literature classroom when choosing texts. Using critical literacy theory and critical race theory, the author looks at how these

analyses can inform CRT practices. Positing that all texts are sources of contention and that accommodations need to be made, Kesler (2011) argues that critically responsive teaching practices involve all students in the construction of knowledge and uses the theory to build upon students' personal and cultural strengths. Thus, educators should be wary of the texts (written, multi-modal, spoken, expressed, etc.) that are used in the classroom. In this light, culturally responsive teaching is seen as "adding to rather than replacing what students bring to learning" (Kesler, 2011).

Additional studies have shown the contentious nature of the social studies or history classroom and how critically responsive teachers are better equipped at navigating the muddy waters. Epstein, Mayorga, and Nelson (2011) used the practices of critically responsive teaching in an urban American history class, and sought to elicit student's prior knowledge and provide opportunities for students to incorporate new and more complex concepts into their existing framework. Students in the classroom were measured at the beginning of the year and at the end of year, during which pedagogical practices that aligned with CRT were used. Post-instruction, students were able to select a more diverse selection of racial groups that have experiences racism in the United States (as compared to the beginning of the year). Students were also able to see historical figures that are traditionally seen as oppressed as agencies of change and resilient. While the findings of this study pointed at the re-conceptualization of people of color as freedom seekers: not just victims, the majority-minority students were unable to see how these experiences transferred to the diverse experiences of White Americans.

Social Justice Education

Culturally relevant education and social justice education have a direct link to their end goals. Esposito and Swain (2009) purport that culturally relevant pedagogy and social justice pedagogy are congruent in the notion that both desire to uncover and prevent hegemonic power structure that permeate almost all aspects of life – school being an example. While Grant and Agosto (2008) claim that no singular understanding of social justice education has been defined, McDonald (2010) defines social justice education as a way to "prepare teachers who are able to provide high-quality, equitable opportunities to learn to all students, who are able to advocate for the transformation of not only individual classrooms but whole schools and districts, and who are able to consider their work as being connected to broader social movements" (p. 452).

McDonald and Zeichner (2009) report a "lack of clarity in the field at large about what constitutes social justice teacher education" (p. 595). Waddell (2013) noted that there is evidence that the development of practices that are congruent with an orientation towards social justice are more than mere content knowledge and further posited that the knowledge and lived experiences of students and communities is key to social justice education. McDonald (2010) offered a call for high-leverage practices that promote social justice education for teacher candidates and to move the research beyond theory and into enactment. Examples of high-leverage practices identified include, "ways of listening, ways of eliciting students' thinking, ways of identifying oneself as an ally of families, and ways of bridging across cultural, ethnic and linguistic boundaries"

(McDonald, 2010, p. 454). Identifying these practices would, according to McDonald (2010), provide a more clear understanding of social justice and how it can take shape in teaching.

This lack of clearly defined practices and definitions has been a large critique of social justice education (McDonald and Zeichner, 2008; North, 2006; Zeichner, 2006). Additionally, some critiques have been leveled at social justice education regarding a perceived ignoring of traditional education goals, i.e. subject matter knowledge, content expertise, instructional strategies, etc. (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008). Further, it has been reported that some critiques of social justice education are aimed at a perceived intentional or unintentional indoctrination of students to a particular agenda or ideology based on the instructor (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008). However, Cochran-Smith, et al (2009) found through a study focusing on students enrolled in a program with a social justice agenda actually "enhanced the students' learning and their life chances" (p. 349).

Further research has focused on social justice education for teachers that is rooted in community. Koerner and Abdul-Tawwab (2006) argued that pre-service teachers often spend very little time in the communities in which they will or do teach and often enter schools with assumptions about students and communities. Beaudry (2015) found in a study of pre-service teachers that participants "expressed that community-based field experiences shaped [their] teacher knowledge and identity in unique ways that went beyond traditional teacher education courses that did not offer opportunities to connect learning with personal experience" (p. 34). Similarly, Boyle-Baise and Langford (2004) found in a study of service learning opportunity founded on social justice notions that

participants had learned from their community, each other, but often came to the experience with various motivations – often charity rather than service.

Conklin and Hughes (2016) outline core competencies in practice that can prepare future educators in a social justice orientation. These practices include ensuring that teacher education programs are facilitated with relationships and community in mind. Next, programs should honor the lives of pre-service candidates and aim to introduce candidates to various world view – not just Eurocentric. Moreover, programs should provide equitable and challenging teaching and learning for all future educators.

Baldwin, Buchanana, and Rudisill (2007) found in a study of service learning projects rooted in social justice for pre-service teachers that candidates were able to cultivate deep and robust understandings about social justice, diversity, and their own personal identity. Studying a group of White, middle-class teacher candidates, they found that participants originally held deficit and preconceived notions about communities and students that differed racially and economically from their own identities. The social justice eservice learning experience allowed students to overcome their assumptions and archetypes about students and communities and promote a more social justice vision to future students (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007). Similarly, Dentith (2005), found decrease in judgmental comments found, an increase in students' understanding of complexity to circumstances, greater awareness of structural inequalities and an inclination to be more open to talk about race and issues of racism in a study of service learning participants in a program rooted in social justice.

Multicultural Service Learning

Pre-service teacher education programs have long included field and clinical experiences that are often heralded as the most salient and important pieces of teacher education programs (Anderson & Stillman, 2013). While scholars have long posited that teacher education programs need to remain focused on providing a wide variety of clinical experiences and national accreditation consortia have increased their emphasis on these types of experiences, the quality of the experience provided to the pre-service educator is often widely varied (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2010; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2006; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2010). Further, the use of field experiences to pursue multicultural teacher education aims has recently been espoused as having great potential as universities and colleges struggle to develop culturally responsible and responsive educators. Gay and Howard (2000) argue that the space provided in the clinical and field experience is crucial in building the cultural capacity in new teacher candidates. Similarly, Villegas and Lucas (2002) posit that field experiences focused on providing cultural opportunities provide an added value as long as they are structured to not perpetuate stereotypes or promote deficit-based ways of thinking. In a comprehensive view of the literature on field experiences and pre-service teacher development, Anderson and Stillman (2013) reviewed over fifty articles focused on preparing culturally attuned educators in the field and argue that future research in the field should "ensure that clinical experience is critical experience, too- experience that engages and deepens the critical faculties of all involved, challenges status quo and

deficit thinking, generates improves teaching practices and learning outcomes, and is subject to ongoing reflection and refinement" (p. 59). Thus a charge was issued to the field to robustly improve the literature base on clinical teacher education programs as it relates to preparing pre-service teachers equipped to critically examine, actively engage and armed with the cultural knowledge to respond to their future teachers.

Boyle-Baise (2002) defines multicultural service learning as learning that "aims to affirm diversity, critique inequity, and build community" (p. 447). Rooting her research in a set of four major tenets, Boyle-Baise's multicultural service learning framework stresses the notion of shared control and partnership between learner, instructor, and community. This concept of multicultural service learning leans heavily on the notion that multicultural education coupled with partnership between disenfranchised and marginalized communities and people can provide the opportunity for authentic and deep and stirring reflection for participants and thus can lead to opportunities for connections across lines of difference. This research further points to multicultural service learning serving as a structure for community-based learning that can be embedded into course content in a manner that balances traditional, school-based practicums that have long been hallmarks of teacher education programs. Together, these tenets frame Boyle-Baise's notion of a broadly conceptualized belief of multicultural service learning.

A major component of multicultural service learning is the use of shared control between educational institutions and community members and leaders. From a system of shared control comes true alliance and joint ownership of the service learning project. This shared control "visually legitimates cultural diversity and affirms the multicultural

project" (Boyle-Baise, 2002, p. 13). Further, this notions embodies a shared development of programmatic goals, evaluation criteria, teaching assignments and other logistical considerations needed to successfully employ such a project and can demonstrate an "asset or capacity-driven model" that can effectively minimize many white pre-service teacher's deficit perceptions of youth of color (Boyle-Baise, 88). These major tenets and the notion of shared control within multicultural service learning ground the conceptual framework purported by Boyle-Baise. This framework serves to position pre-service educators with affirming views of cultural diversity, allow opportunities for participants to critique systemic inequities, and build community. Further research on multicultural service learning have built on this framework and center on self-reflection and identity building for participants and building community.

Multicultural Service Learning in Practice

Actively engaging and addressing pre-service teachers understandings of race, culture, diversity and social justice issues through the practice of an embedded and deeply rooted service learning opportunity, multicultural service learning has been included in a variety of teacher education programs and courses throughout the United State and Europe in an attempt to address preparing teachers for the needs of culturally diverse students (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007; Bell, Horn, & Roxas, 2007; Boyle-Baise, 2005; Conner, 2010). Multicultural service learning highlights "mutual learning and growth between the pre-service teacher as 'service learner' and the diverse students and communities being served" (Chang, Anagnostopoulos, & Omae, 2011, p. 1079). Multicultural service learning has as its aim to "affirm diversity, critique inequity,

and build community," while particularly focusing on building connections between the learner and the lived experiences and culture of groups in which they may differ (Boyle-Baise, 2005, p. 447). Programs that include multicultural service learning have been shown to provide opportunities to increase pre-service teachers understanding of culturally different people and communities and can increase a commitment to working with populations from diverse background (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007; Bell, Horn, & Roxas, 2007; Boyle-Baise, 2005; Conner, 2010). To that end, these types of experiences have shown ability to impact all students in the ever-diverse classroom and can provide the educator with a variety of tools that will aid in becoming finely tuned to the nuances of a variety of cultures and ethnicities while remaining grounded in the work of probing students to become more critical thinkers and moving beyond mere "banking" (Freire, 1970).

As noted, clinical experiences embedded in the teacher education program of study are often seen as hallmarks of a young educator's training. Multicultural service learning has at its core the tenets of developing reflective practitioners that are culturally attuned, capable communicators, and builders of community. Thus, I turn to ways that multicultural service learning can build one's reflective self and can work to provide opportunities for community building- two major components of a broadly conceptualized view of multicultural service learning.

Supporters of embedding multicultural service learning into the curriculum of teacher education programs typically purport the pedagogical practices aim to "affirm diversity, critique inequity, and build community" as a possible lynchpin that leads to

culturally competent teacher candidates (Boyle-Baise, 2004). Thus, it could be said that one outcome of multicultural service learning is to build the reflective practice of participants. Research has found that a service learning project can significantly impact the attitudes and beliefs of participants towards underserved populations and have encouraged the integration of such opportunities into the curriculum of teacher education programs (Housman, et al., 2013). Often, many pre-service teachers live in settings and communities that are different from those of the children in which they teach. Thus, multicultural service learning aims to overcome predispositions and "provide experiences that inform pre-service teachers about communities- their issues, strengths, problems, and resources" (Boyle-Baise & Kilbane, 2000). In a study of 41 undergraduate pre-service teachers, Baldwin, Buchanan, and Rudisill (2007) studied a multicultural service learning opportunity that was situated in diverse settings and focused on the questioning of social inequities by participants. The researchers found that most pre-service teachers held preconceived notions about what teaching in diverse settings might be like and demonstrated how many of these notions were overcome through their work with students and staff. However, the study suggests that some assumptions were reinforced throughout the service learning experiences posit that "redirecting [pre-service teachers] to examine their own beliefs and to ask hard questions about their biases and about social injustices can being with service-learning experiences" (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007, p. 325).

In similarly structured research, Wong (2008) found that participants in a K-12 service learning project that placed candidates in tutoring positions with identified ELL

students evidenced either “transactional,” “transformational,” and “transcendent” qualities (p. 32). While the findings pointed to transformational and transcendent tutors exemplifying culturally responsive qualities, Wong’s (2008) work echoes research (references) that service learning opportunities do not always elicit the positive and idealistic presuppositions of their supporters. The transactional tutors in the aforementioned study viewed their rule as purely dualistic and treated the relationship between themselves and the students in which they were working with as impersonal and business-like. While the experience of the service learning opportunity provided opportunities for pre-service teacher candidates to cultivate the dispositions and practices needed to be culturally attuned classroom educators, it highlights the possibility of unintended consequences and the need to carefully develop such opportunities.

Using a quantitative analysis of surveys, Chang, Anagnostopoulos, and Omae (2011) similarly found that pre-service multicultural service learning experiences were important in fostering candidates’ development of their views about class, gender, race and social inequities. Their research found that the logistics of placement practices was critical in determining the success of the project and further found that “the race and ethnicity of K-12 students also matter to multicultural service learning outcomes” (Chang, Anagnostopoulos, & Omae, 2011, p. 1087). Their work pointedly purported that the relationship between placement site and the university-based teacher educator was a large determinant of overall program effectiveness. While many of the above researchers focused on the development of cultural dispositions as it relates to pre service teachers own identity, supporters of multicultural service learning purport that the ability for

teacher candidates to work within communities provides further opportunities for exploration.

Boyle-Baise's (2005) study of the Bannekar History Project is indicative of the community focus that multicultural service learning opportunities often espouse. Working to create a "venue to assist pre-service teacher sin developing a community orientation for their future teaching," Boyle-Baise (2005) reflected that the aim of multicultural service learning should be for participants to treat "people of color or those living in poverty" as sources of wisdom and that through their participation of the project, the teacher candidates within the study were able to develop a shared identity that crossed racial and ethnic grouping and further promoted an asset-based view of low income neighborhoods (p. 455). Suggesting that participation in merely one service learning project or opportunity is not sufficient echoes similar concerns in terms of pre-service teacher development of culturally attuned skills and mindsets in their classroom. This broadly conceptualized vision of multicultural service learning has been most often used in teacher education programs as a means of building pre-service teacher's affirming thoughts of cultural diversity, openly critiquing social inequities, and building community between participant, instructor, university, and community members.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 underscored the rationale and purpose of this research while chapter 2 sought to define and highlight key literature pertinent to culturally relevant education, social justice education, and multicultural service learning. This chapter aims to explain the methodological practices employed to answer the research questions posed.

Research Design

The following section highlights the methodological procedures used for this case study research. A qualitative research study approach and a case study application were used to provide rich and descriptive data that answered the research questions. Because the nature of the case study was exploration of a problem with the intent of providing in-depth information, this methodology was the most appropriate. This study investigated a specific course within an undergraduate minor that can be treated as a single case. As the research employed case study methodology, the researcher identified and selected three participants to study. Additionally, the study used multiple means of data collection in an effort to ensure validity and dependability. Triangulation of data ensured that the breadth and depth of data analyzed was consistent with research standards (Merriam, 1998). The use of non-participant observations, semi structured interviews, and student work samples provided the contextual basis needed to offer the thick and literal descriptive cases that are synonymous with case study design. Finally, the trustworthiness of the research, along with ethical and dependability considerations were considered.

According to Hancock and Algozzine (2011) case study is "conducting an empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its natural context using multiple sources of evidence" (p. 15). Further, others have likened the case study approach to qualitative research as an integrated system to enable the research questions to be "fenced in" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27; Stake, 1995). Likewise, the "thick" descriptions which are hallmarks of the case study approach were best suited to provide a literal and complete description of the phenomena studied. In this vein, the use of the case study approach allowed the researcher to explore a case in an in-depth manner. As Merriam (2009) explains, "case studies are differentiated from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system" (p. 19). The data in the case of this research are bounded and thus is not finite in number. The concept of a case study being *bounded* recognizes the singularity of the case and the variety of "working parts" that may be involved and is also particularly suited for those researching process (Glesne, 2006). Thus, the case study approach was the methodological design of choice to answer the research questions below.

Research Questions

The purpose of this case study was to explore the program experience of three pre-service teachers enrolled in a minor program focusing on urban youth and community. Further, the research examined how three students view the impact of the program on both their own personal growth and development and their student teaching practice. In particular, the research addressed the following questions:

1. What were the perceptions and overall experiences of three pre-service teachers enrolled in the minor?

2. How did three pre-service teachers in the minor view the impact of the program on their own growth and development?
3. How did three pre-service teachers in the minor view the impact of the program on their student teaching practices?

Setting and Participants

The research questions posed were conducted through an interdisciplinary minor focused on urban youth and community at a large, urban research university. The university placed pre-service teachers in urban classrooms across the city. A description of the university and the participants provided situational context for the research.

Setting

Located in the Southeastern United States, the university began as a post-war training program that was begun in 1946 as a method of training veterans. Officially becoming part of the state university and college system in 1965, the resulting university has grown exponentially and now includes seven professional colleges and more than 26,000 graduate and undergraduate students.

The College of Education at the university is one of seven professional colleges. Currently serving more than 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students, the college is guided by its mission statement that is focused on preparing highly qualified educators that will have great impacts on students in urban and diverse settings. The College is comprised of five major departments that include: Counseling; Educational Leadership; Middle, Secondary, and K-12 Education; Reading and Elementary Education; and Special Education and Child Development. The researched minor was housed within the Middle, Secondary, and K-12 Education Department.

Program

The minor of study was "an interdisciplinary program focused on civic engagement and service learning designed to prepare…students to become informed and engaged citizens by providing students an opportunity to be agents of change in their community" (Minor in urban youth and communities, n. d.). Created as a response to a request for proposal issued by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the program was designed to promote understanding around urban schools and to build a context around these communities and the students from them. The program holds as its tenants a curriculum deeply rooted in social justice, service learning, and current issues surrounding urban education. While the minor was interdisciplinary in nature, it is housed in the College of Education and coordinated by a faculty member of the College of Education's Department of Middle, Secondary, and K-12 Education.

The minor was offered to all undergraduate majors within the university and contains and culminates in a capstone seminar focused on community engagement. Taught for the first time during the spring semester of 2014, this capstone experience required all minor candidates to complete a participatory action research project and was taught/organized by the minor's faculty coordinator. Service learning placements for all course participants were organized and managed by the faculty coordinator. Additional required coursework for education majors included the courses Citizenship and Service Learning Teaching Methods for K-12 Educators. Coupled with two additional elective courses that are organized through the strands of Social Justice, Urban Youth and Education, and Communities, the minor sought to "explore the strengths, capabilities, and

issues of youth and communities in urban settings" (Minor in urban youth and communities, n. d.).

Participants

This research focused on undergraduate education majors enrolled in the minor program. Specifically, this research attempted to answer the research questions outlined above through an intensive study of three pupils enrolled in the minor. These individuals completed their student teaching requirement in the 2015-2016 school years. As Patton (1990) suggests, "specifying a minimum sample size based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study" is helpful in determining sample size and provides criteria to guide and shape the data collection process (p. 186). The employment of purposeful sampling was necessitated in order to answer the research questions outlined earlier through the participation of a particular program of study. Since purposeful sampling is "based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned," this method was used (Merriam, 1998, p. 61). The sample included three students currently enrolled in the capstone course of the minor.

This research studied three participants of the program who met the following criteria: current education major, scheduled to student teach in the fall semester of 2016, and current enrollment in the capstone service learning course in the minor. This purposeful sample provided the needed information-rich cases that are necessitated to answer the research questions (Patton, 1990). Further, individual cases were selected based on their unique contributions to the study. While the relative population from which participants were drawn was limited due to the age of the program, the researcher

sought a sample that was representative (in terms of gender, age, and race) of minor enrollees. Voluntary consent letters were provided to all class members that meet the criteria being studied and the following points of contact were outlined with participants: observation of the capstone course; semi structured interviews during the capstone course; student work samples from the capstone course; semi structured interviews during the student teaching experience. Small incentives were offered to encourage participation in the research. The incentives included coffee during interviews and merchandise gift cards in small monetary amounts. From there, three participants were identified and provided with informed consent and pseudonyms were created to protect anonymity.

Data Collection

This research employed a variety of data collection methods that ensured a thick and literal description of the cases selected. The data collection methods used included: non-participant observation, interview, and student work samples. These methods allowed the collection of data that was accessible, descriptive, and possible to be triangulated. Triangulation of data includes "multiple investigators, multiple sources of data or multiple methods." (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). Thus, for this research, the multiple sources out data outlined below provided the robust and descriptive data that is a hallmark of qualitative research. The research questions of this study were best answered through the observations, semi structured interviews, and document review outlined below.

Observations

This study was grounded in observations of each participant during the capstone course of the minor. The purpose of the observations was to gain background information about the scope of student learning, understanding, and meaning making while enrolled in the capstone course of the minor. The researcher conducted the observations as a non-participant researcher. In this method, the observer (researcher) did not serve as a participant in the class or service learning experience (Adler & Adler, 1994). For this study, three observations of participants were conducted during the course of the spring 2015 semester when students were enrolled in the capstone course. These observations took place in the traditional classroom setting and were organized through the Program Coordinator in an effort to ensure the researcher had access to course sessions most pertinent. These observations were approved by the Program Coordinator. The purpose of the observations in the classroom was to gauge participant's engagement in content, community partnerships, and reflection and was framed through an observation guide. The observation guide was adapted from Bailey's (2007) example and was organized through themes that emanate from the research questions of this study: perceptions and experiences; growth and development; and teaching practices. The observations each lasted ninety minutes.

Consistent with standard research practices, field notes were recorded and typed and analyzed as soon as possible following the observations. Moreover, the observation guide that consisted of a list of features to be addressed during the particular observation was used (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). This observation guide was grounded in the findings from the literature base research and aligned with the research questions being

studied and aided in the recognition of personal biases held by participants. The guide provided a frame from which observation notes will be taken (Merriam, 1998). The observation guide received instrument review by doctoral chair and was tested with a similar population group to ensure that the guide focuses the researcher on observations that align most closely with the research questions being asked. This testing occurred during the winter of 2014 with a sample of three first year teachers not included in this research. The use of observations as research tools are well documented "when the method serves the research purpose, is planned and recorded systematically, and subjected to check and controls of validity and reliability" (Kidder, 1981, p. 264). Thus, ethical and trustworthiness were considered. Merriam (1998) offers that observations should be conducted "in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis to substantiate the findings" (p. 96). I used observations of participants within the capstone course as a means of collecting data but coupled this data with interviews and personal document review to illuminate a more holistic view of each individual case studied.

Interview

In addition to the three observations outlined above, the researcher also used four interviews with each participant during the data collection period as a means of gaining insights. Two interviews were administered during the capstone course as a method of documenting the perceptions and thoughts of participants about the program as a whole, while two additional interviews were administered during the student teaching practicum as a means of collecting data that related to teaching practice. The first interview was administered at the beginning of the spring 2015 capstone course as a way to collect participant's' initial perceptions of the program and the curricula and to establish a

working rapport. The second semi structured interview was administered following the completion of the capstone course and served as a time and space for the researcher to better collect a holistic view of the participant's perceptions of the program and their anticipatory reflections of the student teaching experience. The final two interviews took place at the beginning of the student teaching experience and towards the end of the student teaching experience in the fall of 2015. These interviews allowed the researcher to probe the perceptions of participants on the impact of the minor on their student teaching practices.

Each participant engaged in four interviews that were semi structured in nature and lasted roughly ninety minutes. An interview protocol was used for each interview. The interview protocol consisted of sections that included questions about participant's general perceptions and experiences within the minor, questions about the growth and development of participants while enrolled in the program, questions about the service learning experience, and a final section that asked participants to provide information they would like to add that they felt was important. Each of the interviews followed a similar protocol but the specific tone and questions of the interview aligned with specific research questions. The first series of interviews, during the capstone course, included questions that focused on the perceived programmatic experiences of participants. Further, questions specifically probed mindsets developed, skills built, and perceived impact of the multicultural service learning experience. The second series of interviews, during the student teaching experience, included questions that specifically addressed the impact of the minor on the pedagogical practices of participants. Interview protocols were tested and practiced with a similar population to ensure that the questions asked

were eliciting the desired types of responses. This testing occurred during the winter of 2014 with a sample of three first year teachers not included in this research.

While there are many different interview styles that could have been employed, the researcher choose to use semi structured interviews as they "are particularly well suited for case study research" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011, p. 45). They were well suited because they allowed open-ended questions and responses and "assumes that the individual respondent defines the world in unique ways" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). This was important, as the main purpose of this research was to identify and explore the perceptions of participants on the minor. Additionally, semi structured interviews also allowed for a more authentic interaction between researcher and participant and provided space for questions that emerged during the interview session (Glesne, 2006). By creating flexible questions and using an interview guide or protocol to frame the conversation, the researcher was able "to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74).

Additionally, the researcher conducted one, ninety-minute interview with the program coordinator teaching the capstone course to gain additional insights about the program and participating students. This interview allowed the researcher to better understand the course make up and design and provided much needed context. This interview occurred before the observation cycle of the capstone course began in an effort to ensure that the researcher was fully grounded in the intended outcomes of the course and was aware of the ultimate learning goals.

The validity and dependability of the interviews was addressed through audio recording the interview and through interviewer notes that were hand-written notations

and reactions to the informant's responses. Further, a written reflection completed as soon as possible after the interview was used to highlight insights, nonverbal and social cues, and behavior notes. Coupled with the non-participant observations mentioned in the above section and the personal document review noted below, the semi structured interviews employed became an important part of the research body.

Documents

The use of personal documents as a means of data collection can be used as a tool to uncover the inner experiences of those being researched and Merriam (1998) claims they are a "reliable source of data concerning a person's attitudes, beliefs, and view of the world" (p. 116). This will allowed the researcher to gain a more robust insight into participants' worldview, assumptions, and beliefs as it relates to the research questions posed in this proposal. Thus, the researcher collected course documents that provided additional insight into the perceptions of participants. The following documents were collected and analyzed from the capstone course: syllabus, written reflections, class assignments, and final participatory service learning project poster. With cooperation from the Program Coordinator, these documents provided additional sources of data that were used in tandem with the aforementioned observations and interviews.

Data Analysis

Qualitative (and specifically case study methodology) research necessitates the simultaneous nature of data collection and analysis (Yin, 1994). While collecting and choosing the data to be analyzed, a researcher must find balance between too much detail and vagueness, while ever remaining cognizant of Taylor and Bogdan's (1984) consideration of having "reasonable conclusions and generalizations based on a

preponderance of the data" (p. 139). Analysis based on Merriam's (1998) explanation of the inductive process and a formal analysis after all of the data were collected as suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) helped ensure that all parts of the process of analysis were given appropriate time and focus.

Central analysis was performed through searching for patterns and themes within the multiple sources of data. Using Merriam's (1988) intensive analysis technique, identification of major themes across data based was employed. Before the intensive analysis technique was used, the researcher transcribed all interviews, observations, documents, and field notes. This process allowed the researcher to engage with the data again in an attempt to reacquaint (Reissman, 1993). Using electronic word-processing software, individual files for each interview, observation, document, and entry were created to aid the researcher in coding.

This research followed the guidelines for analyzing multiple cases. The data were analyzed by each case individually through thematic analysis and then through cross-case analysis (Stake, 2006). Since each of the participants was considered as a mini case, the responses could be analyzed in relation to the themes that emerged during the intensive analysis and thematic analysis phase. A cross-case analysis of the three participants led to "categories, themes, or typologies that conceptualize the data from all the cases" (Merriam, 1998, p. 195). Following a case-by-case analysis, the researcher conducted a cross-case analysis by using themes that were salient across cases as well as those that were vastly different. This analysis followed a merging finding procedure as Stake (2006) describes that this method should be used for researchers that want to merge findings across cases and allow a researcher to make generalizations about the cases.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

While sound data collection and analysis methods were used throughout the research phase of this project, it was important to remain mindful of personal biases, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical considerations when undertaking the research project. This section attempts to highlight several of the measures employed to ensure dependability of the research.

Merriam (1998) highlights several strategies for enhancing the internal validity of qualitative case study research. These techniques include triangulation, member checks, long-term observations, peer examinations and acknowledgment and naming of researcher biases. Through the use of multiple sources of data, the use of triangulation of the data was used. Further, acknowledgement that participants had access to transcripts, observation logs, and reflective journals ensured their quality. The length of proposed research time ensures long-term observation and the use of peer examiners of transcriptions and draft products and added additional layers of trust.

Qualitative work relies on dependability rather than reliability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) outline several techniques that ensure research is dependable. First, they purport that the investigator recognizes his or her position as investigator. Therefore, it was important for the researcher to examine his own biases brought to the work. Next, they purport that triangulation of the data is necessary to ensure dependability. As outlined above, a variety of data sources were used in an effort to increase dependability as well as balancing the needs for rich and thick descriptions. Finally, their recommendation of the use of an audit trail throughout the research process will be implemented. Together, these methods were employed to aid in the dependability of the research at hand.

While the nature of qualitative research does not historically provide the generalizability that quantitative work may, issues of transferability of the proposed research can be mitigated through the rich and thick description that case studies will provide, the typicality created and a multi-site design. While a multi-site design was not possible with the work of this research project, Merriam's (1998) other considerations were maintained for reasons of external validity. As with all research, those selected in this sample were provided with substantive ethical considerations.

As Hancock and Algozzine (2011) note, participants must be provided with informed consent, ensured of anonymity and confidentiality and be debriefed after the research has ended. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and participant selection and participation, were maintained throughout the research as previously noted. Further, the investigator-participant relationship as noted by Merriam (1998) should also be named as this can become the source of ethical violations. By serving as a participant-observer for observations and by having no previous relationship with participants selected, this consideration was negated. Moreover, it was important to remain consistent with prescribed ethical considerations in regards to data collection. Informed consent required the researcher to disclose the nature of the research, components that may negatively impact them, the ability to stop the project at any point and that participation was completely voluntary (Glesne, 2006). These and other ethical guidelines informed and guided the collection of data and remained at the forefront of the research.

Finally, the recognition of one's personal biases must be addressed. As a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program focusing on curriculum and supervision in the same College of Education that houses the proposed minor to be studied, the

researcher remained cognizant of how the research may be received by those involved in the program's administration and coordination. During this study, the researcher served as Director of Teacher Development for an alternative teacher licensure program. Prior to serving in this capacity, the researcher was a Curriculum Coordinator for a middle-sized Southern public school district and a classroom teacher in a local high school within the same district. Research was conducted during my ninth year as a professional educator. Throughout his undergraduate and Master's-level career, the researcher had an interest in bridging disconnects that I believed exist between teacher education programs and the American public school classroom.

This collection of experiences certainly shaped the researcher's outlook on the benefits that exist to educators (and non-educators alike) who entrench themselves in issues of social and educational equity. The opportunities, insights, and need to critically question one's own surroundings provided countless means of reflection and self-discovery. While the researcher admits bias towards the benefits of these types of programs, he also experienced individuals who were unable to recognize the opportunity that exists through programs that push issues of service learning and multiculturalism.

The scope of the researcher's tenure in the educational arena was shaped by his belief that traditional means of teacher education programs are not providing experiences that directly correlate to the classrooms that many pre-service teachers will soon serve. The researcher held that education programs that provide opportunities for future educators to work with the communities in which they serve and that are rooted in critical pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching are one method of providing context. Personally, varied educational experiences provided the researcher opportunity to become

more attuned to the cultural needs of students who differ from him. As a White male, it was important to recognize the cultural norms that the researcher carries and to prevent sustentation of traditional hegemonic power structures. These various factors were at the forefront of the research and use of data analysis methods that compensated for this subjectivity were employed.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of the methodological practices to be used for this research. The qualitative case study method was used because of the rich, thick descriptions that are revealed through this research method and because of the ability of case study to explore a problem with the intent of providing in-depth information. Data collected through non-participant observations, interviews, and student work samples from three purposefully selected participants ensured a rich data set relevant to answering the research questions posed. Using the inductive analysis technique, and single case analysis followed by cross case comparisons, this study elicited major commonalities and themes across three cases of student teacher participants enrolled in the program. Together, the employment of these techniques positioned the researcher to answer the research questions proposed.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

This chapter seeks to describe the research findings from three participants. This chapter provides major findings from interview, observation, and student work sample data as a mean for honing in on the three research questions as follows:

1. What are the perceptions and overall experiences of pre-service teachers enrolled in the minor?
2. How do these teachers view the impact of the program on their own growth and development?
3. How do they view the impact of the program on student teaching practices?

Each of the three cases presented in this chapter is rooted in a thorough description of their personal and academic backgrounds as well as context about the minor capstone course. The cases begin with a summary of the participant and their background and are then followed by their personal perceptions of the minor. Next, the themes of social justice and diversity, privilege and Whiteness, community building and relationship building, and teaching practice are explored as pertinent findings. Following the description of the data from the participant's point of view, a cross-case analysis that centers upon the research questions illuminates pertinent thematic trends.

Case 1: Ann

Participant Background

Ann was a White woman in her early twenties and was completing her final student teaching assignment before graduation. Data were collected while she was enrolled in the minor's capstone course in spring 2015 and during the first phase of her student teaching experience in fall of 2015. In her final year of course requirements for the minor and her Bachelor of Science in Education, Ann specialized her undergraduate work in Special Education and hoped to work at the secondary level once she graduated and became a licensed practitioner. Ann grew up in a rural area approximately thirty miles away from the urban research university where the study took place. Ann's background (both personal and academic) was often a point of reflection for her as she thought about the impact of the minor on her current academic trajectory. Ann spoke frequently about her upbringing, high school experience, and hometown. She said, "Well, I'm from a predominantly White area, and I've never really had an experience with a very diverse school because my school had people who looked like me; who thought like me." As a high school student, Ann was interested in nursing as a profession and at her magnet high school enrolled in a certified nursing assistant (CNA) program that was jointly offered through a local community college. Her focus on experiential training opportunities and academics was evident from her discussions about her personal academic journey in high school.

In addition to the coursework completed for the minor of study, Ann also partially completed the requirements for a minor in Women and Gender Studies. The content and skill learned from this minor were acknowledged by Ann as a personal strength as she

thought about her own place in the classroom. While, Ann completed much of the coursework towards this additional minor, she was forced to prioritize her academic pursuits to maintain her graduation date. Ann was introduced the minor in by the program coordinator at a minor and major fair hosted on by the university. Initially attracted to the minor by personal beliefs, Ann stated her rationale as:

> I just thought it was interesting to work with urban youth in communities because of… my ideas about education and about everybody having an equal opportunity to succeed in school is really important, regardless of the resources that are currently available. And I think the most valuable resource is the educator.

As a Special Education major, Ann was also intrigued by the service learning component of the minor as she stated, "I like the idea for having a service learning component in all of the courses we have to take for the minor, because I feel like they're very beneficial to education in general." As a final impetus for adding the minor, Ann spoke about the varied clinical field experiences that were embedded in earlier education courses. Being placed in many different schools across the region, Ann became aware of resource discrepancies that existed. She said, "[I] can totally see a difference in the resources. And it's crazy because they say education is equal and you get public education, but, it's just so not equal, and I could see that." Ann's personal and academic backgrounds both played a significant role in her taking on the minor.

Perceptions of the Minor

According to Ann, her notions around social justice issues led her to consider and ultimately enroll in the minor. Additionally, the service learning focus of the minor was a major draw as Ann said, "I know that a lot of people learn by actual doing and having

that practical experience." As a whole, the minor is something that Ann would recommend to others and was an experience that she is glad to have received while studying education. Ann concluded:

> I would recommend it to my friends….I think it's really important to have that openness in your mind [when] working with different kinds of people. Especially for people who have grown up in such a different environment like I have. [You] just have the respect to work with people that [are a] lot different than you.

These notions of affirming and recognizing the innate strengths in people across racial and economic lines often guided Ann's responses and positively impacted her perception of the minor. In terms of the interdisciplinary focus of the minor, Ann enjoyed the fact that there were participants and peers from a variety of academic and personal backgrounds in her coursework. She said, "I especially like having different viewpoints just so I can reflect on my own views about something, and [learning] how somebody feels who maybe knows a lot more about a subject than me" was a benefit of the interdisciplinary approach of the minor and courses.

Specifically speaking as an education major, Ann also recommended the program to future teachers and educators. She cited the program coordinator and instructors of courses as strengths and said:

> It's really beneficial just knowing how to work with the diverse population of students, because as a teacher, you're going to need to know how to work with all kinds of children, even if you don't think you're going to be working with an urban community in specific.

Ann's response to her overall recommendation of the program for both education and non-education majors was steadfast throughout the data collection process. When asked about the most important takeaway from the program as a whole, Ann's notion of diversity in the classroom and in communities was at the forefront of her thought. She stated "I think the biggest takeaway from the program is just…. to know how to work with all kinds of people and especially kids who are growing up in urban communities." As a White woman, Ann demonstrated a nuanced view of diversity in education but ultimately positioned students (specifically those that did not share her racial or ethnic background) as being diverse – often when placed in hyper-segregated school or community roles.

Ann also noted that her perception of the minor was shaped through its focus on community building (both outside and within) the classroom experience. Ann stated that the program worked to build a sense of respect for communities and cited a specific community-focused course that was required for the minor. This course provided her with opportunities to think about collaboration with community in her own future classroom. As the focus of the capstone course was participatory service learning, I asked Ann about her experiences in this class in particular. She stated, "I really liked that class. I really liked her [the instructor]. I just liked how free it was." The structure and instructor of the capstone course were often cited by Ann as an asset and strength. Ann believed that these two factors allowed her to reflect on her learning and through those reflections position her for impact future. Ann concluded:

> I just hope that I can become a better teacher through experiences like this. Through the capstone and minor…. I really think it's important to have an open

> mind about things and to respect people… I think that's the biggest thing for me, [was] just overcoming that bias. Because, I will probably work with students [that are] different than me….So from this course, hopefully [I am] gaining knowledge on how to better communicate with people effectively.

Throughout our interviews, Ann was steadfast in her belief that the capstone course helped her build a skillset in working with others, often across lines of racial difference, and because of this she hoped that it would impact her teaching. The perceived net gain in skills and content knowledge provided Ann with a positive outlook of the minor and course. Ann was observed during classroom observations actively participating in class. On two occasions, Ann was the first student to arrive and took leadership in helping the instructor set the room up. Additionally, it was noted that Ann had established strong relationships with several of her classmates in the capstone course. She was observed on many occasions engaging with and the instructor on issues related to her assignments or projects.

Although Ann had an overall positive experience with the minor, she mentioned areas where she hoped the program could grow. While the program of study was intrinsically interesting for Ann, there were certain courses that she took as part of the minor that were not as well received as the capstone course. For instance, Ann often spoke about a citizenship class that focused on building agency and active citizens – a major focus for the minor as a whole. Ann stated that the instructor "didn't think the way I thought, being a special education major" and perceived the class as "not beneficial to me, at all." These comments stand in contradiction of Ann's perceived positive experience of the minor being inter-disciplinary in nature. When asked to clarify, Ann

later mentioned, “I thought it was a good class, just because I think it’s important for people to be aware of their role as a citizen and being an informed citizen and being civic.” This duality in responses was reflected throughout our interviews together regarding this particular course. Ann seemed to appreciate the inter-disciplinary nature of the minor at different levels. Often citing the diverse academic background and interests of fellow students as strengths of the program, Ann offered criticism towards instructors and courses that were not perceived as of interest. However, her ultimate conclusion of the course being “good,” does demonstrate a level of appreciation for perspectives and approaches that differ from her own academic background. It

A larger critique of the program came through Ann’s perception of a lack of community among minor enrollees. She often noted a desire for more opportunities for service learning in courses and outside of coursework with her peers in the minor. She further spoke to her desire for there to be a greater sense of community among participants by saying:

> I think something I would change is [that]I would probably try to make it be more of a community for the minor…I think I would probably make it seem like we’re…. coherent like a department, so we get to know each other. And I also think I would like to see more, outside of course work [opportunities where] we’d go and do things. Because, that’s the whole idea of being in this minor. Learning and helping out. And, I feel like we should do more outside of class.

This notion was an idea that she had planned to take to the program coordinator as feedback and suggestion. However, Ann demonstrated little agency to help build that community herself and spoke of this being a structure that the program or program

coordinator should provide for students. While enrolled in coursework and experiences that were grounded in building community with others (schools, organizations, parents, families, etc.), Ann demonstrated limited capacity to build community amongst peers in the minor – a skill that was programmatically built into the minor itself. This was evident from not only interview data but from observations of Ann in the capstone course. She often networked with colleagues and peers and demonstrated a strong relationship with the course instructor. While Ann was clear in her overall perception of the minor (positive and negative), her perceptions of the impact of the minor on her own growth and development was equally coherent.

Social Justice and Diversity

Ann stated throughout our interviews that social justice issues were of interest to her at an early age. Ann consistently noted that the coursework of the minor met her expectation and stated, "I really enjoy it just because it's something that I'm already interested in." Ann was active in service learning opportunities during her high school and earlier collegiate careers. Volunteering and serving with various on and off-campus organizations provided Ann with a structure to practice this personal "passion." This demonstrated mindset oriented Ann to continue to seek knowledge during her time in the minor and capstone course. Additionally, Ann noted that "education is something that's public - it needs to be more equal." This democratic notion of education was also a main determinant in her enrolling in the minor and completing the course requirements. Ann often reflected on her own privilege and background. When asked to think about her experience in the minor as an education student Ann stated:

> Three years ago, I was 17 coming into college. I wasn't really exposed to a very diverse environment when I was growing up. And coming in from a very rural area to a more urban school, I don't think I would have looked at the kids any differently, but I probably would have felt that difference a lot more, me being white and everybody else being different.

Thus, while a predisposition towards service learning and educational equity prompted Ann to enroll in this minor and others with similar orientations, Ann's own acknowledgment of a lack of skill and opportunity to work with students and peers across lines of racial differences became a central component of her experience in the minor. Interestingly, Ann seemed to develop a notion that "urban" youth refers specifically to Black students while her more rural upbringing was majority White. Ann noted during our time together that her main impetus for enrolling and completing the minor was rooted in her desire to learn skills and build knowledge about working with populations that were more diverse than her own upbringing because, "as a teacher you are going to need to know how to work with all kinds of children."

From the minor, Ann often noted that the course work and service learning components of the program were opportunities for her to complete service learning and academic assignments related to her placement. Many of these opportunities were school-based and gave Ann experience in a variety of schools throughout the region. Through her experience at multiple schools – many Title I and some more affluent- Ann often saw resource inequity in neighborhoods and schools from a first-hand perspective. She noted, "You can totally see a different in the resources… It's crazy because they say education is equal and you get public education but, it's just so not equal, and I could see

that." The inequities that she noted in schools prompted her to think about how these issues will impact her own future classroom and caused her to reflect on her own background and schooling.

Further growth and development around issues of social justice was grounded in the experiences offered by many classes within the minor's course of study. Ann frequently spoke about a course on active citizenship and about how the coursework for the class galvanized her thoughts around agency and service learning. While Ann initially had negative perceptions around this course stating that class was not designed in a manner that she felt best met her needs, Ann ultimately noted that "I thought was a good class, just because I think it's important for people to be aware of their role as a citizen and being an informed citizen and being civic." This again highlighted Ann's conflict in both feeling as though she had agency to make change and in being open to coursework that pushed outside of her academic discipline. Of particular note around this course, Ann spoke often about the service learning component where she paired and worked with a local agency that serves the homeless population of the region. Ann said:

> I absolutely love the people we served there, because they're just great. I mean, people are very smart and regardless of where they live or whatever. I like to just listen to people's stories and talk to them.

This example demonstrates how Ann ultimately perceived courses and experiences that were different from her own academic background and provided her with opportunity to explore her own growth and development. While the minor as a whole provided opportunities for reflection, knowledge and skill building, and community building, Ann

spoke often about her experience in the capstone course of the minor as an influence of her own growth and development.

The capstone course of the minor provided Ann further skills and knowledge around social justice issues. Ann stated:

> I feel like this class and minor has been able to teach me to be more open minded…how to best prepare people to work in the community. I'm really excited just because I do have this awareness and I have it in myself already, but being more informed…

This statement captures the emerging agency that Ann saw within herself. These reflections are coupled with thoughts around specific knowledge bases – specifically issues relating to social justice issues in the classroom and education system. "This class was just really surprising to me because it makes me reflect on education a lot." Ann provided a specific example of learning more about the school to prison pipeline and reflected on how her growing knowledge of statistical evidence around the trend and specific restorative justice practices have been shown to interrupt the pattern. This example was indicative of the knowledge and awareness that Ann received from the capstone course and demonstrated an effort by Ann to move from the personal experience to a more justice-oriented, systemic look at factors impacting education. Further, Ann noted, "It's just something that I never really thought about until coming into" this class and "I didn't really know that this school to prison pipeline thing was a thing until I took the class." While the capstone course may have helped illuminate these connection for Ann, she wrote in her first assignment for the class in a manner that demonstrated her predisposition to a social justice orientation. When responding to a writing prompt about

societal issues, Ann connected the issues she highlighted to system (government, healthcare, and housing) and noted that "equal access to necessary resources" was paramount. While not complex in her internalization, this is evidence of Ann's awareness and orientation towards issues of social justice. The awareness and knowledge that the capstone course provided around this issue had a large impact on Ann's thinking about the schools in which she was working and worked to reaffirm her desire to work in an urban school environment.

Additional knowledge and awareness was perceived through the capstone courses' discussion on adverse childhood experiences and their impact on child growth and development and education. Ann believed this content as the most influential of her courses and consistently echoed this sentiment across all interviews. "I mean, that [adverse childhood experiences] was a big theme throughout the whole class" stated Ann. Specifically noting issues of poverty, Ann believed that this awareness and knowledge that she developed was important "because students might go through a lot of experiences that I've never had before or that I have never experienced as a child." This was also a central theme to Ann's capstone project entitled *Welcome Home: Welcoming Neighbors*. This participatory service project proposal served the English Language Learners (ELL) at a local elementary school was designed by Ann as a final component of the capstone course and minor. This included research, interviews of stakeholders, and the completion of a needs assessment for the program at the elementary school. Her project proposal and presentation utilized much of the aforementioned content as its basis. The project was rooted in statistics that underpinned the needs at the school, as well as research regarding the student population (ELL) that the project was aimed at

supporting. Ann wrote in her "Needs Assessment" for the capstone course that her project "benefits children's lives through gains in community involvement, social justice, and education." It is clear that Ann's desire to connect her project to issues of social justice was strong, however a lack of clear understanding in the needs assessment also indicates that Ann had yet to internalize what social justice was. Further, during her presentation, it was observed that Ann shared quotes and statistics specifically related to school resource funding and students living in poverty – two conceptual themes from the course and minor that was consistently noted by Ann as having a large impact on her own growth and development. This illustrated internalization of course content and an ability to analyze the content as it related to the specific project topic.

The content covered during the capstone course and minor not only impacted her own growth and development around issues of social justice, but also helped Ann to define her own notion of diversity in schools. Grounded in her own perceived lack of experience in diverse settings, Ann had an expanding personal definition of diversity. She often reflected on how "broad" a topic diversity was and that it was an underpinning of the capstone course and minor. Additionally, Ann spoke often about her desire to learn more and build her own skill in the area of diversity. For instance, Ann was prompted by an instructor in the minor to attend a workshop and conference hosted at the university that was centered on Educators and LGBTQ students in the classroom. While not a requirement for the course, Ann was encouraged to attend (and became aware of the opportunity) because of the minor. Interestingly, Ann often seemed to define diverse students as those that did not share her own racial or socio-economic background. Even when placed in highly segregated school placements, Ann used language of diversity that

seemed to indicate a false sense of "others" and positioned her own background and identity as that of normalcy. This orientation towards diversity in the classroom stands in contrast to Ann's personal testament that diversity was "broad." Perhaps Ann's own biases and assumptions about who diverse students are shaped her thought.

While her orientation towards social justice issues was clearly affirmed through reflection, Ann often struggled (admittedly) to define what social justice meant to her. When asked, Ann stumbled and said "I wish I knew more about social justice, and I wish I had more classes that were focused on it." When pressed, she articulated that:

> Social justice to me is just, I guess thinking and speaking and having respect and knowing when to talk to people and knowing how to work with people. Social justice being, I guess what I'm trying to say… justice to me, equals respect and having just the freedom to think and say what you need to say and what you feel is important to say.

This ultimate definition that centered upon respect is a theme that emerged throughout her time in the minor. From an assignment given during the capstone course, Ann noted that "Respect is the key to a successful society. Without respect, societies will ultimately collapse. The first key to improve society would be that all people be educated in the issues that occurring in our society." However, Ann's personal definition of social justice or social justice education failed to address systemic issues of equity and was situated solely in the personal. This indicates a very loose understanding of the premise and would thus shape her understanding of social justice education in the classroom. The failure to connect her personal definition of social justice to her own privilege and background was also evident.

Ann spoke often about how the content and skills from the minor shaped the way she thought about teaching and learning in the public school classroom. However, evidence in the data suggested that Ann brought awareness and initial understanding of many of the concepts that the minor is rooted. Ann stated that she had always been interested in community service learning opportunities and took advantage of many of these types of activities during her high school career. Further, she noted that her lack of experience in diverse setting is one way that she had experienced growth through the minor, as the minor provided her opportunity. Ann stated, "I've done a lot of my clinical experience here in [the regional community]. A lot of the schools I've been to have been really diverse. There are so many different races in every single classroom." These experiences stood in stark contrast to her personal schooling career. Additionally, Ann had developed a mindset around the democratic education experience for students and believed that, "education is something that's public. It needs to be more equal." This orientation towards democratic education was developed through real world visits to various school partners in the region and pushed Ann to face the resource and other disparities that she saw. Further, Ann punctuated her social justice mindset by saying that the minor is already "something I'm interested in." Therefore, Ann's innate desire and interest in social justice minded opportunities seemed to further push her towards completion of the degree program and certainly provided an impetus for enrollment, matriculation, and ultimately graduation

Privilege and Whiteness

As previously noted, Ann often reflected on her own personal background as she explored the coursework and service learning that was embedded in the minor. When

asked about content from her minor coursework that most impacted her teaching practice, Ann stated that White privilege was a concept that she had not "thought a lot about." When probed about her reflection on her privilege as a White woman, Ann responded:

> The population, like I said, was very different from what I was used to. I walked into this… and we went in and I looked around the classroom, and I'm the only White person there, and I'm like whoa, this is so different."

This reflection addressed the racial differences that Ann experienced and positioned her (as a White woman) in a position of power by not addressing the power imbalance that accompanies those with privilege. In essence, Ann experienced a disorienting dilemma that caused her to feel uncomfortable. This uncomfortability that Ann described was not rooted in a deeper reflection about power structures based on situation of privilege nor a was it accompanied by a reflection of how this uncomfortability may mirror that of non-White students in classrooms taught primarily by White females.

Ann believed that without the coursework and experiences from the minor that she may have interacted differently with the students in this classroom than she did. She stated:

> I probably would have let the nervousness just take over me because I get real nervous, and wanting to do really well, and just not knowing how to, probably would have taken over how I felt, I don't think I would have treated the kids any differently, but I would have been more afraid of how they would react to me and not be able to react in a way that's appropriate.

However, she acknowledged that the coursework and her experiences tempered her reaction and nervousness and stated that:

> I do think that the minor has given me direction and given me resources to strengthen my understanding of urban youth and given me more of a chance to learn why, and learn how to help out and how to teach to make them have access to the same things that I have access to... let them have that knowledge. The same kinds of knowledge that I have.

This statement from Ann indicated a tepid true understanding of her own privilege as a White women, as she holds that her "knowledge" is the knowledge that needs to be taught and disseminated. The minor, through its service learning components and classroom field experiences, provided her opportunities to reflect on her own background and about how her own identity would be reflected in current classrooms and in her own future student teaching classroom. However, connections between her own understandings of commonly held norms shaped her personal reflections by positioning the students in classrooms as "diverse" and her own identity as normalcy. Additionally, there was no acknowledgment in student work artifacts or in her participatory service project of how her own identity was informing her responses.

Ann grounded much of her own personal identity reflection in her perceived understanding that the minor provided her and other students opportunity to "be aware of diverse populations." This notion of diversity was a common theme throughout the interviews and through other data collected. For instance, in review of participatory project proposal and other student documents and that the purpose for her project in the capstone course was to address needs of diverse students in one of the region's most diverse elementary schools. Additionally, as observed in multiple classroom observations, Ann spoke on several occasions about the knowledge base around working

with and for diverse populations was providing her with practical application for working with peers, colleagues, and community members that may not share her identity. In on class discussion observed, Ann noted that she often feels pressure to share her own learnings and reflections around diversity with her cooperating teacher and school-based colleagues. When asked in an interview to elaborate, Ann stated:

> When I sit at lunch, I always hear gossip about students and I always have to sit back and think, now do they really do this, or did he do this because they don't understand what he's doing? So, sometimes you just have to sit back and think about what people are really saying, or telling you, so that you can have that in your mind. But, know that there could be cases outside of what they're telling you that they don't realize because maybe they haven't had training, and they don't know where this diverse experiences comes from.

Ann's further elaborations acknowledge that from her perspective the content and experiences embedded in the minor and capstone course have "definitely prepared [her] for the classroom" and that the minor has given her "tools to enhance learning for students." This clearly illustrated a perceived connection for Ann between the minor and her own teaching practice, especially as it relates to working with students across racial lines of difference and with fellow colleagues. Through her work in the minor, Ann consistently framed her experience with diverse populations through her own experience as a White woman with privilege by purporting, "I know that I have it because I'm White and I am more advantaged than some people." This privilege was used by Ann as a mechanism to frame her experiences in classrooms and with community partners and was directly attributed by Ann to the curriculum and experiences embedded in the minor.

However, there was no evidence of Ann's true internalization of how her privilege shapes her own understanding of hyper-segregated classrooms. Ann continued in her reflections to position students as "diverse," even when evidence of lack of racial diversity was present in the classrooms and communities in which she spent practicum hours.

Building Community and Relationships

As previously mentioned, capstone participatory service learning project proposal was a major component of both the capstone course and the minor as a whole. Ann's project for the course was entitled *Welcome Home, Welcoming Neighbors* and was a participatory service project that would serve the English Language Learners (ELL) at a local elementary school. Ann's project proposal was not her first choice. She initially researched and completed an interview with a university on-campus organization that was focused on education equity. As the semester progressed, Ann often struggled with meeting assignment deadlines for the project and stated:

> The class has really showed me…. to reflect on things, and when I saw that it wasn't working with my other project, I had to switch. And just knowing, and having the confidence in knowing, that people are supporting you, and your switch…. Because you're going to be late on your due date, or whatever, but sometimes you just have to do things and not be too sure about what's going to happen. And that's hard for me, because I like to know, and be in control, but I'm not, obviously.

While Ann often struggled with components of the project, she mentioned leaning in to a community of learners that were "supportive." This support structure may have buffeted Ann from the missed deadlines and due dates. As a White woman, Ann failed to connect

how the support of a collegial course instructor and program partner could have been due to White privilege. Ann's ability to tap in to this structure of support illustrates a comfortability with her own privilege. This stood in support of Ann's loose connection of social justice to larger, systemic issues.

Within the project, Ann also noted that the community aspect of the participatory service learning proposal was an overall strength and was something that she enjoyed. She often spoke about the "really great partner" that she had at the local elementary school and how the project helped her build skills and acknowledge the strong sense of community that existed in her cooperating elementary school, a Title I elementary school in the region. In Ann's words:

> I think the community atmosphere there is so much greater than I think the community aspect as [another regional school], for example. Even though they both don't have a lot of resources, the community itself is so much stronger. And, I think that teachers and students want to be a part of that community and they want to see the school grow.

While Ann spoke often to the belief that the minor and capstone course were central to her own growth and development in issues of social justice and diversity, she also saw growth in areas related to community building, relationships, and her skill of reflection. Opportunities for community building were embedded in many of the courses that Ann took for the minor and Ann seemed to take a constructivist view when asked about her opportunities to work with community members when she said:

> Personally, just because I feel like we all learn a lot by just being in a situation, and having to think about what we're going to do…I know that a lot of people learn by actual doing and having that practical experience.

She noted that one area she felt she gained experience was building relationships with others in the community. Specifically citing one particular service learning opportunity, Ann said, "sometimes where disconnect is when you learn something… is that you don't actually know how to apply it in real life. But, I like that we're getting that experience now." Through these experiences, Ann was not only able to embed service learning opportunities with communities but also gain valuable skills around building relationships with community partners. For instance, Ann believed that her enrollment in the minor and the service learning opportunities that were included within it gave her opportunity to gain skills in communicating with others. For her capstone course participatory service project proposal, Ann spoke about collaborating with an outside partner and noted:

> It's hard to collaborate with people sometimes. It's kind of intimidating, especially coming in as a college student. I think, though, that I got some practice. Yeah, I think I did get a piece of [how to] collaborate, but I think now I'm getting to see the reasons behind *how* you collaborate, and what are the best ways.

Thus, the practical experience Ann gained from working with an outside community partner and communicating with them was a skill that she was able to learn and practice in the moment.

Teaching Practice

Ann believed that the minor had a positive impact on her teaching practice. Prior to enrollment in the minor, Ann had minimal experiences in classroom settings. Through minor-related courses and other education courses taken concurrently, Ann was able to experience classrooms at a variety of regional schools. Through these experiences, Ann considered the concept of white privilege as most impactful on her teaching practice. As previously noted, Ann said that the concept of privilege was one that she had not thought much about prior to enrollment in the minor. However, the minor and field experiences provided gave her opportunities to reflect on how her own privilege impacted her teaching practices. Additionally, Ann perceived growth in social justice education, student-centered service learning, culturally responsive teaching, and reflection as direct growth areas tied to her own teaching practice

In addition to her own understanding of privilege and Whiteness, Ann linked the minor's curriculum and experiences to a desire to address issues of social justice with her own students during her student teaching experience. When she discussed her own growth around issues of social justice, Ann often referenced the inequity seen across these school settings. Through her experience in the minor and the capstone course, Ann saw connections between the content being taught and explored and to her own future classroom and instruction.

Ann posited that through her minor has come to recognize that "just having the least dangerous assumptions about your students" is important when thinking about imparting critical knowledge and learning. As a future special education teacher, Ann

spoke through this lens when thinking about embedding such issues into her own class during student teaching experience and after. Ann stated:

> And so, with this social justice thing, and discussing events like those, I don't think I ever thought that they [students] wouldn't... I knew I didn't think they would understand, like I would understand it, but that kind of bias of me to think.

Recognizing her own bias in embedding current events that are grounded in social justice issues, Ann continued by stating that through this reflection she now believed that "they're going to benefit from it" and that it would be an important component to embed in her classroom. However, she also noted that she also believed "it might be harder to think about that, just because I need to have more experience in social justice." This illustrated a desire by Ann to learn more around social justice issues before she felt fully equipped to embed them holistically in her own future classroom.

In one interview with Ann, she spoke of an example of how her own understanding around issues of social justice – this time issues of generational poverty and homelessness – helped her make meaning and sense of real life occurrences in her student teaching classroom. Ann spoke directly about issues of homelessness in her school placement and reflected on a personal experience of opening a dialogue with students about issues of homelessness, race, and gender. Ann purported that "just knowing how to talk to them about that, and asking them" questions are important, even if difficult. "It's important students know the problem behind things and why things happen, and being able to talk to you students' openly about things" said Ann when asked about social justice connections to her own classroom. Further, Ann connected dialogue around issues of social justice to issues around race and gender.

When asked about her comfortability in teaching issues of social justice to her own students in the future Ann noted that she would "be more excited about doing that with students in the general education program," but that she would "definitely try to… because it's so important to talk about things like that will all kinds of students." This could be attributed to Ann approaching issues of teaching and learning for special education students from a deficit perspective. But, she countered her statement and focused on specifics skills that could be embedded in her curriculum. Specifically noting a course in the minor that taught service learning methods, Ann argued that this course taught her skills that could be applied at any level of education. Ann said that she and her colleagues built a unit based on a social justice issue of interest that could be delivered to students. Ann stated:

> My service learning class that I'm taking for the minor, we're doing a unit plan based on a social justice issue. And, so I've been learning how to look at the Common Core Standards and how to teach content in the way that is going to help my students have lifelong learning, and I think it's important, especially with students who come from diverse backgrounds, to have opportunities to learn about social justice, event at any grade level."

Ann further posited that through the development of the social justice unit plan in this course, she learned skills that helped her think through implementation of such a unit into the classroom. "I learned through the minor that students, in general, learn better when you implement the learning about these issues in different core classes." This level of application of social justice issues was overall a perceived strength for Ann of the minor and this particular course as it relates to her own teaching practice and skill.

Through observations of Ann in the capstone course, the researcher noted Ann's disposition to reflect about her own self and that of the students in classrooms. For instance, the instructor probed Ann to make connections between learning trends she was seeing in classrooms to needs she was addressing in her participatory service learning project. On multiple occasions, Ann was able to build connections between how access for ELL students in elementary school was informed by systems of power and oppression around them. This corroborates with Ann's written reflections in assignments discussed earlier as she further expands her understanding of power and privilege.

Another area where Ann perceived a strong body of skill being developed was around community service learning and building relationships with outside community partners. Through her coursework in the minor, particularly the capstone course, Ann spoke often about her desire to implement such learning opportunities to her own students. When asked directly about opportunities she saw to connect community organizations and partners with her students in the classroom, Ann stated:

> Definitely! The great think about SPED (special education) in my school, especially for students who are more severely disabled or who are served by an IEP (individualized education plan) for intellectual disability, is they get lots of chances to go out into the community.

Ann noted that she hopes to promote this continued relationship between community and her students throughout her teaching career and expected to be able to promote this relationship as "skill" for her SPED students.

Ann also recognized that students are not removed from their community and thus saw their direct relationship as being important to foster in the classroom. "I like the idea

of community service learning" stated Ann. "I mean kids are going to be able to go to their communities and do things like, that are going to be important to them, you know?" Further, Ann purported that completing a service community building learning projects is something she hopes to accomplish. Referring directly to the service learning methods course in the minor Ann stated, "I really want to try to do something with that" as she referred to the service learning unit she completed for the course.

Similarly, Ann saw connections between her minor course work and her desire for students in the classroom to build relationships with a broad variety of stakeholders – both inside and outside of the school building. Ann specifically referenced building relationships between herself and her students and building relationships with peers, colleagues, and administrators.

> I hope that, when I become a student teacher, I will be able to talk to my kids and let them know, you know, that they're important to be because that's something I've learned that is really important… So, I just think it's important to just let your kids know that you're there for them.

This theme continued as Ann stated that she was most excited about the relationships that she would be able to build during her student teaching experience and in her own classroom one day. "I'm so excited to get to be at the same school for the whole year and build relationships with my students!" exclaimed Ann.

While Ann's self-perceived knowledge and skill around social justice learning in the classroom, relationships, and her own understandings of her identity were recurring themes, she also spoke about examples of teaching practices and mindsets that she either had implemented during her short time in classroom settings or that she hoped to

implement in future classrooms. These mindsets and teaching practices were concurrent with culturally responsive teaching practices and centered on Ann's assumptions and perceptions of students, her skillset in communicating with students across lines of racial difference, and on holding high academic expectations for all learners. For instance, when reflecting on an experience Ann had in a local high school SPED classroom around academic expectations, Ann noted that she was "expecting to see more great things" in terms of the academic work that students were completing. She noted on several instances that there was a perceived disconnect between her expectations of students' academic achievement and those of her cooperating teachers. And, in all instances, Ann held higher expectations for the academic assignments students should be completing. Additionally, Ann noted that her perceived communication skill with students around issues of race and gender was directly correlated to studies of culturally relevant teaching pedagogy that was embedded in the minor and other education courses.

These understanding and knowledge bases were put to test when Ann confronted a situation that made her uncomfortable during a student teaching experience. Ann recounted the use of religious music by a cooperating teacher throughout the school day. When Ann questioned the teacher about the appropriateness, the teacher brushed off Ann's concerns. While Ann was confronted with an experience that tested her own professional identity, she also reflected that the experience made her think she should "definitely be more careful about what I ask and say to students" and "made me question, like, am I really going to let this happen?" While Ann did not directly address her concerns again with the teacher or anyone else, she noted that this had been a learning example that made her think that "it would be nice to know about these types of issues

before you go into the school, to know what's right and what's wrong, what you can and cannot do." These examples illustrate Ann's growth and development around teaching practices and mindsets that can ultimately impact students' growth and development. However, it also indicates a lack of agency as Ann did not address this issue with the cooperating teacher or administration.

Finally, Ann noted her own growth and development was further inspired by her reflective practice. Ann was observed reflecting in the moment during various course observations and during the interview process. Further, many of the course requirements for the major included a reflective component. Thinking about one of these specific courses, Ann stated:

> If I haven't learned anything, but to reflect, that's good enough for me. I've seen the power of just thinking back on something and being able to think about it in a way that is not emotionally powerful, because sometimes when you're thinking about something that happened and you're just so angry about it, that being able to pull it out of context, and being able to look at it and say, well, not, it wasn't very good, but maybe I can look at it differently and think about it in a different way and maybe get a better response other than being so upset about something.

Her orientation towards becoming a reflective practitioner was also noted as Ann believed "teachers are constantly thinking and trying to improve on what they did previously to make a better lesson. And I think that's important to have an idea of reflection." Clearly reflection was used as a tool by Ann in various situations during her time in the minor – both personal and classroom oriented. These reflections also prompted Ann to begin thinking about her own professional identity as a novice educator.

Ann often connected her course reflections to her own notion of herself as a teacher stating that "I really care about participation. I really care that all students understand what is going on." She also self-defined her teaching style as "explicitly teaching strategies" and made a connection to her own preference for experiential learning. Ultimately, Ann noted that she sees herself as a teacher "that believes all students can succeed" and has "reflected on my teaching because I just know that it's important for my students." While Ann brought many predispositions that were already aligned to the minor and coursework with her to this experience, through her interview responses and work samples, it is clear that the minor has impacted her own thoughts, growth, and development as a young adult. The minor and capstone course have demonstrated growth and development in the areas of social justice awareness, relationships and community building skills, and reflection.

In summary, Ann had an overall positive perception of the minor, capstone course, and service learning component. To that end, Ann attributed her enrollment to impacting her own growth and development in issues of social justice issue, notions of diversity, and community building/relationships. Ann's own identity as a White woman further shaped her perception of the minor and her experiences as a novice educator and illuminated a disposition towards diversity as being different from her own identity. This ultimately left Ann's notions of diversity skewed by a lack of true understanding regarding her own privilege as a White female educator.

Table 1:
Major Findings for Ann

Theme	Major Findings
Participant background	-Early 20's -White female -Special education major -Grew up in rural area, predominately white -Previous experience with service learning
Perception of minor	-Overall positive -Appreciated the inter-disciplinary nature -Would recommend program to other education majors -Critiqued certain courses -Yearned for a larger sense of community among enrollees
Social justice and diversity	-Previous disposition -Notions of diversity rooted in Whiteness -Recognition of resource inequity in schools -Recognition of lack of skill in working across racial lines of difference -Tepid understanding social justice and systemic inequities
Privilege and Whiteness	-Recognition of own privilege as White female -Positioned students of color as diverse -Acknowledgment of understanding privilege as greatest impact by minor
Building community and relationships	-Desire for strong community relationships -Evidence of learning about the community as necessity -Desire for stronger relationships with colleagues in minor -Strong relationship with program coordinator
Teaching practice	-Creates social justice education opportunities for students -Desire to embed community service learning with students -Implementation of reflective practices to guide teaching -Shaped desire to build relationships with students and stakeholders

Case II: Jenn

Participant Background

Jenn was a White woman in her early twenties that was at the time of research enrolled in the minor. During the scope of research, Jenn was finishing her minor requirements and was placed in her student teaching assignment. For this research, data were collected during the first phase of her student teaching experience in both the spring

and fall of 2015. In her final year of course requirements for both the minor and her Bachelor of Science in Education, Jenn aspired to work in elementary education. Jenn grew up in the suburbs in the region and attended a small Christian private school. Her own lack of experience in public education was noted by Jenn and was sure to shape her perceptions of students and communities. This background shaped her perceptions of the minor and the community service learning placements she was a part of. "I have always been involved in a lot of community service" stated Jenn. This involvement was one impetus for her enrollment in the minor.

Jenn's personal academic journey was one often shaped by her own background and privilege. While Jenn was excited to graduate and finish her degree in elementary education, she commented that teaching was not originally part of her life plan. While she "always wanted to be a teacher," she was concerned about "not making a lot of money." Thus, she originally began her undergraduate career as a business major in an effort to secure a more lucrative career. A self-reported "decent" high school student, Jenn enrolled in a large out of state university as a freshman but was unable return after her first year due to unsatisfactory academic performance. This "suspension for poor grades" prompted Jenn to return to the region and enroll in a local community college where she focused on general education and pre-requisites. Following a year at the community college, Jenn transferred to the regional university where the data were collected.

After her successful transfer to the regional university, Jenn recalled that her desire to change to an education major was predicated on her past desires to be a teacher. Jenn said, "I always wanted to be a teacher, so I said, 'Let's do it!' I'd rather be happy

than making lots of money. So, here I am now in this education major and minor." Jenn chose to enroll in the minor primarily because of her involvement with community service learning in the past and the minor's structure and requirements. "I chose the minor I'm in because it was the fewest hours," noted Jenn. This indicated a theme of convenience and a path towards graduation of least resistance. However, she continued, "but then once I got into it, I actually really enjoyed it. So, it's actually a really good pick for me." Both structural and conceptual factors of the minor seemed to have shaped her enrollment and successful completion. Thus, Jenn's impetus for joining was not purely based on interest and self-growth.

As Jenn reflected on her final semester as an undergraduate and about what lies next, she stated that she is "looking for graduate schools" and that she is not sure if teaching in an urban school is in her future. During the study, she was placed in a suburban, primarily White elementary school for her student teaching. Jenn was open to searching for teaching positions in that same area following the completion of her degree. Ultimately, it seemed as if Jenn's perception of the minor was greatly shaped by her own understanding of schooling, her background, and her desire to engage with community stakeholders in service learning opportunities. Further, themes of social justice knowledge, notions of diversity, building relationships with community partners, and her own teaching practice emerged from data analysis.

Perceptions of the Minor

Jenn had a positive perception of the minor and through reflection thought that it was "the best fit" for her. As previously stated, while her original draw was due to the number of hours needed and the structure of the minor, Jenn also reported that service

learning and working in communities was a draw for enrollment. When asked if she would recommend the program to other education majors, Jenn replied "Oh yeah - absolutely!" "You learn a lot about diversity…and where these students come from and their background," she continued. These notions of what diversity is became a common theme as Jenn often positioned diverse student populations as different from her own White, Christian, private school upbringing. As the minor is interdisciplinary in nature, Jenn believed that it would be beneficial for any academic background. "Yeah, I think even a business major for example…. I think it's important to know your consumers around you and what they like and stuff like that. You should learn about the community," said Jenn. "I think it's important for everyone to know how to get involved in their community," she commented. Jenn also posited that the interdisciplinary approach expanded the conversations and discussions within the classroom.

> You know, there's been times in the class that one of the education majors, whether it's myself or someone else, has said something, regarding students or diversity…. and, we have a completely different view than maybe another person who's not an education major.

This "difference" was seen as strengths of both the program and the courses embedded within. The "broad nature" of the interdisciplinary minor was perceived as "interesting" and "cool" to Jenn illustrating a tangential connection to the true purpose of the curriculum.

Jenn recommended the minor to both education and non-education majors and drew strengths from the "broad" academic conversations that manifested themselves due to this structure. However, it was through the coursework and the capstone class that

Jenn found most relevance. "I have enjoyed, not just being in the classrooms, but being able to go out and actually do hands on service in the community," she said. Jenn often highlighted the service learning component of the coursework as a highlight and noted that many of the courses she took for the minor were what she "expected." Particularly pointing to the capstone course as a strength of the program, Jenn spoke highly of its structure and set up. Jenn highlighted both the classroom discussions and service learning component of this course as strengths and was "excited" to work on the project for the course.

The capstone course included a participatory service learning project that Jenn worked on with other class members, including Caroline, a participant in this study. The project, entitled *"Summer Learning Loss Prevention"* was a researched project proposal plan for a local community nonprofit focused on the issue. From the project presentation:

> From interviewing with various alum and Coordinators of [the organization,] we decided that there were two big needs we should address. The first being promoting the program to likely candidates that were willing to volunteer at the sites, as well as getting other community partnerships to work with Freedom Schools in an effort to provide more educational trips during the summer.

During the capstone course, Jenn remarked, "I was excited about being able to go out and do something instead of taking notes in class. Now that I am working with [organization,] I feel ever more excited." However, during an observation of Jenn while giving a final presentation on her work, she commented that the experience was not as robust as she had hoped. Further, it was observed during this presentation that students (including Jenn) had difficulty in articulating synergies between her project and issues of

social justice. As the instructor probed students to make explicit connections to how their project addressed an issue of social justice, the group that Jenn participated with (including Caroline) was unable to articulate.

While Jenn was excited and overall positive in her perception of coursework and the capstone course, she did note that the capstone course was not typical of other courses she has taken. "I don't think they're similar, at all," said Jenn in reference to other education courses she took. She stated that this course was different because of its focus on "building relationships and learning about community." These differences were directly linked to Jenn's holistic reflection on the capstone course.

> The [capstone] would be beneficial for all teachers…. because you learn how to research or how to get to know the community that you are going to be a part of. I feel like when you're in a school, although you might not live in the community, you're still apart of the community because you are teaching the children of that community. I feel like it's very important to know their background, what's around you and how you can relate to them.

Clearly the community aspect of the program resonated strongly with Jenn as it was a major impetus in her enrollment and was the "most valuable" component of the minor in her opinion.

While Jenn's strong opinion of the coursework and capstone course were a major point of reflection during data collection, Jenn also highlighted the program coordinator and faculty as an overall strength of the minor. Jenn noted that the program coordinator was "different," "helpful," and "influential."

> I think [the faculty] has had a big influence on me because in my other courses at the university, it's been mostly [curriculum,] but [these courses] are more broad. Like, you need to be able to answers the questions: 'Why are you teaching this?' 'Why would I need to know this?'

Jenn continued with this reflection and cited that it was important for her to be clear on her "why" and to be clearly able to communicate that to herself and to her students to give them the "big picture." For Jenn, this connection and reflection were inspired by both the faculty and program coordinator for the minor and stood in contrast to traditional education courses she had taken.

Overall, Jenn's perception of the minor was positive and reflected a clear focus on the service learning component of the minor and its' coursework. However, Jenn spoke of several areas for improvement that she hoped would make the minor more beneficial for students enrolled. These critiques centered on course offerings and the capstone course. In regards to the coursework for the minor, Jenn often spoke about a particular course she did not feel was a strong fit for herself or the minor. She felt that the course "did not have anything to do with the minor" as its focus was more human geography. Alternatively, Jenn spoke positively regarding the community service project that accompanied the course. When pressed, Jenn was less resolute in her perception of the course and its place in the minor when she stated that the "service learning component was valuable." Despite her experience and perception of this course, Jenn still would recommend the minor and program to others.

More critique was offered by Jenn regarding her experience in the capstone course. Jenn focused her critique around three areas: perceived accomplishment,

perceived hardships, and suggestions for improvement. When asked about her perceived accomplishments in working with the community partner for the capstone, Jenn replied that she had not accomplished as much as she had hoped.

> This is supposed to be like your grand finale….for the minor…..I thought the project might be larger and that we would have started earlier in the semester. I felt like [program coordinator] would have expected more from us and I was very surprised that she just expects us to start a project. I don't…. really know how to just start a project and I don't want to leave them….hanging.

Jenn further noted that she did not "get a lot of times to connect with her community partner" and that she wished she would have been pushed to begin planning earlier. Additionally she said, "I wish there was a little more to [our project] than passing out fliers. I don't know how effective that really is." This reflection did not include a sense of agency for both Jenn and her partners. The project described was one designed by the student group and through her reflection it became clear that Jenn did not take ownership for the work completed. It was clear that Jenn had reflected on the impact of her own work for the capstone and identified areas for improvement, it was also certain that she positively perceived the experience as a whole. She offered suggestions on improving the capstone experience to remedy some of her concerns. These possible solutions included making the capstone experience a year-long course and connecting students with more community partners earlier in the experience. For Jenn, the onus for these changed lied with the faculty and program coordinator.

While Jenn perceived the minor and its service learning components as overall valuable and continuously offered her recommendation of the program to both education

and non-education majors, it is evident that Jenn's experience was not without critique. However, her readiness to offer recommendation of the program remained steadfast and culminated with the reflection that the minor helped her "to be a little more open-minded in the classroom setting with different diverse people and cultures." This "open-mindedness" is linked to Jenn's own identity as a White woman and her perceived growth and development in knowledge of social justice issues and her own notions of diversity in the classroom. This is a continued example of Jenn disconnecting her own privilege and power from marginalized students in classrooms and communities that she worked with for the minor. Jenn positioned diversity as an instance of "others," and maintained her own Eurocentric view as norm.

Social Justice and Diversity

One emergent theme from the data set was Jenn's awareness and skill related to issues of social justice and her notions of diversity. Both were closely aligned to her own background and identity. However, Jenn specifically spoke of connections between her developing social justice mindset and the minor curriculum and service learning experiences. Jenn previously had very little opportunities to work with students and communities that looked different from her own. From the document review of an assignment of the capstone course, Jenn was asked to indicate her previous experience in communities in a service-learning capacity. Jenn indicated that she did not "currently have an ongoing relationship with a community partner." Further, she listed only one previous experience in working within the community – through a community garden project. The minor allowed her to grow her own skill and awareness around issues of social justice. "It definitely opened my mind," Jenn stated when referencing one specific

opportunity to work with LGTBQ youth in the community. Through this community placement, coordinated through a minor course, Jenn worked over the course of a semester with youth from a local non-profit serving the LGBTQ student community. From this experience, Jenn reflected on the future classroom where she may have students that identify as LGBTQ. "You're going to have different students in your classroom, whether that is race or religion, or whatever. It opened my mind on how to handle different situation and how to be respectful," said Jenn. She coupled that with a reflection on skills in listening and relationships that she built when working with this population. She stated that, "listening….hearing them out….taking in how they feel" were large skill takeaways from the experience.

While working with the LGBTQ youth population was a new experience for Jenn, she identified specific skills that she learned or practiced while placed in the community service learning experience. Additionally, Jenn pointed to specific components of content from the minor that helped build her understanding of social justice education. When asked about specific content that resonated most, Jenn spoke most about disproportionality rates of schools drop out. "Dropout rates - within schools- were very interesting to me," she said. "I actually looked it up….further….and they include expulsion in the dropout rate," Jenn continued. "I'm not sure that's the same thing." Struck by a conversation and discussion in one specific minor course, Jenn was compelled to seek additional information and research to help grow her knowledge about this issue and how it impacted students of color at a disproportionate rate. Additional knowledge and awareness involved disproportionate incarceration rates for parents of color and the impact it may have on school-aged students. Jenn carefully articulated her

growth in these areas and contributed it to the content of the minor and her experiences in the community service learning and connected them to her own future classroom.

> This [knowledge] might make me want to pick and choose for what and who I send to the principal. I will think, 'Is it really worth it?' I feel like sometimes teachers will send a student to the principal because they don't have time to deal with it. I feel like that might be a little extreme. I feel like you have to pick and choose when to send them. Because, that could really affect them later on in life.

Clearly Jenn made connections between the content she was learning, her own previous notions, and future students she might teach. Jenn went on to say that the minor "made [her] think deeper about students and their backgrounds and service learning." "I have a deeper thought," said Jenn. However, when asked specifically what social justice meant to her, Jenn was less clear in her thought. She hesitantly responded that social justice was when "people think things are right and wrong in different communities." This definition merely skirts at the meaning of social justice and indicates a lack of clarity on Jenn's part. This dualistic view held by Jenn positioned students in an us/them manner and was clearly articulated through Jenn's own lack of understanding about her own privilege and power as a White woman in education. Although her reflections on what social justice was to her were ill-defined and essentialized students in ways that promoted stereotypical interpretations of difference, Jenn illustrated some sense of reflection on her own knowledge gaps and utilized new information (relating to social justice topics) to think about her future classroom role. Further, it was observed during her capstone final presentation that Jenn had difficulty in articulating synergies between her project and issues of social justice. As the instructor probed students to make explicit

connections to how their project addressed an issue of social justice, the group that Jenn participated with (including Caroline) was unable to articulate.

"The minor as a whole opened me up to diversity," proclaimed Jenn. As previously mentioned, Jenn's upbringing was largely segregated and she rarely interacted or taught students across lines of racial difference. The minor gave Jenn that opportunity and was a large growth point for her. When asked what the greatest takeaway from the minor as a whole had been, Jenn referred to her growth in understanding diverse peoples. She responded, "Diversity, definitely. You know, having students from different backgrounds." This response was given in combination with a reflection about the lack of diversity she currently sees in her suburban student teaching placement school. However, Jenn later commented that diversity can be seen across many categories and that she was sure she would be able to use her learning in her placement school context. This was again an example of Jenn positioning diverse students as others and a failure to recognize her own privilege.

Although Jenn spoke often about the lack of racial diversity in her school placement, she did denote one opportunity where she thought about and reflected on the differences she saw in her classroom.

> There is one student in the classroom who is Indian…. Her name is very hard to pronounce. So, I was there for the first day of school and students were introducing themselves to the class…. Trying to pronounce someone else's name that might be different from your culture may be difficult for students. So, I would have done some kind of activity or something…. so that other students and myself would know how to pronounce all names correctly.

For Jenn, this was a strategy to ensure that all students in the classroom would have been treated with respect and dignity and is "recognition" that Jenn believed was an "effect from [her] learning in the minor." However, it is also another point where Jenn failed to truly grasp her own privilege and power in situations. In the instance above, Jenn positioned the student as other and different and therefore did not create a truly inclusive environment. Further, Jenn noted that through the minor she has "learned a lot in diversity, especially in how to relate to students who may have a different culture than [herself]" and "how to find similarities between students." These notions of diversity were surface and did not address systemic hegemonic structures that exist in school buildings.

Privilege and Whiteness

Jenn's private school, suburban background was a common theme that emerged within the data set. As Jenn reflected on her thoughts about teaching and learning in a public school classroom, she was asked about her own philosophy of education. Jenn stated that it was largely shaped by her own academic and personal background but had evolved over time. Therefore, there is evidence that the experiences and courses from the minor provided Jenn space and capacity to thoroughly reflect on components of her identity.

Jenn's academic journey is rooted in her experience at a small, private, Christian high school in the suburbs. This background and point of reference was often used by Jenn as a mechanism for situating her own experiences in the minor and urban schools. For instance, Jenn stated that her most favorable teaching field experience was when she was placed in a suburban elementary charter school focused on International

Baccalaureate education. "This school was more like where I grew up," said Jenn as she noted that the school environment was "closer to a private school" than a public school. This is evidence of how Jenn continued to align herself with Eurocentric views and values. Additionally, Jenn felt like this placement school experience was "like traveling back in time" for her because it was reminiscent of her schooling career. Jenn perceived this carter school as a place where, "they helped their students work their problems out," and that teachers served as a "guide" to students as they explored personal and academic growth. Standing in contrast was Jenn's perception of an urban elementary school placement for one of her minor courses. Jenn commented that the urban elementary school was a different environment where teachers "yelled more at their students." Jenn was further shocked when she witnessed a student being detained by police outside of the school one day. Jenn recounted:

> One of my first couple of days there, I was checking into the front office and a student was being arrested. Wow! That was just crazy. I had no idea that that could happen at such a young age.

While the experience "shocked" Jenn, further reflections indicated that this experience were not too disparate from her perceptions and assumptions.

Jenn's placement at this elementary school was her first experience in an urban elementary school setting. Jenn stated that she assumed that the school "was going to be majority African-American" and that it "met her expectations." Citing research on the school, Jenn noted that she wanted to "know what to expect." It seemed as if her experience highlighted above reinforced a deficit mentality held by Jenn about schools and students. She said that this desire to learn more about the school and community was

directly tied to the minor's learning, thus indicating a tepid quest for gaining additional information and learning about the school and community. However, this learning was framed through her lens of White, Eurocentric ideals only.

While Jenn noted that learnings from the minor impacted her desire to learn more about the school and community in which she was placed, she also noted community experiences from the minor that tested her assumptions. When Jenn spoke about a community service learning experience at a local organization working for LGBTQ students, she noted that it was "completely different" from what she was accustomed. "You know, going to a private school my whole life – I had no idea about any of this," said Jenn. Additionally, she noted that building a relationship with students in the program was difficult. "I think it was a little more difficult there to build a relationship with them. Just because we have such different background," said Jenn. These examples are indicative of how Jenn's background and privilege were rooted in her experiences at both community partners and schools during her time in the minor.

While specific experiences from her undergraduate career were recounted by Jenn that illustrated her own reflection about her background and privilege, Jenn also spoke often her generalized perceptions of teaching as a profession. Jenn's background seems to have been a determinant of her hesitation to become an education major early on in her academic career. Jenn cited "not making lots of money" as a reason that she did not initially declare education as a professional direction. Additionally, Jenn noted that her experience in the minor has made her "more open to things" and that she perceived that as strength in her academic career. When asked how Jenn might be a different teacher had she not enrolled in the minor, she responded:

> Probably because I wouldn't be as open to things. I grew up in a private school, mostly white people, and they were upper middle class. So, I haven't had the opportunity to meet a whole lot of diverse people. So, [from this minor] I think I've been able to do that.

This response, from the final interview with Jenn was the only time that she mentioned her own race and racial background when thinking about her growth as a professional educator. Further, through analysis of Jenn's assignments and projects no recognition of her own identity is noted. In one assignment titled "Social Justice Issues," Jenn was asked to identify issues of social justice she would most like to address or build solutions for. The areas identified by Jenn included: high school graduation rate, bullying, juvenile crime, literacy, and teen pregnancy. While worthy issues by themselves, there is no evidence in this assignment that Jenn had the disposition to connect the identified issues to a social justice orientation nor to examine them from a systemic level. While not a focus of most of her comments and reflection, it is evidence of Jenn's limited acknowledgment that both her racial and socio-economic background did somewhat shape her experiences in the minor.

Building Community and Relationships

Jenn's own privilege and background certainly colored her perception of schools and community partners and was a frequent point of reflection for her. Additionally, Jenn believed that her own knowledge and skills in working with community groups and building relationships with others were greatly impacted by her learning and experiences in the minor. Jenn stated that her own background in community service learning was both an impetus to enroll in the minor and a component that she perceived as "most

valuable." "I have had a lot of experience working with the community, especially here," said Jenn. This experience, coupled from both her undergraduate career and high school career, helped shape Jenn's mindset about communities schools. Further, Jenn pointed to school practicums embedded in her education coursework that helped shape her mindset. "Going out in the classrooms for clinical experiences was most valuable." Further, Jenn worked with multiple community partners as part of her coursework for the minor. These experiences seemed to have impacted her thoughts about the importance of building community connections to students in her future classroom.

Speaking specifically about the capstone course, Jenn noted that the community connections she made met her expectations and that the course "related content to communities and helped to tie it all together." Further, Jenn stated that the minor coursework was the only opportunity during her undergraduate career that provided her with time to work in the community. This perceived strength of the minor is "something that all teachers should do." "Getting out in the community, especially the community that you might teach, is so important," concluded Jenn.

While the capstone course and minor provided specific opportunities for her to learn and build her skills, Jenn noted the challenges she faced in partnering and working with community organizations in the region. The relationship she built with the organization for the capstone course was most salient for Jenn as she believed that she had created and built a "strong relationship" with the organization that she "want[s] to maintain." When asked about relationships with organizations she made from other, earlier courses, Jenn stated that these relationships were no longer intact. "I think it's difficult to maintain the relationship with them," she continued. "I haven't been back [to

the earlier organization] since I worked with them. I probably should." While Jenn's perceived goal for the capstone course was to build a relationship with fidelity, there was no evidence of her doing so with earlier opportunities. This recounted earlier themes of pathways of convenience.

The theme of relationships emerged during Jenn's discussion of community partners from both interview and document analysis. As previously noted, Jenn perceived that building the relationship with the community partner as the most difficult and that "it takes a long time" to "establish initial communication." Even though she previously noted that her goal for the capstone course was a maintained relationship, Jenn perceived the relationship at the end of the course as one what was "weak." "I wish that I had more contact with them," she continued. When asked about specifics on how she built the relationship with the capstone partner, she responded "We only met with the community partner twice in the whole semester, the rest was through email." Jenn posited that the largest lesson learned was to "begin communication early." Through an analysis of the project proposal and needs assessment assignment that Jenn completed, it is evident that little time or effort went in to building a relationship with fidelity between Jenn and her community partner. For instance, in a transcript of an interview between Jenn and the community partner, it is noted that only ten minutes was allotted to learn about the organization. Further, the questions asked by Jenn in this interview (that were used to prepare a needs assessment) failed to address the needs of the organization. Questions asked included: "How many years have you worked?", "How did you become connected?", and "What are the strengths of the organization?" Clearly Jenn's desire and goal to create a lasting relationship with her community partner, was greatly impacted by

her own ability to build structures and relationships with fidelity. Perhaps a more robust plan of communication that had as its purpose to build rapport, context, and understanding could have positioned Jenn to stronger results.

While Jenn reported that the experiences she had with community partners were most beneficial for her and other teachers, the relationships she established were not as strong as she said she desired. Alternatively, Jenn perceived a high desire to provide similar experiences to her future students in classrooms and often referenced how she would implement. "It's important for students to know, to learn, and to give back to their community," Jenn remarked. When asked how she might implement similar community service opportunities to her future students, Jenn believed that a community service project for the whole class would be a medium in which she could "incorporate service learning with students." Similarly, Jenn believed that "before you can integrate service learning and community into your class, it's important for *you* [emphasis added] to know how to be involved in the community." Jenn perceived community service learning as "valuable" and "important" for students and hoped to engage her elementary students in similar paths. Jenn spoke of examples of service learning that she witnessed in schools and specifically recounted the implementation of a community garden at her student teaching placement school.

> Doing the community garden right there at the school. It is very simple and easy and a way for students to learn. You can incorporate science into that. It is still community service as people from the community help volunteer.

Jenn's notions of integrating service learning into her own classroom was grounded in her perception of building strong relationships with students and colleagues

as she began her student teaching experience. For instance, Jenn spoke of building a community of learners in her own classroom and desiring to do this through various methods. "I think you can build a community in your classroom by having students pick a partner they've never worked with before" remarked Jenn. She hoped to leverage these types of examples as "easy ways" to build relationships with students and among students during her student teaching time. This mindset of building relationships with students and colleagues was summarized by Jenn when she admitted that without the minor, she "would be a little more reserved around students." She further purported that the relationships she built during her time student teaching were based on "learning about students," "talking with parents," and "listening." These skills, while not directly linked to skills she practiced through the community service learning experiences of the minor, are additional skills that Jenn practiced during her time enrolled in the minor.

Teaching Practice

The final emergent theme from Jenn centered on her own practice as a young, pre-service teacher. Jenn consistently connected skills and learning from the minor to her own abilities as a reflective practitioner. "Being able to practice reflecting on your thoughts and what you learned is a big part of teaching" stated Jenn. "It's a big way to learn from what you've done," she continued. Jenn believed that this reflective practice was rooted in her education coursework rather than that of the minor. "I actually did not reflect often" Jenn stated, referencing the capstone course. "I didn't feel we reflected a whole lot in this capstone course, but I feel like we reflected a lot in my other course work," she continued. This reflection positioned the onus of reflection on the course

instructor rather than herself as student and demonstrated a lack of agency and initiative to do so – even when she stated that it was an important practice.

While the minor coursework was not a major impetus for her reflective practice, Jenn did believe that a strong pre-service teacher must become a master of reflection. She stated:

> In the first and second years that you're teaching, you are a new teacher. You don't have everything perfect, the way you want it or the way it works for your classroom. Some of your practice might work this year, but next year it doesn't work. So, I think that being able to go back and reflect on that practice will be helpful.

Additionally, Jenn noted that she wants her students to be able to reflect on their personal and academic growth. "If you have a student reflect from the beginning of school to the end of school, there's going to be so much that has changed and them being able to see that" would be a great strength.

Further evidence of Jenn's burgeoning reflective nature could be heard when she thought about her role as an educator in public schools. 'What if I'm not in the right profession?" asked Jenn. Through experiences she built with working with students she is now thinking about attending graduate school for counseling. This reflective nature of Jenn, while not perceived as being directly linked to her minor enrollment, was an element that shaped Jenn's experience both inside and outside of the classroom. This, coupled with her growth in issues of diversity, social justice learnings, community building and relationships all were perceived strengths of her experience from the minor.

Ultimately, Jenn stated that the minor shaped her teaching practice. When asked if her teaching might be different had she not enrolled, Jenn stated:

> Yes. I think so. It goes back to learning about the community that the school is in. Learning about the students that go to that school. Learning about their community and their culture and all that kind of stuff. I think it is just so important to incorporate those kinds of things into the classroom. For students to learn about [how some peers] might be different from them. Learning about their communities.

Table 2:
Major Findings for Jenn

Theme	Major Findings
Participant background	-Early 20's -White female -Elementary education major -Private, Christian K-12 education -From predominately white, suburban area -Transferred into university
Perception of minor	-Overall positive perception -Program coordinator was strength -Number of hours needed served as impetus for enrollment -Appreciated the flexibility -Enjoyed service learning component -Did not see value in some courses -Capstone course critiqued for scope of accomplishment and time
Social justice and diversity	-Eurocentric views of diverse students -Growth in social justice mindset -Limited understanding of systemic inequities -Unclear definition of social justice
Privilege and Whiteness	-Perceived growth in understanding privilege via service learning -Notions of diversity rooted in Eurocentric, White privilege -Very limited understanding of Whiteness -No reflection on her own identity

Table 2 (continued)

Building community and relationships	-Desire to build a classroom community with own students -Limited relationships built with community partners
Teaching practice	-Reflection as a skill learned -Some evidence of culturally responsive teaching practices -Desire of student service learning -Questioning her place in the field

Case III: Caroline

Participant Background

Caroline was a White woman in her early twenties and during data collection completing her final student teaching assignment before her graduation. Data for Caroline were collected over the course of two semesters and included semi-structured interviews, artifact review, and classroom observations. For this research, data were collected during the first phase of her student teaching experience in the spring and fall of 2015. Caroline had always possessed a self-proclaimed "interest in working with kids" and parlayed that into enrolling as an Elementary Education major. She hoped to pursue a career "working in urban areas as either a teacher or a mentor to underprivileged children." Caroline was born and raised in an affluent, suburban, and predominately White area. This background was a large impetus in her choosing the minor. She often cited her "suburban country club" lifestyle as reason for seeking to teach in the urban classroom setting. Thus, as she reflected on her future career trajectory she "didn't want to teach what [she] grew up with." Caroline initially entertained the idea of the minor as a way to grow her own personal experience in working with students across lines of racial difference. Caroline stated:

> I've never worked with the urban setting, so this was flip-flopping from what I'm used to. I'm able to kind of step out of my element and just take in a bunch of information and learn through situations.

Caroline had an early clinical field experience in a prerequisite education course that placed her in a Title I school in the region. This experience, Caroline said, "struck a chord with me. I just love being around diverse kids in areas where they need help." Further Caroline noted that when the time came for her to choose a minor, she resonated with the term "urban youth." She noted:

> Like, I really want to work with urban youth. I'd only been around the suburbs and kids like that. So, I wanted to branch out. It's relevant to me where I'm going to be teaching. I want to see what it's all about.

Caroline's clear desire to work with elementary school students in urban areas was consistently noted. Caroline often spoke of clinical field experiences at various schools throughout the region that reinforced her desire to eventually work in the urban setting. Additionally, Caroline was placed to student teach in a highly diverse, urban setting.

While her desire to work with urban populations never wavered, Caroline did not cite the community service learning component of the minor as a factor that enticed her to enroll. However, Caroline did note in coursework assignments that she did "have a couple of community partners in which she had worked" and that she would like to use the opportunities of the minor to continue pursuing community service learning. The opportunities and organizations cited in this assignment were all directly related to coursework from the minor. Thus, Caroline's motivation to enroll and complete the minor seemed to me more directly correlated to her personal and academic background as

they both played a large role in her taking on the minor. While these factors seemed to be the lead motivators, through data analysis themes around Caroline's perceptions of the minor were developed. Growth in social justice awareness and diversity, a deeper understanding of her own privilege, growth in building relationships with others in the community, and her own teaching practice emerged. The next sections will focus on each of the emergent themes.

Perceptions of the Minor

Caroline had an overall positive perception of the minor. She said that she would recommend the minor to both pre-service educators and to other interested undergraduate students.

> I would definitely recommend it if I met any pre-education majors. This is something - if you want to be out in the community and see, you know, real world stuff and interact with people and children - that I would definitely recommend.

As for the inter-disciplinary approach of the minor, Caroline would also recommend the minor. She specifically gave examples of business majors that were currently enrolled in some of her minor course work. Caroline said:

> I'd definitely recommend, especially if they're looking for business in the area or any urban area. I mean you get to make those connections that are authentic. You get to know people. [Those other majors,] they make it applicable to them.

Her overall perception of the minor was strongly motivated and shaped by her own experiences from being enrolled. Caroline often spoke of specific placements with community partners or specific courses and projects that made a large impact on her overall impression of the minor. Further, Caroline seemed to positively perceive the

program coordinator and most faculty of the program, even stating that the program coordinated was the "biggest influencer" from the minor. Clearly her thoughts were predicated by her own experiences as a student in this minor.

When asked about the coursework that was required for the minor, Caroline spoke to her own personal trajectory for completing coursework. While she often cited specific courses or assignments that she felt were misaligned to her personal academic journey (or the minor itself), Caroline shaped her experience and thinking by arranging courses to fit her academic interests. "I tailored a lot of mine to target the youth," said Caroline. Further Caroline cited the various instructors "teachings styles," "passions," and "community connections" as overall strengths of the program. Ultimately, Caroline did critique a limited number of courses that encompassed the minor by stating "you had to pick from a list of courses that was very limited." This ultimately contributed to one course that was perceived negatively by Caroline as she felt she was "stuck" with the course because of the lack of offerings. While Caroline perceived the content as one that was nebulously connected to the minor as a whole, she did make "it kind of all connect in the end." But, she noted, "This was not what I want to be doing [in the future]. I want to be in schools." Further probing, uncovered that Caroline was able to connect this class and its assignments to her passion for elementary education by creating a service learning project in the course that was "pretty cool." Caroline cited her completion of the course as directly correlated to the relationship she had developed with the program coordinator by saying, "We connected with her and she kind of gave us ideas. We were like, 'okay, let's make this work!'"

Beyond the required coursework for the minor, Caroline cited instructors "drive for the community" and the fact that "almost all of the classes [she] took were developed around working in the community - making an impact on the community" as paramount to her favorable perception of the minor as a whole. "A lot of [courses] were finding a community issue and trying to solve it. A lot of them were targeted differently, but they all had that in common." said Caroline. Additionally, she perceived the "flexibility" that was offered by course instructors on these community service learning projects as a positive factor.

> I do like the flexibility of whenever we have a service learning project, the teacher kind of say, 'Figure out what you want, where you want to make the impact.' As opposed to saying, 'Hey, you're going to go to this soup kitchen. You're going to serve soup this day.' It's your impact. They want us to, even though it's a lot of work, plan out what we're doing and know why we're doing it. And, they want us to explain why you're making an impact and how you are. I do like the flexibility of what you can do.

Caroline noted that "every single class in the minor has been going out into the community" and that gave her the opportunity to "make a lot of partnerships with people." She rooted much of her discussion around favoring the community aspect of the minor in constructivist principals stating: "I mean, it's a lot of application. Like, taking what we know and putting it…in motion." Specifically addressing the capstone course of the minor, Caroline had an overwhelmingly strong perception of the coursework, participatory service learning project, and the instructor.

> I do like the structure of the class because she [the instructor] gives you a lot of time to go out and be in the community, which helps out a lot with scheduling conflicts. I think her idea of making this [the class] a community in itself is great. She makes you feel important in this class and that you're going to make difference, no matter what you do, how you do it. What you say [here] is important. She just really does care about you.

Caroline described the capstone course as "lots of application" and that it differed from other courses in that the onus of research responsibility was positioned more on the students than instructor. Carolina perceived this as a positive in that it gave students the opportunity to explore passions and interests. She noted that the capstone course took her "out of [her] comfort zone" and she "didn't think that [she] was ready for it." Referring to previous coursework in the minor, Caroline believed "she held our hand a lot more." Regardless, Caroline "loved" the capstone course and believed that she learned and grew "a lot" because of the structure and content. "I can tell that I've learned some much through this course, because of the product I've created. It's kind of cool how this [course] almost reflects" earlier courses and serves as a "bookend" stated Caroline. While there is strong evidence from Caroline that she perceived the service learning and capstone course as overall positive, she did note that she "wished we could have gone out" and done more with the project. This desire to improve upon her work product is indicative of her reflective nature throughout the interview.

The community and service learning component of the minor and the capstone course were large factors for Caroline's overall positive perception. But, Caroline also highlighted several critiques of the program when speaking about her experience in the

minor and in the capstone course. As previously noted, Caroline spoke often about a course within the minor that she believed did not align to her academic trajectory. Although, after further reflecting, Caroline did note her ability to tailor and position the course and its accompanying project to meet her needs. Additional critiques from Caroline stemmed from similar notions as Caroline believed that the minor focused more on community than youth. She stated: "It definitely stressed the community part of it," but "I wish it was targeted more towards the youth." From Caroline:

> The only thing that I didn't like, or that I would tell people to be wary of, is sometimes the classes aren't going to be about urban youth, or may not be lined up to how you think they might should, because it's [the minor] a work in progress.

Here Caroline alluded to the relative infancy of the program and minor as well as referenced the perceived focus on community over youth.

Caroline's perception of the minor focusing on community building over youth was further illustrated through her statement:

> I really thought it [the minor] was going to be going through and working with the youth all the time, because it's called urban youth. The courses, I don't know if it's just the ones I had to pick or whatever, haven't been really designed around the youth. I want to go out and talk to different types of youth. It hasn't really targeted just the youth.

As part of the capstone course, Caroline was tasked with partnering with and creating a participatory research project. Given this opportunity, Caroline partnered with a local agency that pertained to youth. Further, through analysis of written assignments

for the course, it was noted that Caroline reflected on experiences from other minor courses. She wrote when asked about previous experience in the community:

> My previous experiences working in the community have been positive. For my [particular course], we were able to go out to a high poverty area and promote recycling… I have also been able to work in a lot of Title I schools and I absolutely love it.

While her critique about the program focusing more on community may have been warranted, there is evidence in the data that suggests that Caroline had opportunities to work with you in various capacities.

Additional critiques built upon her belief that the minor was not as focused on youth as she had hoped. For instance, Caroline offered the idea that an introductory course that framed the entire purpose of the minor and established the rationale for community placements could be beneficial. "I also think that, if there was an introductory course to this, to lay out what the expectations are" that it "might be more helpful and less intimidating to people" said Caroline. However, these critiques did not overly influence her perceived experience in the minor. Caroline consistently noted her recommendation of the program to all undergraduate students and noted her perceived growth in area of content, community service learning, and application to teaching as overall strengths.

Social Justice and Diversity

Caroline not only perceived the minor as an overall positive component of her education journey but also as an opportunity to gain awareness and skill in the areas of social justice and diversity. From her own experience in a school and growing up in an

area “where all kids were alike with the same race and socio-economic status,” Caroline attributed the minor with helping her develop a critical mindset that questions status quo. When asked if she believed her current mindset would be similar without taking courses from the minor, Caroline provided the following response:

> No, definitely not. Because, when I'm going out and when they have these projects for us, you think about different community partners you want to partner with, and it open your eyes to how many different places [offer services]. It just makes you want to go out and learn about it and know about it and open your eyes to it. I would never know how many different places are there to help people. Yes, I definitely wouldn’t be exposed to a lot of things I am without this course and minor.

Caroline directly connected her capstone course to social justice issues when she said “the whole project was social justice.” However, she was unable to construct a personal definition of what social justice meant to her. Caroline stumbled through her response and answered, “It’s… just kind of like… like making your stance on something or providing your own information out to other people.” This definition illustrated a lack of internalization of social justice education and demonstrated Caroline’s limited understanding of how her own privilege and power might impact the dynamics of classrooms and communities.

As Caroline navigated a variety of social issues presented to her through a social justice lens in her coursework, she spoke specifically about issues that related directly to her role as a pre-service education major. She often categorized these as, “factors affecting kids.” For instance, Caroline spoke about issues of poverty and homelessness-

a theme repeated throughout her minor's coursework. While her convoluted and uneasy response to defining social justice may have indicated a lack of understanding of the concept, Caroline often connected the social justice issues that were being presented via her coursework to her own background. For instance, Caroline recalled the following:

> We've touched on a lot of different stuff, but I think coming in, I thought poverty was like, 'Oh, you just don't have a lot of money.' But, poverty is homelessness, hunger - like so many different things are poverty. Like I said, I grew up not having to worry about that or think about that. And so, my perception of poverty is 'Oh, people just don't have enough money.' No, like these people don't have homes. Like, these kids are re-locating. They are having their lights shut off on them at home. They don't have food. Food – the only meals they get everyday are at school. And so, it's just so different from what I assumed poverty to be, to actually see it in a community… Because otherwise, you just assume that it's something it's not. That's the [content] that resonated most with me.

Other illustrations of social justice topics embedded into the coursework of the minor that made a marked impression on Caroline included disproportionalities of incarceration rates of parents and families and juvenile detention centers. She noted that these topics were "interesting" because they "were totally out of [her] element." While these topics illustrated an understanding of several examples of social justice issues, Caroline also connected them to her own identify and background when she stated, "I mean, I have had no experience with anyone… any of my family in jail. So, I mean I'd be intrigued." However, Caroline never explicitly made the connection between her own privileges as a White woman when speaking about disproportionality rates.

These connections were also noted via coursework assignments for the capstone course. For instance, in one assignment, Caroline was asked to evaluate give societal issues that are of high interest to her and then connect them to possible action research projects she could research and implement over the course of the semester. Caroline identified dropout rates, literacy, poverty, suicide, and recycling as issues she deemed most important. In her explanation of action research projects that she could implement for the course that pertained to each of the five problems she listed, Caroline failed to connect them to larger systemic issues. Further, there was a lack of understanding of systems of power and oppression and how they may interplay with the identified issues. Only two of the topics chosen and evaluated by Caroline (dropout rates and literacy rates) included acknowledgment of racial or economic disparities. Caroline wrote, "I want to start an afterschool program for low income students and tutor students in low income areas. How can we access the same resources for low income students as middle class students?"

Caroline stated her excitement "to learn where [students] came from" and believed that students are "just so rich in culture" that she wanted "to expand on that culture and just know everything" she could about them. These notions of learning from students were further illustrated through her appropriation of content learned in her coursework to skills that she had (or would) use in the future. For instance, in the aforementioned course that Caroline perceived as wholly disjointed from the minor and her academic journey, Caroline spoke about the skill and application of connecting this course and content to elementary education. In other courses that included community service learning for the minor, Caroline created projects that were focused on issues of

diversity where she "taught kids about race and culture and diversity." In such examples, Caroline failed to recognize that many students often understand issues of race and class and thus it seemed as if Caroline was speaking from a Eurocentric and privileged place. She continued speaking about a leadership course taken as part of the minor and noted that it gave her the opportunity to find agency to create and execute a project that was of innate interest to her. However, discrepancies between perceived and actual agency during the project later emerged. In total, these examples are illustrative of Caroline's approach of connecting her learning in the minor to her future as a pre-service educator.

> When Caroline reflected on her own agency around social change she noted:
>
> We talked about social change and making a difference [in once class]. And, I always thought, 'How can I get my kids to do that?' Because, that's like my constant train of thought. 'Okay, this is applicable here, but how can I tailor it for my kids?'

In a similar fashion to her own "tailoring" of coursework to fit her needs, Caroline also sought to reflect and think of ways that she could tailor work to meet the needs of her future students.

Additionally, Caroline often reflected about specific skills, often related to personal growth and teaching, that she felt were gained from her enrollment in the minor. These skills were all grounded in her understanding of social justice issues. For instance, Caroline noted that the "biggest thing I've learned" is that students should be aware of current events and "need to know the reasons behind stuff." She posited that the minor "hit a lot of those" for her. Further, she believed that in a future classroom, she would "create a community of learner where we're okay to talk about things" and that she

wanted to “open it up with a discussion about the issue.” Caroline believed that as a mechanism for teaching students about current events and real world issues, she could “make a lesson around it… so they’re exposed to [it] and they know they can relate it to the real world.” Other ideas that she hoped to use included simulations or reflections that would allow students “to be open with one another and respect each other.” She noted her responses above were directly correlated to the minor and the coursework included.

> This minor has given me so many different experiences with children and with people. Because, as a teacher, you're not going to be just around kids, you're going to be around adults, parents, and definitely kids, too. But, I get to see different aspects where kids come from, what they’re facing. You know the social issues that are happening now that are relatable to these kids.

Further, Caroline believed that the minor and corresponding coursework prepared her for her experience teaching in the classroom by exposing her to a variety of different school experiences. Caroline connected this exposure to skill in her own classroom one day when she said:

> I've seen lots of different students and been around a lot of different experiences…poverty, magnet schools. So, that will help me. I'm not going to be shell shocked if I walked into one or another. It’s taught me that we need to develop relationships with the people we work with. It’s taught me to just create a classroom where everyone is comfortable, where everyone builds relationships, where everyone’s kind of on the same page.

Ultimately, Caroline noted various examples of social justice awareness and skills she developed through the minor. While her understanding of social justice wasn’t clear, it is

sure that Caroline's reflection of self and identity and notions of diversity were strongly rooted in her own understandings of the experiences and content embedded in the minor.

Privilege and Whiteness

Caroline's own background as a White woman born and raised in an "upper middle class" area became an important theme that emerged throughout the data set. Caroline's self-reported identity as a White woman from "suburban areas" was one impetus for her selecting the minor. Although Caroline often spoke about her desire to "learn from diverse people" and "helping others" as impetuses for enrolling in the minor, Caroline also spoke to her own personal background and upbringing. However, there were no noted distinctions in Caroline's definition of "diversity" and evidence illustrated a deficit viewpoint. Caroline stated that she grew up in an area and school "where all kids are alike in terms of race and socioeconomic status." This realization of background, while mainly focused on economics and awareness of her own privilege was often a point of reflection for Caroline as she thought about how the minor's influence has impacted her own thought about public schools classrooms. Interestingly, it was not found in document analysis of the projects or assignments completed for the capstone course.

In reflection about a particular course taken to satisfy requirements for the minor, Caroline recounted her first experience at a homeless shelter and community center in a high needs neighborhood. "I grew up in a suburban area and was never exposed to poverty, really" said Caroline. While she felt "blessed to have been a part of it," she spoke about her service learning experience from this course in a way that was eye opening. "I went door to door to these people and talked to them, and I mean seeing it, is

almost like a different culture from mine. These people live where they're raising their kids - is just different from me" noted Caroline. This reflection by Caroline illustrated another example of otherness and hinted at voyeurism or tourism within a given community. While Caroline never specifically noted her own Whiteness, she did, however, recount this story from a perspective rooted in her own economic privilege. She stated:

> I thought I had it hard. You know, which movie theater were we going to go to? Or, how are we going to do this or do that? I was so very spoiled in that aspect. And so, just seeing what poverty looks like, and being [in] an impoverished community… was really cool.

This response continued to highlight a theme of tokenism towards others with different economic and racial backgrounds than her own and was not coupled with a clear internalization of how her own background and privilege may have shaped her worldview and why that worldview may have been problematic. This story was similarly supported by Caroline's response when asked why she was interested in teaching in urban or low income areas in the community. While she continued the theme of "lov[ing] being around diverse kids," Caroline also responded that "kids in these areas need help. I mean they just need help." This perception of needing "help" is directly connected to Caroline's reflections on her own racial and economic privilege as a teacher and highlighted a mindset that positioned Caroline as the perceived savior or missionary.

While Caroline's background and privilege was a major reflection point during the interviews, she also mentioned how her assumptions and perceptions of individuals and communities that were different than her own were often altered through the various

experiences and coursework that the minor provided. Caroline saw these as opportunities for her to "step out of her element" and to "learn through situations." For instance, she recounted a story linked directly to a service learning opportunity embedded in one of her courses for the minor where she worked in a low income school and community and was exposed to issues of systemic poverty firsthand. Admittedly, Caroline did not have much experience in working across lines of different or in economically disadvantaged schools and neighborhoods. Caroline spoke about her perception of poverty as "just not having a lot of money," and through the coursework and experience in working with the community was able to broaden her personal definition to include "homelessness, hunger, and so many other things that are poverty." This self-reflection and self-recognition became a powerful experience for Caroline as she reflected on her youth and "not having to worry about that or thing about that." These powerful reflections about her previously held notions around issues of poverty are indicative of her struggle to challenge her own assumptions and previously held thoughts while failing to truly internalize how her position of privilege and power may come into play with working with communities and students.

Further interviews with Caroline recounted similar iterations of this story. Caroline stated that "a lot more students are living in poverty and are homeless than I thought," which illustrated a clear connection to her future role as classroom teacher. While Caroline's reflections about her own background and identity were focused on socioeconomics of students and communities, there was little evidence of Caroline reflecting on her own identity as a White female educator. Other than discussions about

her own homogenous school experience, Caroline did not connect or link her own identity to issues around race and racism in communities and classrooms.

Building Community and Relationships

Caroline's experience in the minor yielded a perceived impact by the program on her time working in and building relationships with community partners across the region. Further, Caroline noted how the minor's coursework and experiences also impacted her thoughts around the importance of relationships with students and other stakeholders once in the classroom. While Caroline noted her perceived benefits and growths in these areas, she also provided evidence that the experiences was often times challenging. In whole, though, her experience in communicating with, partnering with, and working with communities across the region was perceived as an overall strength taken from her time in the program.

Caroline's excitement around community stems from the program coordinator. The coordinator is "just all about the community, and I love that" stated Caroline. Further, her excitement and curiosity about the region stems from her growing up outside of the area as she noted "I'm two hours away from where I'm originally from and I don't know the area." This, coupled with the previously noted belief that Caroline thought the minor was "more focused on community than youth," shaped her reflection and perception. Further, her thoughts were centered on her experience in both the minor's general coursework and her experience in the capstone course. Each of these experiences were "loaded" with community work.

Caroline had a positive overall experience with the minor coursework and indicated that she felt that "every single course in the minor has been going out into the

community" and that this allowed her "to make a lot of partnerships with people." She considered these contacts and partnerships to be central to her minor coursework experience. Similarly, Caroline noted that the various courses embedded in the minor each had a component of community service learning that exposed her to different organizations, neighborhoods, and systemic issues. She stated, "Without this minor, I would have never known about any of this," said Caroline when she referenced working with community partners focused on summer learning loss. This illustration indicated Caroline's own growth and development around issues of community building.

Caroline spoke specifically about community building learned via one specific minor course focused on leadership. Caroline argued that the leadership course was most salient because "it was about being a leader in the community" and that she connected being a leader to her future as an educator. From Caroline, "That's what a teacher is: a leader. But, in this course I've learned the values of being a good leader, and I've learned a lot about myself, what type of leader and person I am, as a whole." Specifically relating this experience in leadership to her work in communities, Caroline connected leadership and personal strengths in a manner that could be used to "promote the change you want." "We learned about communities and building relationships within them and being the person you want in society. We learned others will follow if you lead by example. I learned a lot about myself and how I'm going to be a good leader back in the community," said Caroline.

While Caroline's leadership course example was directly connected to her belief about being a leader in communities, through other coursework and experiences in the minor, Caroline was able to act upon her newly found awareness. The capstone course,

in particular, was a community experience that Caroline spoke fondly of. She noted that this course "gave her diversity in its placement" of students and that it was a course and learning experience she wished "all of [her] fellow education majors would know about, because they would love it and definitely take action with her." As part of the capstone course, Caroline worked with three other education majors to complete a needs assessment and project proposal in the community. Caroline partnered with one other member of this research study. In the project proposal, Caroline cited that the community partner that she would work with needed "influential educational partners" that would provide programming for students in a summer reading loss prevention program in the region. Caroline's role in the project plan entitled, *"Summer Learning Loss Prevention"* was as community advocate and recruiter of summer talent to teach courses within the program. Caroline's experience in working with this community organization was overall favorable as she "definitely want[ed] to help them out" again.

When asked about her growth and leadership through this community service learning, Caroline noted that she wanted to "accomplish more" and that she learned "self-responsibility and accountability" from the experience. In regards to building roots with community partners Caroline said that it "took forever to get everything together," and that she "wishe[d] I could have done a lot more" with the organization. Caroline further attributed the "hardest part" of the project proposal to scheduling conflicts between herself and the community organization. She stated:

> My favorite part of the capstone is being out in the community and meeting people. But, I think the hardest part would have to be scheduling. Like, meeting with people. Having clinicals, classes, and work on top of this is just too much…

> But, overall scheduling with partners, who don't answer or are really busy was hard. It took us like a week to even get a hold of someone.

This reflection captured Caroline's inability to recognize how privilege and background may also have played out when working with the community partner. While this was noted as a perceived difficulty in executing the project with the community partner, Caroline still overwhelmingly found benefit in the experience.

Observed during a presentation of the final project to her class, Caroline was eager to share the results but was hesitant when asked about the continued relationship with the partner. Further, as the instructor during the project presentation probed Caroline (and her other group members) to connect their work and partnership with issues of social justice, Caroline was unable to do so. This is similar to her inability to define social justice during an interview with the researcher and indicates a tepid understanding of systemic issues that impact students and communities. Additionally, in her project assignment "Needs Assessment," Caroline fails to make the connection between her community partner and their work academically with students. Instead of focusing on the programmatic outcomes of the partnership, Caroline focuses on advertising and field trips/experiences that could be provided for students. While these focus areas could increase the impact of the organization, they are tertiary at best.

She further purported that the experience in building community with partners led her to think about how she could do similar things with her students. "I would love to take them out and get them exposed to the community," said Caroline about future students that she may teach. This signaled a strong belief in the possibility of service learning for students but failed to adequately recognize that many future students she may

teach do not need to be "exposed to the community," as they are a part of the community. This illustrated a thought process that was deeply rooted in her own privileged, Eurocentric background as she positioned future students from her own upbringing.

Beyond building community with community partners and future students, Caroline also noted that a perceived strength of the minor and capstone was her focus on relationship building. Specifically, Caroline noted relationships with community partners, faculty of the minor program, and students in various clinical field experiences. With community partners, Caroline echoed her sentiment by saying that various courses in the minor prepared her to make and build "strong relationships with community partners." Although perceived as difficulty, communion and scheduling with community partners was "frustrating, [the program coordinator] was a great resource and sounding board." The relationship with administrators, faculty, and peers enrolled in the minor was also cited as strength. As part of her course presentation for the minor, Caroline and her group mates presented their project, *Summer Learning Loss Prevention*. One of the findings they concluded was that the participatory service learning project was beneficial because they "learned how to create and maintain relationships within community" organizations. Thus, Caroline cited strong relationships with community partners as an outcome while alternatively she believed that the communication was weak and limited the perceived impact she had with the program.

While Caroline's initial reflections about relationship building through the minor focused on her current coursework and service learning, further interviews illuminated the connections Caroline saw between using her minor experiences as a way to think and shape her relationships with students and parents in the future. For instance, Caroline

routinely pointed out that student relationships would be a central part of her teaching in the future and that she had already "learned a lot from the kids" and wanted to build relationships with them as she entered her student teaching experience. Caroline noted that while comfortable and excited to build relationships with students during the course of her student teaching experience, she was less excited about the prospect of reaching out to parents.

> I'm a little nervous about it. I worked in after-school programs where I have talked with parents before, so I'm comfortable with parents. I'm just worried that they won't take me as seriously… since I'll only be 22 at the time. But, I am comfortable talking with parents and I like talking with parents. Parents can give the backstory… I have found that having a lot of conversations with parents helps me understand the kids more, because there's some things that kids won't tell you and that parents will.

This sentiment of uneasiness in working and communicating with parents is more rooted in Caroline's own identity as a young, novice teacher than it is in her own perceived lack of skill or practice. Further, it is clear that Caroline recognized and deemed important the need to have strong relationships with parents of future students.

Finally, Caroline noted that her relationship with other teachers – specifically her cooperating teacher – during her student teaching year would be of the utmost importance to ensure success. When asked about how she would navigate being paired with a cooperating teacher that may not share the same values of teaching philosophy, Caroline noted that while she "would be frustrated," she believed there would be ways for her to work her own style into the classroom. "My hope is that my teacher will be flexible

enough to work with me and kind of give me the freedom, since I will student teaching" said Caroline. "Even if my cooperating teacher doesn't agree, I will just have to move forward and find something that works," she continued. Clearly Caroline had begun to think about how her relationship with her assigned cooperating teacher was important.

Teaching Practice

While Caroline's perceived growth in issues relating to social justice, reflection on her own background and identity, and sense of building community and relationships were salient throughout her experience in the minor, she was equally reflective on how these experiences coupled together shaped her teaching practice. Caroline highlighted three major components of her teaching practice that she felt had been influenced by the minor. Her desire to teach students about "issues of race, culture, and diversity," emerged as a salient theme. Further, her desire to become a culturally responsive teacher and focus on reflection was highlighted. Each of these themes stemmed from Caroline's self-reported learnings from the program.

Although Caroline admitted that she was nervous about beginning her teaching career, especially as it relates to classroom culture and management, she often spoke of experiences with cooperating teachers in her student teaching experience that helped her reevaluate her own self as an educator. For instance, when Caroline was confronted with a classroom that was not "run" the way that she would "run" her classroom, she reflected and said:

> I was just thrown into the classroom without structure – it was like a double whammy. The kids themselves were great. They just definitely needed more structure and to know when and where they could do things. They were all just

> running around. I think it freaked me out, they not getting in line… talking… yelling... so it was like a culture shock.

The self-described "culture shock of the classroom" may have originally been an impediment to her desire to teach students, but Caroline later admitted that she was able to connect with the students as she implemented and taught a series of lessons created for another course in the minor. "I taught kids about race, culture, and diversity," stated Caroline. "I loved it and the students loved it," she continued. While her trepidation at "running" a classroom that lacked the same amount of perceived structure she was accustomed to and served as a "culture shock" for her, Caroline explained that she was able to build a connection with students through her teaching about issues of diversity. Caroline's thoughts here are similar to others in that she failed to understand that classroom and school setting as one that was full of culture and hyper-segregated. As a White woman, Caroline taught students about issues of diversity that positioned people of color as *diverse* and *different*, and herself as norm: a contradiction to culturally responsive teaching practices.

The approach above is one that Caroline noted she would continue to take in her own classrooms. When asked about how she would connect her students learning to current events, Caroline responded by talking about "making a lesson around the events" and making sure that students are "exposed to stuff like that, and they know they can relate it to the real world." She further noted that these connections would be built through "making a simulation, or lesson, to reflect on what might be happening in the world today."

The examples above are indicative of Caroline's image of what a classroom could and should be. While enrolled in the capstone course, Caroline reflected:

> I came up in schools where all kids are alike with the same race and socioeconomic status. Going to my clinicals and working with all of these community partners and seeing all the differences that people have, has changed my view on a lot of things that I want for a classroom.

Specifically, Caroline noted that she wanted to highlight the learning happening in her classrooms through the cultural lens of her students. She stated:

> Learning about culturally responsive teaching is the core of everything that I want. Like, I want my classroom to be a community of learners that know and respect different cultures, ideas, ethnicities, and values.

Caroline said that culturally responsive teaching was a concept she "definitely learned" from both the minor coursework and the program coordinator. For her, the concept meant:

> Instead of putting information in their heads, culturally responsive teaching is pulling it out of their head and letting them know that they are smart and know this stuff. You have to make it relevant. Giving them experiences where they are in control and can pull their prior knowledge to that event is important.

When asked how she might embed culturally responsive teaching practices in her own classroom, Caroline noted that having texts "from all different races and backgrounds" was a key first step but was not enough. She posited that her classroom would be "celebratory" and differentiated in a way that would "tier the learning for them."

However, this seemed contradictory the practice used by Caroline in the example highlighted above and illustrates disconnect between theory and practice.

While Caroline was steadfast in her belief that embedding culturally responsive teaching was a "goal" for herself and her teaching, she offered further illustration of how she hoped to reach it. When asked how she might manage a relationship with a cooperating teacher during her student teaching experience that did not share this same goal, Caroline responded:

> It would be frustrating, but I think there are a lot of ways that I can kind of wean it in there… And, for me, it's not always just reading different things about different types of people, but more so about [creating] a community of learners that are engaged and understand.

This evidence highlighted a more nuanced understanding of culturally responsive teaching in the classroom context as it focused on the student-teacher and student-peer relationships in the classroom. Further, this illustrated Caroline's commitment to the practice as she brainstormed ways that she might balance her own teaching identity with that of a peer and colleague. She furthered these sentiments when reflecting on balancing classroom culture and teaching the standardized content. Caroline said:

> It makes me laugh sometimes. I'm here and I'm worried about teaching fractions. But, some kids are worried about where they're going to sleep that night. If I can learn where my students are coming from, and they can learn where I am coming from, then everybody can build a relationship.

Furthering this sentiment was Caroline's desire to ensure her students "were functioning citizens of the world," as she worked to set individual learning and personal growth goals

for each of them. "They need to a do some sort of academics over the summer as well." They need to "understand and learn, while having fun" were Caroline's perceptions of how she planned to structure her own teaching practice.

Caroline's notions of how the minor shaped her own teaching practice are echoed by her thoughts regarding being a reflective practitioner. A large component of becoming a culturally responsive teacher, Caroline often spoke about her own growth and development through a reflective practice. "I learned a lot about myself," said Caroline as she examined the role of reflecting on her own teaching practice. Citing reflection as a "huge component" of the minor, Caroline believed that this practice was beneficial as she began to examine her own style of teaching. When asked if this practice is something she might continue when she is teaching her own classroom, Caroline said, "I am sure that I will do it every day. I'm just not going to write it all down or turn it in for a grade anymore. But, I definitely see the value in reflecting."

Further, Caroline's penchant for reflecting as a classroom teacher was directly tied to her own thought around implementing reflective activities into her classrooms with students. After a course in the minor asked her to build social justice infused lesson, Caroline noted:

> I found out through writing these lesson plans that I always ended up putting in a part where we talk about how the lesson went or we talked about what we learned. I didn't realize that I was asking students to reflect, but it's cool to have them do it. I'm learning how to teaching and I'm learning how kids learn best. I can't do that if they don't reflect and talk about it.

Finally, Caroline spoke of two examples of how personal and professional reflection had helped to shape her mindsets around teaching and her own leadership. When asked about her student teaching assignment to a fifth grade classroom (a new grade level for her,) Caroline originally spoke negatively. However, in later interviews Caroline stated:

> I was negative about it, but, I was like, you know what? Let's see what fifth grade is all about. It might not be for me, but at least it will be a new experience I can learn from.

While not directly tied to her experience in the minor, this example is indicative of Caroline's growth mindset around her role as an elementary school teacher. Additionally, Caroline noted in one of our final interviews a reflection on her undergraduate career and her decision to become a professional educator. "I'm not ashamed to teach, or ashamed to want to teach, but I hate how people have looked down on me for teaching" she said. Addressing this comment to family and friends from her past, Caroline showed a growing maturity in her own professional identity as a teacher through this reflective statement.

In summary, Caroline had a strong perception of the minor, capstone course, and service learning component. Caroline saw her enrollment impacting her own growth and development in issues of social justice issue, community and relationship building and teaching practice. Her own identity as a White woman further shaped her perception of the minor and her experiences as a novice educator and was used as a point of reflection as thinking about her role as a professional teacher. However, a deep analysis of the power and privilege that played out in school and community settings was not evident.

Table 3:
Major Findings for Caroline

Theme	Major Findings
Participant background	-Early 20's -White female -Elementary education major -From predominately white, wealthy, suburban area
Perception of minor	-Overall positive perception -Program coordinator was strongest -Critique of certain courses -Desired more focus on "youth"
Social justice and diversity	-Growth in social justice orientation -Notions of diversity often positioned students of color as *others* -Unclear definition of social justice
Privilege and Whiteness	-Perceived growth in understanding privilege via service learning -Limited reflections of personal identity -Desire to work in "urban schools"
Building community and relationships	-Strong link to coursework for the minor – leadership course -Strong perception of community component of capstone course -Favorable experience with community partner but perceived difficulty in establishing relationship -Desire to build sense of community and strong relationships with students and stakeholders
Teaching practice	-Social justice education in the classroom as priority -Evidence of culturally responsive teaching practices -No desire for student service learning

Cross-Case Comparative Analysis

The data illuminated how three participants in the minor experienced and perceived their enrollment. Through their voices, themes were developed that shed light on how these individuals perceived the minor's coursework and community service learning experiences. Interview data have revealed how their unique experiences shaped their perceptions of all components of the program – ultimately influencing their own teaching practice. The purpose of the following section is to conduct a cross-case analysis of each participant's perception and experience of the minor, perception of the minor on

their growth and development, and perception of the impact of the minor on student teaching practices.

Table 4:
Meta-analysis of major findings across all cases

Major Theme	Sub Theme	Ann	Jenn	Caroline
Participant background	Demographic	W, F, 20's	W, F, 20's	W, F, 20's
	Upbringing	Rural, White	Suburban, White	Wealthy suburban, White
Perception	Program	Positive	Positive	Positive
	Courses	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
	Instructors	Mixed	Strong – program coordinator	Strong – program coordinator
Social Justice Orientation	Perceived Growth	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Definition	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
	Notions of Diversity	Euro-centric	Euro-centric	"Others"
Privilege and Whiteness	Privilege	Recognizes	Limited	Recognizes economic
	Whiteness	Limited	Limited	Limited
Building Community and Relationships	Community Partner	Weak	Transactional	Weak
	Relationships	Desire for more within minor	Difficulty within capstone	Difficulty within capstone
Teaching Practice	CRT	SJ learning for students	Limited evidence of use	Evidence of use
	Service Learning	Desire for students	Desire for students	No desire for students

Perception of the Minor

Each of the cases responded favorably when asked about their overall experience and perception of the minor. Additionally, all participants would recommend the

program to other future educators. However, each had a different reason for enrollment that illustrates the various points that participants of the program may enter from.

Impetus for Enrollment

For Jenn, her academic background was the largest influence in deciding to enroll in the minor. Jenn believed that her own academic journey played a large role in her decision to become part of the minor. Jenn's suspension from another university and subsequent enrollment at the university of study was a main determinant in her reflection about possible career paths that ultimately lead her towards elementary education. Additionally, Jenn noted that the hours requirement for the minor allowed the program to best fit into her schedule as she was worked to make up lost credits. Further, Jenn noted that while not an original impetus for her enrollment, the community service component of the minor was a large reason for her continued enrollment and successful completion.

Like Jenn, Ann also believed that the community service component of the minor was an important feature. Ann mentioned that her extensive experience with service learning during her high school career was a major factor in deciding to enroll in the minor. Additionally Ann's predisposition towards social justice issues played a large role in her enrollment. "My idea about everybody having an equal opportunity to succeed in school is really important to me," Ann answered, when asked about what led her to explore this minor as an option for enrollment. Additionally, Ann's desire to work with a student population that was unlike her own predominantly White, middle-class upbringing was often a point of conversation. Ann's reflection on her own identity and a desire to work with student populations that differed was illustrated by this reflection: "[I think this minor is important] because knowing how to work with diverse students…. as a

teacher…. is important. You're going to need to know how to work with all kinds of children."

Clearly Ann's personal background played a large role in her decision to enroll and remain in the minor. Similarly, Caroline often spoke of her own identity as a determining factor in enrollment. In fact, when asked about the impetus for her enrollment, Caroline spoke solely to the fact that she "had only been around the suburbs and [students] like that" as her reason for joining. For Caroline, the focus of the minor on "urban youth" was most closely aligned to her own desire to teach in urban school settings. Feeling "disconnected" from her background in "suburban country clubs," Caroline also enrolled in courses and practicums that were based in Title I schools in the region, thus cementing her desire to work and teach in the urban school setting. For Caroline, enrollment in the minor was a direct correlation to this desire and to her own background.

While each participant cited various reasons for enrollment in the program, there were commonalities that emerged. For one, both Jenn and Ann remarked that previous experience in working in community service learning led them to become interested in the minor. Additionally, Ann believed that her own personal background and mindsets around social justice issues shaped her perspective towards enrollment and ultimately led to her participation. Caroline's personal background was also main determinant for her enrollment and served as her only verbalized desire for participation. Finally, Jenn's academic background and academic journey seemed to have shaped her experience and desire to enroll. These impetuses for enrollment allowed each researched case to participate in the minor and reflect on their perceptions.

Positive Reflection

"I would recommend," said Ann. "I absolutely recommend this program," remarked Jenn. "I definitely encourage others" to enroll, stated Caroline. Each of the participants of this research were steadfast in their positive perception overall of the minor and capstone course. Additionally, each illuminated components of the program that most resonated with them and that were perceived most favorably. Many of the perceived favorable components were similar to each other and were focused around perceived flexibility, the faculty and program coordinator, the embedded community service learning, and the interdisciplinary approach of the minor.

All three participants commented that the flexibility of the minor and the course structure was an overall strength of the minor program. Caroline specifically noted that the projects embedded into courses like the capstone, provided flexibility for students and that she "appreciate[ed] it." Echoing this sentiment, Ann posited that the flexibility that course instructors provided during the capstone course was greatly beneficial to her and her reflective practice. From Ann:

> I just like how universal this [minor] is. I learn so well by…. being able to apply what I learn to so many aspects of my life…. I can apply it to almost anything….That's what I really like about picking course…. I can probably connect it to something I've already learned.

Ann's comments indicated a larger reflection about the course offerings and structure that were not illustrated by Caroline. However, Jenn's perception of the flexibility of the minor was most broad in its application. Jenn stated that the flexibility of the minor's structure, coursework, and service learning experiences was not only a perceived strength

of the program, but also a reason for enrollment. Because of her academic trajectory, Jenn needed to complete courses in a quick and timely manner. The minor's coursework provided this perceived level of flexibility for Jenn.

Beyond perceptions of flexibility within the structure and coursework of the minor, all three participants pointed to the program coordinator of the minor as a perceived strength. "She is really great. She helps us all individually and is so willing to give whatever she needs for us to succeed." "The coordinator is just all about the community, and I love that!" These examples illustrate the overall impact that the program's coordinator had on each of the researched cases. While both Ann and Jenn mentioned the program coordinator on several instances and often referred to her as "helpful" and "like a mentor," Caroline held this perception most often. Caroline remarked that the program coordinator was her "favorite part about the minor" and that she "wouldn't change anything about" how she worked with students. Additionally, she cited the coordinator's connections to the community and region, passion about students, and mentor-like nature as assets of the program. Even when faced with obstacles from other faculty or community service organizations, Caroline perceived the program coordinator's support as paramount. As Caroline remarked about a particular course for the minor where she struggled, she said:

> I talked to [program coordinator] even though she wasn't the professor of the course. I connected with her. She gave me ideas and was like, 'Let's make this work!' She is great. So, I love her! I wouldn't change anything about her.

Caroline's remarks are indicative of a strong connection to the coordinator and the perceived strength of relationship built by participants.

Beyond the program coordinator, Ann, Jenn, and Caroline also agreed that the community service learning component of the minor was an asset. Ann's predisposition towards service learning was clearly an impetus in her enrollment in the program and is also a perceived strength she had in the program as a whole. Ann spoke of liking that the program "builds respect for communities" through the service learning component and argued that these experiences were pivotal for her and her future career as a classroom instructor. Ann also noted that the collaboration with various community partners allowed her to deeply connect with communities across the region and to learn more about issues impacting students. Because of these experiences, Anne stated "I know how to communicate with people now and know that everybody comes from a different background." The link between skill and experience embedded in the coursework and her own future classroom was a positive perception for Ann.

While Jenn noted that the community service learning component of the minor was "most valuable," she did not as explicitly connect the knowledge and skills learned to a future classroom that she might lead. She was more focused on the opportunity to experience and "get out of the classroom" as a perceived strength of the community service learning. "I'm excited about being able to do something instead of taking notes in a class!" exclaimed Jenn. Similarly, Caroline noted "every single [course] in the minor has been going out into the community." For her, this was a strength that allowed her to build "connections." The "hands on" approach solidified Caroline's positive perception of the community service learning experiences as she ultimately labeled it a favorite part" of the program.

Finally, the interdisciplinary nature of the program was an overall strength of the program from a student enrollment perspective. While, two of the participants spoke to the interdisciplinary coursework as a critique, all of the participants believed that having a minor that represented varied academic and career backgrounds was a strong point. Ann noted that she appreciated having "different viewpoints," while Jenn recounted an example of how students from differing academic background "broadened" the conversation. Caroline, while not as explicit as Ann or Jenn, also noted that she would recommend the minor to all majors and enjoyed the varying perspectives in her coursework. Each participant was clear that the perceived flexibility of the minor, the program coordinator, community service learning experiences, and the interdisciplinary nature of the program were strengths. However, the data also illuminated critiques of the program based on the perceived experience of each participant researched.

Minor Critiques

Critiques of the minor were offered by all participants in this research. The critiques were varied and often specific to the case's context. Each participant did, however, comment on their perceived misalignment of certain components of the coursework. While the minor is interdisciplinary in approach (and the inclusion of various academic backgrounds in these education major's courses was perceived as a positive,) the participants all noted that courses that existed in the program often felt disconnected and disjointed from the program's named focus of urban youth and communities. Jenn went so far as to remark that she felt one course "did not have anything to do with minor." And although they completed a community service learning experience in that course, "the material did not align to [her] perceptions." Ann also

shared in these thoughts and spoke prolifically about a particular course, but later noted that she was able to reflect and find a programmatic connection and link. These instances are indicative of disconnect between the participants and the interdisciplinary course structure of the program. Caroline countered with her belief that the course list for the minor was "very limited" and did not provide her with much flexibility. Clearly participants felt a misalignment between some course offerings and the themes of the minor.

While the perceived misalignment of courses and course content was shared by all three participants, other critiques were more context-specific. For instance, Caroline noted that she felt the program was too grounded in the community aspect and was not focused enough on the youth. "It [the minor] really hasn't been designed around youth," she continued. This forced Caroline to tailor her course projects and assignments to a more "youth focus." Alternatively, Ann believed that the minor and its' participants "should feel more like a community." Ann cited that she would like the program to imbue a "sense of community" for all participants. Ann believed that all participants in the minor should have space and opportunity to network and be more community focused and gave examples of projects she would like to see enrollees complete as a collective. Clearly disparate views of community were seen by participants.

The final critique came from both Ann and Jenn and was focused on their participatory service learning project – a key component of the minor's capstone course. Ann spoke often of not having a feeling of accomplishment about her project. She also was surprised that the project for this course was a proposal and that she was not expected to follow through on implementation or execution. Jenn echoed these

sentiments when she stated, “I felt like the instructor would have expected more from us” and “I don’t want to leave the [organization] hanging.”

While the critiques offered by the participants illuminate their overall perspectives of the minor, it is clear that the perceived benefits and experiences were overall very positive. Flexibility, the program coordinator, and the community service learning component of the minor were all cited as strengths. Participants also cited areas of improvement or critiques. These included, perceived course misalignments, limited course offerings, and focus on community rather than youth. The next section illuminates the participant’s perception of the minor on their own growth and development.

Perception on Growth and Development

Themes of growth and development in knowledge, professional identity, and personal emerged from the data as well. All three participants in the study believed that the minor impacted their own growth and development in positive ways. The areas most impacted were around their growth in understanding and knowledge and their personal development.

Growth in Knowledge

Each participant spoke broadly to their own growth and development academically via the minor. This perceived growth was focused in two areas: growth in the knowledge and awareness of social justice issues and growth in their own notions of diversity. Themes of social justice learning were permeated throughout the data and were common amongst all three participants in this study. Each participant spoke about components of coursework within the minor that exposed them to methods of critical

thinking about issues of justice and equity in society and schools. For instance, Caroline replied that discussions, readings, and lectures around poverty and incarceration rates expanded her understanding and pushed her thinking. Meanwhile, Anne spoke of adverse childhood experiences and the disproportionality of these on students of color. And, Jenn posited that her experience working with a local organization advocating for LGBTQ students in the region most challenged her assumptions. The examples given were indicative of each participant growing their own knowledge base and challenging their assumptions.

While each participant attributed great learning from the content embedded in the minor, some participants made stronger connections between the inequities they were seeing in society to their future classroom roles. For instance, Ann mentioned often about the purpose of schooling as a "democratic" principle. "Public education…. should be the same for everyone across the board," she noted. While, Jenn often commented on issues of homelessness that manifested themselves in classrooms in which she worked. Both participants in these examples connected their learned knowledge and greater awareness to a classroom or school specific example. Caroline best summed up the perceived academic learning by stating, "If I wouldn't have [had] this minor, I wouldn't know what it's like to be in difference circumstances and situations." While this statement shows that Caroline was internalizing the academic knowledge and content and thinking about its application to her life, there is not an acknowledgement of her background and privilege.

Similarly, participants in this research were often reflective of their own notions of diversity – many of which were rooted in their own background. All three participants

were White, middle-class women in their early 20's. Ann was the only participant that clearly named her Whiteness as part of her own background and experience and used it to frame her experience in a predominantly African-American classroom. "It makes me…. feel like they [students] might be a little uncomfortable that they can't talk about things that are bothering them because of the racial barrier," noted Ann. While, Ann specifically noted instances where her Whiteness was part of her cognition, Caroline and Jenn did not. They did, however, often refer to their backgrounds and upbringings – specifically related to socio-economic status.

Participants all spoke of how the "minor opened [them] up to diversity" as Jenn put it. Most interestingly, notions of what diversity meant to them (as future educators) often centered upon racial and cultural differences from their own privileged, White backgrounds. The acknowledgement of racial diversity within the community and school contexts was perceived by Jenn and Caroline in a manner that positioned the diversity to "others." Jenn's statement that the minor allowed her to "meet a whole lot of diverse people" and Caroline's sentiment that students in diverse schools "need help" is indicative of their mindset. These statements and their reflections indicated a lack of understanding regarding privilege, power, and their own backgrounds. Additionally, each participant failed to suspend their own personal biases or to consider their Eurocentric viewpoint when working with students or community members.

While Ann, Jenn, and Caroline all exposed various reflections about their own cultural identity and its impact on their viewpoint of diversity in schools, they also took with them an appreciation for different and diverse cultures. For instance, Ann explained that the minor allowed to her expand her definition of diversity and that she now

perceived “diversity as a broad topic” that is rooted in “respect and learning.” Further, Ann (during the course of her senior year) often sought out professional developments and other opportunities that allowed her to continue to grow in her understanding. Meanwhile, Jenn left the minor with an understanding that the content and experiences with diverse peoples “broadened [her] horizons.” Further, she noted that the minor “opened [her] up to diversity.” Finally, Caroline summarized her understandings of diversity when she stated the minor provided her opportunities to work in schools and communities that were “more diverse that what the regular education classes were offering.” Through these experiences and the minor, Caroline recounted that she hoped to attain employment in an urban and diverse school setting following her graduation. While each participant reflected on their own understandings or notions about diversity in schools, each illustrated a troublesome mindset that positioned their own culture, language, and race as normalcy and those of community members and students of color as “diverse” – a contradiction to the principles of social justice education and culturally responsive teaching.

Professional Identity Growth

Beyond academic growth in their knowledge of social justice issues and notions of diversity, the participants of this research also highlighted key areas of personal growth that were directly attributed to the program. Each participant had begun to uncover their own professional identity and a young pre-service educator and built personal skills around communication and relationships. These areas of professional growth were accredited to the minor- specifically the community service learning components. All three participants believed that their experience in working with

community partners through service learning was beneficial and has contributed to their belief that understanding community context is paramount when teaching. Additionally, all participants believed that their learning around social justice issues will shape their classroom practices in the future. Ann and Caroline believed that the minor solidified their desire to work in urban school settings and both were placed in urban school settings for their students teaching practicum. Ann and Caroline also spoke at length about how their own backgrounds (and their reflection on their background) led them to make that decision. On the other hand, Jenn was placed in a suburban, predominately white student teaching practicum and stated that she hoped to gain employment at a suburban school in the future. Additionally, Jenn questioned her own place in the field and was in the process of researching graduate programs. Of all participants, Jenn was less steadfast in her determination to become a practitioner in the field. While each participant stated that the minor shaped their own thoughts about teaching and learning in public schools, only Ann and Caroline were interested in pursuing a future in diverse, urban settings.

The participants of this study were each constructing and identifying their own burgeoning identity as an educator and stated the perceived impact of the minor, its coursework and curricula, on their reflection. Moreover, each participant spoke to a growth of skills around relationship building and communication as personal growth area attributed to the minor. Three areas for relationships emerged from the data: with community partners, with students, and with cooperating/mentor teachers.

Personal Growth

All three participants noted in interviews perceived personal growth skills from the minor. Jenn and Caroline spoke most frequently about the relationship with their community partner for the capstone course. At the beginning of the course and project, both hoped that they would be able to build a relationship with their partner with fidelity. However, both later admitted they "wished [they] had more contact with them." Jenn went so far as to say that the communication between herself and the partner was difficult to establish and maintain. She cited that she "wished [she] would have started sooner." Caroline echoed that sentiment but cited a generally favorable viewpoint of the relationship that was established.

Ann, on the other hand, cited several local community partners that she had worked with during her time in the minor. While she acknowledged that not all relationships were easy to establish, she did cite specific opportunities that she hoped she could reconnect with the organization or community member. She, too, cited the importance in building these relationships early and with clear communication. Ann saw "service learning as application for building relationships" and spoke of her experiences in this manner. She further extolled her belief that relationships with students and future students in her classroom were similar. Ann believed that her experience in classrooms gave her confidence to build strong relationships with students during her student teaching experience. In fact, when asked what she was most looking forward to about the experience, Ann cited the opportunity to build long lasting relationships.

Similarly, Jenn and Caroline also noted that building relationships with students was of the utmost importance for their student teaching placement. While all three

participants believed that relationships with their students were integral to their experience in the classroom, Ann and Caroline also spoke to the need to build a strong relationship with the cooperating or mentor teacher. They both believed that a strong relationship was necessary to build their own skillset and to help achieve the most possible with students during their student teaching time. Alternatively, Jenn did not note a desire to build a strong cooperating/mentor teacher relationship. However, she did believe that building a strong relationship with family members and parents of future students was imperative. "I think it's really cool to see how much they really care about their students learning," Jenn said in reference to parents and family members. Further, Jenn noted her desire to "work hard" at building these relationships from day one.

Each participant believed that the minor attributed to their own growth and development. All participants spoke of academic knowledge and skills that the minor provided. Further, each reflected on their own expanding notions of diversity and professional identity. Finally, participants spoke of ways that the minor provided opportunities for them to grow in their relationships building and communication skills. The next section focuses on the final research question- teaching practice.

Teaching Practice

Each participant was enrolled in their student teaching experience and thus reflected on the minor's perceived effect on their teaching practice. The participants identified themes of culturally responsive teaching and community service learning for students as perceived areas of impact. Additionally, all three participants spoke about their perception of classroom management.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Caroline was most direct when she addressed culturally responsive teaching as a perceived impact of the minor. Caroline spoke specifically about CRT and how she hoped to become a teacher that embedded its principles in her daily teaching. Caroline spoke of ensuring that her texts and curricula were aligned to highlight multiple perspectives and the lived experiences of her own students. Additionally, Caroline argued that her role as a teacher was "more than just putting ideas in their head." Caroline believed that her students should bring their learning and knowledge in her classroom and that "CRT is at the core of everything that I want."

Likewise, Ann also spoke of specific courses from the minor that touched on culturally responsive teaching. She often spoke of academic achievement and her own developing cultural consciousness. For example, Ann spoke of the lack of "high quality" materials being given to students in a special education class that she was placed. She believed students should have completed work that was of a higher level. Further, Ann often reflected on her preconceived notions and assumptions and spoke of times when these were challenged or questioned. Jenn, however, never mentioned culturally responsive teaching as a perceived impact on her teaching practice. She did, however, give examples that illustrated an expanding cultural competence. Specifically, Jenn cited that all texts used in one elementary classroom in which she was placed highlighted only White individuals. "I think you need to have other books…. where they can relate," said Jenn. While Caroline and Ann specifically made reference to culturally responsive teaching as an aim, all participants recounted examples of how the tenets of culturally responsive teaching were used in their own teaching practice.

Student Service Learning

As all three participants highlighted the community service learning component of the minor as strength, they also believed that using the model with future students could prove beneficial. Jenn cited the importance of service learning for students is for "students to give back." While Ann's response was nuanced:

> I like the idea of community service learning because…. kids are going to be able to go to their communities…. and do things that are important to them…. They are in their communities every day and [for me] to teach them ways that they can engage…. and how to make a difference in positive ways is great.

These two varying views of the perceived importance of students completing service learning work are illustrative of the viewpoints of both Ann and Jenn.

Alternatively, Caroline did not address a desire to take on community service learning with future students. She did, however, speak to her desire to build a community of learners within her future classroom. "I…. hope to create a community of learners where we're okay to talk about things," Caroline said. "I would love to set up something like the way [program coordinator] does," she continued. This reference to mimicking the classroom style of the minor illustrates a strong connection Caroline had to the minor. It also speaks to Caroline's desire to teach students about current societal challenges and opportunities. Strongly linked to her reflection around her growth in social justice issues, Caroline believed that future students should be part of the solution when she reflected:

> We talk about social change and making a difference. And, I've always thought, 'How can I get my students to do that?' Because, that's…. my constant train of thought…. How can I tailor this for my students?

This reflection evidences a desire by Caroline to empower students to be agents of change but in the confines of a classroom experience. This could be illustrative of Caroline's own "imagined" classroom and students and her biases as a White woman. Perhaps learning and being exposed in the classroom is needed but working in the community is not. Similar reflections are noted by Ann as well. As a special education teacher, Ann reflected on how to engage her students (in appropriate ways) with current events and social learning. Ann believed that exposing all students to social justice conversation would be important and provided evidence of planning community service learning for her students.

In summary, the participants all cited various ways in which they perceived the minor impacted their teaching practice. From embedding service learning into future courses and curricula, to practicing the tenets of culturally responsive teaching, Ann, Jenn, and Caroline all cited the minor as a large influencer.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

As classrooms across the United States continue to reflect the changing demographic trends seen nationally, schools of teacher education are further prompted with designing and implementing programs of study that effectively train educators to work across lines of racial and economic difference. Further, "urban public schools have resegregated" across the country, while the teaching force has remained White, female, and middle class (Sulentic Dowell, Barrera, Meidl, & Saal, 2016). The rise of social justice teacher education programs have recently been established in an effort to promote issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and school system and position education as a democratic institution. Further, teacher education programs have focused efforts on multicultural service learning and culturally responsive teaching as mechanisms for delivering a blend of practical application, pedagogy, curriculum, and an orientation towards training teacher leaders with growth mindsets.

Proponents of multicultural service learning posit that these experiences provide authentic opportunities for pre-service teachers to partner with traditionally disenfranchised and marginalized communities (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Highlighting the ability of these types of learning experience to grow mutual learning and respect between participant and service learner, advocates of the approach believe that these experiences can become hallmarks of a novice educators training experience and can increase the

commitment to working with populations of people that are of different cultural backgrounds (Baldwin, Buchanana, & Rudisill, 2007; Bell, Horn, & Roxas, 2007; Boyle Baise, 2005; Conner, 2010). Citing the affirmation of diversity, community building, and critique of systemic inequities, multicultural service learning is seen by proponents as mediums for fostering positive views about race, class, and gender (Chang, Anagnostopoulos, & Omae, 2011). Further, service learning is espoused as being able to "develop pre-service teachers while honing the skills necessary to teach from a culturally responsive lens and a social justice stance" (Sulentic Dowell, Barrera, Meidl, & Saal, 2016).

This chapter will provide implications for the findings highlighted in the cases of chapter four, focusing on the four salient themes of social justice orientation, notions of diversity, teaching practice, and relationships with community members. Further, the themes uncovered will be analyzed using Boyle-Baise's (2002) tenets of multicultural service learning as a guidepost: building community, affirming diversity, and critiquing the status quo. Beginning with a discussion of the research implications and their connection to the conceptual frameworks that guided the study, the chapter will conclude with recommendations and possible future research. Although the findings of this qualitative study are not generalizable, I believe this study will be a catalyst for future research on the topic of preparing novice educators in program rooted in social justice and service learning.

Social Justice Orientation

The findings from this study indicated that growth and development around issues of social justice education occurred across the range of participants. However,

individuals in the study internalized social justice at different levels and were inconsistent in their understanding of how they were best positioned to carry out the work in their own classrooms. For instance, Boyle-Baise and Langford (2004) suggest that service learning focused on social justice "redirects the focus of service learning from charity to social change" (p. 55). This understanding repositions the power dynamic that is often present during service learning and allows participants to reflect on how their placements and experiences in the field "address issues of racism, sexism, and classism with consciousness raising… as the aim" (p.55). However, participants in this study often exhibited mindsets oriented towards charity and a mentality of White savior. Throughout the data set, participants in this study often mentioned their desire to "help" diverse students, or "volunteer" in urban or low income communities. For instance, Jenn often positioned the community members or students that she worked with as "these people." Jenn and the other participants often positioned themselves as separate and other from the students and communities in which they taught. Thus, these findings stand in contrast to Boyle-Baise's (2002) assertion that multicultural service learning allows participants to affirm diversity.

This mindset permeated much of the experience for participants. However, participants did self-report a growth in their own understanding of how issues of justice and equity impact society and the classroom. Placed in a variety of community organizations and public schools, all three participants illustrated a growth in their understanding of the experiences of others. For instance, Ann said, "I think it is important to understand and respect the differences in each other." Caroline illustrated a similar sentiment as she often spoke of issues of poverty. Caroline's own reflection of

how her background as a privileged, White, suburban female stood in contrast to the experiences of many of the students that she worked with during various classroom placements. Additionally, all participants indicated that they grew or learned more about working with others across lines of racial and economic difference. From specific classroom examples, to relationships built with organizers and participants of a local LGBTQ advocacy group, Ann, Jenn, and Caroline all felt as though the major had provided opportunities for them to work with and learn about folks from diverse backgrounds and ultimately viewed this as a strength of the program. While the major allowed them to work with individuals from different racial and economic backgrounds than their own, the evidence is mixed in regards to their ability to affirm diversity. While participants self-reported a growth in their knowledge about diverse individuals, this study found that participants did not fully internalize how their own identity shaped their views of others. Unlike Baldwin, Buchanan, and Rudisill's (2007) findings, Ann, Jenn, and Caroline did not always work through preconceived notions of students and community members that were different economically or socially. In fact, they often used their own identities as a baseline for which diversity was defined and understood.

While participants self-reported a growth in their understanding of the principles of social justice work, all three were less secure in their definitions of what social justice meant to their work – illustrating a lack of internalization and possibly reflection. As three middle-class, While, females, their collective understanding of issues of social justice was lacking. From Jenn's deficit-based positioning of people of color, to Caroline's failure to address issues of race in her reflections, this study indicates that participants failed to truly develop the critical awareness that is paramount for social

justice teacher education to take root (Cochran-Smith, et. al., 2009). While the research of this study indicates that participants in the minor had "open minds" and were "exposed" to people and communities that may be different from their own, this understanding did not translate to the true aim of social justice teacher education programs: "to prepare teachers… who are able to advocate for the transformation of not only the individual classrooms but whole schools or districts, and who are able to consider their work as being connected to broader social movements" (McDonald, 2010, p. 452). Participant's one-dimensional understanding of social justice education is directly linked to their understanding of diverse classrooms and illustrates disconnect between the classroom curriculum, community placements, and praxis. The data suggest that diverse community and classroom placements alone are not enough to embed the hallmarks of a social justice orientation. While constructivist practices (like service learning experiences) have been show to promote culturally responsive teaching practices, this research indicates that they alone do not provide the structure to ensure that participants leave the experience holding positive views of students or community members (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This is evident through this study. While Boyle-Baise (2002) asserts that questioning the status quo is a major tenet of multicultural service learning opportunities, this study found that participants that experienced diverse field experiences and service learning opportunities did not leave the study with a truly robust understanding of systems of power and oppression. Linked to their own tepid understanding of their identity and Whiteness, participants often perpetuated traditional hegemonic structures in their classrooms or community placements.

Notions of Diversity

The participants of this study each admitted to growing in their understanding of how to work for diverse student populations – although little universality was noted among participants. Often positioning their own identity and background as that of normalcy, Ann, Jenn, and Caroline all sought to embed curriculum and experiences into their future classrooms that supported diverse practice. While previous research has shown participants of such experiences and programs have gained awareness of self and social inequity, the results of this study do not provide a clear corroboration (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). Ann and Caroline used their experience in the minor to step back and reflect on their own identity and how it may have impacted experiences they had in classrooms or in the community. This indicated a growth in their own understanding about how their race and class position them inequitably in systems. However, this growth was tepid at best and was often relegated to surface level understandings of economic privilege rather than racial.

However, Jenn often had a starkly different experience. Jenn's deficit approach towards "diverse students" (often used to refer to hyper-segregated classrooms or school buildings) was troubling as it indicated a lack of understanding of her own position and privilege. As the minor was rooted in social justice, culturally responsive teaching, and multicultural service learning, Jenn's approach seems to indicate a lack of internalization of the tenets of the program. While other studies (Boyle-Baise & Sleeter, 2000; Dentith, 2005) provide instances of such programs and experiences that address deficit classroom views, Jenn's mindset stands in contrast. Thus, evidence of inconsistently held views was evident by participants in the minor.

While a more nuanced understanding of teacher for diversity was not evident during the research, the participants of this study did provide examples of how their own internalization of diversity shaped aspects of their experience in the minor. For instance, Jenn's understanding and analysis of student's identity and cultural marker during a classroom practicum highlighted a (although somewhat surface) reflection. While Jenn often mentioned instances that "broadened her horizons," she often positioned diverse students and learners in a deficit manner. Jenn spoke of racially diverse students being "handled," "helped," and "meeting expectations." This language and understanding of students in hyper-segregated schools often seemed to reinforce Jenn's own assumptions rather than break them. And according the tents of Boyle-Baise's (2002) framework for multicultural service learning, does not evidence a questioning or critique of the status quo. However, Jenn's own competency in the classroom grew as she interacted and worked with students when she said, "the relationship just happened over time. I think that they finally felt like they could trust me." Jenn offered no analysis or reflection on how her own privilege and power may have shaped the classroom dynamics and positioned the students of the class as the individuals needing to do the trusting. As Beaudry (2015) noted, field experiences should provide opportunities for "realistic, reflective, and reciprocal exchanges." This illustration indicates that Jenn's exchanges with students in the classroom were not reciprocal in nature and that the onus of the trust and relationship building was put on the students rather than her.

Ann and Caroline also highlighted specific examples of how working with and interacting with students and communities that were from different racial and economic backgrounds expanded their understanding of people and contributed to their belief in the

democratic nature of education. These exchanges allowed these participants to grow their understanding of diversity – albeit in a limited manner. Ann took the opportunity to reflect on how her identity as a White female teacher in a majority Black classroom may have been perceived by students and families and on several occasions seemed to struggle internally with "white guilt," as she wrestled with her own place in educating students of color. Alternatively, Caroline believed that the minor allowed her "to step out of her environment," and expanded her level of awareness regarding social issues impacting communities. While the goal of multicultural service learning is to "affirm diversity, critique inequity, and build community," the data suggest that participants in this minor did not universally meet those objectives (Boyle-Baise, 2002). However, evidence from this research did suggest that the opportunities provided by the minor did somewhat increase the pre-service teacher's understandings of culturally different peoples. As Baldwin, Buchanan, and Rudisill (2007) found, there may have been opportunity for students to examine their preconceived notions and assumptions in an effort for them to not be reinforced throughout the experience. This research seems to indicate that the deficit views of participants did not greatly "transform their understanding of culturally diverse students." (Boyle-Baise & Sleeter, 2000, p. 39).

Teaching Practice

Participants of this study each were enrolled in their student teaching experience following completion of the minor capstone course. Throughout the data collection phase, participants noted various ways in which the minor shaped their own current and future classrooms. From skills such as "listening" and "learning about others," to more

pedagogically-based decisions, the data suggest that the minor had an impact on teaching practice.

Bennet (2013) posited that field experiences should be connected with prescribed coursework in a manner that illustrates culturally responsive teaching. Culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching were ultimate aims for education majors enrolled in the minor (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2002). This research suggests that the nature of the minor's coursework and constructivist community placements allowed participants hands-on experience to learn with and from diverse populations. These placements and the corresponding coursework prompted participants to note areas where teaching practice was shifted based on their experiences in the minor. First, all participants noted their desire to embed critical inquiry through a social justice lens into their own classrooms. Conklin and Hughes (2016) found specific teaching practices that prepare justice-oriented teachers and correlated with social justice teaching practices. These include: facilitating the development of relationships with community, honoring the lived experiences and existing attitudes of students, providing multiple world views, and providing equitable and intellectually challenging teaching and learning (Conklin and Hughes, 2016). These teacher education practices closely align with the tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy – academic achievement, socio-cultural consciousness, and cultural competence. In other words, if pre-service teachers experience the practices that Conklin and Hughes (2016) outlined, they would closely mirror the student-facing paradigms of culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching (Ladson-Billing, 1995; Gay, 2002). Results from this study seem to indicate the employment of these teacher-facing strategies can lead to student-facing practices in application.

For this research, various proficiencies with teaching practice were uncovered. For instance, Ann spoke directly about a course in the minor focused on social justice issues and indicated that a completed unit plan on these issues was to be implemented in her own classroom. Caroline's opportunity to build unit plans based on social justice themes was directly linked to coursework in the minor. These types of opportunities are directly related to the high leverage practices McDonald outlined (2010) when practicing to teach for social justice. McDonald argued that the field needs to identify high leverage practices that would parse out experiences and curriculum and develop pre-service teachers' cultural knowledge, and relationships with students and families (2010). Coursework similar to Caroline's course on social justice methods seems to point to opportunities for teacher educators to bridge the gap as it combines traditional teacher education methods (unit planning and lesson planning) with a focus on equity and social justice.

Two out of the three participants indicated that teaching in an urban school environment and working with students across lines of racial difference was important to them. These opportunities provided in the minor allowed participants to connect their technical teaching practices to a social justice orientation in a manner that was practical and challenging. Thus, both Caroline and Ann believed that they had found their true calling and were interested in working in urban schools for their student teaching experience and beyond. However, Jenn noted that she was not interested in working in an urban school and preferred to teach in a suburban area that more closely resembled her own background. This could be attributed to her own deficit-based thinking regards students of color in urban schools. Villegas and Lucas (2002) note that field experiences

in diverse communities does not guarantee an understanding of or orientation towards social justice. The data from this study seems to support this finding.

Finally, while only one participant made a direct link to culturally responsive teaching practices, all participants noted examples of how their own teaching has been shaped by their understanding of the identities and cultures of others. Culturally responsive teaching practices aim to validate the lived experiences of students, educate the whole child, and can be emancipatory and liberating as teachers provide instruction that is free from the systemic and hegemonic structures found in traditional schooling (Gay, 2013). The findings from this study indicate a mixed internalization of the concepts of culturally responsive teaching. From Ann's understanding of how her own race and gender might be showing up in classrooms and communities that look different than her, to Jenn's realization that embedding and celebrating aspects of the cultures found in her classroom, participants cited examples that used the "cultures, experiences, and perspectives" of their students (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Unfortunately, none of the participants linked the use of this valuable knowledge to larger issues of academic achievement – a hallmark of cultural responsive pedagogy nor did they realize the opportunity to serve as emancipator or liberator in their classroom or community setting (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2013). Perhaps this oversight was predicated by the fact that none of the participants had their own classrooms yet or perhaps this foreshadowed disconnect between using cultural knowledge for more than just relationships and classroom management.

While all participants illustrated minimal examples of culturally relevant teaching practices, Caroline specifically cited the principles as a goal of her teaching career and

believed it to be the "core of everything" she was about as an educator. Caroline had a more nuanced understanding of culturally responsive teaching that moved it beyond mere text and curriculum adoptions and focused on celebrating and using the cultural learning and differences in her classroom. Thus, she focused on affirming the lived experiences of students (Gay, 2002). This understanding led her to believe that teaching for her was more than just imbuing knowledge to others, it was about learning from her students about their own lives – a similar theme to Freire's concept of "banking" (1970). Caroline perceived that teaching and learning should be more than depositing information and content and placed a goal for her to use and tap into the rich cultural experiences of the classroom in a way that was responsive to the needs of students but also sustained their cultural history (Paris, 2012).

This study further suggests that Caroline's had more self-efficacy than Jenn or Ann to teach in culturally responsive ways in the classroom. The belief in one's own abilities around culturally responsive teaching practices has been shown to increase the likelihood of execution of said practices (Siwatu, 2011). While Ann and Jenn often tangentially mentioned shifting teaching instruction according to culturally responsive teaching practices, Caroline's confidence and self-efficacy could provide greater levels of execution in her own future classroom.

Ultimately, this study suggests that participants perceived a large impact by the minor on their own teaching practice. Caroline was able to translate that directly into her belief and understanding of culturally responsive teaching practices (Gay, 2002; Siwatu, 2011). While, Jenn and Ann highlighted best practices that they believed would embed the principles of the minor into their own future classrooms (Gay, 2002). Ultimately, for

Ann and Caroline their learning in the minor and through the service learning opportunities shaped their desire to work with students and communities that are culturally different than themselves, as illustrated by their choice of student teaching placement school and reinforces previous findings (Boyle-Baise & Langford, 2004; McDonald, 2010; Wade, 2000). Jenn's desire to work in a suburban echoed presumptions about students of color previously held as she opted for a suburban, predominately White school for her student teaching placement. Thus, a mindset shift for Jenn did not occur and therefore the teaching practices that she highlighted only address the cultural "surface." further, her disposition towards marginalized communities and schools was often seen as charity rather than service and positioned her dominant culture (White) as normalcy. These challenges are similar to previous findings in the field (Wade, 2000).

Building Community and Relationships

As a major tenet of multicultural service learning, building community was seen by participants throughout the data (Boyle-Baise, 2002). From emerging relationships between participants and community organizations to evidence of the importance of building community within classrooms and building strong relationships with peers, Ann, Jenn, and Caroline each illustrated how the minor contributed to their own growth in building community.

The capstone course of the minor offered the greatest potential for community building as participants were tasked with a participatory service learning project proposal. The project was driven by the interest of the students and participants chose to partner with neighboring schools and neighboring non-profits. The participants did not feel a

strong sense of connection with the community partners that they chose and worked with. Boyle-Baise (2002) purports that shared control between community partner and university staff is needed for multicultural service learning to reach its potential as a site for change. Given the fact that participants in this study were asked to select a community partner on their own, results were mixed and relationships built were weak. Participant's feeling that the relationships with community partners were not robust or sustainable supports previous research that indicates that multicultural service learning's success hinges on the strength of the relationship between community partner and participant (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Ann and Jenn's admittance that communication with partners was often lacking indicated that a strong reciprocal relationship was not fully established. Additionally Jenn noted that while she hoped to remain in contact with her community partner, she was not confident that it would continue. While participants built surface relationships with their community partners, all identified communication with the partner as the most difficult. Boyle-Baise and Sleeter (2000) found that participants in multicultural service learning often "shifted from deficit view to more affirmative views of the community" partner (p. 40). The participants in this study all seemed to place the onus of relationship building on the community partner rather than a joint or shared operation. This deficit view of the community partner stands in contrast to previous research and suggests that participants of these experiences do not all build understandings of community partnership at the same level.

All participants reported value in the capstone course project and through building a relationship with a partner. However, the value of the relationship and the perceived one-dimensionality of the relationship stand in stark contrast to the idea of "shared

control and partnership" as outlined by Boyle-Baise's framework of multicultural service learning (2002). The coursework and structure of the service learning experience in the capstone course was consistently referenced by the participants of this study. The coursework and curriculum of the course provided opportunities for participants to process and make meaning of their experience and thus cannot be separated from the service learning experience embedded in the course (Beaudry, 2015). The level of shared control and partnership evidenced in this study indicates that structures of service learning may have a broad impact on overall learning and internalization for students.

Additionally, only two of the three participants emerged from the minor with a clear articulation and desire to work in urban settings and with students from different racial backgrounds than their own. Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill (2007) found that multicultural service learning opportunities not only increased the awareness and understanding of diverse cultures and races but also contribute to a desire by participants to work across lines of different. Further, Conner (2010) found that participants often self-reported a desire to commit to working with students from cultures other than their own. The results from this study differ. They illuminate the point that although the multicultural service learning experience can provide opportunities for relationship and community building, it does not guarantee an inclination to continue the work past the service learning term. Jenn's disposition to find a teaching job in a suburban environment that mirrored her own upbringing is evidence of such. These findings indicate that service learning experiences alone (even embedded in programs of study) do not provide the sole link to connecting participants and that previous dispositions and mindsets are not always challenged through service learning experiences alone.

Self-reported growth in the skillsets around relationship building and community building was a theme throughout this study. Participants believed that building a "community of learners" was most important as they began her career as an educator. These sentiments were echoed was they highlighted best practices such as "partner work and collegial activities" that she planned to implement once in their own classroom. Boyle Baise and Langford (2010) found community building activities were necessary in ensuring that students in the field were affirming cultural and social diversity. The coursework and structure of the capstone course of the minor provided these types of activities amongst learners – perhaps a contributing factor to participants highlighting their desire to build strong classroom communities in their future classrooms.

This study suggests that participants were able to use the minor to work with and engage with communities and schools as opportunities to grow their own mindset around the importance of community building and establishing strong relationships. However, the lack of foresight and planning on the end of participants to continue and pursue relationships with community partners with fidelity provides question. The findings of this study stand in contrast to Boyle-Baise's (2002) assertion that these types of experiences help build community. Grounded in the concept of shared control, research has shown that embedded field experiences can serve as a structure for community based service learning (Boyle-Baise, 2002). However, participants in this study did not demonstrate a notion of shared control when aligning their service learning interests – particularly for the capstone course.

Through a close examination of the findings, it is clear that participants enjoyed and perceived positively their time in the minor. However, various levels of

understandings around social justice issues and diversity indicate that the presumptions and implicit biases that participants carry with them were not uncovered and may have contributed to the overall experience in the program (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007). Ultimately, these experiences shaped the knowledge around teaching practice and building community for each participant as participants implemented some level of cultural relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching practices (Ladson-Billing, 1995; Gay, 2002). As a major tenet of multicultural service learning, critical questioning of the status quo was seen in very few and limited pockets – illustrating the obvious difference in experience by each of the participants (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Further, a lack of true community building or shared partnership with community indicates a weak connection to working with culturally diverse communities.

Limitations

This study included limitations that were beyond the control of the researcher. The voluntary nature of selection provided a challenge, while the inability to control for prior learning on the concepts of social justice, culturally responsive teaching, and service learning limited the generalizability of results. Moreover, the limited time frame that the minor had been in existence provided a unique challenge in that a relatively small body of sample candidates was available for research. Additionally, the pool of eligible participants limited the group to only White and female, offering a limited perspective. Further, my ability to observe only the capstone course provided a limited perspective on the program as whole. As such, most of the data collected for this study was contributed to the minor via the capstone course and its service learning component. Finally, the student teaching assignments for students were not under the auspices of the program

coordinator. Students in this study were given the opportunity to self-identify types of schools and geographic areas where they would like to student teach.

Programmatic Recommendations

There are two programmatic recommendations for programs such as this. This study has highlighted the voices of three White female pre-service educators enrolled in a minor rooted in multicultural service learning and social justice education. As such, their stories illustrate the benefits and opportunities for further growth of such a program for novice educators. While all three participants had various experiences and outcomes associated with the minor, all three struggled with the tension of their own identities and background and those of the students and community partners embedded in the minor. I believe that more work on White racial identity theory could help participants understand their unique role in ensuring the academic success of all students (Helms, 1995; Tatum, 1997). Through analysis of the data, it is evident that little internalization of their own position and power as White females in classrooms and communities predominantly of color had occurred. While reflection was a hallmark of many of the courses and projects of the minor, creating space and dialogue for participants to truly reflect on how their own identity may be influencing their assumptions, biases, and experiences in communities and classrooms of color is recommended. Participants of this study often spoke about "diversity" through a lens of others – thus positioning their own identity and Eurocentric mindsets as norm. A deeper unpacking of internalized racial biases could help participants receive a more robust and holistic view of racialized systems at play in schools and communities predominantly of color.

As a program rooted in multicultural service learning and social justice education, participants left their experience with vastly disparate understandings of what social justice meant to them. While all participants felt that they learned from working with those of different races, there was a sense of "do good" by all participants that failed to recognize the systemic issues of power and hegemony that impact students and communities across the country. Boyle-Baise and Langford espouse that service learning for social justice should year to move beyond this sense and to replace it with "an analysis of power and oppression in the service learning course and field experiences" (2004, p. 55). The data suggest that participants of the minor did not reach such as level and that future changes to coursework or the structure of field experiences could provide a more in-depth experience. McDonald (2010) reported that social justice education practitioners should focus on "identifying a set of high-leverage social justice teaching practices" aimed at providing teacher candidates with specific best practices (p. 453). These could include "ways of listening; ways of eliciting student's thinking; ways of identifying oneself as an ally of families; ways of bridging across cultural, ethnic, and linguistic boundaries" - all sound practices rooted in culturally responsive teaching (p. 454). Thus, I believe that a course focused solely on social justice issues for educators could help to provide a platform and medium for participants to engage in robust and in-depth analysis of systemic issues in the United States and their impact on the classroom with the end goal of providing the space and tools necessary for young educators to diagnose and deconstruct injustices.

A final recommendation would be for the program to require education majors in the minor to complete their student teaching assignment in an urban school – possibly a

school that they worked with for another practicum or field experience as part of the minor. Not only would this ensure that students of the program were provided opportunities to continue to grow in their competency of working for students in hyper-segregated schools, but it would also allow opportunities for students to continue to reflect on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion during their student teaching experience.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the data and programmatic recommendations, I believe that future research could include the continued research of participants after their graduation and throughout their first year in the classroom. Thus, the researcher would be able to track actual implementation of mindsets and practices embedded in the minor and would be able to see perceptions over the course of time. Evidence of relationship and community building, social justice curriculum implementation, and conviction towards equity in the public schools could be measured. This research could also include student voice as a means to capture how classroom teachers were implementing practices congruent with social justice education and culturally responsive teaching practices. The data from students would illustrate an additional viewpoint and could provide insight on practice as it would provide opportunities for students to reflect on the effectiveness of their teacher.

Additional future research could look at the academic achievement of the students in the teachers' classrooms. A pinnacle of culturally responsive teaching and an ultimate goal of social justice education, measuring and tracking the academic progress of students of color in classrooms would provide additional evidence of the impact of the minor and its' curriculum and could provide a more generalizable conclusion (Cochran-

Smith, M., et. al., 2009). A longitudinal study of students could show enduring and possibly transformational academic impacts beyond the reach of one school year with the educator. The future research mentioned here could provide opportunities for teacher educators to better understand how the implementation of programs rooted in social justice education and multicultural service learning impact more than pre-service teachers and how their development ultimately impacts students and student achievement.

Finally, as this research studied the perceptions of three White female pre-service teachers, I believe additional research of a more inclusive sample would best. As all three participants were female, a sample that included males would be most helpful. Further, future research should also aim to explore how multicultural service learning and issues of social justice impact the teaching practice and perceptions of pre-service teachers of color. Additionally, providing diversity in education major (beyond SPED and elementary education) could provide further insights pertinent to teacher educators.

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