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**The Dissertation Committee for Katie Elizabeth Ortego Pritchett Certifies that this  
is the approved version of the following dissertation:**

**Defining the Role and Experiences of Service-Learning Faculty:  
A Qualitative Study at The University of Texas at Austin**

**Committee:**

---

Richard J. Reddick, Supervisor

---

Edwin R. Sharpe

---

Gregory J. Vincent

---

Dawna I. Ballard

---

Suchitra V. Gururaj

**Defining the Role and Experiences of Service-Learning Faculty:  
A Qualitative Study at The University of Texas at Austin**

**by**

**Katie Elizabeth Ortego Pritchett, B.A.; M.P. ADMIN.**

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated:

To my mom for unconditional love and instilling the importance of education;

To my husband for believing in my goals and sacrificing to help me achieve them;

To my goddaughters Andie, Chloe, and Stella so you know how much I believe in you and your ability to achieve all your educational and personal goals;

And to all first generation college students— you are not alone in your journey.

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# **Defining the Role and Experiences of Service-Learning Faculty: A Qualitative Study at The University of Texas at Austin**

Katie Elizabeth Ortego Pritchett, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

Supervisor: Richard J. Reddick

Over the past two decades researchers have analyzed motivating factors and institutional barriers that influenced a professor's initial decision to utilize a service-learning pedagogy. The majority of this research has been quantitative in nature, surveying faculty members' initial attitudes around service-learning. However, the extant literature fails to qualitatively examine the experiences of faculty members who successfully integrate service-learning, especially at a public research institution with civic-engaged mission. Because a public institution relies upon a critical mass of faculty members to support its civic engagement mission, this study focused on explaining the lived experience of exemplar professors in service-learning to understanding their motivations, barriers, and experiences.

Faculty members are important to study because service-learning is a form of community engagement that cannot happen without sustainable efforts from professors. Moreover, students and communities cannot derive the benefits of service-learning, nor can civically minded institutions achieve their goal, if faculty members do not incorporate service-learning into their classrooms. Thus, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to understand the experiences of service-learning faculty

members at a four-year public research institution where community engagement is a stated priority.

Utilizing a recently developed faculty engagement model (Demb & Wade, 2012) as the guiding theoretical framework, this research study seeks to understand the lived experience of faculty members at The University of Texas at Austin by inquiring 1) how faculty members implement meaningful community engagement through their service-learning classes, 2) how service-learning may shape a faculty members' professional and personal identity at a research institution, and 3) how service-learning fits into faculty members' larger scholarship agenda.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

With the many demands on faculty members' time and energy, why do some professors engage in an intensive, community engaged pedagogical approach such as service-learning? The benefits of service-learning are well documented for students, communities, and institutions, but little research defines and conceptualizes the experiences of faculty who lead service-learning courses—inspiring the question, “What’s in it for faculty?” So often this question goes unanswered, despite the expectations placed on professors to extend their knowledge and resources to focus student learning on meaningful projects for societal good.

By helping to address social problems in tandem with academic curriculum, universities embody the highest form of learning and escape the problem of inert knowledge, knowledge that is valuable only in a classroom (Kronick & Cunningham, 2012). Academic service-learning is one pedagogical method that facilitates the opportunity for faculty and students to engage in a higher form of learning, to engage with a community, and to achieve learning outcomes for the public good (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Over the past two decades, researchers have identified factors and variables that may influence professors' initial decision to utilize service-learning pedagogy. While it is assumed that faculty choose a service-learning pedagogy to serve as conduits for student learning and social change, the professional and personal experiences of these faculty members remains largely an unexplored area (O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011). In particular, it is necessary to understand how faculty members at a public research institution successfully incorporate service-learning into their classrooms and how service-learning may subsequently shape a faculty members' professional identity.

Faculty members are perhaps the most important to study because service-learning is a form of community engagement that cannot happen without sustainable efforts from professors. This places faculty at the nexus—relying upon them as a pillar to uphold the institution’s civic mission because of their unique influence on other key stakeholders. In addition to serving as officers of the academy, professors serve as role models to college students and have the opportunity, through service-learning, to influence a generation of collegians to recognize the importance of contributing to the wellbeing of a community. Faculty also exhibit great influence on one another. For example, a research study at the University of California, Berkeley (Bell, Furco, Ammon, Muller, & Sorgen, 2000) found that without the genuine support and involvement of a critical mass of faculty, service-learning is not likely to become institutionalized on a campus.

In essence, students and communities cannot derive the benefits of service-learning, nor can civically minded institutions fully achieve their goal, if faculty members do not incorporate service-learning into their classrooms. By examining faculty experiences using a qualitative approach, research institutions can better understand the how these faculty members navigate an academic system that is divided by three distinct pillars of teaching, research, and service (Boyer, 1987). In light of the growing interest in service-learning (O’Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011), this qualitative research study investigated the lived experiences and identities of service-learning faculty at a research institution with a service-minded focus.

This chapter begins with background information including a discussion of service-learning terminology and an overview of the growth of service-learning particularly at higher education institutions. The background section also briefly

introduces service-learning literature by including context for how service-learning programs have evolved. The chapter continues with a statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. The research questions, significance of the study, and methodology follow. The chapter concludes with definitions of key terms that will be used in the study and an overview of the study.

## **Background**

In the 1980s and early 1990s, higher education institutions were criticized for failing to extend their rich resources to address public concerns around issues such as education, the environment, or economic development (O'Meara, Sandmann, et. al, 2011). The subsequent surge in community and university partnerships helped to link teaching and research with local and national problems, resulting in mutually beneficial relationships between faculty members, their students, and community partners. Faculty members were at the center of this community engagement innovation "because of their intimate ties to the academic mission" (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011, p. 84). Over the past two decades, researchers have examined factors that influenced faculty members' initial decision to leverage academic service-learning as a pedagogical tool for community engagement. Through the testing and re-testing of quantitative metrics, a variety of factors and demographics emerged to be statistically significant during a faculty member's decision-making phase. While these factors have helped to shape the research and practice around initially motivating faculty to participate in service-learning programs, there remains a need to understand the lived experiences of faculty who sustain

such efforts. This is particularly important at research institutions because the success of service-learning and community engagement programs depends upon the extent to which faculty adopt and implement it as part of their larger scholarship agenda (Forbes, Wasburn, Crispo, & Vandever, 2008). In order to advance scholarly knowledge on this subject, deeper qualitative research must be conducted to learn about the experiences of faculty who successfully engage in service-learning and to identify how these experiences shape their professional and personal identities.

#### **SERVICE-LEARNING TERMINOLOGY.**

One of the challenges of implementing, researching, and even discussing service-learning is the variety of terms used to describe the practice. This section serves to introduce service-learning as a specific teaching approach and explores the often entangled relationship of service-learning with other forms of civic or community engagement (such as volunteerism, public service, community-based research, internships, etc.).

Bringle and Hatch (1996), distinguished service-learning scholars, have defined service-learning as

a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (p. 222).

Unlike a one-time voluntary service, service-learning is a course-based service experience initiated by a faculty member and bound within the timeframe of an academic course or program.



Given the plethora of definitions it is important to identify the fundamental problem of interchanging the terms civic engagement or community engagement with service-learning (Hatcher, 2010). While recognizing the overlap, there are important differences. Service-learning is both a method and a philosophy of teaching (Jacoby, 1996), and therefore is a faculty-driven process aligning student community service with academic content in a credit-bearing course. While civic engagement and community engagement are broad categories that are similar to one another, the distinction lies in the scope of the impact.

Not all community engagement efforts can be categorized as service-learning. Service-learning is often folded into the broader definition of community engagement (Gibson, 2006), but it is only *one type* of community engagement that seeks to identify and impact a specific localized problem or issue. The purpose of community engagement within higher education is to develop a partnership between a university and a community so that knowledge and resources may be shared to enrich scholarship, research, teaching, and learning to prepare engaged citizens who contribute to the public good (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.). In addition to academic service-learning programs, community engagement activities may also include a one-time volunteer program or community-based internship. However, research has shown that the course-based, faculty-led approach of service-learning is one of the best ways an institution can fulfill its mission while providing a deeper learning opportunity for faculty, students, and the community (Elrich, 2013).

Civic engagement is another broad category often associated with service-learning. Civic engagement involves teaching students about social responsibility to civic and public life through voting, staying politically active, and engaging in community

service. Civic engagement is a core learning outcome of service-learning classes because it allows professors to address specific knowledge and skills that prepare them as leaders in a democratic society (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2012). Civic engagement is inherent within service-learning, but the two terms are not synonymous. While service-learning always has a civic dimension, other types of civic engagement efforts can exist outside of service-learning courses (i.e. one-time community service, voting, etc.). Nevertheless, service-learning programs are a primary vehicle for faculty and institutions to embed civic engagement into the academic setting.

#### **GROWTH OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION.**

Policymakers, educators, administrators, and grant funding agencies (including governmental agencies such as the National Science Foundation; nonprofit agencies such as the Fund for the Improvement of Higher Education, Learn and Serve America; and private foundations such as W. K. Kellogg, Ford Foundation, and Lumina Foundation) are investing in efforts to refocus undergraduate teaching practices to improve student learning and promote college success. Investment in transformed classrooms results in a shift away from the “sage on the stage” model, which reduces students to passive recipients of information, to a more interactive mode of instruction (Commission on Mathematics and Science Education, 2009; Hora, 2012; University of Texas at Austin, 2012a). Academic service-learning is one pedagogical tool used to promote interactive teaching because it engages students by linking course content with real-world solutions in the community. The Council for the Advancement of Academic Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has defined service-learning as:

a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured

opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. (2011, p. 3).

More effective teaching models, like service-learning, can yield multiple benefits for students while also improving the quality of learning for undergraduates.

Service-learning has gained recognition in higher education as a curricular strategy that produces multiple positive outcomes for students. In addition to their academic progress (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997), students in service-learning courses have educationally meaningful community service experiences that enhance personal and civic development during their undergraduate education and beyond (Astin & Sax, 1998, 1999; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Jacoby, 2006; Tinto, 2003). These outcomes can echo the mission retention strategies often employed by four-year public research institutions as a way to ensure that graduates not only embody a rich expertise within a specific discipline, but that they also enter the workforce as civic-minded members of society.

Civic engagement is vital to the future of the United States, and public research universities are the place where many students learn and develop the leadership skills necessary to be productive members within their communities (Cherwitz, 2005; O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). However, higher education institutions vary in their support for service-learning as a means to integrate civic engagement outcomes in academic programs (Furco, 2001). Notably, most of the recent growth in service-learning programs has occurred in colleges and universities that emphasize teaching, such as liberal arts colleges, religiously affiliated universities, and other teaching-focused doctoral-granting institutions (Furco, 2001; Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010). Full integrated adoption of service-learning into academic curriculum has been slower at public research institutions (Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002; Demb & Wade, 2012;

Holland, 1999; O'Meara & Rice, 2005). This is alarming, given that research institutions have an "ethical obligation to contribute to society with more than narrow, theoretical, disciplinary knowledge" (Cherwitz, 2005, p. 48). Furthermore, Gibson (2006) notes:

...research universities, with their significant academic and societal influence, world-class faculty, outstanding students, state-of-the-art research facilities, and considerable financial resources, have the credibility and stature needed to help drive institutional and field-wide change more rapidly and in ways that will ensure deeper and longer-lasting commitment to civic engagement (p. 4).

This illuminates the important gate-keeping role of faculty at public research institutions because of their intimate ties to the academic mission (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011).

Over the past few decades, many scholars have encouraged institutions and faculty to fully integrate service-learning pedagogies by highlighting its benefits in higher education curriculum. In 1982, Derek Bok, former president of Harvard University, asserted, "There is no reason for universities to feel uncomfortable in taking account of society's needs; in fact, they have a clear obligation to do so" (as quoted in Jacoby, 2009, p. 301). In 1994, Ernest Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, called for universities to "respond to the challenges that confront our children, our schools, and our cities, just as the land-grant colleges responded to the needs of agriculture and industry a century ago" (Jacoby, 2009, p. 301). Service-learning is a fundamental approach to help students connect skills and learning through service in the community, preparing them to be proactive citizens in a democratic society including collaborative work and problem solving within diverse groups (Finley,

2011). In turn, education scholars have initiated the current call for institutions to integrate service-learning as a key educational component to help drive the nation's broader economic and social change strategy (see for example published works by Alexander Astin, Robert G. Bringle, Janet Eyler, Dwight E. Giles, Jr., Julie A. Hatcher, Barbara Jacoby, David A. Kolb, and KerryAnn O'Meara).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Quantitative and qualitative research studies have focused on the effects of service-learning on students and positively linked service-learning courses with an increase in students' comprehension of course content, sense of social responsibility, cognitive and cultural development, and academic persistence (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997; Yeh, 2010). Yet, the success of a service-learning program depends on the knowledge, skills, and willingness of faculty members to engage with this type of pedagogy. The examination of service-learning faculty has been identified as a key research agenda item (see for example Demb & Wade, 2012; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997; O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011), but the vast majority of research over the past two decades have almost exclusively focused on quantitatively assessing the intrinsic motivations and institutional barriers for faculty at their initial decision making point (see for example Abes et al., 2002; Demb & Wade, 2009; Demb & Wade, 2012; Smart & Umbach, 2007). Interestingly, some studies include faculty members in the sample who were not familiar with or did not intend to utilize service-learning as pedagogy (see for example Abes et al., 2002). This highlights

a gap and an unexplored area in the literature—the lived experiences of faculty members who succeed at service-learning within the context of a public research institution.

In terms of the percent of budget allocated to salaries, faculty members are an institution's most costly resource (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). Therefore, recruiting and retaining service-learning faculty becomes an important financial investment, particularly to administrators at public research institutions with a civic mission. As such, institutional researchers must be willing to explore faculty teaching experiences as a rich data source in this effort because "service-learning is a course-driven feature of the curriculum" (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p. 227). Lived experiences are an important measure because it allows a researcher to understand *how* professors operate as officers of the academy, role models for students, and exemplars of civic engagement. Without understanding how faculty members' research, teach, and serve within the context of a public research institution, little is known about their professional identity or their level of investment to sustain a university's civic mission.

Prior studies of motivation have found that faculty choose to leverage service-learning primarily from their desire to improve student learning, enhance curriculum, provide service to their community, and encourage students to personally value engagement in the life of their community (Abes, Jackson, and Jones 2002; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007). However, these findings imply that service-learning professors only derive circuitous benefits (i.e. prioritizing students and community needs). O'Meara, Sandmann, et al. (2011) have challenged this notion, suggesting future research should center more on understanding the impact of service-learning on "faculty members as

professional learners and partners” (p. 85). Indeed, these scholars have called for deeper analysis by stating that future research should critically “examine the factors that influence faculty members’ own civic commitments, practices of engagement, and outcomes rather than viewing them as a means through which to achieve student outcomes” (p. 85). By ignoring faculty experiences and identities, researchers have neglected to provide a complete picture of the reciprocal learning and benefits for all stakeholders.

Another shortcoming of the extant literature is the failure to qualitatively examine faculty service-learning experiences at a research institution where the campus mission and/or university leadership have articulated community engagement as a priority. Just as studies of student engagement in classrooms (e.g. National Survey of Student Engagement) have benefitted faculty “by giving them tools to improve their practice, so, too, will this greater attention on the engaged faculty reap significant benefits for both the students and community partners” (O’Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011, p. 85). Research that follows faculty members’ experiences can help to fill a void in current literature and has the potential to inform higher education policies and practice around the role faculty play as professional learners and engaged scholars.

### **Purpose of Study**

Service-learning faculty are particularly interesting to study at a public research institution because they are well-positioned to advance new forms of scholarship to link the intellectual assets at higher education institutions to solving public problems (Campus

Compact, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the lived experiences and identities of faculty members who choose to teach utilizing service-learning methodologies at The University of Texas at Austin— a four-year public research-intensive institution where community engagement is a stated priority (as further evidenced in Chapter 3) and is part of the institution’s mission to “foster dynamic community-university partnerships designed to transform lives” (Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, 2012) and to leverage teaching and research to “solve society’s issues” (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b). As such, this study was guided by three research questions:

1. How do faculty members who teach recognized service-learning courses at The University of Texas at Austin describe their experiences implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach?
2. How do faculty members describe the influence of service-learning on their professional and personal identities?
3. How do faculty members explain how service-learning connects, if at all, to the context of their larger scholarship/practice agenda?

### **Significance of Study**

There is ongoing interest from institutions of higher education to assess how service-learning may serve a mechanism for promoting civic engagement among students and faculty while reaching out to communities in need (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Therefore, I seek to expand existing literature (see for example Abes et al., 2002,



O'Meara & Rice, 2005; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007) to introduce an in-depth account of faculty members' lived experiences, and to explore how this type of community engagement may shape faculty members' professional identities at a public research institution. Themes identified through this study may support or prompt changes to institutional hiring practices, professional development programs for faculty, and mentorship programs for faculty. This type of research is significant for institutions with stated priorities for community engagement and civic engagement.

### **Brief Overview of Methodology**

This study utilized a qualitative methodology with a phenomenological approach. The purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of a universal essence (a “grasp of the very nature of the thing,” van Manen, 1990, p. 177 as cited in Creswell, 2013). According to Moustakas (1994), the research questions in a phenomenological study should guide the researcher to dive deep into the lived experience of participants not only to describe “what” they have experienced, but also “how” they experienced it. The primary focus of phenomenology is to “be able to put behavior in context” to distill meaning and understanding from participants (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). The desire to explore how faculty members understand and make meaning of their experience is the principal reason why a phenomenological approach was appropriate for this research study.

According to Creswell (2013), the most important aspect of participant selection for a phenomenological study is the identification of individuals who have experienced

the phenomenon and who are able to describe their conscious experience. Therefore, participants were recruited for this research study through the use of purposeful criterion sampling (Creswell, 2013) and based on their familiarity with the phenomenon under study—service-learning. The criteria for selecting participants included faculty who were employed full-time at The University of Texas at Austin and who taught a service-learning course within the past 12 months from the start of this study (August 2013).

In order to identify potential study participants, I examined a list of faculty members who were identified by the institution’s service-learning office, the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement (LCCE). I excluded adjunct instructors from the LCCE list and sent an email invitation to 14 full-time faculty (both tenured and non-tenured track) to participate in the study. The invitation email defined service-learning (from by Bringle & Hatcher, 1996) to ensure that a professor’s pedagogy aligned with the definition associated with this study. It was especially important for the integrity of this study to strictly define the phenomenon of service-learning, rather than leaving it up to a faculty member to interpret what constitutes collaboration with a community partner: “for example, one faculty member may view the stem cell research as addressing community needs, while another might consider only research that is carried out in collaboration with a local community organization as such” (Vogelgesang et al., 2010, p. 443). Of the fourteen invited faculty, nine professors responded and agreed to participate in the full study.

I adapted the qualitative interview methodology from Seidman’s (2006) approach by having participants engage in two semi-structured phenomenological interviews.

Additional sources of data came from relevant documents such as a faculty member's syllabi, curriculum vitae, and any document that may reference their service-learning experiences (e.g. award nominations, opinion editorials, published research articles, feature stories, etc.).

The impetus for this dissertation study came from a pilot study I conducted during the spring 2013 semester. The purpose of the pilot study was to explore the research question, "What is the lived experience of faculty members who engage in service-learning at the University of Texas at Austin?" (Pritchett, 2013). In the pilot study, I interviewed three faculty participants from different disciplines, to test a preliminary interview protocol and to assess the viability of Demb and Wade's (2012) faculty engagement model as a theoretical construct. For this full dissertation study, I received permission from the Institutional Review Board to perform a secondary analysis of the data collected from the pilot study (Heaton, 1998) in addition to interviewing seven new participants.

To increase the study's validity, I used several methods for data collection. The primary data source consisted of two rounds of in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 2006). The first round primarily investigated faculty members' career history, service-learning pedagogical approaches, and experiences teaching through service-learning. The second round explored how faculty members' identities and scholarship may be influenced as a result of their community engagement efforts and service-learning pedagogy. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Upon completion of each interview, I wrote field notes to capture observations of body

language, environment cues, or additional feelings and meaning units that may have been implied rather than made explicit in the transcripts. The written text of the transcripts and field notes allow for a hermeneutical coding method to find, describe, and begin generating preliminary themes around faculty members' lived experiences with service-learning (Creswell, 2013).

Prior research has demonstrated that professors were often thwarted from utilizing a service-learning approach due to the lack institutional support or a reward system (Bringle, Hatcher & Games, 1997; Holland, 1999; O'Meara & Rice, 2005). The extant literature fails to discuss the experiences of faculty who engage in service-learning at an institution where community engagement has been articulated as a priority and where professors are rewarded for their successful integration of service-learning. Therefore, UT Austin is a unique study site because the institutional leaders have attempted to address these barriers in several ways, including: 1) the incorporation of service into its core mission (University of Texas at Austin, 2013c), 2) the inclusion of service-learning classes into the tenure and promotion review criteria (University of Texas at Austin, 2012b), and 3) through its establishment of a campus-wide division expressly created to foster mutually beneficial relationships between the university and the community through service (Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to highlight the role of service-learning faculty by understanding their lived experiences at a four-year public research university that "foster[s] dynamic community-university partnerships" designed to leverage teaching and research to "solve society's issues" (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b).

## **Limitations and Delimitations**

Limitations refer to the restrictions of the research design or methodology, and delimitations refer to the boundaries that the researcher strategically sets for study (Patton, 2002). One of these strengths of this qualitative study is the fact that key findings will be used to better inform the higher education community about the experiences of service-learning faculty at an institution with high research activity and a civic commitment. However, an inherent limitation of the research design and methodology is that service-learning faculty were not disaggregated by their status (tenured versus non-tenured track) nor by their discipline for this study. While I intended to recruit a diverse sample regarding participant demographics and discipline of study, there was disproportionate representation of some demographic categories due to the availability of faculty members (refer to Table 4.1).

The delimitations for this study were purposefully narrowed to fill a gap in literature and to provide findings to the LCCE for the purpose of creating more robust data-driven programs to support faculty and graduate students in service-learning and curricular community engagement efforts. Therefore, the scope of this study was purposefully narrowed to UT-Austin, so faculty voices and their lived experiences specific to this institution would inform findings to support future institutional professional development programming. Another purposeful delimitation was my decision to restrict participant sampling to those who engaged in academic service-learning, instead of including faculty who participated in broader community or civic

engagement efforts. Although it turned out that all nine faculty participants were engaged in various types of community-engaged learning or research, this study was focused only on gleaning service-learning experiences. The study limitations and delimitations are further explored in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6.

### **Key Terms Defined**

- *Civic Engagement*: “Civic engagement involves participation and contribution to civic and public life through voting, staying politically informed, and engaging in community service. Civic engagement is important to service-learning because when service-learning programs address specific knowledge and skills, civic development is made explicit to students as a core learning outcome” (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2013).
- *Co-curricular service, volunteering, or community service*: Co-curricular or community service is volunteering performed by students outside the curriculum taught in a credit-bearing course. “In general, co-curricular service, community service, and volunteering are essential to service-learning, but are not synonymous with it” (Crews, p.12). Often, these experiences are limited to one-time service opportunities that do not offer a direct link to a faculty-led course or academic program.
- *Community*: Community is a broad term used to reference local neighborhoods, the state, the nation, and the global community. The human and community needs

that service-learning addresses are those needs that are defined by the community (Jacoby, 1996).

- *Community-based research:* Community-based research is “scholarship that involves collaboration with community members to address community needs. Community research is applied research and may include student involvement” (Demb & Wade, 2012, p. 345).
- *Community engagement:* Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities. “The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good” (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.).
- *Community-engaged scholarship:* Community engaged scholarship is predicated on the idea that major advances in knowledge tend to occur when human beings consciously work to solve the central problems confronting their society (Campus Compact, 2013). At the faculty level, engaged scholarship is a vehicle through which faculty can participate in “academically relevant work that simultaneously fulfills the campus mission and goals, as well as community needs” (Sandmann, 2003, p. 4). There are various ways faculty can integrate community engaged

- scholarship into their professional portfolio (e.g. teaching a service-learning course, leading a community-based research project, etc.).
- *Community partner:* A community partner may be a governmental agency, non-profit organization, or associated citizen group who serves community needs and partners with service-learning faculty to help meet those needs.
  - *Epistemology:* “A pedagogy must assume an epistemology. That is, a method of teaching, as a method of increasing knowledge, requires an account of what knowledge is and how it is acquired and tested” (Richman, 1996, p. 5).
  - *Experiential learning:* Experiential learning is an all-encompassing term that means that learning happens through discovery, exploration, or active participation. It is often attributed to scholars such as Dewey (1933) or Kolb (1984). Experiential education is any kind of active education that takes place outside the classroom and can encompass various activities such as internships, practicum, cooperative education programs, job shadowing experiences, community-based learning, and service-learning.
  - *Faculty:* For the purpose of this study, the term “faculty” refers to full-time employed instructors at an institution of higher education, and may include both tenured and non-tenured track faculty.
  - *Pedagogy:* The methods used to instruct and to teach. Service-learning is one pedagogical model that intentionally integrates academic learning and relevant community service (Rhoads, 1998).



- *Professional service:* Professional service for faculty members can be described as engagement when: (a) a service based on disciplinary expertise is extended to the community (e.g., perform a needs assessment), or (b) when a faculty member uses his/her disciplinary expertise to collaborate with the community and address or respond to societal needs, problems, issues, interests, or concerns (Demb & Wade, 2012).
- *Reciprocity:* Reciprocity is an essential component of service-learning because it calls for a sense of mutual respect and responsibility between faculty, students, and community partners. It means that teaching and learning occur in both directions; therefore, it “challenges the academy’s role as expert arriving at the doorstep of a community with plan in hand to fix problems or rescue the community without equal input and the creation of authentic community partnerships” (Gerstenblatt, 2012, p. 17).
- *Reflection:* “Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (Dewey, 1910, p. 6). Through reflection activities, students analyze their service-learning experiences and connect it to course content while considering future implications for changes in earlier knowledge.
- *Service-learning:* Service-learning (also called academic service-learning) is “a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an

organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Unlike extracurricular voluntary service, service-learning is a course-based service experience that produces the best outcomes when meaningful service activities are related to course material through reflection activities such as directed writings, small group discussions, and class presentation. Unlike practice and internships, the experiential activity in a service-learning course is not necessarily skill-based within the context of professional education” (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p. 222).

- *Social change*: “Social change or 'transformation' models typically focus on process: building relationships among or within stakeholder groups, and creating a learning environment that continually peels away the layers of the onion called 'root causes.' Practice education or action, emerges over time out of the relationships or most current understanding of root causes” (Morton, 1995, p. 22).
- *Transformative learning*: “Transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action“ (Mezirow, 2000, p.8).

## **Organization of Study**

This dissertation is organized into six distinct chapters. This first chapter, which began with background information on service-learning, provided an overview of the problem, the purpose, and significance of the study. It also offered a brief description of the methodology that will be implemented. The second chapter will provide an exhaustive review of the literature and will cover topics such as the history of service-learning, definition and purpose of service-learning, impacts and outcomes for faculty, students and the community, and the theoretical frameworks to support the study. The third chapter will discuss the methodology, including research design, site and participation selection, data collection and analysis, limitations and delimitations of the study. Collectively, these chapters form the foundation for the research study and detail the qualitative methodology. The second half of the dissertation focuses on the research findings. Chapter four will describe the study participants and how they discovered service-learning as a pedagogical approach. Chapter five will answer the three guiding research questions based on salient themes culled from in-depth interviews and collected documents. Chapter six concludes the study by discussing implications of the findings related to the theoretical frameworks, future research, and higher education policies and practices.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences and identities of service-learning faculty at UT Austin. This chapter is organized into six sections and provides context for the study through a review of existing research literature. First, the chapter begins by defining service-learning. This section frames the current rhetoric and scholarly need for the timeliness of research around service-learning. The second portion of this chapter is dedicated to the history roots of service learning—including influential scholars and the evolution of the pedagogy within higher education. Next, the literature review briefly covers research findings related to students and community partners in order to describe their role as a stakeholder in the service-learning process. The fourth section gets to the heart of the study by exploring the multiple facets of faculty involvement with service-learning, particularly focusing on factors that have emerged from the motivational studies conducted over the past two decades. After exploring all of these factors, the fifth section defines persistent gaps in service-learning faculty literature. The final section of this chapter reviews two theoretical constructs that will help to guide the research study. Combined, these six sections help to demonstrate the need for qualitative research focused on understanding identities and experiences of service-learning faculty in order to better understand how they may play a vital role in helping to meet the mission of a public research university.

## **Defining Service-Learning**

Academic service-learning is often folded into the broader definition of civic or community engagement, yet it is a specific pedagogical technique that stands on its own merits (Gibson, 2006). Other types of civic engagement activities may include a one-time community volunteer program, practicum, or internship; however, this literature review is delimited to focus on service-learning and culls through the literature to identify service-learning as a specific form of engaged scholarship.

Practitioners and academics have struggled with how to define service-learning and to explain how it is different from community service or civic engagement (Holland, 1999; see also Gonsalves, 2008; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). The broadest definition is the incorporation of meaningful community service for the purpose of student learning, either through curricular or co-curricular efforts. From this basic definition there are many critical approaches that reflect different disciplinary orientations or institutional missions.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (2011) is a consortium of professional associations with the mission to develop and promulgate standards for the improvement of programs that enhance student learning while promoting good citizenship. The Council (CAS) offered a broad, practitioner-based definition for service learning by describing it as “a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and

development” (p. 3). CAS also noted that different institutions choose different written forms of the phrase service-learning—mainly including or excluding the hyphen between the two words. CAS (2011) substantiated use of the hyphen because it “symbolizes the symbiotic relationship between the service and the learning” (p. 3). Consistent with CAS’s written use of the term, I have chosen to maintain the hyphen throughout this research endeavor to demonstrate the link between service and learning in curricular programs.

The CAS definition provides a service-learning definition from the perspective of a professional association. To supplement the CAS definition, I also follow an academic definition of service-learning provided by Bringle and Hatcher (1995, p. 112) and frequently cited in the research literature:

...course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

These two definitions highlight distinct aspects of academic service-learning, helping to illustrate its importance as a unique approach to community engaged scholarship.

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2013) provided a detailed example of how to delineate the practical differences between one-time service, classroom learning, and integrated service-learning. For instance, if students collected trash out of an urban stream, they would be volunteers to the community through their one-time service. If students sat in a science lab to analyze water samples under a microscope, it

would be considered classroom learning. However, if students from a science class collected trash from an urban stream, analyzed their findings to determine the possible sources of pollution, and shared the results with residents of the neighborhood, they would be engaging in an integrated service-learning class. Together, the connection between course content, teaching, learning, and meaningful community service constitute service-learning.

Another way service-learning differs from volunteerism is through the integral use of two fundamental concepts—reflection and reciprocity (Jacoby, 1996). Hatcher and Bringle (1997) defined reflection as “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives” (p. 153). CAS further describes the importance of reflection by presuming that a service experience, in and of itself, does not necessarily produce learning; rather, faculty must foster learning and development through consideration of learning goals in relation to course material. In addition to domain-specific knowledge outcomes, faculty may also use reflection activities to consider civic, ethical, moral, cross-cultural, or spiritual learning goals as well.

Reciprocity requires a mutually beneficial relationship for the community, the students, and the faculty member as each commit to learning. Through reciprocity, students and communities engage in mutually beneficial learning experiences while students develop a greater sense of belonging and responsibility as members of the larger community (CAS, 2011). The core concepts of reflection and reciprocity eschew a charity model of service, and instead, focus on students engaging in service *with* others rather than *for* others as a model of learning (CAS, 2011).

## **Historical Context of Service-Learning**

This section of the chapter will include three subsections to develop understanding of the historical and philosophical roots of service-learning, beginning with a discussion of three influential scholars: John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and David Kolb. The second subsection will describe the roots of service-learning in higher education to illustrate how the purpose of higher education has aligned with the United States' political and societal needs—dating back to the 1862 passage of the Morrill Act to establish land grant institutions. The last subsection concludes with a look at the present-day service learning movement as a reflection of efforts made over the past decade to link higher education institutional resources with addressing societal problems.

### **INFLUENTIAL SCHOLARS.**

More than any other figure, John Dewey has been cast as the father of service-learning because his philosophy was both a precursor to and exemplar for the theory and practice of service-learning (Deans, 1999; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Hatcher, 1998; Jacoby, 1996). Paulo Freire, born in Brazil, has often been called the Latin John Dewey (Deans, 1999), as his philosophies were similar to Dewey. Freire noted the crucial importance of reflection, but due to his impoverished background he emphasized the role of service-learning on creating a more socially just society. This section also includes information on David Kolb as an influential scholar in experiential learning approaches.

**John Dewey (1859-1952).** John Dewey was a philosopher, psychologist, educator, and political activist (Deans, 1999). According to service-learning scholars



Giles and Eyler (1994), “For Dewey, pedagogy and epistemology were related—his theory of knowledge was related to and derived from his notions of citizenship and democracy” (p.78). Through his ethical writings, Dewey emphasized the important role of education in sustaining democracy and capitalistic ideas in the United States. These ideals gave service-learning roots in civic engagement as students connect their ability to further democratic ideals. Another important contribution to service-learning was Dewey’s assertion that thinking and experience were inseparable from one another. As such, he touted a student-centered educational theory of combining reflection with action to connect experiences with the production of knowledge.

According to Erlich (cited in Jacoby, 1996), Dewey engaged in a debate about the nature of education with Robert Maynard Hutchins just before the start of World War II. Hutchins wanted to transform undergraduate education around a canon of "Great Books" as he maintained that a study of the major texts written by Western intellectuals would provide guidance for all aspects of human life. On the other side, Dewey argued that reliance on “the notion of fixed truths” (p. xi) was dangerous and contrary to democratic principles. Dewey also maintained that theoretical study should not be separated from practical study or from great social problems because education should be a process to assist in defining society (Deans, 1999). Erlich further contended that until the 1970s higher education leaders believed that Hutchins won the argument over Dewey; however, support for Dewey's philosophy has grown as demonstrated by the various pedagogies that link students’ active learning with civic participation and engagement (Deans, 1999; Jacoby, 1996).

Eyler and Giles (1999) asserted that Dewey's theoretical writings defined the important role of reflection by describing it as "the hyphen in service-learning." Throughout his writings in both philosophy and education, Dewey insisted that mere activity did not constitute an educational experience (Deans, 1999). Instead, he promoted an active and participatory theory of learning with reflexive inquiry designed to assess how an experience is processed to produce knowledge and learning. Dewey proposed that reflection included five phases:

- 1) perplexity, confusion, doubt in response to a situation whose character is yet to be determined;
- 2) a conjectural anticipation, tentative interpretation of the given elements;
- 3) a careful survey of all attainable consideration which will define and clarify the problem at hand;
- 4) a consequent elaboration of the tentative hypothesis to make it more precise and more consistent;
- 5) the development of a firmer hypothesis upon which to act, as well as remaining open to further testing and revision (as cited in Dean, 1999).

The inextricable link between academic service-learning pedagogy and reflection activities stems directly from Dewey so that students working in the community on real life complex problems have a way to process it as an educational experience.

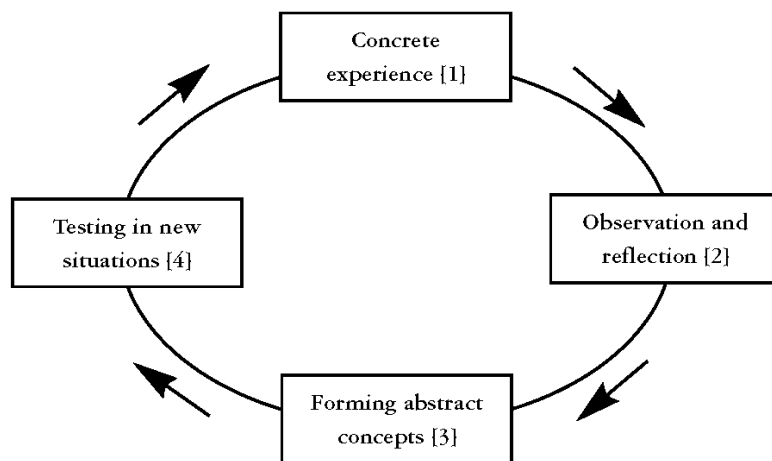
**Paulo Freire (1921-1997).** Freire was a Brazilian educator and philosopher who drew most of his theoretical perspectives from the poverty he experienced, particularly how hunger impeded his learning and caused him to fall behind in school (Gerstenblatt, 2012). Freire's writings criticized the traditional role of education and politics because it formally emphasized the dominant political regime and played a part of the larger societal milieu (Deans, 1999). Yet, Freire contended that education could encourage democratic participation by giving students a voice and social agency to actively focus on

social and economic transformation by understanding, reforming, and revitalizing systems of oppression. Through this, Freire connected service-learning pedagogies as a way to reveal social injustices and to call students to action against the culture of oppression.

Another one of Freire's major contributions to service-learning literature was the idea that experiential education provided an opportunity for students to engage in inductive reasoning—questioning traditional content-driven, deductive modes of teaching (Deans, 1999). Freire is best known for his attack on what he called the banking concept of education where he asserted that the traditional lecture-style teaching reduced students to passive “banks” into which the teacher “deposits” information (Jacoby, 1996). This traditional model sets the teacher as the narrator, turning students into empty vessels to be filled with content that is alienated from reality (Deans, 1999; Gonsalves, 2008). Instead, Freire sought to promote education as a revolutionary process where knowledge emerged as the invention and re-invention of a restless, impatient, continuing, and hopeful inquiry (Deans, 1999). He built upon Dewey's concept of reflection by calling students to engage in critical consciousness, thereby, restructuring the relationship between a teacher and his or her students. As such, Freire laid the foundation for critical pedagogy where students become active participants in their learning and counteract traditional modes of learning (Jacoby, 1996).

**David Kolb (1939).** In 1984, David Kolb developed an experiential learning theory (ELT) defined as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and

transforming experience" (Kolb 1984, p. 41). Kolb's theory has been widely used by practitioners, professors, and researchers because service-learning has its roots in experiential education—the idea of learning by doing (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). Kolb conceptualized the ELT, which was originally based on Dewey's conception of reflective inquiry (Deans, 1999; Gonsalves, 2008; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). The ELT model consists of a four-step learning process: 1) concrete experiences; 2) observation and reflection; 3) forming abstract concepts; and 4) testing new situations through active experimentation (see Figure 2.1).



*Figure 2.1* Kolb's experiential learning theory (ELT). This figure was retrieved from Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning experience as a source of learning and development*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Jacoby (1996) asserted that a person might enter Kolb's cycle at any point; however, a student engaged in service-learning would begin with a concrete experience and then embark on a period of reflection that would lead to analyzing their observations

from the experience. Students would then reflect on the implications that arise from their observations and begin to integrate this newfound understanding with existing abstract concepts and knowledge. Most service-learning students would find that the acts of service combined with their classroom instruction deepened their understanding of the world and the root causes of larger societal and systemic issues. In the fourth step of the model, Jacoby states that students begin to see ways they can further test these concepts in different situations. “This experimentation leads the learner to begin the cycle again and again” (p. 10). This cycle reinforces the powerful nature of an experiential learning technique such as service-learning.

#### **HISTORICAL ROOTS OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION.**

The evolving role of higher education has been directly connected to the historic political, social, and economic movements in the United States over the past century. Universities and colleges have served as backbone to the country by providing domestic stability through promotion of democratic ideals and civic education, while at the same time helping to keep the nation globally competitive through technological and scientific advancements. A brief review of some key milestones in American history follows to illustrate how the roots of service-learning in higher education are intimately tied with the nation’s wellbeing.

While the term service-learning gained popularity in the 1990s, the scholarship and pedagogical methods of incorporating meaningful service into academic programs is actually much older than that (Speck & Hoppe, 2004). Service-learning is one form of experiential education, and this concept was rooted in the land grant movement of the

1860s. The Morrill Land Grant Act signed by President Lincoln in 1862 during the Civil War, and the second Morrill Act in 1890 to establish research institutions for African Americans, were the first official legislative documents to link higher education to the nation's agricultural, technological, industrial, and economic revolutions (Jacoby, 1996). Land grant colleges and universities were purposefully designed to provide a range of practical educational opportunities to all economic and social classes, and promoted service and civic engagement as part of the mission of education. The founding purpose of land-grant universities was service to society.

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act as the culmination of five years of debate over how agricultural extension work should be organized. The Act created the Cooperative Extension Service which funded universities and colleges to develop and share technologies in agriculture, such as the uses of solar energy (Titlebaum, Williamson, Daprano, Baer, & Brahleer, 2004). This measure furthered the public-oriented mission of land-grant colleges by directing faculty members and students to share their teaching and research with the community through public demonstrations, publications, and printing and distribution.

The 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s were peppered with war, recession, global competitiveness issues, and civil rights movements that affected higher education and its ability to meet its civic mission. In response to an influx of veterans return home from World War II, Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). This law provided a range of benefits for returning veterans including cash payments of tuition and living expenses to

attend college or vocational education. By the end of the program in 1956, roughly 2.2 million veterans had used the G.I. Bill education benefits to attend colleges or universities, and an additional 6.6 million used these benefits for some kind of training program (Titlebaum, et al., 2004). While the G.I. Bill did not include provisions for veterans to participate in community engagement activities, such as service-learning, it provided yet another clear link between the connection of civic duty and higher education.

The start of the Cold War in the 1950s questioned the United States' position as a world superpower. The first large-scale federal student loan program was born in response to the launch of the Soviet Union satellite, Sputnik on October 4, 1957. Sputnik caught the world's attention and prompted the U.S. federal government to take swift political, technological, and scientific action. Fearful that the United States was lagging in science and technical education, President Eisenhower proposed spending \$1.6 billion to improve education. To help ensure that highly trained individuals would be available to help America compete with the Soviet Union in scientific and technical fields, the federal government provided support for loans to college students, the improvement of science, mathematics, and foreign language instruction, graduate fellowships, and vocational-technical training (U. S. Department of Education, 2011). While this shift in focus prompted higher education institutions to prioritize science and technological research, the undercurrent of connecting education for the public good was not lost. Indeed, efforts to strengthen the United States' competitive edge are evident in public and

private higher education funding today because “science and technology have great potential to improve lives around the world” (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2012).

The anti-poverty and civil rights laws of the 1960s and 1970s further connected the importance of education, community service, and social justice. In an effort to continue to maintain allies abroad, President Kennedy established the Peace Corps in 1961. Kennedy planned to promote world peace and friendship by connecting college-educated men and women of the United States to provide peaceful service to the poorest areas of countries, and to help promote a better understanding of the American people (Titlebaum, et al., 2004). President Kennedy had a vision to also activate young adult volunteer corps domestically to help strengthen America’s socio-economic wellbeing. Following Kennedy’s untimely death, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a "war on poverty" and signed the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fulfill President Kennedy’s vision (Titlebaum, et al., 2004). This Act created the Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA) which gave college students the opportunity to provide services and programs to address poverty in the United States, addressing the needs of depressed areas such as of the Appalachian region and migrant worker camps in California (Titlebaum, et al., 2004).

In the 1980s and early 1990s, higher education institutions were criticized for failing to extend their rich resources to address public concerns around issues such as education, the environment, or economic development (O’Meara, Sandmann et al., 2011). Soon after, the actual term “service-learning” became popular, often credited to Ernest Boyer’s influential publication, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the*



*Professoriate*. Boyer (1996) believed universities and colleges “were one of the greatest hopes for intellectual and civic progress in this country” and that “the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call scholarship of engagement” (p. 11). The subsequent surge in community and university partnerships helped to link teaching and research with local and national problems, resulting in mutually beneficial relationships between faculty members, their students, and community partners.

The events on September 11, 2001 changed the face of America forever. Terrorist attacks brought new concepts into the American vernacular, essentially spurring an overnight public demand for experts in science, technology, engineering, and foreign languages such as Farsi, Arabic, and Mandarin. Student scholars and expert faculty members were called on for service to the United States in an effort to respond to the domestic crisis. At the same time, college campuses saw an immediate increase in students' political interest and civic participation, evidenced by the increase in student-supported blood drives, political rallies, and honorary days of service to others and strengthening of American communities (Dote, Cramer, Dietz, & Grimm, 2006).

Looking back, the core purpose of higher education has been directly connected to the historic political, social, and economic movements in the United States over the past century. While the specific pedagogy of service-learning has not always been a part of higher education rhetoric, the promotion of democratic, civic, political, and economic

wellbeing as a strength to the United States has not wavered as a core mission of American colleges and research universities.

#### **SERVICE-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY.**

Today, service-learning has gained recognition in higher education as a curricular strategy that produces multiple positive outcomes for students. In addition to their academic progress (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997), students in service-learning courses have educationally meaningful community service experiences that enhance personal and civic development during their undergraduate education and beyond (Astin & Sax, 1998; Astin & Sax, 1999; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Jacoby, 2006; Tinto, 2003). Yet, some higher education institutions, in particular public research institutions, are slower to integrate service-learning as part of its core to address areas of research, teaching, and service (Hikins & Cherwitz, 2010; Hora, 2012).

In 1997, Astin conducted research on the public pronouncements American colleges and universities make in their mission statements and catalogs and found that very few mention private economic benefits or international competitiveness. Instead, most mission statements supported “developing character”, “promoting responsible citizenship”, and “preparing students to serve society” (p. 210). These universities and colleges displayed some level of commitment to service as an integral part of their mission statements. In many ways, Astin (1997) asserted that these lofty statements mirrored Dewey’s conception of the proper role of education in society. However, according to Astin (1997), most institutions’ rhetoric exceeded their performance when it

came to institutionalizing and supporting tangible efforts to reach their goals—namely, service-learning.

Writing for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Elrich (2013) contended that service-learning can be a powerful force in undergraduate education because it helps faculty members connect academic study with community service through structured reflection. Elrich asserted that this type of learning is deeper, longer lasting, and more adaptable to new situations and circumstances. However, institutions, faculty members, and scholars must continue to tie their service-learning efforts to measured outcomes in order to fulfill their mission of graduating responsible, engaged leaders. Cherwitz (2005), a former dean and tenured professor at The University of Texas at Austin, specifically called public research institutions to redefine the meaning of service by not allowing it to take a “back seat to research and teaching” (p. 48). Instead, Cherwitz (2005) stated that public research institutions have an obligation, and are in the best position, to infuse service with academic engagement across disciplines to produce solutions to society’s most vexing problems. The next two sections of this chapter will examine existing research findings that highlight specific outcomes and impacts for the three key stakeholders involved in service-learning—students community partners, and faculty members.

## **Service-Learning for Students and Community Partners**

### **BACKGROUND.**

The purpose of service-learning is to enable colleges and universities to meet twin goals of student learning and development while also making unique contributions to addressing community, national, and global needs (CAS, 2011). According to Altman (1996), “the purpose of service-learning is to promote acquisition of socially-responsive knowledge” (p. 374) by “linking the curriculum to community needs and engaging students in direct, academically based problem solving on social issues” (p. 74). Altman’s (1996) emphasis is placed on educating the student to wider societal problems through engagement outside the classroom to prepare students as participants and citizens in a democratic society. However, students are not the only members of the university that benefit from engaging with communities. Service-learning has the capacity to “promote institutional citizenship” (Bringle, Games, Richard, & Malloy, Edward, 1999) with the participation of faculty and administration in developing mutually beneficial relationships between a campus and surrounding communities. The following sections take a deeper look at how service-learning impacts various outcomes for the three important stakeholders: students, faculty, and the community.

Although this study focuses specifically on faculty members, academic service-learning cannot happen without the participation of the other two stakeholders—students and community partners. Before taking a deep look at faculty-centered literature, this section provides a brief overview of students and community partners.

#### **PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES OF SERVICE-LEARNING FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS.**

Pedagogical research has indicated that students learn and develop at higher rates just from the simple act of interacting with others in the community (Rhoads, 1998). In

particular, quantitative and qualitative research has positively linked service-learning courses with an increase in students' comprehension of course content; understanding of the issues underlying social problems; sense of social responsibility; and cognitive and cultural development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). Research also reported that service-learning students had higher grade point averages than non service-learning students (Gray, Ondaatje, Fricker, Geschwind, Goldman, Kaganoff, Robyn, Sundt, Vogelgesang, & Klein, 1998), and students showed a greater increase critical problem solving skills (Lisman, 1998). Astin and Sax (1998) concluded the more time devoted to service the more positive the effect on students.

Further quantitative research has explored the relationship between service-learning participation and college persistence, concluding that service-learning programs promote academic persistence and retention (Yeh, 2010; see also Tinto, 2003; Vogelgesang, Ikeda, Gilmartin, & Keup, 2002). More recent, Yeh (2010) suggested service-learning programs had a positive effect on low-income, first-generation college students because the "hands-on" learning model often satisfied these students' differing educational needs. Overall, existing literature has provided substantial support to demonstrate the impact of service-learning opportunities on college students as they gain leadership skills and knowledge of community and societal issues—lessons that follow students into their professional and civic lives (Campus Compact, 2012).

#### **PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES OF SERVICE-LEARNING FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS.**

Gray et al. (1998) conducted a study of 847 community organizations that participated in service-learning with faculty and students. Though the agencies reported

challenges of working with campus service-learning efforts (e.g. volunteer management, students' expectations, faculty members' and administrators' lack of understanding of non-profit operations, etc.), 90 percent of respondents indicated that the benefits of working with student volunteers far outweighed the costs. As a follow-up, Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, and Kerrigan (1996) conducted a comprehensive case study of four service-learning classes and used qualitative and quantitative methods to assess community partners' experiences. Their research revealed some of the major benefits to community partners included an increased capacity to deliver services to clients; new energy and fresh approaches to solving problems; access to resources; and economic and societal benefits.

Sandy and Holland's (2006) recent qualitative study included 99 community agencies that worked with service-learning students at eight California campuses. Their findings revealed community partners' were pleased with their ability to convey their mission through student volunteers. Moreover, agencies documented their ability to create new projects with increased human resource capacity. Sandy and Holland also found that community partners' dedication to student learning was the primary reason for their participation with service-learning classes. Through improved town-gown relationships, colleges and communities gain additional learning opportunities to meet human and societal needs (CAS, 2011).

As critically important as community partners' engagement with service-learning, this study focused expressly on the interaction of faculty and service-learning. Therefore,

the next part of the literature review robustly examines the role of higher education faculty in choosing to incorporate service-learning into their curriculum.

### **Full Review of Service-Learning and Faculty**

Community engagement efforts, including service-learning classes, are one of the major innovations that have occurred in higher education over the last 20 years (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). Faculty members are at the center of this innovation because of their intimate ties to the academic mission. This part of the literature review is divided into three major subsections and seeks to examine research that has focused specifically on faculty members. The first section describes various factors that have been proven to influence faculty members' initial decision to participate in service-learning. The second subsection will discuss the impacts and outcomes of service-learning on faculty members, describing how past research portrays benefits afforded to professors in the field. Lastly, this section concludes by expressly listing out major gaps in faculty service-learning literature that have yet to be addressed by academic research.

#### **FACTORS RELATED TO FACULTY PARTICIPATION.**

When considering the entire body of service-learning literature, the majority of it has focused on student learning outcomes and benefits afforded to community partners who participate (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). However, academic service-learning cannot happen without full engagement from a faculty member willing to align course content with meaningful community service. Therefore, the small fraction of research on faculty and service-learning over the past ten years has been focused on large-scale,

multi-institutional quantitative surveys (see for example Abes et al., 2002; Demb & Wade, 2009; Demb & Wade, 2012; Smart & Umbach, 2007) to identify and isolate factors that predict what initially motivated or deterred faculty members from service-learning. This subsection will detail the most influential factors that researchers have identified, including: 1) demographic and personal characteristics, 2) institutional factors (further divided by issues of leadership and mission, resources and funding, tenure and promotion guidelines, academic departmental context, and discipline-fit), 3) faculty socialization issues, and 4) pedagogical and epistemological approaches.

### **Demographics and personal characteristics.**

Abes et al. (2002) surveyed 500 faculty members (including those who do and do not use service-learning as a pedagogy) and found a statistically significant difference for three demographic variables that indicated an increase in the likelihood of using service learning: gender, academic discipline, and tenure status. While they found that women were more likely to participate in engagement activities, men were more heavily involved in community-based research (another form of engaged scholarship). Faculty members from science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM disciplines) were less likely to participate in service-learning by citing a lack of relevance to their field. In addition, non-tenured faculty participated much more heavily in service-learning than tenured faculty (Abes et al., 2002).

Vogelgesang et al. (2010) found that women and faculty of color had a statistically significant stronger disposition toward service-learning and were more likely to engage in community-service-related behaviors. This study indicated that women



were substantially more likely than men (53 percent of all women versus 45 percent of men) to use their scholarship to address community needs. Vogelgesang et al. (2009) also suggested that the gap might be due to the greater proportion of women professors in applied fields such as education, health sciences, nursing, and social work where academic service-learning is more prevalent. Yet, the study remained unclear as to whether the gender difference could be attributed specifically to predispositions and intrinsic motivations, to the culture of individual departments, or to both (Vogelgesang et al., 2009).

Holland (1999) conducted a quantitative survey of faculty members (both service-learning and non service-learning) at 32 institutions. She found that faculty members who engaged in academic service-learning were strongly influenced by personal, individual, and collective professional objectives and that the different factors were of greater importance to faculty as varied by their position or discipline. Holland's results demonstrated that faculty who were more willing to engage in service-learning also reported a personal connection to social activism, family values, spiritual beliefs, and cultural experiences.

Recent research studies (McKay & Rozee, 2004; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Schnaubelt, & Statham, 2007; Smart & Umbach, 2007; Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010) have affirmed Holland's (1999) research findings showing faculty are motivated to create academic service-learning courses because of intrinsic rewards, such as the desire to align personal values with teaching effectiveness. These intrinsic characteristics motivated faculty to find congruence in their lives by fulfilling a

responsibility to apply their knowledge and scholarship for the betterment of society (McKay & Rozee, 2004). Faculty who engaged in service-learning were keenly aware of the link between service-learning and the long-term positive effects on students' learning and development (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Vogelgesang et al., 2002), increased civic engagement (McKay & Rozee, 2004), and persistence in their studies (Astin & Sax, 1998, 1999).

### **Institutional Context.**

Prior research findings (e.g. Gonsalves, 2008; Holland, 1999; McKay & Rozee, 2004) have indicated that faculty members were initially motivated to participate in service-learning in part because they believed that their teaching and research were aligned with institutional and disciplinary priorities of community engagement (Vogelgesang et al., 2010). However, Holland (1999) recognized that each campus placed a different level of importance on community engagement, which affected the levels at which service-learning classes were offered. Holland decided to account for these differences by performing a large-scale national research project. Holland (1999) studied 32 different types of higher education institutions to identify factors that initially served to inhibit or facilitate faculty participation in public service. Patterns emerged, and the vast majority of motives and obstacles cited by faculty were associated with their institutional context, including: the mission, institutional leadership, funding, tenure and promotion process, and reward structures. Since Holland's study, several other educational researchers (e.g., Abes et al., 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; O'Meara & Rice, 2005) have conducted similar quantitative analyses

yielding similar findings. The following subsections provide greater detail about various influential institutional factors, including a university's mission and leadership, resources and funding, tenure and promotion guidelines, academic departmental context, and discipline-fit model.

***Institutional mission and leadership.***

According to Jacoby (1996) service-learning as a strategy cannot succeed solely on the basis of its ideals, instead the success of a service-learning program depends heavily on the culture of the educational institution. The written mission statement of an organization was noted in Holland's (1999) research as being one of the most important factors in establishing a culture and a structure to recognize, incentivize, and support service-learning; yet, the articulation of this mission varied at among the 32 study sites. Holland found that if institutional leadership did not articulate a commitment to community-engaged pedagogies by reflecting it in strategic plans or budgetary allocations, faculty did not feel compelled to engage in service-learning. Furthering that notion, O'Meara and Niehaus (2009) studied how service-learning was integrated into the formal structures of institutions. They concluded that institutions which lacked a formalized department for service-learning undermined the advancement of civically engaged learning because the essence of that experience would instead be strictly contained within "one faculty member, one class, or one semester" (p. 29). Meaning, institutions without a central department to promote and sustain service-learning could not expect faculty members to uniformly engage in service-learning. Rather, these

institutions would have to rely upon students receiving this experience in sporadic ways, based on the individual desire of faculty members.

O'Meara and Niehaus (2009) found that institutions with a strong civic engaged mission encouraged faculty to find congruence between the institutional mission and their teaching styles. However, this positioned faculty as simply a vehicle through which their institution was meeting their educational goals of developing students and serving the community. In these cases, the institution served as the major player, the faculty the medium, and the students the beneficiaries of the end goal (O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). Though informative, O'Meara and Niehaus' research points to a gap in the literature because institutions with a primary focus on research (as indicated by Carnegie classification) have yet to be examined qualitatively to determine how their service-learning faculty identify and fit into the overall mission.

### ***Resources and funding.***

Just as institutions and academic departments can support and advocate for service-learning, research has suggested that institutions may serve more as a barrier than a source of motivation. Most research studies cite the lack of resources and funding (Bringle et al., 1997; Holland, 1999; Smart & Umbach, 2007; Vogelsgang et al., 2010) as key prohibitive factors for faculty. Service-learning can be time and labor-intensive, and institutions that value it will provide institutional support through infrastructure, funding, and professional development opportunities for faculty.

Vogelsgang et al. (2010) sought to identify faculty perceptions of institutional support and found that if a faculty member perceived high institutional support, it

increased his or her odds of collaborating with the local community in research or teaching by 21 percent. Though support and resources were important, budgetary constraints were a major issue for faculty members and could easily deter them from engaging in service-learning, especially if there was lack of funding for designing new curriculum (Abes et al., 2002).

***Tenure, promotion, and reward structure.***

A common factor cited by faculty as a critical need was the establishment of a compatible reward system, including tenure and promotion guidelines, consistent with the institution's expectation for faculty service (Holland, 1999; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007; Vogelsgang et. al, 2010). Most researchers have concluded that faculty members are sensitive to the institution's ability and willingness to promote community-engaged scholarship and to offer reward structures (Holland, 1999; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007; Vogelsgang et. al, 2010). However, after surveying 500 faculty members at 29 diverse institutions, Abes et al. (2002) found that the lack of reward and recognition in the tenure and promotion process was not statistically significant for all faculty. The only subset of faculty members showing a statistically significant relationship between reward structure and the decision to engage in service-learning were those at research institutions. Just over 30 percent of research-intensive university faculty members indicated that not being rewarded in performance reviews and tenure and promotion decisions might cause them to discontinue using service-learning (as opposed to 16.7 percent from other institutional types). Not surprisingly, untenured professors were more concerned about embedding service-learning in the promotion guidelines than those who had already achieved tenure.

Faculty members who achieved tenure had less pressure to spend time on research activities and could focus on developing their teaching skills (Abes et al., 2002; Hora, 2012).

***Academic departmental context.***

Schnaubelt and Statham (2007) reported that department level issues were more important than those at the institutional level because “the influence wielded by tenure and promotion committee members is often greater than written policies” (p. 29). The influence of immediate colleagues and supervisors renders decisions as “decidedly local, thus suggesting the need to understand in greater detail how an individual’s decision-making process unfolds in a specific situation” (Hora, 2012, p. 222). These decisions may be influenced by normative expectations embedded within the departmental culture including, but not be limited to, types of textbooks, teaching models, class size, and student evaluations (Hora, 2012).

Some faculty members have cited the influence of competition and prestige within their department as a motivating factor. For example, some departments encourage faculty to earn prestigious certifications that may require evidence of public service (Holland, 1999). Therefore, some faculty are motivated to engage in service-learning because of a desire to earn certifications, awards, or grant funding associated with academic prestige within the discipline (Holland, 1999).

***Discipline-fit.***

A review of existing literature suggested that faculty members’ perception of discipline-fit (Holland, 1997; Holland, 1999) and departmental culture (Abes et al., 2002)

were two key considerations when understanding the incentives and obstacles associated with service-learning.

Holland's (1997) person-environment fit theory proposed that academic environments contribute to student learning and development. Furthermore, the theory purports that faculty members within a specific department collectively reinforce and reward students who display attitudes and abilities consistent with the norms of that discipline. An example of these attitudes and beliefs were reflected in the study by Abes et al. (2002), whereas professors in the STEM disciplines cited a lack of relevance to their academic discipline as the strongest deterrent. For instance, the participants said there was no community-related experience that could "further illustrate abstract mathematical reasoning skills" (comment from a math professor) or that "could replicate a clean lab" (comment from a chemistry professor) (p. 11). Abes et al. concluded that the very nature of a discipline could motivate or deter professors to adopt a specific pedagogy. This research supports the assumption that faculty members in disparate academic environments structure their undergraduate courses in a manner that allows them to place greater emphasis on the development of student competencies consistent with the distinctive values of their respective academic environments (Abes et al., 2002; Holland, 1999; Smart & Umbach, 2007).

### **Faculty socialization.**

According to Klay, Brower, and Williams (2001), "Universities are the cradle of the professions and the primary socializers of future professionals; [therefore] making any profession more community-oriented must begin with making universities more

community-oriented” (p. 46). This is particularly important for research universities because they provide the bulk of graduate education and, thus, can serve as a major source of tomorrow’s faculty and administrators skilled in service-learning and civic engagement.

Historically, faculty service was an academic ideal meant to extend the roles of teaching and research beyond academe (Reybold & Corda, 2011). However, the juxtaposition of service against teaching and research productivity proved to be particularly difficult for tenure-track faculty. Tierney and Bensimon (1996) noted that as newcomers to the academy, tenure-track faculty members recognized service as a lesser role because it took time away from research activities that had greater relevance to their quest for tenure. As such, emerging tenure-track faculty members reflect socialization theories that illustrate how a person takes on characteristics, values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that contribute to a new professional self (Austin and McDaniels, 2006).

Tierney (1997) stated that graduate students who are not encouraged to see the relevance of their disciplines to local schools, governments, business, and the public are significantly less likely as faculty to become engaged scholars. Acknowledging this gap, O’Meara (2008), proposed a four-phase approach to graduate programs by calling them to reconsider how they attract and support doctoral students in order to prepare future faculty for their roles as citizen-scholars. Though this four-phase approach has yet to be tested, O’Meara purported that it may help to eliminate one the greatest barriers to future faculty community engagement by teaching doctoral students how to connect disciplinary



scholarship to public purposes; how to integrate teaching, research, and outreach toward meeting community needs; and how to fashion long-term careers as engaged scholars.

Part of a faculty member's socialization is their acceptance among peers. A University of California–Berkeley study examined service-learning at 45 colleges and universities in the western United States, and found that the strongest predictor for institutionalizing service-learning on college campuses was faculty involvement in and support for one another through service-learning (Bell et al., 2000; see also Furco, 2001). The study, which examined two-year community colleges, four-year private institutions, and four-year public institutions, found that “even when institutional rewards and incentives are in place for faculty, faculty members agree to “develop high-quality service-learning experiences for their students only when they are convinced that engaging in service-learning will not be viewed negatively by their peers or the campus administration” (Furco, 2001, p. 69). This finding was true across all types of institutions. Without the genuine support and involvement of a critical mass of faculty, service-learning was not likely not to be institutionalized on a campus to any significant degree (Bell et al., 2000).

### **Pedagogy and epistemological approach.**

Curricular concerns play a major role in deciding whether or not to leverage service-learning. Bringle et al. (1997) observed that the second-generation of service-learning faculty (the generation after the pioneers in the 1980s and 1990s) demanded more evidence of concrete learning outcomes from service-learning because of the time investment in designing the course, creating new activities, cultivating partnerships,

organizing logistics, and recruiting students (Holland, 1999). This hesitancy was further illustrated in the study conducted by Abes et al. (2002) which found that faculty members who taught a foundational course (i.e. an introductory course responsible for delivering a large quantity of content) were less likely to engage in service-learning because the pedagogy did not fit with the curricular constraints.

A lack of confidence with the skills and techniques of outreach and service was also cited in Holland's (1999) study as an obstacle to faculty participation. Faculty members' own graduate experiences were focused on "developing faculty who [were] content experts in their field and accomplished scholars judged by their peers" (p. 39). Often faculty members who are interested in pursuing service as part of their portfolio are conflicted about what their discipline values most. In a mixed methods study, Schnaubelt and Statham (2007) found a similar obstacle with faculty and concluded that the language of "service" was not effective for academics because "service has been, is, and will likely remain the least regarded and most ill-defined of the traditional tripartite faculty role" (p. 29). Tierney (1998) summarized faculty members' struggle to navigate a community-engaged pedagogy when he stated in his book *The Responsive University*, "increasingly, faculty are expected to do less of what they have come to think of as central to their role— research—and more of what they often do not know how to do—serve the larger society" (p. 2).

The governance structure of most research-intensive institutions is such that a particular course is not designated as having a specific pedagogical approach. Instead, Hora (2012) argued that each faculty member is "encouraged to exercise individual

agency in pedagogical techniques” (p. 220) just as they have academic freedom over their own research. This autonomy affords faculty members the freedom to experiment with service-learning. Furthermore, faculty may choose to exercise their agency as they consider the growing numbers of major federal funding agencies that require collaborative approaches or the public-facing research proposals (Gibson, 2006).

In 1990, Boyer asserted that higher education should redefine faculty scholarship by encouraging administrators to urgently create a “more inclusive view of what it means to be a scholar—a recognition that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching” (p.24). Boyer’s (1990) definition of scholarship meant that faculty members would permit “social problems themselves to define an agenda for scholarly investigation” (p. 21) and then relentlessly pursue answers to that societal need through a university-supported agenda with coordinated efforts around research, teaching, and service alongside students. Almost twenty years after Boyer’s call for faculty to galvanize around integrated community-engaged scholarship, O’Meara and Niehaus (2009) presented findings that demonstrated the opposite. Instead, they found that most faculty members considered their service-learning class as more of a private endeavor, isolating their work to something that happens only in the cocoon of their particular class. This finding from O’Meara and Niehaus (2009) depicted service-learning as a special project of the faculty members in their sample. This finding mirrored the term, the “Lone Ranger approach,” first introduced by O’Meara, Terosky, and Neumann (2008). The Lone Ranger approach means that a single faculty member is less effective in reaching communities and affecting positive change in students if he or

she does not have the support of their department to invest in curriculum and partnerships that extended well beyond one class or one semester.

#### **IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES FOR FACULTY.**

Teaching is the central unifying role of the professoriate; yet little research has documented the benefits afforded to faculty members who use service-learning as a teaching tool. One of the few documented benefits comes from research by O'Meara and Niehaus (2009) indicating that service-learning faculty report higher levels of satisfaction and higher rates of job retention than those who do not engage in service-learning (see also Hou, 2010). Gibson (2006) stated that service-learning professors are intrinsically satisfied when they are able to produce academically relevant work that simultaneously fulfills the campus mission as well as community needs. By aligning one's research interests and disciplinary specialization with a pertinent social issue, a faculty member can also advance his or her research agenda (Furco, 2001, p. 67).

The benefits afforded to students and to communities through service-learning are well documented, but less literature exists on faculty members' experiences. Research findings over the past two decades imply that service-learning professors derive circuitous benefits (e.g. students increase in cognitive and cultural development), but "it is critical to examine the factors that influence faculty members' own civic commitments, practices of engagement, and outcomes rather than viewing them as a means through which to achieve student outcomes" (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). Thus, the picture painted on faculty benefits is one of broad brushstrokes, lacking nuance and descriptive detail afforded through the deep analysis of faculty members' experiences.

More research studies have documented faculty apprehension to service-learning instead of the benefits associated with it, in-part because academic departments prioritize and reward research publications and grant funding over teacher effectiveness (see for example Abe, Jackson, & Jones, 2002; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997; Holland, 1998; O’Meara & Rice, 2005). Furthermore, it is important to point out that current literature cites fewer benefits to faculty than it cites benefits to students or community partners. For example, CAS’s 2011 document entitled “The Role of Service-Learning Programs” includes a section dedicated to outlining student benefits, community benefits, and institutional benefits; yet, the report does not specify benefits afforded to faculty members. This document reflects a broader body of literature that lacks research on faculty benefits through service-learning. Instead, previous research has focused on “why” questions—assessing mechanisms that influence professors’ decision-making on why they choose to engage or not to engage with service-learning. O’Meara, Sandmann, et al., (2011) recently called for a change to methods and frameworks used to assess the role of faculty in civically engaged scholarship, suggesting future research should assess the impact of service-learning on “faculty members as professional learners and partners” (p. 85). Rather than viewing faculty members as a conduit for student learning, there is a need for deep examination of individual faculty experiences and civic commitments (O’Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011), the roles faculty play at a public research institution, and the benefits resulting from their investment.

## **Gaps in Service-Learning Faculty Literature**

Prior research on service-learning has provided some insight into understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of faculty who engage in service-learning, as well as highlighting traditional barriers associated with academic departments and institutional missions (see for example Gonsalves, 2008; Holland, 1999; McKay & Rozee, 2004). The strength of these studies lies in consistent findings that reinforce the themes related to faculty motivations and barriers.

### **NEED FOR QUALITATIVE METHODS.**

Most of the research on service-learning faculty has been studied primarily through survey research and quantitative methods (e.g. Abes et al., 2002; Holland, 1999; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007; Smart & Umbach, 2007). O'Meara, Sandmann, et al. (2011) stated the need for qualitative studies to "examine the actual work and experiences of faculty to help move beyond questions of what faculty members are doing to what they are learning in their specific settings" (p. 93). Additionally, there is a call to examine what professors learn in various stages of their career and how, if at all, they adjust aspects of their teaching to meet personal and professional needs (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). Future research in this area should utilize qualitative methods to provide new understanding about use of expertise, community-building skills, and teaching occurring in service-learning settings. This type of research can provide important information to higher education programs that focus on professional development

because it seeks to uncover nuanced detail about faculty experiences as professional learners and partners.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONAL TYPE, HISTORY, AND MISSION.**

There are persistent gaps in the literature that necessitate further study. First, current research still leaves questions about the experiences of faculty members who engage in service-learning at an institution where common barriers (e.g. institutional mission of service articulated, tenure and promotion guidelines include service-learning, dedicated campus department for service-learning, etc.) have been addressed. Second, the research neglects to provide data or evidence of how faculty who successfully engage in service-learning navigate the traditional three pillars of the professoriate—teaching, research, and service—particularly at a public research institution that has prioritized community engagement based on its political and racially charged history.

As noted earlier in this chapter, public research universities and land grant universities were originally connected to the historic political, social, and economic movements in the United States over the past century. While the specific pedagogy of service-learning has not always been a part of higher education rhetoric, the promotion of democratic, civic, political, and economic has not wavered as a core mission of American colleges and research universities. Furthermore, public research universities were designed to serve their state and local communities by extending resources. Instead, many institutions took advantage of the local communities by acquiring property and neglecting the local needs of low-income residents. The University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin) is one public institution that has been scrutinized because of its negative

racial and political history—particularly regarding the contentious acquisition of local land.

### **UT-Austin and the Blackland Neighborhood.**

UT-Austin is located in central Austin, with Interstate-35 (I-35) forming the eastern boundary of the university. In 1927, the city of Austin initiated a plan to formally segregate its residents, confining people of color to the east side of town and providing the UT-Austin with rights to expand its property eastward (Austin’s East End Cultural Heritage District [AEECHD], 2010). This segregation created a defined area known as the Blackland, and it drastically reduced housing and property values providing Blackland residents with cheaper rent. However, the living conditions in the area also declined drastically for these residents. Over time, property values continued to decline and the University bought devalued property for expansion. In 1956, the city of Austin rejected the 1927 plan based upon its racist foundations, but UT-Austin administrators continued to cite the former legislation in order to acquire land on the east side to accommodate the campus’ growing needs (AEECHD, 2010). In 1981, members of the Blackland community formed the Blackland Neighborhood Association in order to protect the neighborhood’s property rights and fight for better housing conditions. After more than a decade of struggle, the Blackland community settled its political battle with UT-Austin, and the two sides agreed on a compromise in 1994 when the University agreed to limit its acquisitions in the eastern neighborhood (AEECHD, 2010).



### **Importance of the Research Study Site.**

Based on the aforementioned gaps in existing literature, the UT-Austin was an ideal site for this study because it addressed formal structures that have traditionally be a hindrance for faculty regarding their participation with community engagement and service-learning. Specifically in 2006, current UT-Austin President William Powers Jr., created the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE). In addition to sustaining all diversity initiatives, DDCE serves as a campus-wide division expressly created “to foster dynamic community-university partnerships designed to transform lives” (DDCE, 2012) and to leverage teaching and research to “solve society’s issues” (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b).

As part of the establishment of DDCE in 2006, the University made an extension of good faith to the neighborhood by locating a Community Engagement Center on the east side to “serve as catalyst to create new opportunities for expanded and more coordinated ties between the university and the community” and to build “a more positive relationship between the university and underserved communities in Austin” (Community Engagement Center, 2013).

One of the reasons President Powers has been committed to community engagement as one of his core tenants under his tenure as president is due to the litigious relationship with the east side community, especially the Blackland neighborhood. Although community-university partnerships are not the primary focus of this dissertation study, the historical perspective provides important context for the backdrop of this dissertation study. While only a couple of the participants focused their service-learning

projects on the east side of Austin, all professors who participated in the study said they recognized that their service-learning courses were situated within the context of the University's contentious history. (See also Chapter 3, "Site Selection" section for more details on why UT-Austin was chosen for this study.)

## **Theoretical Framework**

The goal of this literature review is to demonstrate a gap in existing research to support the need for this dissertation research study. This study sought to examine service-learning faculty members' experiences and identities in response to a call from O'Meara, Sandmann, et al. (2011) stating, "[I]t is critical to examine the factors that influence faculty members' own civic commitments, practices of engagement, and outcomes rather than viewing them as a means through which to achieve student outcomes" (O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011, p. 85). Because this study will fill a gap in the literature, there is not a single recognized framework for which to base it. Instead, this study will employ two separate, but related, theoretical frameworks to analyze findings in support of the three research questions. The primary theoretical framework is based on Demb and Wade's (2012) faculty engagement model. A supplementary theoretical construct, intersectionality (see for example Dill & Zambrana, 2009; Miller, 2010), will help to serve as an additional lens to analyze data. Together, these two theoretical constructs will help structure the study and examine complex detail about faculty experiences and identities currently missing from the body of research.

### **FACULTY ENGAGEMENT MODEL.**

Demb and Wade's (2012) faculty engagement model serves as the primary theoretical framework for this study. This model was chosen because it has been accepted in the service-learning literature, and it is grounded in the research findings of distinguished service-learning scholars throughout the past two decades (for example see Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, Kerrigan, 1996; Holland, 1997; Holland, 1999; McKay & Rozee, 2004; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; Schnaubelt, & Statham, 2007; Smart & Umbach, 2007; and Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010). The model was created<sup>1</sup> based on data from a quantitative survey (Survey of Faculty Engagement) conducted at a large urban Midwestern land-grant university. Survey questions were originally designed to test an earlier version of the faculty engagement model presented by Demb and Wade in 2009 (see Appendix A for original model). The survey sought to assess the types of community engagement activities faculty members participated in and how various factors could "motivate or deter faculty members from participating in engagement" (p. 344). As shown in Figure 2.2, the faculty engagement model (taken directly from Demb & Wade, 2012) provides an overarching framework to illustrate factors that may influence a professor's decision to engage in service-learning.

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<sup>1</sup> Wade's (2008) dissertation study served as the foundational quantitative analysis that developed the first version of the FEM, later refined by Demb and Wade (2009; 2012).

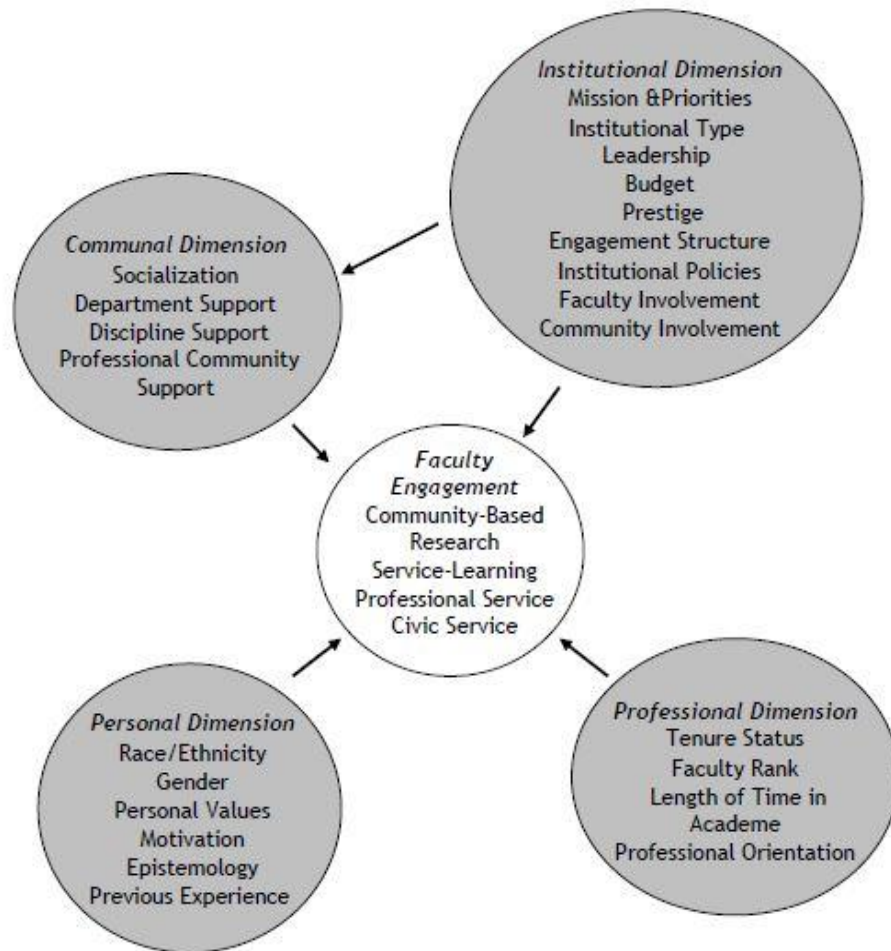


Figure 2.2. Faculty Engagement Model showing factors influencing a faculty member’s decision to engage in engaged-scholarship by Demb, A. & Wade, A. (2012). Reality check: Faculty involvement in outreach & engagement. *Journal of Higher Education*, 83(3), 337-366.

The model consists of four dimensions: *personal*, *professional*, *communal*, and *institutional*. Demb and Wade (2012) suggest that this revised model with four dimensions is intended to “shift attention from personal characteristics toward the aggregate impact of professional, communal and institutional factors on faculty choices

about participation in outreach and engagement” (p. 360). The new model reflects data from the survey showing faculty members are most influenced by factors associated with their academic department and institutional mission. Nevertheless, the model maintains the importance of the *personal* and *professional dimensions* because faculty members must determine the impact on their professional career and how they will approach service-learning through their personal lens related to their race, gender, and values.

Because the vast majority of all service-learning faculty research is conducted through quantitative methods, there are few qualitative conceptual frameworks from which to choose. Nevertheless, Demb and Wade’s model is robust, accepted in peer-reviewed literature, and its factors reflect two decades of research on service-learning. The faculty engagement model (Demb & Wade, 2012) is a strong starting point for this study because it recognizes the factors that initially influence a faculty member’s decision to engage in service-learning. It will be interesting to identify if and how these same factors influence the lived experience and identity of faculty as they align teaching, research, and service with academic service-learning.

Models help scholars and researchers test assumptions through further research. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of a theoretical framework. For the purpose of this dissertation research study, Demb & Wade’s (2012) conceptual model may be insufficient if used alone. First, the one-way arrows in this model suggest that a faculty member does not exert any agency on the dimensions. The one-way arrows affect the professor, but the professor does not have an equal chance at contributing to or influencing the dimensions. Additionally, four of the five arrows point

directly from the dimension to the faculty member. Only one arrow links two other dimensions together; the institutional dimension has a one-way arrow pointing to the communal dimension, suggesting that the community does not have an influence on the institution. Finally, each dimension encompasses a list of factors which all appear to have some bearing on the faculty member—disregarding the possibility that some factors may not apply in every case. Demb and Wade’s (2012) faculty engagement model primarily depicts motivational factors, but it will serve as a strong guidepost for this study in order to have a launching point by which to assess the various intersections and experiences of faculty who incorporate service-learning into their curriculum at a public research institution.

#### **INTERSECTIONALITY.**

Demb and Wade’s (2012) faculty engagement model includes the *personal dimension*, which relies upon various demographic or personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, and gender. However, Demb and Wade’s model, alone, is insufficient. The theoretical construct of intersectionality will be leveraged as a secondary lens to examine how various biological, social, cultural, and professional categories (such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, job status, and other axes of identity) interact on multiple levels. The concept of intersectionality was introduced in sociological research in the late 1960s and early 1970s in conjunction with the multiracial feminist movement, but the actual term was first coined by Crenshaw (1991) in her research to identify intragroup differences of oppressed groups. It has since been frequently cited in education literature as researchers seek to understand the interplay of identities on

cognitive and personal development, especially for individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Intersectionality shares traits with other critical studies in that it recognizes the importance of history and context and the centrality of the lived experiences and struggles of people of color (Bukoski & Reddick, n.d., see also Dill & Zambrana, 2009). While the origins of intersectionality focus on marginalized groups, the theoretical construct can be used as a tool to guide researchers in understanding the unique interactions and facets of multiple identities for individuals from all backgrounds. Collins (2000) asserted the importance of understanding guiding principles of intersectionality—one of which argues that people within one socially constructed category (e.g. race, gender, class) cannot be assumed to have similar experiences as their peers because of the dynamic interplay of an individual's other identities (see also Dill & Zambrana, 2009). The goal of this approach is to reveal within-group complexity (McCall, 2005) through examination of the lived experiences of faculty members who teach utilizing service-learning pedagogies.

As an analytical tool, intersectionality assists researchers in understanding the kinds of diversity within the group. For example, not all women faculty members at the same university can be assumed to have similar experiences teaching through service-learning. This is because each female faculty member will view her experience through additional lenses related to other identity factors such as her race, social class, sexual orientation, and academic discipline. Thus, intersectionality highlights the complexity of social systems and their effect on identity.

The goal of this dissertation study is to deeply understand the fine-grained experiences and identities of service-learning faculty. In order to account for these nuances, the research will employ a second theoretical construct, intersectionality. Intersectionality should help to account for some shortcomings of Demb and Wade's (2012) faculty engagement model because intersectionality contends that no faculty member, in spite of shared identities, has the same life or experiences. Intersectionality "challenges traditional modes of knowledge production in the United States and provides an alternative model that combines advocacy, analysis, theorizing, and pedagogy" (Dill & Zambrana, 2009, p. 1). The advantage of intersectionality is "it posits that valuable knowledge originates from individuals and groups whose voices are often marginalized" (Miller, 2010). The salience of different identities interacts with the others, creating a particular experience that might be similar, but not equivalent, to another person even if they share many of the same identities.

My pilot research study revealed early trends demonstrating that service-learning faculty members at UT Austin are often relegated to the periphery of academia (Pritchett, 2013). This preliminary finding reinforced literature from Antonio, Astin, and Cross (2000) which showed with statistical significance that service-learning faculty were often those from academic marginalized groups (e.g. people of color, women, and untenured faculty). Campoy (2002) stated that faculty participating in service-learning projects are "more often viewed as second-class citizens with low pay, heavy teaching loads, and lesser prestige"(p. 6). Consequently, the use of intersectionality as an additional theoretical construct will provide an important missing component in existing service-



learning literature. While some qualitative research has studied faculty and their motivation for utilizing service-learning (see for example Gonsalves, 2008, O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009), I did not find a service-learning study on faculty that leveraged intersectionality as a way to explore the dynamic identities of these service-oriented faculty members at a public research university.

### **Literature Review Conclusion**

I began this review of literature by defining service-learning and framing the current rhetoric and scholarly need for research on service-learning faculty. This chapter also examined the historical roots of service-learning by illustrating how higher education has aligned with the political and societal milestones experienced over the last century in the United States. Next, I included a brief section on the impacts and outcomes of service-learning on students and community partners because their investment in the pedagogy is critical to its success and sustainability. However, I allocated the largest portion of the literature review to examine the role of faculty in service-learning.

Through this review of literature, I accomplish three objectives. First, I explained how and why service-learning has emerged as an important pedagogical tool in higher education. Second, I demonstrated the need for additional research on faculty experiences by highlighting gaps in current research. Lastly, I provided justification for the use of two theoretical constructs, including Demb and Wade's (2012) faculty engagement model in addition to using intersectionality as an additional analytical frame.

Most research in service-learning has focused on student or community outcomes, but little is known about faculty experiences. Even less is known about the faculty experiences of navigating complexities of a public research institution, the perceived roles they play through service-learning, and the resulting benefits of their work. Because a critical mass of faculty members are needed to truly live out an institution's civic engagement mission (Furco, 2001), we must focus research on *how* these faculty successfully “harness the intellectual assets of universities as a lever for social good” (Cherwitz, 2005, p. 49). Instead, research has focused on broad factors that may influence professors' initial decision-making on whether or not to engage with service-learning—regardless of the type of institution. Through this chapter, I highlighted existing research that relied heavily upon multi-institutional quantitative surveys, treating faculty from different disciplines and different institutions as a homogenous group—masking nuanced experiences, benefits, and identities of faculty at particular institutional types. Research thus far has not focused on service-learning faculty experiences in conjunction with their identity at a public research institution where civic engagement is a stated priority. This constitutes a gap in the literature whereby this study is uniquely situated to address.

The next chapter will describe the research methodology to collect and analyze data from service-learning faculty at UT Austin where the mission is to “foster dynamic community-university partnerships designed to transform lives” (Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, 2012) and to leverage teaching and research to “solve society's issues” (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b).

### **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

Public research institutions have been scrutinized over the last couple decades for the role they play in society; namely, how they choose to leverage their rich resources and knowledge base to address critical social issues for the public good (Cherwitz, 2005; O'Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). Literature reviewed in Chapter 2 illustrated how service-learning can be leveraged by faculty to engage the community, to strengthen town-gown relationships, and to have a positive impact on student learning and civic engagement. My review of the literature also underscored that faculty members are the lynchpin for service-learning. Essentially, service-learning cannot happen without professors who serve as catalysts by deciding to integrate the experience into their curriculum in order to bridge the institution with the community through student service and active learning. Therefore, any public research institution serious about investing in service-learning must also invest time in understanding the experiences, identities, and professional development needs of exemplar faculty. I have designed a research methodology to address this need by deeply examining service-learning faculty experiences at UT Austin.

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section begins by describing the purpose of the study and its guiding research questions. The research design section will substantiate the use of qualitative methods for the study as well as describe the analytical paradigm and the influence of a pilot study on this larger dissertation research endeavor. The third section describes the study site in detail and illustrates the process

for how participants will be recruited and selected to partake in the study. The next two sections cover data collection methods and data analysis techniques. The chapter concludes by discussing limitations and delimitations of the study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

By addressing social issues through service-learning, research universities engage in the highest form of learning because faculty and students produce active knowledge that is valuable to their communities outside of the classroom (Kronick & Cunningham, 2012). Previous research has focused on three primary topics. First, the majority of service-learning literature has focused on service-learning experiences for students. These research results have demonstrated how service-learning is linked to students' cognitive and cultural development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997), higher grade point averages (Gray et al., 1998), increased critical problem solving skills (Lisman, 1998), and development of leadership skills (Campus Compact, 2012). The second topic of research discovered the service-learning benefits afforded to community partners, including an increase in capacity and resources to deliver services to clients (Sandy & Holland, 2006). Fewer studies have focused on the third topic of research, faculty. Chapter 2 contained a review of quantitative studies that surveyed faculty members on why they might choose to utilize service-learning and what barriers prevented them from doing so. However, mainstream research has not yet expanded to incorporate qualitative methods to explore and conceptualize the experiences and professional identities of faculty who lead service-learning courses.

There are persistent gaps in existing service-learning literature that necessitate further exploration. First, current research still leaves questions about the experiences of faculty members who engage in service-learning at an institution where common barriers have been addressed (e.g. institutional mission of service articulated, tenure and promotion guidelines include service-learning, dedicated campus department for service-learning, etc.). Second, the research neglects to provide data or evidence of how faculty who successfully engage in service-learning navigate the traditional three pillars of the professoriate—teaching, research, and service. Instead, most of the quantitative research draws from a deficit-based model, focusing on the question of “why not,” by identifying the shortcomings of institutions, academic units, and faculty members. More research should be focused on a strengths-based model to learn “how” faculty engage the community and implement service-learning as role models to their colleagues and students. Finally, there is a call to examine what professors learn in various stages of their career and how, if at all, they adjust aspects of their teaching to meet personal and professional needs (O’Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011). Faculty members are influential role models to college students, and therefore, have the opportunity through service-learning to influence a generation of collegians to recognize the importance of contributing to the well being of a community.

#### **CRITICALITY OF STUDYING SERVICE-LEARNING FACULTY.**

Faculty members are perhaps the important to study because service-learning is a form of community engagement that cannot happen without sustainable efforts from professors. In essence, students and communities cannot derive the benefits of service-

learning, nor can civically-minded institutions achieve their goal, if faculty members do not incorporate service-learning into their classrooms. A research study at the University of California, Berkeley (Bell et al., 2000) found that without the genuine support and involvement of a critical mass of faculty, service-learning is not likely to become institutionalized on a campus, regardless of other structural supports. Therefore, one of the first steps to advancing service-learning on any campus is to develop a critical mass of faculty who support and promote its use. The experiences of faculty are important to study at an institution like UT-Austin because it has made an institutional commitment and has taken steps to address “barriers preventing socially relevant research and learning” (Cherwitz, 2005, p. 48). However, the faculty-at-large have yet to fully adopt or integrate a community-engaged, service-learning pedagogy (Cherwitz, 2005; Furco, 2001; Pritchett, 2013). Faculty members serve as the lynchpin to service-learning, and institutions that seek to broaden the use of this pedagogy must understand what faculty members experience and how it affects their professional identity in teaching, research, and service.

Advancing and institutionalizing service-learning at research universities is predicated on the degree to which community engagement is tied to the work of research faculty and the overall mission and purposes of research universities (Cherwitz, 2005; Furco, 2001). In the effort to sustain a research universities’ prestige, mission, and purpose administrators must not neglect service-learning faculty who are committed to students’ learning and success through a community-engaged pedagogy. By examining faculty experiences using a qualitative approach, research institutions can better

understand the how these faculty members navigate an academic system that is divided by three distinct pillars of teaching, research, and service. Although teaching is certainly an essential component of research institutions, the production and publication of high-quality research take center stage as the predominant benchmark by which faculty performance is measured (Boyer, 1987 as cited in Furco, 2001). Therefore, though this research study, I recruited professors who have successfully implemented service-learning at a public research institution to understand their experiences to learn how they navigated the traditional three pillars of academia: research, teaching, and service.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS.**

The overarching purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the lived experiences and identities of service-learning faculty at UT Austin, a four-year, selective public institution with high research activity (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.) where community engagement is a stated priority through the institutional mission to “foster dynamic community-university partnerships designed to transform lives” (Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, 2012) and to leverage teaching and research to “solve society’s issues” (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b). As such, this study is guided by three research questions:

1. How do faculty members who teach recognized service-learning courses at The University of Texas at Austin describe their experiences implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach?
2. How do faculty members describe the influence of service-learning on their professional and personal identities?

3. How do faculty members explain how service-learning connects, if at all, to the context of their larger scholarship/practice agenda?

## **Research Design**

A qualitative research approach is most suitable for this study given the nature of the guiding research questions and my desire to uncover an in-depth understanding of faculty experiences and professional identity. Qualitative research is grounded in experience and emphasizes meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). It is based on the concept that human behavior can be understood only within the context in which it occurs (Armour, 2002). In this section, I will outline key characteristics of qualitative research that provides a rationale for its use in this study. Additionally, I will describe the guiding theoretical perspectives and discuss how my pilot study has helped to shape the overall research design.

### **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH.**

It is appropriate to conduct qualitative research when an issue needs to be explored, rather than to rely upon re-testing predetermined information from prior quantitative studies (Creswell, 2013). The advantage to qualitative exploration is the ability to highlight complex phenomena by empowering individuals to tell their stories. Creswell (2013) asserted that qualitative research helps to develop theories when partial or inadequate theories exist for certain populations, when existing theory does not adequately capture the complexity of the problem, or when other studies have neglected to capture the uniqueness of individuals with sensitivity to gender, race, economic status,



job status, or discipline). Qualitative research will help me to address all three aforementioned areas and to fill a void in service-learning literature that exists today.

There are many benefits to utilizing qualitative research that helps to set this study apart from others. For instance, I will be able to collect data from faculty members in their natural setting; I will not bring individuals into a lab or send out a nondescript survey instrument for individuals to complete out of context. Instead, the strength of qualitative data are that researchers can gather up-close information by actually talking face-to-face with participants over an extended period of time and observing their behavior within a specific context (Creswell, 2013). This means that I will serve as the key research instrument. By interviewing participants, observing their behavior, and collecting documents I do not rely upon measures or instruments developed by another researcher meant for a different time, place, or purpose (Creswell, 2013). This provides me with the benefit of gathering multiple forms of data from which to build patterns, categories, and themes from the “bottom up,” by organizing data through inductive and deductive logic (p. 45)—relying on expert complex reasoning skills from which I have been trained.

As described in Chapter 2, quantitative methods have dominated service-learning research over the past two decades, including large-scale surveys of faculty members across multiple institution types, regardless of their level of participation with service-learning. While former research has provided aggregate information to reveal general trends in the types of motivational factors or barriers facing faculty, I conducted a single-site study with multiple participants to deeply examine the complex nature of service-

learning faculty experiences. In order to obtain a rich data set, I conducted individual semi-structured phenomenological interviews that resulted in a “thick description” of faculty experiences and identities (Creswell, 2013; Seidman, 2006). As such, I was able to provide the research community as well as UT Austin with an in-depth description of the phenomenon facing service-learning faculty specific to its own institutional environment. The theoretical perspective and epistemological principles guiding this study are described in the next section.

#### **GUIDING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.**

An epistemology is a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know (Crotty, 1998). The epistemology used in this study is constructionism—a rejection that there is an absolute truth waiting to be discovered (p. 8). Instead, constructionism asserts that truth is derived from how individuals engage with the world, in turn, meaning is not discovered but is constructed (p. 9). Stemming from this epistemology is the theoretical perspective of interpretivism. The specific type of interpretivism used in this study is phenomenology because the researcher seeks to understand how faculty participants interpreted their experiences. Phenomenologists believe that “there is an essence or essences to shared experiences” (Patton, 1990, p. 70). Thus, exploration of a particular phenomenon should be with a group of individuals who have all experienced it (Creswell, 2013). Because all participant interviews were transcribed into written text, a hermeneutic phenomenological approach guided the study to find, describe, and understand the socially constructed experience of participants and the co-constructed reality by the researcher—making truth relative to the context of this

study (Armour, 2002). I tested this theoretical perspective in a pilot study conducted in the spring 2013 semester, and the next section includes a description of the lessons learned from the pilot study reinforcing my desire to maintain a phenomenological approach for this larger dissertation study.

#### **PILOT STUDY INFLUENCE.**

I conducted a pilot study during the spring 2013 semester. The leading question was, “What is the lived experience of faculty members who engage in service-learning at The University of Texas at Austin?” (Pritchett, 2013). I invited five faculty members to participate in the study, but only three professors had the time to meet and agreed to participate. Logistically, this helped me to have a realistic expectation of the number of faculty I may be able to recruit for this dissertation study—expecting a target sample population of six to eight faculty members.

The professors who participated in the pilot study represented three unique disciplines. All participants in the pilot study were employed by UT Austin and taught a service-learning course within 12 months from the interview date. However, for the pilot study, I did not delimit faculty participation by their employee status with the university; two of the three participants were full-time employees, and one participant served as a part-time assistant instructor. Only the two full-time employed faculty participants from the pilot study were eligible to participate in my full dissertation research study. With permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I invited the two eligible faculty members to take part in my full dissertation study. Both participants agreed to participate in a second follow-up interview and to provide the necessary supplementary documents

for further data analysis. I included their pilot interview as a source for secondary data analysis (Heaton, 1998).

According to Maxwell (2012) one important use of a pilot study in qualitative research is to develop an understanding of the concepts and theories held by people you are studying. Because there were no published studies specific to service-learning faculty experiences and identities at a public research institution, I sought to determine if a phenomenological approach could bring out the depth needed to explore this topic. I wanted to test how faculty members articulated their experiences teaching a service-learning class at a research institution. I also wondered if their experiences would mirror Demb and Wade's (2012) faculty engagement model, or if my faculty participants would present information that would expand upon it.

There is one preliminary finding from the pilot study that has had significant impact on the direction of my full dissertation research. That is, faculty in the pilot study could not explain their experiences without also describing their professional identity and role at UT Austin. As such, they discussed their experiences having to preserve their identity as a service-learning professor to their superiors, colleagues, and students. Given their varied job classifications and hierarchies within the institution, each participant described a different journey in their commitment to service-learning and to the mission of UT Austin (Pritchett, 2013).

This preliminary finding confirmed three things for me. First, it validated the use of a phenomenological approach and the use of an open-ended, semi-structured interview protocol. These mechanisms allowed faculty to open up and to articulate their lived

experiences within the specific context of UT Austin—a public, research institution with a focus on community and civic engagement. Second, I was able to test Demb and Wade’s (2012) theoretical model and found that it was applicable to align with this study. However, given the fact that participants in the pilot study described their service-learning identity as being part of a marginalized group “on the periphery of academia” (Pritchett, 2013), I realized it would be appropriate to supplement the Demb and Wade model with intersectionality as an additional theoretical construct. Finally, the pilot study affirmed for me that this research is both timely and appropriate by answering a call to action from O’Meara and colleagues (2011), stating future research must “examine the actual work and experiences of faculty to help move beyond questions of what faculty members are doing to what they are learning in their specific settings” (p. 93). The faculty participants in the pilot study specifically linked their commitment to service-learning with its ability to maintain their lifelong learning and to preserve their interests as “public intellectuals” (Pritchett, 2013). From this preliminary finding, I expected there may be more to explore regarding how professors parlay their service-learning classes to the context of their larger scholarship/practice agenda; therefore, I added a second question around identity and a third research question around broad scholarship practices to guide this research study.

## **Site and Participant Selection**

This section describes in detail why UT-Austin was chosen as the research site for this dissertation study. It also describes how participants were being selected for the study, based on experience with the pilot study.

### **DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH SITE.**

According to Jacoby (1996) service-learning cannot succeed at a higher education institution solely on the basis of its ideals; rather, administrators must pay attention to the culture of the educational institution and uphold service-learning as an essential component to its academic mission. As evidenced in Chapter 2, there are at least three key components at the institutional level which can facilitate or hinder faculty members' interest and ability to implement a service-learning class, including, the institutional mission, support from the highest levels of university leadership, and a reward structure. UT-Austin was an ideal research site for this study because it addressed all three areas and demonstrated a commitment to community engagement as an institutional priority by incorporating service-learning and civic engagement initiatives as part of the institution's mission to "foster dynamic community-university partnerships designed to transform lives" (Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, 2012) and to leverage teaching and research to "solve society's issues" (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b). As a public flagship research institution, UT Austin is well positioned to advance new forms of scholarship by linking intellectual assets to solve public problems (Campus Compact, 2012).

Service-learning is one way that higher education can respond to the national call for improvement in both productivity of instruction (e.g. graduation rates) and quality of graduates (e.g. knowledgeable in discipline and civically-minded) to help address the nation's problems (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996). Yet, research shows that lack of institutional support of service-learning can serve as a barrier to faculty who would otherwise be interested in community-oriented learning techniques, like service-learning (Bringle, Hatcher & Games, 1997; Holland, 1999; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). One way university presidents can demonstrate a commitment to service-learning is through membership with Campus Compact, a national coalition of almost 1,200 college and university presidents who have committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education. Being a member of Campus Compact is only one step, and institutions serious about their community engagement efforts will find additional ways to institutionalize and encourage it for faculty.

UT Austin was an appropriate site for this study because the extant literature fails to examine service-learning faculty at a public institution where service and community engagement have been articulated as a priority. According to the Carnegie Foundation (n.d.), at the time of this study only 15 other institutions in the United States shared characteristics similar to UT Austin, based on the following criteria: 1) four-year institution, 2) public institution, 3) high undergraduate enrollment profile (HU), 4) institutional profile that is full-time four-year, more selective, with higher transfer-in rate, and 5) research university with very high research activity (RU/VH). Of these 15 institutions, ten of them were also members of Campus Compact, a national coalition of

1,200 college and university presidents who have committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education. However, UT Austin was the only institution in the state of Texas that was a member of Campus Compact while also maintaining the high-research and high-enrollment status from the Carnegie Foundation (see the Appendix G for a full listing of similar universities in other states). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to fill a void in current research literature by exploring the role of service-learning faculty at this particular type of institution.

In addition to its Campus Compact membership, UT Austin has taken several steps to communicate and institutionalize the importance of public service and community engagement efforts. One example is the University's well-known and celebrated tagline, "What Starts Here Changes the World." The institution's website describes this tagline by stating, "We are a catalyst for change. We are driven to solve society's issues" (University of Texas at Austin, 2013b). As such, students and faculty at are encouraged to connect learning opportunities with actionable change for the public good. While previous studies have focused on surveying faculty at campuses with varied degrees of commitment to service, this study seeks to understand the experiences of faculty at a public research institution that has already demonstrated its support in multiple ways.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 described how faculty members sought to align their pedagogical approach with the campus mission and desires of institutional leadership (Holland, 1999; Jacoby, 1996; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). These are crucial components, and if a faculty member does not feel that the institution will support or



reward community engagement efforts, then s/he will not consider service-learning as a pedagogical approach. Since it's founding in 1883, UT Austin has had a rich history of community engagement and service. The institution's mission statement reflects this commitment:

The mission of The University of Texas at Austin is to achieve excellence in the interrelated areas of undergraduate education, graduate education, research, and public service. The University provides superior and comprehensive educational opportunities at the baccalaureate through doctoral and special professional educational levels. The University contributes to the advancement of society through research, creative activity, scholarly inquiry, and the development of new knowledge. The University preserves and promotes the arts, benefits the state's economy, serves the citizens through public programs, and provides other public service (University of Texas at Austin, 2013c).

In alignment with this mission, former UT Austin President, Larry Faulkner, took great steps to institutionalize support for service-learning and community engagement. In 2004, President Faulkner and several faculty members, along with distinguished members of the community—including the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, the chancellor of the University of Texas System, the president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, and the executive vice president of a major health-care network—contributed to a series in the local newspaper exploring how to connect the university and community in order to address society's most challenging problems (Cherwitz, 2005).

A commitment to diversity and community engagement has been one of the strategic initiatives of UT-Austin President William Powers Jr. since taking office as the 28th president in 2006. He made the bold move of aligning projects, units, and budgets to create the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) and appointed

Dr. Gregory Vincent to serve as the Vice President of the division (DDCE, 2012). In doing so, President Powers established one of the most comprehensive units of its kind in the country. Since its inception, DDCE has served as a campus-wide division expressly created “to foster dynamic community-university partnerships designed to transform lives” (DDCE, 2012). President Powers has publically stated that DDCE is “crucial to the University’s success in meeting its teaching and research mission, and in being counted among the world’s elite institutions of higher education” (DDCE, 2012).

Extant literature also describes the importance of campus resources and staff support in helping faculty to sustain service-learning efforts while navigating the three pillars of research, teaching, service (Furco, 2001; Holland, 1999; Smart & Umbach, 2007; Vogelsgang et al., 2010). One of the ways DDCE ensures its connection to the teaching and research mission is through its Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement (LCCE). The LCCE is a center that serves as the University’s central resource for service-learning. According to the LCCE website (2013), it “strive[s] to be a national model for community engagement through programs and partnerships with other campus departments, leveraging resources of the university on all levels to provide a quality community-based learning experience.” The LCCE encourages faculty to incorporate service-learning pedagogies by providing resources such as an extensive online database to vet suitable community partners, course syllabus consultation, templates and ideas for reflection activities, an online system to track student service hours, and support for faculty interested in assessing results of their service-learning courses for publication.

Demonstrating a formal commitment to recruiting faculty who participate in community engagement and service learning is an important part of an institutional mission (Holland, 1999; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007; Vogelsgang et. al, 2010). Most service-learning research does not focus on institutions that traditionally incorporate this into their operational structure. Therefore, another reason why UT-Austin is a unique site for this study is because DDCE launched a *Thematic Faculty Hiring Initiative* with the support from President Powers, the Executive Vice Provost, and academic deans to establish the critical mass among the faculty whose areas of scholarship has been underrepresented. Faculty hired under this initiative receive funding for teaching, research, and service that are rooted in diversity and community engagement efforts (DDCE, 2013).

Another influential factor frequently cited in the literature is the commitment of an institution to recognize and reward faculty for their service-learning efforts (Holland, 1999; Schnaubelt & Statham, 2007; Vogelsgang et. al, 2010). UT Austin has addressed this barrier in two ways. Most importantly, the *Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure of All Faculty Ranks* (2012) includes a statement in the teaching section instructing faculty to “describe and provide documentation of organized service-learning instruction” (p. 11). Through its consideration of service-learning courses in a professor’s tenure and promotion file, the University gives weight and significance to the incorporation of this pedagogical strategy. Furthermore, UT Austin annually recognizes outstanding faculty with the *Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Award*. The Provost’s website states that award nominees must “clearly demonstrate their commitment to teaching and sustained

capability to deliver excellence to the undergraduate learning experience, [including] an extraordinary commitment to...mentoring students, service-learning, [and] engagement” (University of Texas at Austin, 2013a). Another reward opportunity for service-learning faculty is sponsored by the LCCE. Since 1992, the LCCE has hosted annual awards ceremony, The Tower Awards, in the spring semester to honor excellence in volunteerism among faculty, students, and staff (LCCE, 2013). Faculty members who integrate service-learning into their classrooms are eligible to be nominated for two awards, *Outstanding Academic Service-Learning Professor Award* and *Outstanding Academic Service-Learning Course Award*. The availability of teaching awards and the inclusion of service-learning in the tenure and promotion guidelines is yet another way UT Austin has demonstrated its priority to community-engaged learning.

Altogether, UT Austin is a unique study site because it has addressed some of the key barriers cited by faculty in prior research. Since faculty members are supported in community engagement endeavors, I am confident that UT Austin is the right place to situate this research. Furthermore, as a member of the university community and graduate research assistant at the LCCE, I know these data are essential to helping the university learn how to create faculty development programs that could support service-learning efforts in a more effective and efficient manner.

#### **SAMPLING TECHNIQUE.**

I approached this research through a strengths-based model, meaning I sought to gather data from exemplar faculty who successfully teach a recognized service-learning class at UT Austin. Therefore, participants were recruited through the use of purposeful

criterion sampling based on their familiarity with the phenomenon under study—service-learning (Creswell, 2013). Each participant was screened to meet the following criteria: a) employed full-time as a professor at UT Austin, and b) identified by the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement as having taught a service-learning class within the last 12 months.

In order to identify potential study participants, I initially examined a list of faculty members who were identified by the institution's service-learning office, the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement (LCCE). I excluded adjunct instructors from the LCCE list and sent an email invitation to full-time faculty (both tenured and non-tenured track) to participate in the study. The invitation email contained the definition of service learning from Bringle and Hatcher (1996) to ensure that faculty participants were indeed utilizing a rigorous approach to the pedagogy. It was especially important for the integrity of this study to strictly define the phenomenon of service-learning, rather than leaving it up to a faculty member to interpret what constitutes collaboration with a community partner: “for example, one faculty member may view the stem cell research as addressing community needs, while another might consider only research that is carried out in collaboration with a local community organization as such” (Vogelgesang et al., 2010, p. 443). Faculty who met the specified criteria were invited to participate in the full study. Similar single-site qualitative studies on service-learning faculty have had a sample size ranging from four to eight participants (Gonsalves, 2008).

Based on the aforementioned sampling criteria, I recruited fourteen faculty members from various disciplines to participate in this study with an anticipated

participation rate of 70%, or ten of the fourteen. Half of the recruited participants were female, and half were male. A total of nine faculty members responded to the initial invitation and agreed to participate, yielding a participation rate of 64%. Chapter 5 will provide details and demographics on the population sample. However, it is important to note why the other faculty members did not participate in the study.

Of the five faculty who did not participate in the sample, three of them did not respond to either the first or second email invitation to participate. The other two faculty members who responded to the initial invitation chose not to participate because they felt their courses did not meet the service-learning definition and criteria set for this study. One of the respondents said that he was not sure his class met the service-learning definition. Despite the fact that his students were “performing a service” on behalf of the community, he said the focus was really about allowing students the opportunity to “practice a craft that they want to learn.” He was not sure that his course incorporated reciprocity. Although I may have found otherwise, I chose to exclude this faculty member from the study because the methodology called for faculty to agree that they met the criteria, thereby serving as exemplars in service-learning. The second respondent felt his course did not meet the service-learning definition because “there were no organized lectures or class meetings” associated with the students’ service. Instead, he said it was more like an internship credit where students participated in their own volunteer activities, and these students received course credit based on the successful completion of service hours. While he was the instructor of record for a credit-bearing opportunity, this faculty member felt that he should not be compared to other service-learning faculty who

organize, plan, and teach a rigorous service-learning course. For the integrity of the study sample, these two faculty were excluded from the final sample population. All five of these faculty members who did not participate in the study were males, two of whom were males of color.

Once participants were selected for the study, they were asked to complete a pre-interview questionnaire (see Appendix C) and to review the interview protocol (see Appendix E and Appendix F). These requested actions served two purposes: 1) to provide important background information on the faculty member before the first interview, and 2) to give the participant an idea of the types of questions to be asked so that they are comfortable and willing to share their experiences during each interview.

### **Data Collection and Instrumentation**

The purpose of phenomenological research is to have participants illuminate their experience of specific phenomena. According to Creswell (2013) the guiding research questions of a phenomenological study helps the researcher to dive deep into the lived experience of participants to describe not only *what* they have experienced, but also *how* they experienced it (p. 79). To increase the study's validity, several methods for data collection were utilized in triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this section, I detail the three forms of data collection that were used, including interviews, document analysis, and analytic memos. I collected data between October 2013 and December 2013.

#### **INTERVIEWS.**

For a phenomenological study, the data collection process predominantly involves “in-depth interviews with as many as 10 individuals,” and the “important point is to describe the meaning of a phenomenon for a small number of individuals who have experienced it” (Creswell, 2013, p. 161). Therefore, the primary data source for this study consisted of two rounds of in-depth, semi-structured interviews, adapted from Seidman’s (2006) model, which traditionally involves three separate ninety-minute interviews. Seidman (2006) advocated the use of three interviews: the first to cover an individual’s life history up to the point of engaging in the phenomena; the second to focus on how an individual experiences the phenomena; and the third to encompass participants’ reflections and meaning-making as a result of experiencing the phenomena (e.g., teaching through service-learning at a research university). I combined the two topics originally covered in Seidman’s (2006) second and third interviews into the second interview because I found through my pilot study that faculty were unable to separate their reflections about the meaning of their service-learning experiences as they also described their actions (Pritchett, 2013). Modifications to Seidman’s model are present in other faculty research literature (Reddick, 2011), further justifying my decision.

Following my adapted interview model from Seidman (2006), the first round of interviews primarily investigated faculty members’ educational history and service-learning pedagogical approaches. The second round of interviews delved deeper into how faculty make meaning of their service-learning experiences, how faculty members’ identities may have been shaped by this pedagogy, and how, if at all, service-learning plays a role as faculty participants develop their larger scholarship or practice agenda.



When possible, participants were given a copy of their first interview transcript before meeting with me for their second interview. This served as a reflection tool to remind them of the background information they provided in the first interview and serve as a launching point for the second interview.

The phenomenological interview was semi-structured and consists of open-ended questions to allow for a fluid, adaptable, and individualized interviewing process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). One way I ensured fluidity and individualization of each interview was by asking follow-up questions, when appropriate, to uncover meaning about a particular experience. The true essence of any lived experience cannot be uncovered without interview probes, and several examples of interview follow-up questions are listed in italic print in the interview protocol (see Appendix E and Appendix F). Follow-up questions and prompts are important in phenomenology because it is essential to get beneath the surface and to find the “intentionality of consciousness” (Creswell, 2013, p. 77). Through follow-up prompts and interview probes, participants were invited to describe how they experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Because qualitative research is an iterative process (Creswell, 2013), I asked participants to be willing to connect again with me for further follow-up via phone call or email in the event I needed clarification on the explanation of a particular topic brought up during the interview process. Participants were also welcome to reach out to me if they had additional information to share after our interviews. I provided interview transcripts to all participants asking for their feedback or if they wanted to change or add more information to supplement what they initially gave me through their interviews and

documents. Three of the participants provided feedback on the transcripts and gave clarifying comments about some of their experiences. This follow-up phase was important to ensure that I extracted as much data as possible about the phenomena.

#### **DOCUMENT ANALYSIS.**

In addition to in-depth interviews, Creswell (2013) advocates the gathering of additional data to help depict a more holistic view of a participant's experience. These data helped to triangulate information provided through the interviews. I requested additional documents from participants that could help to tell their stories, describe their experiences, or to reveal the meaning behind their service-learning efforts. These documents included course syllabi, curriculum vitae, service-learning award nominations, and published works based on their service-learning experiences. All documents were coded and considered an important aspect of the study's "data corpus"—total body of data (Saldana, 2009).

#### **FIELD NOTES AND ANALYTIC MEMOS.**

Before coding the data, I wrote field notes and analytic memos as an additional qualitative technique to ensure triangulation and validity. My field notes served as an additional tool that helped to capture and record the more discreet observations from an interview in an unobtrusive manner (Ely, 1991). These observations did not include my personal opinions, rather they served to capture observations of body language, environment cues (e.g. books in a professor's office, teaching awards on the wall, etc.) or additional meaning units that may have been implied rather than made explicit in the transcripts. The written text of the field notes allowed for an additional data source by

which to find, describe, and begin generating preliminary themes around faculty members' lived experiences with service-learning (Creswell, 2013).

As part of the data collection, concurrent with data analysis, I also wrote analytic memos. Analytic memos are informal journals that a qualitative researcher uses to reflect about what has occurred through the research process, what has been learned through data collection, what may seem to be evolving theory, and how themes may direct future action (Creswell, 2013; Ely, 1991). Unlike field notes, I wrote analytic memos as a reflective tool to help me discover what I was learning throughout the research project. The analytic memo serves “to uncover the deeper and complex meanings” experienced by the researcher (Saldana, 2009, p. 32). Taken together, these additional mechanisms served as important, explicit data sources for the study.

Although it was not part of the methodological design, six of the nine faculty participants in this study independently chose to follow up with me after their second interview. Some of the follow-up occurred as an in-person meeting, while others sent email correspondence. Several of the faculty members mentioned that they were thankful they participated in this study because the interview allowed them to reflect on how they presented themselves and their work to peers in the department.

### **Data Analysis**

The primary focus of phenomenology is to “be able to put behavior in context” to create and distill understanding and meaning (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). Through this study, I described how service-learning faculty at UT-Austin understood and made

meaning of their experiences. Data analysis is the term given to the various methods utilized to prepare and organize data, so that it can be coded and reduced into themes that provide meaning to various consumers of the research. Moustakas (1994) refers to the data analysis as the “explication and interpretation” phase of research (p. 15). The next section will detail the coding methods used to explicate meaning from data sources as well as the approach I took to categorize codes and interpret their meaning in the broader context of the study.

#### **CODING METHOD.**

Phenomenological data analysis occurs through a method of reduction by evaluating specific statements for all possible meanings (Creswell, 2013). Thus, the first step I employed for data analysis was to reduce written text and interview transcripts through the use of coding. Saldana (2009) defines a code as a “word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). All collected data, including interviews and documents, were coded. I also coded data collected during the pilot study through a secondary analysis approach (Heaton, 1998).

Coding is a crucial step in qualitative research because it is the stage where meaning is assigned to data. Therefore, I employed two cycles of coding techniques to make certain of capturing all-important meaning units. Saldana (2009) asserts that two cycles of coding are important because it helps the researcher to exhibit “control and ownership of the work... by making the abstract information more concrete” (p. 22). I used initial coding as my first cycle method. Initial coding involves the breaking down

qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities and differences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Charmaz (2006) states that the goal of initial coding is to “remain open to all possible theoretical directions” (p. 46). All codes assigned during the first cycle were provisional and tentative, but the intent was for me to grasp an overall understanding of the entire data corpus by searching for specific characteristics and attributes emerging from the data (Saldana, 2009). In this initial cycle, I created and assigned codes that emerge from the data utilizing the three research questions, Demb and Wade’s (2012) faculty engagement model, and intersectionality as guiding elements.

The second cycle of coding sought to identify patterns that surfaced from the first cycle. I used a technique, defined by Charmaz (2006), called axial coding. Axial coding identifies properties (i.e., characteristics or attributes) and dimensions (i.e. the location of a property along a continuum) to isolate conditions, causes, or consequences as a result of the phenomena (Creswell, 2013). As the codes grouped together, I was able to identify “if, when, how, and why” something happened (Charmaz, 2006, p. 62). Through the use of Dedoose, a web-based research application, I was able to visually see the interaction and frequency of codes—an important element when considering how to cluster meaning units and organically generate themes that emerged from the data.

#### **CLUSTERING AND THEMATIZING.**

Moustakas (1994) refers to the final stage of data analysis as “clustering and thematizing” (p. 121). Once I applied the two cycles of coding, I clustered, or categorized, the data. During this stage of data analysis I began to create meaning units

that gave way to themes and sub-themes in order to reach a deeper understanding of service-learning faculty members' experiences and identities at a public research institution. These themes were used to write the findings through textural and structural descriptions.

Textural descriptions focus on what the faculty members experienced through service-learning, substantiated by their quotes and narratives (Creswell, 2013). Structural descriptions take it one step further by describing the context and setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomena (Creswell, 2013). From the textural and structural descriptions, I composed a composite theme. The core essence distills the common experiences of all participants and should serve as a common underlying structure to answer the guiding research questions for this study. See Figure 3.1 for a visual of my full data analysis process.



*Figure 3.1.* This figure visually describes the process of data analysis for this research study.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are particularly important in qualitative research because of the close interactions between the researcher and the participants (Creswell, 2013). This

section covers three areas of ethical considerations: data confidentiality, trustworthiness and validity measures, and researcher positionality.

#### **DATA CONFIDENTIALITY.**

Though I identified participants through a purposeful recruitment strategy and conducted face-to-face interviews, each participant was reassured of confidentiality related to their participation in the study. One way to ensure this anonymity was through the use of pseudonyms in the write-up of findings (Creswell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994). All audio files were coded so that no personally identifiable information was visible, and they were kept in a secure place to further protect the confidentiality of participants. All publications aligned with this dissertation study will exclude information that could make it possible to identify faculty subjects. Participation in the study was voluntary, and all faculty members received full disclosure of these details by signing an informed consent document (see Appendix D).

#### **TRUSTWORTHINESS AND VALIDITY MEASURES.**

Qualitative researchers strive for understanding phenomena that comes from visiting personally with participants, spending extensive time in the field, and probing to obtain detailed meanings (Creswell, 2013). During and after data collection, I sought to establish trustworthiness of the data. My preparation through academic training, research experience, and professional experience form the foundation of trust for my future participants and peers in academia.

In order to further substantiate the trustworthiness and validity of data for this study, I triangulated my data collection through multiple sources (Miles & Huberman,

1994). I addressed the issue of internal validity by participating in member checks to ensure that data analysis and key findings were indeed grounded within the words and lived experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). Each participant was provided with an electronic copy of interview transcripts, giving them an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our interaction and to clarify any additional information (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To establish external validity, I utilized qualitative techniques such as peer debrief and rich, thick description. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define peer debriefing as a way to identify someone who can play “devil’s advocate” in an attempt to keep the researcher honest by asking hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations. I scheduled frequent peer debriefing sessions throughout the data analysis phase with my interpretive community (including, but not limited to my dissertation adviser, committee members, and colleagues in the higher education community). External validity was also achieved as I wrote the findings for the study and incorporated rich, thick description. According to Stake (2010), a description is rich if it provides abundant, interconnected details that involve describing from a general idea to the narrow.

Measures of internal and external validity helped me to create analytic generalizability with readers and consumers of this research (Gilgun, 2010). “Generalizability has several different meanings, and only one of them is probabilistic and dependent upon random samples” (Gilgun, 2010, p. 94). Through this qualitative research, I sought to provide readers with analytic generalizability by creating



transferability with the findings so they are relatable to research implications and recommendations for future research, policy, and practices.

#### **POSITIONALITY AND RESEARCH BIAS.**

According to Creswell (2013), one characteristic of good qualitative research is that the inquirer makes their position “explicit” by talking about personal experiences with the phenomenon being explored and by discussing how these experiences subsequently shape interpretation of the phenomenon (p. 216). In an effort to disclose my position on the research topic and to identify my a priori beliefs and assumptions, I list out my affiliation with service-learning in this section.

Although I participated in experiential learning, service-learning, and community-based research in my undergraduate and graduate school experiences, at the start of this research project (spring 2013), I had not had the opportunity to teach a service-learning course. Therefore, I viewed my research participants as the experts in helping me to understand their experiences in preparing for and executing a service-learning course. Additionally, I looked to my participants as experts on how they navigated the traditional three pillars of the academy (research, teaching and service) at a public research institution because I have no experience with this as a professional. However, I do have an affiliation with the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement at UT-Austin where I was employed as a graduate research assistant for the duration of this research study. Through this position, I worked with faculty members and students on methods to incorporate service-learning and civic engagement efforts into academic curriculum and co-curricular activities. In this role, I have had access to faculty who engage in service-

learning pedagogy, which helped with the recruiting phase of this research study. It is important to note that my role as a graduate research assistant meant that I was not in an authoritative position to influence the faculty members' reward structure, tenure, promotion, or evaluation. Taken together, my experiences as a student and as an employee at LCCE deepen my interest as a researcher to further learn about the phenomenon of service-learning at a research-intensive university.

Because I served as the analytic mechanism for this phenomenological study (Creswell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Moustakas, 1994), there must be a systematic process in place by which I reflected upon and set aside prejudgment regarding the investigated phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) refers to this process as the "Epoche process" (p. 22) and defines it as an essential step for a researcher to bracket her preconceptions, beliefs, and knowledge of the phenomena in order to have the ability to launch the study in an open context. Prior to each interview, I reflected on my positionality by participating in the Epoche process so that I was able to be open and receptive in listening to and hearing research participants describe their lived experience of teaching service-learning classes at a public research institution.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

Limitations refer to the restrictions of the research design or methodology, and delimitations are the boundaries that the researcher strategically sets to the study (Patton, 2002). Miles and Huberman (1994) note the inherent strengths and limitations of qualitative research. One of these strengths lies in the fact that key findings can be used

to better inform the higher education community about the experiences of service-learning faculty at an institution with high research activity and a civic commitment. However, an inherent limitation of the research design and methodology is that service-learning faculty will not be disaggregated by their status (tenured versus non-tenured track) nor by their discipline. My intention was to recruit a diverse sample of faculty participants, but as previously discussed there was a disproportionate representation of women participants and White/Caucasian participants based on sampling criteria, availability, and response rate.

The delimitations for this study are purposefully narrowed to fill a gap in literature and to provide findings to the LCCE for the purpose of creating a data-driven faculty professional development program. Therefore, the scope of this study has been purposefully narrowed to a single institution site, UT-Austin, so that faculty voices and lived experiences can inform the findings necessary to support a future institutional professional development program. Another purposeful delimitation was the decision to restrict the selection criteria for participants by inviting professors who taught rigorous academic service-learning courses in the last 12 months at UT-Austin, instead of including a larger cohort of faculty who may participate in broader community or civic engagement efforts. Although I learned during the data collection phase that all of my faculty participants were involved in other engaged scholarship activities (e.g. community-based research, volunteerism, serving on a non-profit board, etc.), they were invited to this study based on their service-learning course(s).

## Summary

As service-learning continues to be implemented on higher education campuses as a mechanism for civically engaging students, examining the faculty who effectively implement it is crucial. This qualitative methods dissertation sought to learn more about the professional and personal experiences and identities of faculty—especially at a large public research institution with a service-oriented mission. Just as studies of student engagement in classrooms (e.g. National Survey of Student Engagement, 2007) have benefitted faculty “by giving them tools to improve their practice, so, too, will this greater attention on the engaged faculty reap significant benefits for both the students and community partners” (O’Meara, Sandmann, et al., 2011, p. 85). Research that assesses faculty members’ experiences can illuminate strategies for optimizing faculty participation in this pedagogy. These findings may also be used to design recruitment strategies or professional development programs (Hora, 2012). The current literature calls for investigation of professor experiences and identities—an area that remains largely unexplored. This dissertation study is timely because it will add new knowledge to the growing body of literature on faculty and it has the potential to inform institutional policies and practice around supporting faculty as citizen-scholars in aligning with the civic mission of a public research institution.

## **CHAPTER 4: SAMPLE DESCRIPTION AND PARTICIPANT PROFILES**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide descriptive data on the sample population for this study. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides aggregate demographic data for the overall participant sample. This section will highlight the demographics of the population as well as their reported levels of civic engagement and participation captured by the pre-interview questionnaire. The second section of this chapter will include a profile, or brief biographical sketch, for each of the nine faculty members who participated in this study. The profiles provide a systematic structure of qualitative data that describes how each “individual experience interacts with powerful social and organizational forces...so we can discover the interconnections among people who live and work in a shared context” (Seidman, 1998, p. 112). Overall, this chapter serves as a prequel to the results chapter, Chapter 5, to better inform how participants experience the phenomenon of utilizing a service-learning pedagogical approach at a research-intensive university.

### **Aggregate Population Demographics**

All nine participants were full-time employed faculty members at UT-Austin at the time of the study. Participants were chosen based on their current status of teaching of at least one service-learning course. Every participant completed a pre-interview questionnaire to give demographic data, provide detailed teaching information, and report their levels of civic participation within the last 24 months.

## **PERSONAL DEMOGRAPHICS.**

Participants were chosen solely on the basis of their full-time employment at UT-Austin and having been identified by the LCCE as teaching a service-learning course in the last 12 months. The pre-interview questionnaire allowed participants to write in their choices for each demographic question, rather than providing finite options for selection. The sample population consisted of seven females and two males. There was little variability regarding race and ethnicity— eight of the participants reported being Caucasian/White, and one participant reported being African American/Black. The age of participants ranged from the thirties to the sixties; there was one participant in the thirties, one participant in the forties, four participants in the fifties, and three participants in the sixties.

## **TEACHING INFORMATION.**

Faculty participants in this study were assigned to three broad disciplinary categories as one way to mask their specific discipline (see Table 4.1). Four participants make up the *Arts and Science* category, which include fine arts, visual arts, and those disciplines, which make up the STEM acronym in higher education literature (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). There are two participants who are categorized as teaching in *Professional* disciplines. This encapsulates any of the professional schools and disciplines at UT-Austin, including but not limited to: business, law, nursing, pharmacy, and policy. Three faculty participants make up the *Humanities*

and *Social Sciences* category, which include all majors that fall within communications, education, foreign languages, liberal arts, social work, and undergraduate studies.

Table 4.1. Reference Guide of Participant Demographics

<b>Name</b>	<b>Sex &amp; Age Category</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Discipline Category</b>	<b>Faculty Rank</b>	<b>Number of S-L Courses Taught</b>	<b>Number Years Teaching S-L Courses</b>
Anna	Female 60s	White	Arts & Sciences	Associate Professor	2	20
Betty	Female 30s	White	Arts & Sciences	Assistant Professor	2	3
Diane	Female 50s	White	Professional	Senior Lecturer	3	8
Gary	Male 40s	White	Arts & Sciences	Professor	1	5
Gayle	Female 50s	African American/Black	Humanities & Social Science	Associate Professor	3	6
Julie	Female 50s	White	Humanities & Social Science	Lecturer	1	1.5
Linda	Female 50s	White	Professional	Senior Lecturer	4	11
Mike	Male 60s	White	Arts & Sciences	Professor	2	15
Pam	Female 60s	White	Humanities & Social Science	Assistant Professor	1	3.5

The faculty members in this study comprise three different categories: tenured (3 participants), tenure-track (2 participants), and non-tenured lecturer/senior lecturer (3 participants). On average these nine participants have taught full-time at UT-Austin for

11 years, ranging from 3.5 years to 20 years. On average they have taught utilizing a service-learning pedagogical approach at UT-Austin for eight years, with a range from 1.5 years to 20 years. In addition to their service-learning courses, all faculty members reported teaching at least one other class at UT-Austin without a service component within the last 12 months. Eight of the nine participants have received an award, distinction, or promotion directly tied to their service-learning and engaged scholarship efforts. The number of awards ranges from one to eight per faculty member within the sample.

#### **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.**

Other descriptive data collected for this study includes the levels of civic participation for each faculty member (see Table 4.2). The purpose of this study was to examine the phenomenological themes associated with participants' service-learning experiences, identity, and overall scholarship agenda. In order to fully understand the participants' experiences, I critically examined all intersections of identity, including civic participation (see Table 4.2). Recognizing that faculty members' identities are formed inside and outside the classroom, as well as informed by and impacted because of their experiences, I collected data on the pre-interview questionnaire about the level of participation in various civic engagement activities. Participants were asked to place a check mark next to all the statements that were true of their activity within the last 24 months. See Table 4.2 for the results of this survey question.



Table 4.2 Participants' Civic Participation Rates as Reported on Pre-Interview Questionnaire.

<b>Civic Engagement Activity</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
I voted in the most recent presidential election (November 2012).	90%	10%
I voted in the most recent local election.	80%	20%
I have contacted an elected official or governmental agency about political or social issue.	70%	30%
I signed a petition taking sides on a political or social issue.	55%	45%
I have actively tried to change policies in a school, workplace, college, or neighborhood.	70%	30%
I participated in a political rally, protest, or stand-in.	20%	80%
I worked together formally or informally with others to solve a problem in the community where I live.	90%	10%
I volunteered through an organization or in a community setting.	100%	0%
I served on the board of a non-profit organization.	70%	30%
I made a charitable contribution to a non-profit organization.	100%	0%
I wrote a letter or article for a magazine or newspaper about a political or social issue.	80%	20%
I responded with a comment to an online news story or blog about a political or social issue.	55%	45%
I have posted about political, governmental, or social issues on my personal social media pages (including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	55%	45%
I responded to the call for jury duty.	45%	55%
I attended an organized religious service.	70%	30%

## Faculty Participant Profiles

The primary focus of phenomenology is to “be able to put behavior in context” to distill meaning and understanding from participants (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). Prior to answering the research questions in Chapter 5, it is imperative to provide participant profiles so that I may present the participant in context, to clarify his or her experiences and intentions, and to convey a sense of process and time (Seidman, 1998). This is a compelling way to make sense of interview data because the “story is both the participant’s and the interviewer’s. It is in the participant’s words, but it is crafted by the interviewer from what the participant has said” (Seidman, 1998, p. 102). Consumers of this research will have a deeper understanding of the collective phenomena and themes presented in Chapter 5 after having read and understood “each individual’s experience to the social and organizational context within which he or she operates” (p. 103). To ensure anonymity, I have assigned pseudonyms to each participant and disguised their specific discipline and references to geographic places. The profiles are presented in alphabetical order according to their pseudonym.

### ANNA.

Anna was included in this study because she teaches two service-learning courses. She is a full-time, tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Arts and Science*. She has taught courses at UT-Austin for several decades—all of which have included some type of experiential or service-learning. Anna has won

numerous awards for her teaching style. She identifies as a White female in her sixties, and she is the only study participant who was born outside of the United States.

Anna's upbringing in Eastern Europe has heavily influenced her perspective on schooling: "Education has been at the center of my attention my entire life." Her passion for fine arts started when she was six years old. Anna's parents immediately put her into formal training and lessons, which she said "was quite common for that society at that time." However, Anna admitted, "My parents didn't mean to make [an artist] out of me. My father wanted me to go into mathematics because I was good at it...but when I started taking lessons, somehow it felt good." Once it was clear that Anna had artistic talent, her parents enrolled her in "established schools where they work with gifted children." She credits her home country's educational system for providing a rigorous education "from the beginning."

Anna attended a prestigious institution where she pursued a degree in fine arts. She studied under an internationally renowned professor whose mentorship had a profound impact on her career trajectory. "He had always remained my teacher, but it was more than that. He was my mentor. And I place him as close to a father figure as one can be." After college, Anna immigrated to the United States in pursuit of her dream to be a professional artist.

I have always functioned professionally in [the arts]. I've never waited tables. There's nothing wrong with it, I just have never done it. When I came to this country in 1976, I did not speak English.... I came with a suitcase. And I did not have money. And I didn't know how things worked here. It was a very long and difficult story, because I couldn't understand why not everyone didn't jump at me and say, "Hey we want to hire you. You're so good!" Oh no, not at all.

Anna's first job in the United States was to teach young children. It was both fascinating and frustrating for her because she felt American children were not disciplined enough to learn the art. "It was all very, very foreign to me." She had to give lessons in order to pay her apartment rent, but she was not sure why American parents were willing to pay for lessons if their children were not interested in truly learning. This formative experience brought a smile to Anna's face, as she realized her approach to teaching has not changed.

One of Anna's primary responsibilities at UT-Austin is to teach others how to teach. When I asked her about why she first integrated service into her courses, she replied, "First of all, one should want to teach through service. And not everyone does." She continued by discussing how she first decided to leverage service-learning primarily to drive her pedagogical philosophy.

It was not a humanitarian decision on my part. Although, it certainly has humanitarian value. It just wasn't the first motivation. The first motivation was that if I wanted to teach them how to teach, they needed to teach actual, real people. No one can learn how to teach from listening to a lecture, reading books, or taking notes, or even saying the right things. Because once you have a real person in front of you, and every real person is different, you need to find a way to apply this idea. Not at an imaginary student who will do what you say, but a real person. And that's where real learning happens.

Although she recognized her students' teaching as true service to the in the community, her principal motivation has always centered on pedagogy. Anna stated, "I view it as an absolutely necessary and integral part of [students'] learning how to teach. And I believe that it's very important that they will teach students of different kind, age, and level." Given this strong stance, she inquired after the first interview if I should include her in

the study since she may differ from “other service-learning professors,” who instead, may be motivated by a social justice agenda. When I reassured Anna that she met the criteria for the study based on her service-learning classes, not her motivations, she opened up further about her epistemological stance and professional orientation.

Anna’s teaching style is not isolated from her other professorial duties; rather, it is informed by all of her professional functions (e.g. research, service, mentorship, etc.) as a faculty member. She believes that “learning, teaching, performing, explaining, and doing are all diffused.” As an artist, Anna’s research responsibility revolves around her performance of original pieces. In this respect, her most recent accomplishment was being the first person to ever blend together two specific art forms. When we discussed her identity as an artist and professor, she smiled and replied, “So, it’s a very, very strange thing to say. But I am the only one on the planet of Earth. How about that for identity?” Anna felt that her role as a professional artist earns her respect from students because she understands the demands of the field. “I’m known among my students as a very demanding teacher. But they know my demands come out of my respect to them and their ability. I want to stimulate their creativity, and that requires discipline.” Anna’s regimented, but interactive approach to learning reinforces her deeply held personal value that “education is the core element...in the development of the mind.”

I asked Anna what she gains from teaching through service-learning, and she indicated that she felt fulfilled in her role as someone who is “carrying the torch” for art education. “And when it comes to preservation of our art, it cannot be preserved as a dead body. It has to be preserved as a living organism.” To help preserve her art, Anna

created a non-profit organization, designed to serve artistically gifted children. Anna considers herself a life-long learner, and she enjoys teaching, researching, and performing her art alongside students because, “I learn from my students at every given moment, regardless what we’re doing. Teaching is a wonderful profession because of that.” When I asked Anna about her commitment to service-learning as a teaching strategy, she replied, “I don’t think it can be done [without it].” When asked if she had any final thoughts on her experiences and identity as a service-learning professor she said, “I am here in a position to teach my students how to teach. My professional integrity calls me to do everything that needs to be done to accomplish that goal.”

**BETTY.**

Betty was included in this study because she teaches two service-learning courses each year. She is a full-time faculty member and is at the midpoint of the tenure track. She teaches in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Arts and Science*. Betty identifies as a White female in her thirties. She recently earned a University-wide award for her service-learning efforts.

Betty can clearly trace her interest in service and community engagement back to her childhood. Both of her parents were educators, and she described growing up in a family that had “mostly had a service element to it.” One particular formative experience she had was the opportunity to serve as a camp counselor for a wilderness camp that she attended as an adolescent.

It was for underprivileged kids that were really from very rough neighborhoods. There was always in this camp a smattering of folks that were on scholarship. [But this session] was only for people that really had never had an experience

outside of their very crime-ridden neighborhood. We had this transformational experience, the first day. It's buffet style, or family style food. We'd been warned, and it did happen, where people are starving because they've never seen this much food. You are really just watching people get very ill, because they are trying to just shovel food in into their mouths to save themselves. They're in this save themselves for survival mode. It was eye-opening for me, because these are really nice little girls. They have the ability, in four days, to go from trying to run away in the woods, to calling me their sister. I'm pretty sure that's how humanity is... I never, ever considered, again, doing anything that didn't directly involve and engage people. I just realize how much you learn when you're with people, and working with them instead of for them. It was pretty transformational for me.

Her desire to work with people and to strive for change meant that she needed to “find a job in which I could be a mom to my own family but also really, directly serve people.”

Betty was inspired by great professors and mentors in her undergraduate program who she said were doing work that intersected human rights issues with her content area. Though she loved art and history, she recognized that the “history of underserved populations had not been done.” So she took an internship during her undergraduate years with the city and learned how city workers interacted with underserved populations and neighborhoods. Betty said, “It was really good for me to understand the realities of sides, the municipal side and the community side of things.” The combination of these experiences led her to pursue a master’s degree and a doctorate.

Betty points to three particular events during her graduate program that have shaped her professional orientation. First, she founded her own non-profit organization with a mission to improve the quality of life for low- and moderate-income families through planning, development, and design. As the founder of this organization, she was acculturated into the dynamics of working within and between city government, neighborhoods, and the university. She also learned “organizational management, and

how to work with people in a professional sense.” Second, Betty was afforded the opportunity as an assistant instructor to teach a service-learning course under the mentorship of a senior faculty member.

I don't think I knew how hard it would be when I started it. I was probably a little bit less daunted than I should've been. [But] it was great. It just sort of stopped the clock for me—in terms of—I didn't work on my dissertation at all that semester because I was very busy. But it was a wonderful experience that taught me a lot about how to do things right, and how to partner properly, and to develop expectations that are mutually agreeable between you and the partner.

The third most impactful experience for Betty came at the time of her dissertation defense. One of her committee members, serving outside of Betty's field of study, made a politically charged comment. “She told me that I was very brave for doing participatory action research...because of the fact that it wasn't perceived as high level scholarship.” Betty said that professor's comment “always stuck” with her. When I asked why, she said:

[T]hat I was considered to be brave, which I thought was ridiculous. It's still ridiculous; I'm not brave at all. I'm sitting in my little office getting to be cushy, not doing things that are brave. Brave people are fighting wars, and standing up for rights that others don't have. The context of the academic community, apparently this type of work is considered by some to be brave. I think that means there's a level of risk associated with it. It changes the context a little bit. Tenure is a risky thing anyway. Many of us don't get it because we didn't match up to what the profession was expecting of us. In my profession, it's more accepted to do—creating engaging research.

Betty's graduate socialization certainly impacted her approach to integrating service-learning into her classroom and into her research and scholarship agenda.

Betty has two roles at UT-Austin. She serves as both a professor and an administrator, and she strives to balance the roles. She has received some criticism from



faculty who were concerned about potentially exploiting students for free “pick-up-the-hammer type work” in the community. In response, she works hard to create meaningful opportunities for students to engage in “intellectual work that might help a community.” Facing further criticism, she has been advised by mentors that if she wants to earn tenure, she “should not teach in the summer at all.” She has followed this advice, but she continues to integrate service-learning into her scholarship. “For me, research is not always this very separate thing that can't have anything to do with service-learning. Often they overlap in a very strong way.”

Betty is still active with her non-profit. Her work within the local community has informed the way she teaches students to approach community work. “When you're in an academic situation, it is appropriate to use academic language for obvious reasons.... [but with] underrepresented groups...I try not to use jargon. I try to be honest. I try to under promise and over deliver at all times.” She said this philosophy directly stems from her observation of a persistent problem when universities see communities as a place to “test and prod and not give anything back.” She believes that her best work happens when “all three pillars” of research, teaching, and service are integrated for the purpose of “making better citizens.” When I asked Betty if she gains anything from teaching through service-learning, she said that it was a constant affirmation and personal fulfillment that her professional, academic, and personal passions aligned.

I think they have a lot of intersections. I love my job. A lot of the time, like tonight, I'm meeting a friend for dinner as my big activity of the week, which is personal. It happens to be a friend that I met while working at [the non-profit]. We still partner on things all the time because she's still there, and we're going to

go to the [election] watch party. So they're all one big community for me. That's because I like it. [Work] doesn't need it to be something that I get away from.

**DIANE.**

Diane was included in this study because she teaches three service-learning courses. She is a full-time, non-tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Professional*. Diane describes herself as a White female in her fifties. She has worked at UT-Austin for just over a decade, incorporating service-learning into her courses for more than half of those years. Though she has received multiple awards and distinctions for her teaching and scholarship, Diane credits the confluence of her family, educational socialization, mentors, and former work experience with her success in the field.

Diane's parents were both professionals—her father was a lawyer, and her mother served as both a practicing psychologist and a professor. Her parents' professions influenced Diane's career path. At her elite graduate school, she participated in an extracurricular organization that afforded her the chance to work on real world social-political issues. This work “had life and death consequences” and she knew “there were really high stakes involved in the projects we were working on...[so] I just threw myself into those projects.” Recently, Diane attended a reunion gathering of students who participated in this organization, and upon reflecting about her attendance she realized how impactful those experiences had been in shaping her career trajectory and informing her teaching philosophy.

After completing her education, Diane moved to Texas and worked as a politically appointed federal employee. Her research and field work in this position prepared her for her next role in advocacy where she worked on “a number of reform issues” and influenced policies and regulations. Diane became specialized in a particular social-political issue that afforded her the opportunity to “make my own way as a consultant, doing work all over the country, on various reform initiatives.” Somewhere in the back of her mind was the idea she would eventually want to leverage these experiences by teaching at the collegiate level.

I always had one foot in the practitioner world. I understood what the issues were out there, and the ways in which the academic enterprise could be brought to bear on a lot of those issues, or at least contributing to reform in that area.

Given her passion for bridging practice with academics, Diane started working at UT-Austin as an adjunct professor. She did not have a course model to follow, but instead designed courses based on her expertise and experience. She straddled the practitioner world and the adjunct teaching profession for a couple of years. Recognizing her deep passion for teaching and sharing these issues with upcoming leaders in the field, Diane petitioned the dean for a full-time faculty position. She admitted that her journey to the professoriate was non-traditional and that it took some time and trust on behalf of University leadership to create a full-time position for a previous adjunct. “I never went into academia with an eye towards being in an ivory tower. It was just another vehicle for working on these issues and wanting to expose my students to [the issues] as well.”

Some of Diane's courses had an experiential component to them, but she acknowledged a shift to formal service-learning when an opportunity arose to have her students work on an inter-disciplinary service-learning opportunity. The project started in just one semester where students worked to research background and history related to a national social-political current event. The students' work was so well researched and detailed that it was incorporated into high-profile judicial documents. At the end of the semester Diane "realized we were sitting on a ton of amazing research, and we didn't want it to go away...and students were totally committed to what they were doing so most of the group stayed on for the next semester." The students put their research into action, producing public reports that garnered national attention from both practitioners and academics that worked on the same social-political topic. Diane expressed her sincere appreciation for the synergy created with her students through this service-learning class, but she believes this teaching style was most effective because she was a practitioner.

There's no way I could be doing what I do without the experiences that I've had, without the contacts that I made, without the reputation I've developed out there, and without a sense of where this work can fit in and fill a gap. If I were someone who just come out of graduate school and started teaching, I could not do that... There's no way I could be producing this much stuff without it being done in collaboration with my students. I just can't. I count on them to be doing it, but the fact that I can get out this many substantial projects in a short period of time is a testament to what they're doing.

Diane reinforced the fact that service-learning is a pedagogical tool that allows her to "bridge the gap" for students so they are not only reading about an issue but also doing something to address it.

Getting into this pedagogy as a full-time faculty member has meant that Diane becomes consumed by her students' service-learning projects. "To be honest, I work so hard. You could burn out on this stuff... I have to take the summer off." She said the time commitment includes "not just the stuff that you are doing in the school, [but] its all the meetings with clients. I've got to stay up to speed with everything because it affects the work we're doing. We're not doing stuff in a vacuum." Diane acknowledged another difficult aspect of service-learning. Though she is confident in the role she plays in promoting student learning and growth and in contributing to the scholarship and prestige of UT-Austin, she still finds it "frustrating that [service-learning] bumps up against the traditional academic expectations and validations and what is considered legitimate here." She believes that many traditional academic publications are difficult for the general public to access because many of them can only be accessed through an expensive subscription. Instead, she feels "the process of doing the research and writing it is to serve that community," and she finds the lack of immediate impact on "traditional research" to be disheartening. "We've got an obligation to serve the community...It's not a question for me—particularly at a public university. That's what we're here for."

When asked what she gets out of service-learning, she said that it is "constant affirmation knowing that the work gets used, knowing that it's having an influence, knowing that the clients have appreciated getting it, seeing it in the paper and having it change policy." Diane said her students' service-learning projects are "absolutely critical" to real-world issues and social-political solutions: "Everything I do with my students, with my classes, and with their projects are all about teaching my students.

They're all about conducting research that's going to be useful in the real world.” She is fueled by her students’ learning and success, but she notes that it has certainly impacted her professional status as well.

There is no question it has raised my profile, both nationally and in Texas because of this work. It's been good for me. It also has been extraordinary because people now see me as raising the next generation of experts in this field. That's so cool! Literally, people all over the country are now turning me asking, “Hey, do you have anyone for me for this job, or that job?”

**GARY.**

Gary was included in this study because he teaches one service-learning course. He is a full-time, tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Arts and Sciences*. Gary describes himself as a White male in his forties. He has worked at UT-Austin for several decades, but recently incorporating service-learning into his capstone STEM course within the last few years. He won several teaching awards throughout his tenure at UT-Austin. While leadership, ethics, and hands-on learning have always been an underlying theme of his teaching, Gary has only been engaged in formal service-learning for about five years.

Gary credits his upbringing for setting him on a trajectory for success in his field. “You don't end up where you are by chance. There's a lot going on that led me to be here.” His mother and grandmother were both teachers, and his father and grandfather were both practicing professionals within the STEM fields. He volunteered periodically throughout his childhood and college years but admitted that it was more about hanging out with his friends rather than to make a significant impact on the community. Upon graduating with his doctorate, Gary worked as a practitioner for five years before

returning to academia to become a full-time professor. His field experience still plays a large role in his current approach to service-learning because he intimately understands what students need to know in order to be successful practitioners. “In the class that we have the service-learning component, we talk about being a professional and part of that is becoming [licensed in the field]. I bring in my stamp...and my dad's and grandfather's stamp to show the importance.” He brings these items to the first day of class to show students the importance of the career path and profession they have chosen.

Gary experienced a convergence of factors that simultaneously revealed to him the need for students to have real-world, service-based learning opportunities. First, Gary said he was “touched at a personal and professional level” by hurricane Katrina. He recalled witnessing how the weather damage was not as severe as the damage caused by human design and implementation. “It was a very clear example of when [my profession] fails. Life becomes entirely different. They didn't have water, they didn't have power. There were no streetlights. There were no stoplights. There was no telephone or wastewater service.” It struck him that people in his profession did “a lousy job of looking at the big picture” and communicating with the public the benefits and consequences making community infrastructure decisions.

At the same time, Gary noticed that the “curriculum had a hole in it” and there was room for improvement in how the department addressed specific accreditation standards in response to preparing professionals in the STEM field. “The way we were [teaching that component] was pretty haphazard and not very consistent, nor very formal, nor very effective.” Students in the STEM field engaged in a capstone course that mostly

centered on case-studies and guest speakers. “As someone who had practice as [a professional in the field]... I thought the whole thing was incredibly hokey and not realistic; therefore, I didn't really think it was doing much, because it clearly was this contrived exercise.” The timing of the natural disaster and pending accreditation visit motivated Gary to redesign the course with service-learning so students could work on a “real project with a real stakeholder group, with a real consequence.” Gary believes the redesigned course is more meaningful for students, benefits the community, and provides a more ethical and rigorous response to meet his discipline’s accreditation standards.

Gary is forthcoming in stating that the benefits of service-learning have not been without challenges. In this new service-learning role, Gary has been exposed in greater detail about town-gown tensions that surround UT-Austin and the city. Some of his students’ projects have been difficult—spanning several semesters before real change can be made. He has noticed a shift in the deep time commitment and coordination required of this pedagogical approach. “It really requires a village to do this...I rely really heavily on a teaching assistant... I can't possibly go to all of the various stakeholder meetings because some of them are happening simultaneously, across the city from each other.” He also notes that some students push back on the service-learning model. When I asked how he handled it, he credited his five years as a practitioner.

I don't think I could've done [service-learning] without that experience. I don't think I'd have the confidence. I don't think I'd have the wherewithal. There is a huge level of patience that's required. You can't help students too much. If they're going to learn, you've got to let them learn.



Gary's desire to develop the service-learning course stemmed from an intrinsic motivation. "It's something I want to do. If I didn't want to do it, there'd be a lot of reasons not to." However, when I asked Gary if he receives any benefits a result of this work, he responded by providing examples of both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits. First, he noted an impact on his personal level of civic engagement and participation.

I've gotten more involved in policy and in wanting to contribute to the city and to the community in terms of the policies that we're establishing.... I'm always thinking about how we can make Austin a better place and the university is an integral part of that.

Gary admitted that he has contemplated running for elected office one day. Second, he has received awards from his department and his college for his teaching and service-learning course. Gary takes pride in the service and prestige he brings to his field based on his service-learning work. "I'm someone that people would point to if they were trying to describe why we are one of the best departments in the world. I would think they would probably use me as one of the examples." Lastly, as a result of his continued work in navigating university and community partnerships Gary has been nominated to serve on elite campus-wide committees. He said, "I don't think that would happen except that I've been exposed to these issues through this class and through my interest in trying to make the university a better place."

**GAYLE.**

Gayle was included in this study because she teaches three service-learning courses. She is a full-time, tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Humanities and Social Science*. Gayle describes herself as an

American/Black female in her fifties. She is integrally involved with the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement and earned two University-wide awards for her service-learning efforts in the last few years. Gayle has worked at UT-Austin for almost two decades, but she has been formally engaged in teaching service-learning courses for about six years.

Gayle described growing up in poverty and the impact it had on her life. “If you are a person who has experienced that, it’s something that stays with you.” She also recalled how important it was to her that her mother was the only parent from her low-income housing community that took the time to volunteer in her school. “She was the only mother from the entire [neighborhood] because we were bused to another school. We didn’t have a car, [so she] got on the bus and came to volunteer.” Despite the fact that her mother only had a sixth grade formal education, she served as the president of their housing authority group. Connecting her past with her present Gayle laughed and said, “Now that I think about it, yes, that was probably in my genes in terms of staying close to the needs of the community.”

Gayle did not participate in any type of service-learning throughout her educational journey. She worked for almost a decade with a “lucrative career” in the business world. It was in this role as a professional where she was introduced to the concept of corporate social responsibility and began to see how business and society were connected. “It was a pivotal moment for me. I came to appreciate this whole new world of going out and helping people in the community... I definitely never forgot that experience. I believe that’s what led me back to service-learning.” Through introspection

and reflection, Gayle realized that she wanted to be a researcher to look at systematic community-societal issues from a social sciences perspective. Knowing that she wanted to be a researcher, she went back to school to get her Ph.D. and focused on becoming a professor at a research institute, with “an eye for giving back to the community.”

Although the focus of Gayle’s social sciences discipline is designed to address real-world issues, she did not begin to formally implement service-learning as a pedagogical approach until she was presented with the opportunity to design a course with an international perspective. “I wanted to design that course...because service is already an idea that the millennial [students] have that they want to change the world. When it comes to anything global, they want to serve.” She wanted to root the pedagogical approach in a purposeful, structured way.

It's not just going and doing something. It's studying about it so that you not only have the opportunity to serve in a developing country, but you have an understanding of why that country is underdeveloped in the first place. So there's a history part of it, there's a social political discussion around that, there's an understanding of international work and what has happened before....That automatically created an opportunity for me to build in a structure around how you do something. There's a beginning, middle and an end. Each phase is informed by the study. In order to start planning it you need to know the history. In order to get to the middle part and implementation you need to know about the community...That’s the difference between volunteerism and service-learning.

Since creating this international service-learning course, Gayle has also connected other classes to local community issues. In the six years she has been actively engaged in service-learning she says she now finds it hard to believe she every taught another way.

Gayle described the purposeful intent to her pedagogical approach. She teaches students from various disciplines, but it is important for her to allow students an

opportunity to apply social science knowledge in designing projects that have an immediate impact on a community. Since embracing her identity as a service-learning professor, Gayle said she has been surprised by the change in the relationship she has with former and current students.

We just go to a deeper level. And for me it's been several things combined that bring the relationship to that point. It's the fact that you're with them outside of the classroom, and you see their struggles and their triumphs directly—not through paper and pencil... And sometimes they're having the struggles right in front of you—meltdowns or even the jumping up in celebration. I see the laughter and appreciation from community members and get to watch them give my students compliments... What I found is that most students actually appreciate having that additional feedback about who they are and what they bring. And they desire to actually have the opportunity for someone close to them in this huge, research-intensive academic setting who is paying attention to their growth and transformation. And it helps them in other areas outside of the classroom too. I think that in the end, they have such an appreciation for that. They keep in touch with me and they let me know what they're doing...I call them my children now.

Gayle pointed to her relationship with students as being mutually beneficial in learning and professional growth. She also has noticed that requests for letters of recommendation have tripled since she began teaching through service-learning, and Gayle attributes this to the unique opportunity she has as a professor to see real growth and transformation. “There's transformation that happens when you effectively integrate the study with service.”

Gayle spent most of the time talking about the positive benefits of her service-learning experiences, but these experiences were not in isolation to the internal and external challenges she has faced. Gayle has faced criticism from some students who did not want to participate in service-learning and actively engage with the community. She

also has some colleagues within her field that question the level of commitment to this pedagogical approach with concern for how she was going to integrate publishing or searching for large grants. There have also been local and global communities that scrutinized Gayle and her students, wondering if they were only in the community doing work because it was a “resume building” exercise. Last, Gayle recognized the dedication and time commitment to this work. “I know for certain how much work it is...If some people would say about academia that professors don’t really ever stop working, then I would say that when you’re in service-learning you really never stop!”

Service-learning has meant the full integration of Gayle’s professional and personal life. She gave a recent example of when she spent a weekend having to contact students to inform them that one of their community partners unexpectedly passed away. Without hesitation, Gayle stopped what she was doing to buy flowers for the rosary and attend the funeral. When I asked Gayle what she gets from service-learning, she said that the awards she has received for this type of community engagement has “really solidified me within my school.” She is thankful to have been “given the opportunity from corporate America to actually go back and reach back into communities” because it gave her the inspiration to teach through service-learning and to mentor students as change agents.

**JULIE.**

Julie was included in this study because she teaches one service-learning course. She is a full-time, non-tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Humanities and Social Sciences*. Julie describes herself as a White female

in her fifties. She has been at UT-Austin in several capacities, but she was hired as a full-time faculty member several years ago.

Having been raised in middle class family Julie recalled, “We always had enough of everything, but [we were] not wealthy.” Julie believes that values of education and reading were so important to her family “because my parents both [grew] up in The Depression, and they saw education as really the only way to progress intellectually and economically.” Both of Julie’s parents had physical challenges, so her parents “understood in a really deep way... the importance of accepting people as they are, and working together and being aware that others in the community are not as fortunate.” She recalled having the chance as a family to participate in some community projects through their church.

Although Julie did some volunteer work in college, it was when she grew into adulthood that she felt a deeper connection to a particular cause. Both Julie and her brother were personally affected by their experience of having to watch dear friends suffer with terminal illness. Since then, Julie and her brother have committed to volunteering with a non-profit with a mission to help those with end-of-life care. Though the family was geographically dispersed, Julie’s parents decided to also volunteer their time for a similar organization in their hometown. “They thought that would be a way to share in [the] experience, which was so beautiful. How many people do that?” Though she did not participate in formal service-learning experiences throughout her educational journey, Julie’s familial and personal experiences frame how she views the role of universities in society:

I am interested in the truly common good. I look at my neighbors who live in publicly assisted housing. I look at the people that I ride the bus with, and I want the best for them as well. The fact that the University of Texas is a tier one research institution doesn't mean that it can't also serve the community.

Julie did not take a traditional, direct path to becoming a full-time professor at UT-Austin. Though she taught immediately after completing her Ph.D., she describes it as being “off and on.” Her professional journey includes having taught at different institutions in the region (e.g. private, public, community college, etc.) and in working as a free-lance editor and writer for large academic publishing companies. It was through this work as both a practitioner and academic where she was exposed students from various background and different skill sets. “Theoretically, I knew that, but working for the [publishing] companies, I had to write for those different skill levels and skill sets... some just barely literate, and some are practically ready to go to their Ph.D. program.” Julie found this work fascinating, and at the time, she did not consider being a full-time professor.

Julie first approached service-learning when she was an adjunct instructor at UT-Austin. Her initial goal was to “enhance the program with more experiential learning” because she thought that the computer simulation lab “was nice, but not truly experiential.” She enjoyed piloting the service-learning experience in her department and recalled that everyone involved “thought it was super cool because the students were in the community doing this work.” Nevertheless, she was asked by departmental leadership to cancel any future service-learning courses. “I never really knew why. We guessed that possibly some of the faculty and the chair were concerned that maybe

service-learning and working in the community would be somehow in competition with study abroad.” Julie expressed the critical importance of departmental leadership in the success of implementing service-learning. She was disheartened by the experience, “It’s frustrating sometimes to be in an academic department at this rank and not be able to use creative energy... to design a course and implement it.” Julie left UT-Austin as an adjunct instructor, and she joined forces with other professionals in her field to write a service-learning textbook. “One of the best ways to learn something is to write about it. We taught ourselves. We are our own mentors.”

About five years ago, Julie received an offer to return to UT-Austin as a full-time faculty member. Given the new departmental leadership and support for service-learning, she agreed.

From the time that [the new department chair] said, “OK, go ahead,” to making cold calls to different social service agencies, and schools, and reaching out to students in that first day of class— all of it has felt like one long Christmas morning for a five-year old kid. Because this is something that I’ve really believed could be a great and productive experience for the students, for the department, and for the community.

Julie puts in time and effort to create opportunities for her humanities and social science students to connect what they learn in the classroom with real world professional experiences. “They find that they can either learn the terminology that they need to in the profession, or develop the patience they need to work with kids, or whatever it is they feel might be an obstacle at the beginning of the semester.” Additionally, Julie feels a true shift in the culture of her department. “People are aware that I’m doing [service-learning]. They recognize that it is a lot of work and really do appreciate that I’m doing



it. They think it's good for the students and good for the department, but they don't have time.” Despite sometimes feeling like the “black sheep,” her department has recognized her efforts with a small increase in pay and a title that reflects her role as the departmental contact for community engagement efforts.

When I asked Julie what she gets out of service-learning, she said, “I'm benefiting from it just because I really thought it could work... and it's gratifying to see my students going out with their good intentions in making Austin a little bit better.” She believes “community service has made my life so much richer,” and she is personally and professionally fulfilled when her students realize that their skills can have an impact on the world. In reflecting on her journey to becoming a full-time professor, she said

One of the reasons I wasn't really committed to being a professor on a full-time rest of my life basis, was that for a long time I wanted to be able to combine my teaching and writing with my community service and my creative energy...Now, with the service learning, it brings everything together. Because you have to create the course, you have to create new pathways, new relationships, and new ways of approaching material. I get my creativity. I get my community service by creating relationships between students and community partners. And I'm now starting a new volunteer gig because of this course.

**LINDA.**

Linda was included in this study because she teaches four service-learning courses each year. She is a full-time, non-tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Professional*. Linda describes herself as a White female in her fifties. She has taught at UT-Austin just over a decade, and she has won a University-wide teaching award. Linda describes herself as always being “civically engaged.” She was the first female president of a city-wide organization with a mission focused on volunteerism and community change. She has also served on two different

non-profit boards—one board connected to her church and another affiliated with UT-Austin.

Linda began telling her service-learning story by describing how her early career influenced a personal learning style.

Before I started teaching, I had twenty years in the [redacted] industry... So my background was coming from a place where I did a lot of years as an adult learner in the workplace where you don't go sit and listen to a lecture. You go and do something. And then learn how to use it. And you might go to a conference to get information... If I sent an employee to a conference they would come back and we'd do a brown bag and talk about. We'd come up with about two or three practices that we'd do differently based on this new information. That the whole application piece was what really made it learning.

When Linda decided to change careers from being a practitioner to an academic, she knew she needed to get her doctorate. Because she was approaching her Ph.D. as an adult learner, she “shopped for an accredited school with hands-on experience.” It was in her doctoral program where Linda took classes with a service-learning component. “In fact, the project I use for my class is modeled after what I did in my doctoral program. One of my professors in my doctorate was a strong believer in service-learning and experiential learning.”

Linda's first experience teaching with service-learning was at a private parochial university. She inherited a class that already had service-learning built into it. “I was basically handed the syllabus. I was just an adjunct at the time...and it was part of [the university's] view of their responsibility to their students. They believe they create or nurture adults who are engaged in their communities.” She had the courage to engage in service-learning for the first time as a professor because “somebody was there that I

could run to and could talk to about problems.” Linda was reassured through the support of her colleagues who were also teaching through this pedagogy. After a couple semesters she said, “I found that this fit very well with my viewpoint of active learning [and was] something very important for college students to experience.”

When Linda received a full-time faculty position at UT-Austin she stayed committed to her teaching philosophy: “learning requires exploration.” As a non-tenured professor, her college and departmental leaders expect her to focus most of her energy on teaching. Linda designed her courses with a service-learning component because she expressed, “What you do in the classroom may or may not be learning. It’s not learning until you use it. I don’t think I’m doing the job of educating the students if all I do is talk to them.” She admitted that her discipline facilitates active learning because society and industries require the professional skill set she teaches. Linda described her class as a “lab” with “a real-life consulting project” because students will have the “opportunity not just to learn about stuff in the classroom, but to see it applied in the real world.” She also teaches students how to view these service-learning class assignments not just as a way to earn a grade or course-credit, but how to list the applicable experience on their résumé. Linda describes her profession as existing in a “complex world;” therefore, service-learning allows a “win-win situation for the student and community because the student gets to learn how course content is really reflected in community...and the community wins because they get help and support of students, along with their research, knowledge, and energy.” She also believes that the service component of her course gives students a

chance to civically engage with society, something that “lights the fire and feeds into the fire” that millennial students already embody.

Though she strongly believes in and is committed to this pedagogical approach, Linda defined her experience as one that is not free of barriers. However, her biggest struggles typically come from within her classroom, not outside of it. She often teaches honors students who can be described as wanting a formulaic way to approach a class. “I have to do some norming,” she recalled as she described using the first day of class to introduce students to the idea of service-learning. She admitted to using terms other than service-learning to help students understand the connection of their learning with the applicability of their skills. She is always clear that she does not teach a traditional class, and typically she receives strong course evaluations. However recently, her scores have been reflective of students’ disinterest in the pedagogy.

I’ll be very honest with you. In the last three semesters, I’m having some trouble with students not wanting to work this hard. Students are saying this class is too much work and I’ve gotten more complaints and more people rate me low because they thought it was too much work outside of class.

Linda admitted that her department chair supports her through these growing pains, and she’s confident that even through the “messy experience” she is able to demonstrate student learning, growth, and development.

When I asked Linda what she gets out of service-learning, she said, “To me, it’s just a core part what I believe teaching is all about.” She also finds that by integrating her teaching with service and research that she is able to stay active in her field. She has written several articles for Texas magazines on current topics and she serves as her

college's media contact with issues related to her profession. Most recently, she was appointed by her dean to serve on a committee with other of high-level professionals responsible for implementing a new academic unit that will transform UT-Austin. Linda reflected, "In my mind, there is a macro obligation on the part of the university to maintain a healthy town-gown relationship. At the micro-level, me and my class, we have an obligation to connect with our [professional] community."

**MIKE.**

Mike was included in this study because he teaches two service-learning courses. He is a full-time, tenured faculty member in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Arts and Sciences*. Mike describes himself as a White male in his sixties. He has worked at UT-Austin for almost two decades—incorporating service-learning into his courses for the majority of that time. He has won several awards for his teaching and engaged scholarship.

Mike had what he called a "pivotal experience" as an undergraduate student studying at a prestigious private research institution in the northeast. He said that a visiting professor taught a community engaged project to one of his classes, and the goal of the project was to design a park in a low-income residential neighborhood. "Not only did I find [the professor] to be a compelling character and liked his reasoning, but I also found the experience of working in the field with real people to be far more rewarding than just working in the [classroom]." This experience led him to pursue other endeavors to engage in social change, and he joined a two-year volunteer service organization after graduation.

Prior to entering the academy as a professor, Mike worked as a practitioner for almost twenty years.

I know a lot about practice at almost every scale. It's really how and why I approach the work the way I do. I mean, think about if you went straight from grad school and started teaching. You would have a very different view of reality than if you were working in a place like [rural north east] where the population has very little money...So it was a very different world there.

Although Mike says he is “receptive to theory,” he credits his former work experience for driving his epistemological stance. “I found that any kind of theory development without an empirical basis or without some kind of engagement with a community to be served is just epistemologically unsatisfying.” Mike suggested that other faculty could view service-learning as an ethical issue, not a pedagogical one. While he agrees that community engagement is “an ethical responsibility within a public university,” Mike said he would frame his primary motivation as being more of an epistemological issue. He argued, “How do you know what you know? On what grounds do you know this?” At the simplest level, he said, “The idea is always to have the theory test the practice, but also to have the practice test the theory.” And he challenges his students to recognize that service-learning gives them an opportunity to test the theory they have learned.

Most of Mike's service-learning projects coincide with opportunities that arise from true community need in the Central Texas area. This poses both advantages and disadvantages. One advantage is that Mike's students are able to “produce research, create sustainable projects, and influence public policy.” One of his service-learning courses is made up of students from various disciplines. He sees great benefit in having students tackle the same complex social issue from different perspectives: “Students

come in [with] a highly developed language that fits in their discipline, and then they actually have to talk to each other. And at times it seems painful. But they do learn from each other.” Additionally, Mike said:

Through engagement [with the community and our clients] students understand what they are doing in a very different way because they’re not moving abstract symbols around a page that produces a desirable visual effect. What they come to realize is that their choices have significant consequences about everyday life—somebody else’s everyday life. That’s enormously important!

The disadvantage to working on current university-community issues is navigating the political territory. Mike said his students put in a semesters’ worth of work with intent to present it to a governing body made up of citizens and University personnel. However, since the University is so large and many colleges and departments frequently do not communicate or coordinate on community-university issues, he discovered later that a private company had been contracted to conduct a similar project in just a two-week span. Mike said the neighborhood overwhelmingly rejected the private company’s plan because “of course, they weren’t a part of the planning process. If I had to write a scenario that I knew would be doomed to failure, I could not have done a better job of writing a farce.” This experience taught Mike and his students the value of proper community engagement and institutional coordination because at the community’s request Mike “was invited to come to a conversation of relevant officials.”

Another difficulty Mike has experienced is dealing with internal dissent from peer faculty. He described in detail the confrontations he had over a three year period with unsupportive departmental colleagues in which he said was “the price of feeling like you’re marginalized within the academic community.” However, given his stature and

longevity with the department, Mike felt he had to stand strong with the junior faculty who were also doing service-learning when peer faculty members staged a “sneak attack” in a faculty governance meeting. Mike contends that some faculty in his department did not feel service-learning courses provided the same amount of contact and classroom hours as a traditional course, so they rallied together and voted to limit the number of service-learning courses students could take in their respective discipline. Frustrated, Mike created a service-learning practicum for students to use as a supplement to their academic curriculum. He was able to provide data that students were still engaging in content-specific theory and practice, but their contact hours were held in the community instead of within the confined walls of a classroom.

For the third year of the battle, Mike partnered with a fellow service-learning faculty member, and together, they preempted the dissenting colleagues by taking the issue straight to the dean. The dean gave his support and ensured Mike and his colleagues that they could continue offering their service-learning program without further interruption. I asked Mike how he felt after that, and he said, “There are never euphoric moments of like, ‘YEA! WE WON!’ [pumping his fists in the air]. Honestly, it’s more like a deep sigh, and we say, ‘Ok. We’re making some progress here.’ We realize it’s a long-term investment.”

When I asked Mike if he receives any personal or professional benefits from service-learning, he said:

I’m not sure I would make a boundary between them. Although I do some stuff at a national level and scholarship at the international level, a lot of the things that I do are really Austin-based, which is consistent with my pedagogical



epistemological attitude...I always see the research being conducted in Austin as always tied to what I'm writing about.

Mike described how his teaching, research, and service are interwoven into a rigorous scholarship that gets published through books and articles, as well as being acknowledged and used by practitioners in his field. Furthermore, he feels that he is furthering the mission of the institution because “service-learning has clear direct benefit to the citizens of Texas.”

**PAM.**

Pam was included in this study because she teaches one service-learning course. She is a full-time faculty member and is about half-way through her journey on the tenure track. She teaches in a discipline that has been categorized in this study as *Humanities and Social Science*. Pam identifies as a White female in her sixties.

Being born premature in the 1950s was a major concern for Pam and her parents because it meant that she could have had serious developmental challenges. Although she overcame those odds and eventually went on to get her doctorate, Pam said:

I've always been sort of the underdog. I was bullied, that type of thing, so I then became involved in sports and learned how to do really well in sports because that was a way for me to gain acceptance. My sister was a year older than me, and she taught me everything that she learned...All of those things, because of that and our tight-knit family, I've just always felt that you need to look out for people... I was the one that always got a nose bleed or whatever because of the fact that I stepped in when other people didn't.

Pam spent most of her educational journey looking out for the best interest of others. Although she majored in art for her undergraduate and graduate degrees, she stayed involved in extracurricular and community engagement activities. “I don't think I would

have been that excited about school. I've always believed that you learn a lot more through service-learning and extracurricular activities than what you learn in the content areas.”

Although she is currently a tenure-track professor at UT-Austin, Pam took a non-traditional route to the academy. She was a teacher and administrator in the school system for many years. She lived and worked in various parts of the United States, but she always had the opportunity to create programs to help students succeed. Oftentimes, her programs centered on getting students out into the community, and she quickly noticed that students internalized the value of service to others. She recalled one time when her students asked her if they could honor all of the custodians in a special way. “On a Friday, we cleaned the whole school up and did everything and had a big party for them and awards. Then they got to leave when we did, so they wouldn't have to stay. It was just a little thing, but it was a big thing for them because they're the ones that came up with it.” She smiled recalling the personal growth and transformation that took place for these students in addition to collecting data that proved their academic scores increased commensurate with their participation in the program. “I am convinced that there was such a unity among the class. That's why they did so well.” Pam's practical work experiences taught her that student success could not be achieved without the opportunity for service-learning. This experience also drives her pedagogical approach within the collegiate setting.

Pam feels reaffirmed by her teaching approach as she continues to receive positive feedback from her students each semester. However, she feels a strain between

her personal values and what is valued through the tenure and promotion process. Although she does not describe herself as “religious,” Pam said that her political and social values are informed by her beliefs as a Christian. Therefore, she tries to lead her life and daily activities as a servant leader in congruence with her faith in God and alignment with her eternal perspective. However, she admits that her biggest struggle on the tenure track is “trying to maintain the values that I consider to be important (i.e., service to others) with the pressure to set others aside to write and publish.” She often finds herself sacrificing her own writing time, research, or focus to give feedback to her students in her service-learning class or to community partners because their needs are immediate, and the impact is long-lasting.

This leads to the interpersonal barrier that Pam struggles with. Because her journey into the academy has been so different than her peers, Pam feels like she is marginalized within her department. In a sense, she feels like she has returned for a second Ph.D. because she had to “start all over again and start a new research agenda” because she has been in the field for so long. She yearns for her colleagues to apply the “Golden Rule” (i.e., treat others how you would like to be treated) and to take the time in learning more about her. In doing so, Pam believes her colleagues would have a better understanding of how she integrates teaching, research, and service through scholarship and practice so that she can have a real impact on individuals and systems that need it most. In referencing the UT-Austin motto Pam said:

I have to wrestle with that, as far as “what starts here changes the world.” Does that mean that the world is the impact that you have to have? I feel that there

needs to be a little bit of recognition of the different layers or ripples of water that are affected by that one person being the stone in the water, so to speak.

When I asked Pam if she receives any personal or professional benefits from service-learning, she said, “There are transformations that happen at the higher ed level...[and] my identity is really in allowing people to find their voice and be able to have their own transformation and look it over and me not take the credit.” Pam seeks the opportunity to be both personally and professionally fulfilled through her ability to lead and facilitate that change.

## CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present salient themes for each research question, detailing the core essence of the lived experience of service-learning faculty participants in this phenomenological study. Each of the three research questions in this study help to inform the overarching phenomenon: the lived experience of faculty members who teach service-learning courses at The University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin). For organizational purposes, the data are presented in four main sections. The first three sections will address each of the following research questions:

1. How do faculty members who teach recognized service-learning courses at The University of Texas at Austin describe their experiences implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach?
2. How do faculty members describe the influence of service-learning on their professional and personal identities?
3. How do faculty members explain how service-learning connects, if at all, to the context of their larger scholarship/practice agenda?

Each of the research questions will include a textural and structural description. Textural descriptions focus on *what* faculty members experienced through service-learning, substantiated by their quotes and narratives (Creswell, 2013). Structural descriptions take it one step further by *how* the participants experienced the phenomena (Creswell, 2013). These descriptions will make up a composite theme to describe the lived experience related to each research question.

The fourth section of this chapter will illustrate how each of the three composite themes informs the core essence of this study, titled *Risk versus Reward*. In phenomenological research, the core essence is the central understanding of a shared experience among participants (Creswell, 2013). For this study, the core essence can be summarized by the phrase: *Conscious Commitment: Mitigating Risk through Reward of Professional Integrity*. This phrase summarizes the phenomenon service-learning faculty at UT-Austin engaged in a continuous and dynamic decision cycle based on the perceived risks and rewards related to their experiences, identity, and scholarship. Figure 5.1 presents a visual breakdown of the findings and composite themes.

Core Essence of Research Study			
Conscious Commitment: Mitigating Risk through Reward of Professional Integrity			
	RQ#1: How do faculty members who teach recognized service-learning courses at The University of Texas at Austin describe their experiences implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach?	RQ#2: How do faculty members describe the influence of service-learning on their professional and personal identities?	RQ#3: How do faculty members explain how service-learning connects, if at all, to the context of their larger scholarship/practice agenda?
Textural Description	Focus on Transformative Learning	Building Bridges	Academic-Societal Norms (Rhetoric)
+	+	+	+
Structural Description	Operating in Context	Paradox of One	All Politics are Local (Reality)
=	=	=	=
Composite Theme	<b>Rigor &amp; Resocialization</b>	<b>Walk the Walk</b>	<b>Fight the Good Fight</b>

Figure 5.1 Visual Summary of Study Findings. Each research question was answered by combining a textural description with a structural description to create a composite theme. Next, each composite theme (denoted by bold orange text at the bottom of the figure) served to inform the core essence of the study.

## **Research Question 1 - Emergent Themes**

Data gathered from interviews and collected documents inform analysis of the first research question, “How do faculty members who teach recognized service-learning courses at The University of Texas at Austin describe their experiences implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach?” To address this research question, the following sections will provide the textural description (“Focus on Transformative Learning”) and the structural description (“Operating in Context”). Together, these descriptions explain what faculty experienced when designing service-learning courses with transformative learning outcomes. The composite theme of this research question, “Rigor and Resocialization,” encapsulates the lived experience of how faculty members navigated institutional and community contexts by staying focused on the rigor of their courses while also resocializing the service-learning experience. The findings in this section are limited to the shared lived experience of study participants when preparing for and leading service-learning courses at UT-Austin.

### **FOCUS ON TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING.**

The textural description is focused on *what* participants experienced when implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach. Accordingly, the most salient theme centered on students’ learning, transformation, growth, and development. The Dedoose data analysis code co-occurrence table illustrated that faculty motivation was almost three times as likely to be applied to the passages with the codes related to “student learning” or “transformation” than any other code. This high-level frequency

indicated just how often participants related their motivation for service-learning as being directly tied to student learning outcomes and/or transformative learning experiences.

Implementing a service-learning course was time-consuming, rigorous, purposeful, and rewarding for all faculty participants in this study. In order to cultivate transformative learning, faculty intentionally designed courses to achieve learning outcomes through reciprocity and critical reflection. Some of the core elements to implementing service-learning courses included: designing a course with a balance between theory and practice, ensuring proper training in reciprocal learning with the community partner, setting up the grading and assessment structure, and allowing for critical reflection to occur to measure short-term and long-term transformations.

### **Course Design.**

Designing a service-learning course took discipline, time, and patience. Faculty in this study said they focused on creating opportunities for students to see their education not just as a simple transaction (e.g. take a test and earn a grade), but also as a transformation of their learning (e.g. by applying concepts or theories from course content, students transformed the way they approached the issue). This was a purposeful and time-consuming activity for faculty who worked to ensure the right balance of course content with service so students could meet the learning outcomes of the course. Some faculty, like Anna (a tenured fine arts professor), chose a service-learning pedagogy because it was the most efficient tool available to achieve specific learning outcomes. The first motivation for service-learning was not for the “humanitarian value.” After 20 years of teaching in higher education, Anna said her students do not learn from



explanation alone. Instead, she recognized the difference between transformative learning and memorization when she allowed them to practice a skill first, and then to discuss its ramifications. Anna compared this pedagogical approach to learning to ride a bicycle:

We don't learn from explanations. We learn from doing. Explanations come as a final step when we formalize what it is that we've experienced. Probably one of the brightest examples of that is how you teach a child to ride a bicycle... Can you imagine you would explain to a child that you keep your center well balanced, and while you press your right foot down your left foot comes up. And then the left foot presses down, and your right foot comes up. Is that how it happens? No. That is not how the child would learn how to ride a bicycle! How does it happen? Well, you run with him. You hold the seat. You push. And suddenly at some point it catches. Then he realizes that one foot goes down while the other foot comes up... So explanation confirms and formalizes what we have just learned and experienced. But we cannot learn from explanations alone.

Faculty shared that balancing explanation with experience was not always easy, but it was a necessary and intentional process that they engaged in before the start of every semester. In order to make his course more rigorous, Gary said he worked year-round to define projects for his students so they could have “a real project with a real stakeholder group, with a real client, with a real consequence. They ought to solve the problem, present it, discuss it, and incorporate feedback from stakeholders to produce something valuable to our community.” In addition to finding the right community partners and service-learning projects, Gayle reinforced the importance of contextualizing the service within course content or disciplinary theory. She said that she always frames students' service with lectures and research assignments that reveal the “historical, social, and political pieces so students learn why.” Gayle said sending students into a community with this background information is vital because they can see the community

and the social issues through a different lens, and that leads students to question how things could be different. In a similar vein, Pam said the theory and context was an important piece because students learned to integrate it into their service approach. "Students don't remember facts. They remember events."

One of the signature aspects of service-learning is the inclusion of both reciprocity and reflection. All faculty in this study infused these crucial pedagogical elements into their courses in a purposeful manner. Gayle said,

For me, it's a commitment to structure and to continuously ask myself as a professor, "What am I doing, and why am I doing this?" The community should benefit, and the students should benefit through giving himself or herself credit for doing the work as well as their own personal and professional transformation. And the community should benefit by having a tangible product or service that will be value-added to what they're already doing. I really take to heart that reciprocity should be measured in some way.

Mike shared a similar perspective as he described the inextricable link between reciprocity and reflection. Mike said his students come to "recognize that important decisions are not made late at night sitting at the computer. Important decisions are made at the table when you're talking to people you're serving." Mike's students reflected on the change they saw in their community partners, and recognized that real change could only happen when all stakeholders were invested in the learning process. All faculty integrated formal reflections as a component of their service-learning courses. The reflections assignments allowed students the opportunity to synthesize their experience with theoretical constructs, course content, and various approaches. Linda said student reflection papers are important because it's where she can measure real learning and transformation within her students. She ascertained:

I just don't think learning happens without experience and without change. In my mind, why are we here if we aren't doing those two things—giving students experiences and then giving them material to change their perspective, to change their behavior, to change their goals, or challenge their values?

Furthermore, Pam said that just having students engage in service is a wasted opportunity “if you don't have that dialogic conversation, either through an assignment or a reflection. [Y]ou have to be the type of person that's going to be willing to sacrifice and give feedback to the students.”

Participants uniformly agreed that grading and assessment were more difficult to design for their service-learning classes because the goals and learning outcomes differed from traditional lecture courses. In contrast to testing recollection of specific facts or concepts, faculty participants had to find ways to assess student participation and effort, as well as learning transformed thinking. The majority of faculty in this study said they struggled over how to organize the grading structure of their service-learning courses. Summarizing the sentiment of the participants, Anna said, “Everyone hates to grade [in a service-learning course]. It's a skill in itself.” There was not a uniform approach to assessment among the faculty, but they each shared various issues. Likewise, Linda said she had to make tough choices in deciding how, if at all, to allow community partners' dissatisfaction to weigh on a student grades. Although she was careful not to threaten the reciprocal relationship with the partners, Linda said she walked a delicate balance in trying to decide how to turn the negative experience into a learning opportunity for students. In the past, she has worked with students on a plan to re-build the relationship or to make amends with their community partner, and she used this opportunity to talk to

students about how to approach things differently in a future situation so “it sticks with them.” In reflecting on her most recent experience Linda said, “I didn’t punish them with a lower grade. I had to take the risk away for the students to really engage and go forward. If the grade risk is there, or if students worry they will fail if the client doesn’t like their work, it will shut the students down.”

Diane has allowed community partners to provide feedback on students’ performance as one factor in determining earned grades. She said it was a “complicated process of all of us working together,” but it was nice to reflect with the students and community partners on the change and value of the experience. However, Diane expressed feelings of frustration when students do not pull their own weight in a project. Irritated, she said, “First of all, how dare you? This is the real world, and secondly, you’re hurting the rest of your team and your teammates.” Gary felt the same frustration with students who did not put in a good faith effort. He said:

When you go out in the real world, you’re not getting a grade. You’re going to do it because you intrinsically want to do a good job, because you want to help someone, because you want to present yourself professionally, and because doing a good job is going to help you in your career and in your profession.

Gayle offered a different perspective on grading. She said, “Once you move into understanding that you have to change the grading structure, then you are able to grade students on transformation, not on memorization. It transcends grading on the ability to take tests, or even the ability to write well.” Gayle had students engage in self-assessment to baseline their current understanding of concepts and their personal values at the beginning of each semester. From there, she assessed student reflections and levels

of reciprocity throughout the service-learning project. She said this type of grading is time-consuming, but that once “all things come together, it gets into your soul.” Gayle administered post-service assessments for students so they could have results to compare to the baseline assessment they took at the beginning of the semester. This allowed Gayle to measure individual student transformation, and what she considered to be the most important aspect of her grading style. Similarly, Betty said she looks forward to the end of the semester assessments because she sees “a brightness in students’ eyes when they see that they have made a difference, not just a grade.”

### **Immediate Utility and Long-Term Impact.**

Faculty participants agreed that designing a rigorous service-learning course was important to facilitate transformative student learning, growth and development. Some of the faculty experienced the transformation, as Gayle said, “right in front of our eyes.” However, other participants said they experienced a long-term impact and transformation for their students that extended beyond the particular semester in which they took the service-learning class.

Within the short-term, professors shared the changes they witnessed in their students. Julie enjoyed “reading about when students had something go well, or something that's been difficult, but they've resolved it in their service.” She recognized how students’ final papers reflect their experience and personal change: “They've really been touched by their service in the school or in the community. Sometimes, they feel that they've grown personally and that they've become more confident interacting with people.”

Gary shared that he saw the most transformation in students who deal with adversity through their service-learning projects. He told a story about how his students were making a final presentation at a local government agency and did not realize that the director of the department was in the audience. After providing several alternatives to address an issue, the group editorialized that the community partner “would never” choose the most expensive solution. Gary said, “It was very hard for me to sit in that room. My immediate reaction was to stand up and say, ‘Cut!’ But I couldn’t. That wouldn’t have been realistic.” Gary said the most impactful experience was when the client approached his students after the presentation to talk about the disrespectful comment and coached them on better ways to communicate and interact with community partners. Gary noticed an immediate transformation in his students’ professional demeanor. “I don’t know how to teach that any better way than for them to stand up there, and you can see how uncomfortable they are.” Although there may be uncomfortable moments, the utility of the skills and impact of the mistakes can be an immediate learning moment for students.

Gayle said she knew her students were internalizing, synthesizing, and applying course theories with civic engagement when she was confronted by her students about how their class could respond to a current event.

In the middle of this semester, the Trayvon Martin<sup>2</sup> case came up...Students expect you to not just throw [current events like this] into the lecture. They challenged me, "So what are we going to do?" because they realized we're about action, and we were already out in the community. So that year, they organized a rally and I led them from the front steps of the [UT-Austin] tower. Many of the students were from my class or came out because of the tweets and texts that were going around asking students to meet us... But see, I had a professional obligation at that point because I'm talking about being a change agent in my class.

Gayle felt that her students actually "got it" that semester because they learned about how to organize in a peaceful way to bring awareness to a social issue they cared about. She saw an immediate understanding and transformation among her students within the span of the semester.

Betty shared an anecdote from one of her service-learning classes when she witnessed a transformational learning moment for her students. The students were out in the community meeting with a resident about a potential design for her new home.

They showed her a few designs, and she very respectfully said, "Yes, it's very beautiful." She knew that the students had put these things together. She was complimentary in an appropriate, very respectful way. Then they said, "Would you want to live in this house?" It was a shed, just on that one-sided, not gabled. She said, "No." Surprised, they said, "Why not? Tell us more." I think, when she realized they were eager for more information, she let her guard down a little bit more. She struggled to try to describe it, and then she said, "I just couldn't hang my Christmas lights on that." It was a really great moment, because it wasn't that the Christmas lights were going to fall off. To her, it just didn't resemble a home. Again, I can't teach that. That has to come from an experience, and I think it was transformative for the students that were there—just having a woman being nice

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<sup>2</sup> Trayvon Martin was a 17-year-old African American from Miami Gardens, Florida who was fatally shot by George Zimmerman, a Caucasian neighborhood watch volunteer, in Sanford, Florida. On the evening of February 26, Martin went to a convenience store and purchased candy and juice. As Martin returned from the store wearing a sweatshirt and hood covering his head, Zimmerman spotted him and called the police to report him, saying he looked suspicious. Moments later, there was an altercation between the two individuals in which Martin, who was unarmed, was shot in the chest. Following Martin's death, rallies, marches and protests were held across the nation. The media coverage surrounding Martin's death triggered a national debate about racial profiling and stand your ground laws.

enough to have us in her home, and then be real honest about what she was comfortable with.

Betty recalled the conversations and transformative thought that took root in her students' minds after that interaction. The students recognized the importance of adapting their approach based on feedback and input from community stakeholders—rather than designing an antiseptic piece in a studio void of community input.

All faculty in this study who taught service-learning for at least five years (six of the nine participants) shared their experience in recognizing long-term benefits and transformations in their students. Gary said the most rewarding experience was to have former students return as mentors in his class. He has had former students who said they “had no idea what really happened in [the field] and in the real world” before the service-learning course. Recognizing the delayed value and transformation, Gary said, “With all learning there's that light bulb moment, and that light bulb moment may not happen in the semester. But it'll happen sometime in their career.”

Gayle said that the long-term acquisition of a skill is based on the transformative nature of service-learning. “That's the difference between volunteering and service-learning. I can guarantee you that the students I'm teaching learn about real development.” She said that when students are in the workforce and have families and income, they would be faced with critical community decisions. She said they would know how to act and react as citizens in a community because “we worked on a deeper level.” In fact, Gayle has watched her students help a community resist gentrification and fight crime over time, and the students' end-of-course reflections demonstrated an



internalization of these issues and the impact it will have on their future decisions for purchasing homes and working with communities, instead of against them. “There's a student transformation part that happens when you effectively integrate the study with service.”

Gayle further discussed how her relationship with students transformed over the course of the semester and how students continued to stay in touch after completing her course. Gayle said it was a “surprise” to her that her students would want to continue to stay in touch and share how they continued to build upon what they learned in her class. Gayle noticed how her students changed their self-perception after engaging with service-learning where they began to reframe their role at the institution to see themselves as young professionals based on the caliber and quality of their work—something that was not a direct learning outcome of courses where she did not utilize service-learning. In a similar way, Mike noticed how his students moved from just understanding or remembering a concept to critically evaluating it and synthesizing it with other knowledge. He gave an example of how his most recent cohort of students demonstrated long-term, transformative learning by utilizing language that would be understood by professionals in the field as an “inside joke.”

They reflect in a context that becomes our own [professional] language. It's hard to describe, but for example, I was sitting in on a student group's regular review session. And one of the students said a couple of times as he pointed to a poster on the wall, “Well, isn't that formally pretty?!” Hahaha! [laughing heartily] You get it? Because there was a poster that was on the wall in our classroom that had a formal design on it. But the picture didn't have anything to do with reality. It was not useful, and maybe not even functional. So the joke is that it was formal, or formally pretty. It became an inside joke with the students. And [that showed me] they really do get it!

Linda told of an encounter she had with one of her students several years after he graduated. The student had returned to campus to participate in an alumni event when their paths crossed.

He said, “You know, I have to tell you. I don’t think I even gave you a high evaluation because I hated how much work the course was. But here I am six or seven years out of college and it’s your class. Really, it’s YOUR class that I still call on for the skills I use every day.” Wow! I mean, you can’t pay me enough money to be worth more than that!

Linda reiterated that her motivation for service-learning stemmed directly from students’ transformative learning. “When they succeed, I feel like I succeed. In fact, I would say that I get more joy out of hearing about students who succeed... than whether or not I win awards or anything else.”

All faculty agreed that the short and long-term transformations were a result of including reciprocity and reflection into the course design. Anna smiled when she recalled the various letters and emails she received throughout the years from students who “made it” as an artist. Diane recognized that the transformation in her students was a direct reflection of the reciprocal learning for all involved. She said, “It’s not like we’re here just toiling in the fields. We’re growing too. We’re getting something out of it. It’s mutually beneficial!” While transformative learning was primarily the intention behind course design, faculty and community partners also benefited from challenges and opportunities to learn and grow.

## **OPERATING IN CONTEXT.**

The structural description emerged from the data analysis for this first research question, and it explains *how* faculty experienced transformative learning embedded within the context of the institution and the community. The participants expressed their professional obligation and personal integrity to align their work with the University's mission and core values. Therefore, they described their experiences as being unique to the formal structures and informal culture surrounding UT-Austin and the communities they served. I asked all participants to describe how they view their role as it related to the university's institutional mission, societal needs, and the historical context of the community they served. Overall, faculty reported having a heightened sense of awareness of: 1) the macro obligations of teaching at a public research institution, 2) the dynamic and often discontented debates on what was considered valuable scholarship by students and peer faculty, and 3) the town-gown historical relationship between the University and the various communities.

### **Macro Obligation of the Research Institution.**

Every faculty participant described their experience leading service-learning courses at UT-Austin as context-specific. Despite the fact that each participant partnered with different communities for their service-learning courses (e.g. one particular neighborhood in Austin, a developing nation, a state governing body, individual residents, a non-profit organization, etc.), they were all able to describe the unique experience and importance of teaching at a large public research institution located blocks away from the state capitol. All faculty agreed that serving communities and

teaching students how to serve communities was an inherent part of their employment at a public institution. As Diane said, “We've got an obligation to serve the community. It's not a question for me—particularly at a public university. That's what we're here for.”

Mike echoed this sentiment:

UT [Austin] is not a land grant university, but it is a public university. One of the primary responsibilities of a public university should be to benefit the citizens of the state directly. The research that's done—even if it's about the *Iliad*—should somehow have a benefit to the citizens of Texas. I think that service-learning clearly has a direct benefit to the citizens of Texas. One would think that the University would embrace it as a way of helping citizens recognize that the University can benefit them directly.

Mike eloquently summarized what all faculty in this study described—the debate between public and private benefits to service-learning. Mike said that there are multiple competing frames by which politicians, administrators, faculty, students, and the community view the role of a public higher education institution. He said that some people “frame the University as an elite, aloof institution that's very wealthy that has nothing to do with them. Others view it through the football team, and they bleed orange.” However, on the aggregate, all faculty in this study agreed that they viewed UT-Austin as being obligated to fulfill its institutional mission of contributing to the advancement of society, developing new knowledge, and serving citizens through public programs and public service.

The majority of faculty were able to recall the institution's core values—including the value of *Responsibility*, defined as the calling to serve as a catalyst for positive change in Texas and beyond (University of Texas at Austin, 2013a). All faculty members could recite the University's well-known slogan, “What starts here changes the

world.” Diane said, “The tagline very much influences my thinking. I have referred to it on numerous occasions with my students, with the people I work with, just in many, many contexts related to my work.” When asked about the tagline, Pam asserted, “I’m pretty well aligned with it...I try and instill that in the students, too, that if you change one life, you’ve really made a difference.” However, the faculty in this study questioned whether the institutional mission and core values were merely symbolic statements, rather than serving as a protective decree for those who chose to leverage their academic freedom to implement a service-learning pedagogical approach.

### **Debate Over Valuable Scholarship.**

Faculty agreed that the institutional leadership, institutional mission, and campus-wide promotion structures were in place to support service-learning. In fact, the majority of participants in this sample had received promotion, tenure, or an institutional award as a direct result of teaching through service-learning. Nonetheless, faculty uniformly reported that it was the local culture of their individual departments or disciplines that were more contentious than the larger institutional context. While the formal university structures and policies supported service-learning, it was within their specific department or discipline where participants felt the *least* support or collegiality. Recall the participant profiles in Chapter 4 in which each faculty member described at least one experience when they had to defend their use of service-learning to students, peer faculty or departmental leadership because it countered traditional academic-societal norms for their particular discipline.

Anna described how one of her former directors asked her why she observed students when they were engaged in their service-learning activity. She explained to him that it allowed her the opportunity to have key insights to help students reflect upon how they connected course content within the context of helping someone else learn the art. Her director's response was, "Can't you do it during your lecture?" Anna said she was disheartened by his lack of understanding and support.

Diane shared how she experienced bias from colleagues who did not consider her books, published government documents, news articles, and various other forms of scholarship to be "academic enough." Diane held an academic journal in one hand and a policy brief that influenced a change in legislation in the other hand. Looking directly at me, she said, "The problem is that one of these gets valued in an academic setting and the other does not."

Julie recognized the importance of having departmental leadership to support academic freedom. After she piloted a service-learning class, a former department chair told her that it was inappropriate to combine service with her course. Julie said,

I never really knew why. We guessed that possibly some of the faculty and the chair were concerned that maybe service-learning and working in the community would be somehow in competition with study abroad. Of course in study abroad you have immersion, and if we let you immerse here in Texas—which seems like a perfectly natural thing to do—but if we encourage it here, then maybe you won't go abroad. If you don't go abroad, then maybe [our department] doesn't look good. It seemed like a political thing. After that and a couple of other things happened, I was disgusted and left UT[-Austin] for a while.

After returning to teach full-time at the University under new leadership, Julie said, "I do the things that I do in that context and with awareness."

Gary shared how he had to navigate the context of skepticism from both students and peer faculty in his department about service-learning. First, he conceded, “For every student that thinks it's the greatest thing in the world and is impacted significantly by this course, there are also students who hate it, and who were angry that they got stuck in the uncomfortable situation.” Nevertheless, Gary has collected an abundance of positive evidence over the years from students and community members who had transformative experiences with his service-learning class. Interestingly, Gary said that he did not readily share these stories with his peer colleagues or departmental leadership. When I asked him why he refrained from sharing the positive feedback, he said, “They like it. I think, they think that it's helping us with accreditation. They're happy to be able to check that box.” In digging deeper, I discovered that the positive and negative student experiences were not being shared because of the perception of what was considered valuable scholarship within his discipline. Instead, Gary felt his department only wanted to know that they could ethically fulfill an accreditation requirement through this experiential learning and were much less concerned with the quality of experience of students.

When Linda applied for her most recent promotion she had “a whole section about connecting to the community.” Linda said that her promotion file clearly delineated that she had a very distinct definition of service, and it did not include just sitting on a faculty committee. Instead, Linda confided, “I showed the connections I forged between the University, the business world, and the non-profit community. To me, that is a service—when you create those connections and help the community feel a

benefit from the University.” Linda asserted that she had support from her department chair to teach through service-learning, and if that ever changed she would find another place to teach. She was resolute in describing her role at the University: “In my mind, there is a macro obligation on the part of the university to maintain a healthy town-gown relationship.... I mean, there’s got to be a benefit to dodging all those students on Guadalupe Street<sup>3</sup>.” At the same time, she also felt her students needed to be challenged to see how they could leverage their privilege to give back to the community in a productive manner. Linda said that students did not readily appreciate or value this teaching approach. She admitted, “I have to do some norming for the students. I constantly make sure they understand *why* we’re doing what we’re doing. I have to do a lot more of that than a professor in a traditional class.”

### **Town-Gown Relationships.**

All faculty in this study articulated their role at a public research institution was to create new knowledge for the benefit of society. Some faculty interpreted this obligation by working on a global scale with underdeveloped countries. Others worked with community partners that were not defined by a geographical region, but instead, they worked with governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, school systems, or individual community members. Although there were various types of communities served through this pedagogical approach, the faculty participants in this study deeply understood the context of operating at the nexus of community and university needs—

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<sup>3</sup> Guadalupe Street is the main road (also known as “The Drag”) that forms the western border of UT-Austin’s campus.



also known as town-gown issues. Faculty participants varied in their depth of their familiarity with UT-Austin's history, but each person was able to recall historical facts and discriminatory practices carried out by the University that led to disenfranchisement of both community residents and students. This working knowledge empowered faculty to take a proactive approach in preparing students to work in these contexts, as well as to re-orient community partners to service-learning by following best practices for community engagement. Attempts to ameliorate student and community anxiety and skepticism revealed the complexity of designing a service-learning course within the context of a contentious town-gown environment.

Gayle decided to frame each of her service-learning classes in challenging students to consider the role of a public university in society. She has provided several readings and journal articles for students. "For example we read how Columbia [University] students were actively involved in protesting the university's takeover of land in Harlem. And we look at other examples of how universities create friction or lack of good will with their neighbors." Gayle provided examples to her students of how several prestigious universities have historically marginalized specific populations in the past, creating the rhetoric of hostility around community-university partnerships. Gayle said, "I describe why residents may not always look upon UT [Austin] students favorably in a community. It's important for them to be prepared for that and to be able to articulate their role to community folks." Still, Gayle recalled being surprised when a community member approached her and said, "So you're bringing all these students here, and to what extent are they just résumé building? Is UT [Austin] really helping us here?"

Betty explained the difficulty of working in a context wrought with friction caused by years of disenfranchisement and mistrust. She had to find a balance between having “a scholarly approach...because students need to feel that they are part of something serious,” but her students have learned that outside of the academy it “is not really appropriate to have an academic parlance.” Betty said she has learned to tailor her approach in working with underrepresented communities versus academic colleagues.

I try not to use jargon. I try to be honest. I try to under-promise, and over-deliver at all times because I think the other problem is that the University has been known to come in, test and prod, and not give anything back.

Betty’s students are required to do a service activity up front with a community partner before they begin to address systemic or long-term issues. She said, “That’s how you build trust, you listen a lot. You prove that you are here to do work with them, not just test things on them and leave.” Another way she has built trust is to work with the same community for a long time. “It’s very alluring to students go engage with all sorts of different communities, and feel like you’re in some sort of savior role.”

Mike and Pam reinforced the difficulty of building trusting relationships with community partners in order to promote transformative learning. Mike spent months building a reciprocal relationship between his students and community partners. He described his dismay when he received a report about a project his students just completed for a local Austin family. Mike said, “The husband of the family said, ‘Yeah, those students at UT [Austin] just practiced on us.’ So that was stinging. It was a slightly pejorative term.” Similarly, Pam described the struggle to ensure reciprocity was mutually built within the context of service-learning. She said some community partners

were not “as consistent as they could have been in providing the kind of support that the students needed.”

#### **RIGOR AND RESOCIALIZATION.**

Departmental leadership, peer faculty, and town-gown relationships often created friction as a backdrop to the operational context of service-learning. This caused faculty to reflect on how they could create rigorous courses and also socialize others to understand the potential for transformative learning through service. These composite descriptions make up the core essence of having rigor and resocialization as part of a service-learning implementation strategy.

In order to create an environment suitable for transformation, faculty participants purposefully implemented rigorous service requirements and learning outcomes through the use of reciprocity and reflection intended to challenge the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and social development of students. As students displayed signs of growth and development, faculty and community partners were also poised to transform their thoughts or actions. However, these experiences did not happen in a vacuum. Choosing a service-learning pedagogy meant that faculty participants were at the nexus of navigating a context littered with 1) macro obligations of teaching at a public research institution, 2) dynamic and often discontented debates on what was considered valuable scholarship by students and peer faculty, and 3) historical town-gown relationships. Participants engaged in resocializing their departmental leadership, peer faculty, students, and community partners to reconsider how reciprocal and reflective service-learning

could produce rigorous scholarship, build authentic university-community partnerships, and develop a new generation of civic leaders in their discipline.

### **Research Question 2 - Emergent Themes**

This section focuses on the themes derived from the research question, “How do faculty members describe the influence of service-learning on their professional and personal identities?” Utilizing Demb and Wade’s (2012) faculty engagement model as a starting point, I analyzed data to consider the various factors of participants’ personal and professional identities that may be influenced through their experience with service-learning.

As I interviewed participants in this study, I quickly realized that this particular research question had an underlying assumption of a direct causal relationship based on the understanding of prior quantitative studies; in particular, this question was heavily influenced by Demb and Wade’s (2012) model which illustrated the statistical significance of personal and professional factors that served as motivation or deterrence when faculty chose to engage in service-learning or other forms of engaged scholarship. The underlying assumption of the second research question was that faculty members would describe how teaching through service-learning has directly impacted their professional and personal identity. What was particularly interesting about this sample of faculty members was their deep connection with their prior work experience and how that factored into their identity formation as a professional and also influenced how they approached their teaching responsibility at the University.

The core essence of this research question is, *Walk the Walk*, which is made up of two composite descriptions. First, the textural description details what faculty experienced in their identity formation through their use of service-learning. This textural description is summed up by the theme, *Building Bridges*. The description of building bridges will clarify the influence of service-learning as indispensable part of faculty participants' continuous identity formation. This theme manifests as a cyclical relationship, not a linear one as I first thought when formulating the second research question. The second composite description will address *how* participants experience building bridges to their identity based on the paradox they feel by providing data to illustrate how faculty experienced both loneliness and bravery as the only service-learning professor in their department. The theme, which informs the structural description, *The Paradox of One*, provides specific examples of how faculty experienced advantages and disadvantages to being the only person in their department who have a service-learning pedagogical approach.

Data from in-depth interviews and collected documents inform the composite textural and structural descriptions which ultimately make up the core essence, *Walk the Walk*, to address the second research question. Faculty participants were able to find credibility as a professional, an academician, and a citizen because they were able to use service-learning in two capacities. First service-learning allowed them to bridge their personal and professional identities. Second, faculty recognized the paradox of being the only one in their academic department to utilize service-learning. This advantageous and disadvantageous mix of experiences ultimately allowed faculty to view their service-

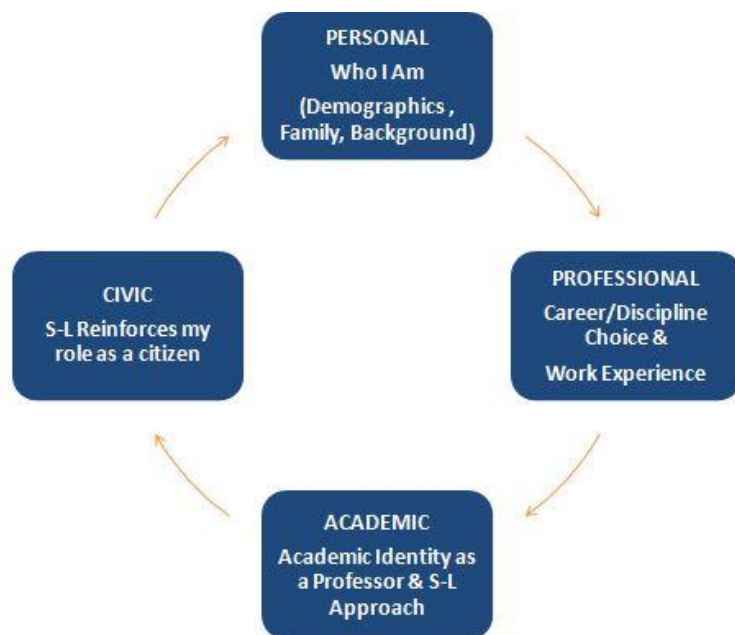
learning pedagogical approach as a key component to their ability to “walk the walk” so that they could be credible in the professional, personal, academic, and civic dimensions of their lives.

### **BUILDING BRIDGES.**

The word “bridge” was explicitly used by four of the nine faculty participants throughout their in-depth interviews as a metaphor to describe their role and identity. All nine participants used the words “connect” or “connector” as a way to describe the active relationship between service-learning and their personal and professional identities. The frequency of these terms led to a deeper understanding of the reciprocal nature between the pedagogical approach of service-learning and faculty participants’ holistic identity. Based on the data, I have termed this phenomenon as “building bridges.” Building bridges is the process by which faculty have connected the professional, personal, academic, and civic dimensions of their identity into a single, authentic identity so that they could operate within the various worlds without losing credibility.

One of the most frequent themes that found in data analysis was the notion that faculty engaged in an active learning cycle of experience and identity development (see Figure 5.2). Although most participants began their stories by describing their personal experiences and intersections of identity (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, etc.), it was clear that faculty were always renegotiating personal identity as a result of the influence of professional, academic, and civic experiences—particularly as a result of service-learning. Early formative experiences in education and professional training influenced all nine of the participants to eventually choose a new career path as

an academician. Because of their prior work experience, participants approached the academy from a practitioner lens; therefore, they found service-learning to be the ultimate bridge to intersect their professional and personal identities. In doing so, participants described how they connected the macro issues within their field/discipline with micro responsibilities and actions through service-learning to bridge their academic identity with their civic identity. Figure 5.2 illustrates this active learning cycle bridging identities for service-learning faculty. The following three sections will describe this cycle in depth by highlighting how service-learning influenced participants ability to: 1) bridge personal identity to professional identity, 2) bridge professional identity to academic identity, and 3) bridge academic identity to civic identity.



*Figure 5.2 Active Cycle of Bridging Identities.* Visual depiction of how faculty participants describe the way in which service-learning acts as a bridge in connecting their identities from various dimensions.

For Gary, a tenured professor in Arts and Sciences, his identity was inextricably linked with the intersection of his family and educational journey. Gary's mother and grandmother were teachers and his father and grandfather were hard-working practitioners in a STEM field. "You don't end up where you are by chance. There's a lot going on that led me to be here." Gary kept his grandmother's school bell and his grandfather's licensed stamp in his office as a reminder of this early personal influence. Similarly, Anna, a tenured professor in Arts and Sciences, said that once her parents recognized her artistic ability they enrolled her in "established schools where they work with gifted children." She credited her parents for providing a rigorous education "from the beginning" so that she could pursue a career as a professional artist.

Julie knew that her professional work would have to be centered around humanities because her "parents understood in a really deep way the importance of education, and also the importance of accepting people as they are, and working together and being aware that others in the community are not as fortunate." Although Julie worked in several capacities before becoming a full-time professor, she never faulted in her efforts to pursue a career path that would combine her love of art, linguistics, and history in an effort to better the community.

Being born premature and growing up as "the underdog" is an important part of Pam's personal identity. However, she also described an even more direct bridge to why she ultimately chose to work as an administrator in the school system before returning to the University to pursue teaching as a full-time faculty member:



To be honest with you, I had so many professors [at my undergraduate institution] that had never been an administrator. I found that I had a tendency to not look as positively or didn't give them credibility. They didn't have the "street cred." It was all philosophy and theory. I thought to myself, "You'd never make it for two weeks in [the field]." I wanted to have the street credibility that went along with my education.

In an effort to mitigate the issue of credibility, Pam decided to first work in the field as a practitioner. Since she was familiar with playing the role of an underdog, she decided to enter her field and work within the educational system to help others who were also faced with challenges.

### **Professional Identity Bridge to Academic Identity.**

Although all faculty participants worked within their respective fields in a professional capacity, they eventually pursued a career as a full-time academician. However, all faculty described this transition as an intentional bridge between worlds—not forsaking one career at the expense of another. Diane, a senior lecturer in Humanities and Social Sciences, was clear about her intentions to enter the professorate: "I never went into academia with an eye towards being in an ivory tower. It was just another vehicle for working on these issues, and wanting to expose my students to all that."

As a parallel to Diane's experience both Betty and Gary carried important professional obligations with them into their roles as professors. Betty, a tenure-track professor in Arts and Sciences, said the bridge from her professional identity to her academic identity has been useful because she can still work on key issues in the non-profit world. In fact, this "dual citizenship" allowed her to bridge networks of people from the world of practice and the world of theory:

I am seen as a person who can speak a little of that language, and a little of this language, and because of that I can convene people and help facilitate full conversations, that they might not be able to convene on their own. That seems to be the unique thing that I contribute to.

Similarly, Gary could not shed his professional orientation when he entered academia. He understood in a profound way the positive and negative impact that professionals in his field could have, and he specifically recalled the man-made aftermath in the wake of a large-scale natural disaster: “What really struck me about it was that we, as [a profession], had done a lousy job of looking at the big picture...and communicating very clearly with people making the decisions and with the public, who was going to be affected by the decisions, what the consequences of those decisions would be.” Based on the responsibility he felt from his professional experience, Gary took on the identity in his department as the one person who would be willing to offer students a capstone service-learning course to test their ethical and professional orientations with a real-world client. When asked how his professional identity played into this decision, he said it was “absolutely critical.”

Both Mike and Linda spent two decades of their lives as practitioners within their respective professions. The longevity of their careers led each of them to carry an obligation of guiding students to understanding how the theories could be applied and make a difference in the real world. Mike described this as an epistemological approach to his work; his identity as a professor was to challenge students to active engagement in testing theoretical assumptions. Furthermore, he posited that connecting his professional

and academic worlds allowed him to address real systematic issues from a different vantage point:

You can understand and recognize that these macro structures of race, gender, and class are operative and appreciate how they work, but you can still be in touch with conditions that are entirely local. So it's not preferring one over the other. It's to say that both are operative.

Similarly, Linda described her academic epistemological orientation as “a core part what I believe teaching is all about.” She further stated, “You don't want to hire me as a teacher if you don't want service-learning because learning is a journey of experience.”

### **Academic Identity as a Bridge to Civic Identity.**

Faculty described service-learning as one way that they engaged in an active learning and growth cycle so that they could find congruence between the personal and professional identities as well as academic and civic identities. All participants articulated the symbiotic nature of service-learning as a way to reinforce and express their roles in academia, within their professional field, and as a part of the community.

Anna believed that her identity as a “very demanding teacher” was an important part of her academic identity because students respected the disciplined pathway she took in order to be a professional artist:

I think they know that my demands come from my respect to what we're doing—out of my respect to them, their ability. I don't want to play games with them. I want them to work at the top of their abilities. I want to stimulate their creativity, and that requires discipline.

Anna also said, “I am here in a position to teach my students how to teach. My professional integrity calls me to do everything that needs to be done to accomplish that goal.”

Likewise, Betty came to academia “from a love of practice.” Her ability to teach utilizing a service-learning pedagogical approach was one way that she demonstrated to students the importance of connecting their skills to real-world impact. Betty said, “Service-learning is about understanding the true spectrum of diverse needs in a community.... It's a way that I can contribute to these big issues, without having to make it a separate job.”

In addition to their academic identity, faculty utilized service-learning as a way to stay in service to colleagues in their respective fields. One way to demonstrate this is by cultivating the next generation of leaders. Diane expressed this by saying, “I am becoming like a feeder organization for a lot of these places, because they know that the students coming out of my classes are well prepared and they're doing quality work.” By extension, Diane’s students reflected both her academic and professional identity because they were well prepared, savvy in the field, and contributed new knowledge that challenged the landscape of the profession. Additionally, Gayle and Linda connected their professional work from corporate America to their research and teaching within communities. They described their role with students as being a “mentor” or a “guide” as they encouraged students to find opportunities at the intersection of service-learning and skill-building. In doing so, they felt that local communities and peer professionals viewed them as reliable, trustworthy, and still contributing back to the integrity of their discipline.

Last, faculty described the opportunity to participate in service-learning as a way to reinforce their identity as a citizen. Although Mike said his primary responsibility in

service-learning was to teach students, he would not engage in that pedagogical practice without “preserving the interests of the communities we work with.” Furthermore, Mike asserted that preserving community interests reflected his identity as a civically engaged citizen: “I must be frank with you. It preserves my interests as a public intellectual.” Gary also had a similar understanding of how service-learning has influenced his identity within the community: over the years he has helped students navigate local politics through service-learning projects. Gary recognized that service-learning projects placed him in a unique position to contribute to work with city officials in a capacity he otherwise would not have had as just a professional or just an academician. In fact, Gary pointed to his service-learning experiences as opening him up to the idea that he could one day run for public office: “I’ve gotten more involved in policy and in wanting to have the ability to contribute to the city and to the community in terms of the policies that we’re establishing.”

In summary, service-learning has served as the bridge that allowed faculty participants to reinforce their identity as a professor, in their professional field, and in the community. This active learning cycle allowed faculty to bridge personal and professional identities with academic and civic identities through each service-learning experience. Perhaps Julie summarized this theme best when she looked at the cyclical nature of identity formation and said, “I have the sense that I’m a bridge-builder.”

### **THE PARADOX OF ONE.**

Faculty participants described how service-learning clearly connected aspects of their personal and professional identities; however, faculty are an interesting paradox

when they considered their role within academic departments on campus. Typically the phrase “birds of a feather stick together” resonates with faculty who work within the same discipline and who share common research or teaching interests. Instead, faculty in this study described themselves as being the only person within their department who utilized a service-learning pedagogical approach. While some of the participants established working relationships with professors outside of their department who engaged in similar work, all participants felt that this unique status within their own department proved to be both an advantage and a disadvantage—creating a paradoxical existence by which their identity was challenged.

Eight of the nine faculty participants received some type of promotion or award based on their service-learning work. For example, Julie was appointed by her department chair to lead service-learning initiatives. “Through my teaching and through those interactions with the faculty, I feel like it gets affirmed over and over that service-learning is good.” By being one of the few professors who uses this pedagogy, Julie was able to stand out from her peers because she could point to tangible outcomes from her students. Linda made similar comments about the unique role of being the only one in her department to engage in service-learning:

Unlike many of my colleagues, certainly all of my tenured colleagues... they haven't worked for a living. They've been in academics all their lives. They're trying to achieve different things with their classes. Their classes are an extension of their own research. There's a place for that, especially at a division one university. But I don't offer that. I don't offer some great theory or line of research that I've been working on for 10-15 years. That's not what I bring to the table. And it doesn't bother me that I'm different. I see that as my competitive advantage. It's what makes me special and unique. I don't need everyone to do it my way. I just need to be true to what I have to give. What are my strengths, and

how do my beliefs fuel those strengths? Faculty in my department are thankful that I do this, and that means they don't have to.

Gary echoed Linda's sentiment in saying that some of his academic colleagues relied upon his professional expertise: "If they haven't practiced...they really wouldn't be comfortable or they wouldn't really understand that's what actually happens in practice." Given their professional expertise as practitioners, Julie, Linda and Gary described how they fulfilled a much-needed niche within their department.

Contrasting to that experience, Mike recalled taking "some heat and criticism from my colleagues" because of the fundamental differences between his epistemological approach and other faculty members who had never practiced in the field. Mike said this fundamental difference centered on the question, "How do you judge excellence?" He felt his colleagues who had never served as a licensed practitioner in the field desired a more "aesthetic excellence." Instead, Mike defined excellence in his field by achieving visually appealing work that also accounts for the context of community and the socio-economic restriction of stakeholders. He described it as a difference between producing excellent work that is pristine and innovative versus producing excellent work that is innovative, but also functional:

It's risky because working with communities invariably means producing works that may be by the standards of design elites as, well, not very good.... [It] is not to say that I don't admire aesthetic excellence or that I don't strive for it in doing community work.... I guess I would say that I have another agenda—which is to produce works that perform not only in visual terms, but also in political and ecological terms.... [But] I found that any kind of theory development without an empirical basis or without some kind of engagement with a community to be served is just epistemologically unsatisfying.

Pam echoed these sentiments by telling how she felt a disconnect in the way she defined excellence from her colleagues. She believed that her identity as a practitioner would be welcomed within her department. Instead, she experienced isolation: “In all actuality, I'm not even sure if anybody really knows what I'm all about.” She recalled speaking up in a faculty meeting to ask how her real-world community work and service-learning course fit into the overall department’s scholarship agenda. To her dismay, Pam said “Everybody just put their head down and looked at me, and nobody said anything, except for the chair, who just said, ‘that's something we really need to think about.’”

Working in a department with colleagues who do not have the same frame of reference proved to be a paradoxical experience for participants in this study. Diane said, “It's like two cultures—the academic culture colliding with the people that have worked in the real world and who know what actually matters out there.” Gayle said she noticed some of her colleagues have wanted to distance themselves from service-learning as a pedagogical approach. “So we talk around it and agree to disagree,” she said. After spending multiple years as a professional artist and over two decades as a faculty member, Anna said she knows that her identity is strong, “but if there are people in the higher offices, who really don’t understand what I’m doing, let it be so.” Pam also struggled to find how she could navigate this paradox, searching outside of her department for collegiality: “I am talking about really finding people that have like minds and like hearts and then getting into the deep conversations.” Pam was not as seasoned as some of the other participants who had already transcended from the paradoxical environment within their department by connecting to other professional



networks and communities. Instead, Pam still searched to find networks that would help her achieve congruence in her identity as a civically engaged professional and scholar.

### **WALK THE WALK.**

How do faculty members describe the influence of service-learning on their professional and personal identities? Participants described how service-learning provided an opportunity to connect their professional, personal, and civic identities by serving as a “coach,” “advisor,” “manager,” “mentor,” “resource,” and “partner in learning.” In each of these roles, faculty were able to bridge their past professional expertise, the present service-learning course, and the possibility of their students’ future opportunities. Service-learning was viewed as a catalytic teaching tool that allowed faculty participants the opportunity to continuously synthesize their identities in an active learning cycle—not a linear one. The result of that synthesis allowed faculty to “walk the walk” because they achieved a level of credibility and congruence in their actions between at least three dimensions of their lives: professional, personal, and community.

Walk the walk is the composite theme for the second research question in this study. Integrated into this core essence is the paradox of “colliding cultures” within their academic department. Faculty had to navigate feelings of isolation and bravery as their peer colleagues and departmental leadership provided mixed reactions to their service-learning approach. Some participants, like Linda and Julie, felt their unique identity, as a service-learning professor was “an advantage,” while other faculty, like Mike and Pam, felt they were “relegated to the academic periphery.” This tension and uncertainty provided an opportunity for faculty participants to make a decision. Ultimately, all

participants made an active decision to continue utilizing service-learning as a mechanism to live out personal and professional values through their work in addressing discipline-specific societal issues as a citizen-scholar.

The various roles that participants' played through service-learning were an important part of their lived experience, and thus, an integral part of their identity as a service-learning faculty member. Primarily, service-learning was the way they simultaneously expressed who they were as a professional, an academician, and a citizen. Service-learning allowed faculty walk the walk because they 1) stayed connected to key issues within their field/discipline and practice, 2) were viewed favorably by their colleagues in the field/discipline for cultivating the next generation of leaders, 3) taught students from a unique, practitioner-informed vantage point, and 4) remained civically engaged within their community. In other words, faculty described service-learning as a mechanism to walk the walk in their professional, personal, academic, and civic dimensions without losing credibility—even if faced with adversity.

### **Research Question 3 - Emergent Themes**

Data gathered from interviews and collected documents inform analysis of the first research question, “How do faculty members explain how service-learning connects, if at all, to the context of their larger scholarship/practice agenda?” Similar to the previous two research questions, this section will be divided into three sub-sections: the textural description, the structural description, and the composite theme. Since this is a

phenomenological study, I am obligated to distill the data analysis down to a common experience among participants.

For this research question, the most salient finding was the shared common language among participants in describing service-learning as a key component of a larger scholarship or practice agenda. The following textural description, *Re-Framing Research, Teaching, and Service: Rhetoric*, will describe this common language and provide *what* perspectives faculty used to reframe the role of service-learning at a research-intensive university, such as UT-Austin. Despite this shared common language, there was a great deal of variation in how faculty members were able to integrate this pedagogical approach to fulfill their scholarship agenda. Therefore, the structural description, *All Politics are Local: Reality*, will illustrate *how* faculty participants were primarily faced with difficulties at their departmental level.

#### **REFRAMING ACADEMIC-SOCIETAL NORMS: RHETORIC.**

The faculty participants in this study uniformly agreed that their service-learning courses were not an isolated effort, but were a key element to their larger scholarship/practice agenda. Faculty approached their scholarship agendas through a shared understanding and common language around reframing the traditional three pillars of the academy—research, teaching, and service. Service-learning was connected to their larger scholarship/practice agenda because it allowed professors to challenge traditional academic-societal norms that often trapped other professors into viewing the three pillars as separate and distinct functions.

Although they came from diverse backgrounds and had different experiences, all of the participants in this study said that service-learning was one manifestation of reframing the three pillars of research, teaching, and service. Mike summed up this process by offering a description of how he reframed the role of a public research institution.

Individuals come into the world, and they are educated in different places and at different times by different social groups. Over time they gain a frame of interpretation. There are many layers to it, but our frames of interpretation guide not only what we do in the world—like how we dress or the kinds of jobs we pursue—but they help us make sense out of happenings. Of course, there are multiple competing frames that are out there. Some people frame the University as an elite, aloof institution that's very wealthy that has nothing to do with them. Others view it through the football team, and they bleed orange.... There are many, many different kinds of frames that are out there. [But for me], it's a mutual learning opportunity. I think of it simply as the university teaching citizens. [My frame of reference] includes the university, faculty, and students gaining some understanding of real problems.

Through the reframing process, Mike demonstrated how his frame of reference for UT-Austin directly aligned with service-learning as a pedagogical approach.

For Anna, a tenured professor in fine arts, service-learning was a pedagogical tool that she used to “diffuse” the three traditional pillars. “My performance is my research, and this experience feeds into my teaching. My teaching, however, also feeds into my performance. You really cannot break them apart. And if they are broken apart, then it's wrong.” When asked why she felt this way, Anna said that a discipline cannot be “preserved as a dead body. It has to be preserved as a living organism.” Through this description, she shared her view on the purpose of a public research institution in preserving the integrity of a discipline through a combination of theory and practice.

Betty shared the same perspective as Anna on the role of a research institution. By diffusing research, teaching, and service through a service-learning pedagogy, she could be “resourceful” on the tenure-track. She said often focused her attention on areas where there was overlap so she could “understand the true spectrum of diverse needs in a community [by creating] scenarios in which problem solving through service-learning is very authentic and locally rooted.”

Like Betty, Diane referenced the “ivory tower” metaphor. Instead of accepting old academic rhetoric that research was the most distinguished of the three pillars, Diane relied upon UT-Austin’s slogan, “What Starts Here Changes the World,” as a way to bridge research with teaching and service. She said the slogan “very much influences my thinking.” Diane referred to the institutional rhetoric as justification for the way she has reframed the three pillars.

The things that I do through service-learning, I think, are teaching, service, and research. It may be more of a stretch for me to persuade other people that it's because of the traditional academic views of what those things are, but it wasn't a personal shift for me. Everything I do with my students, with my classes is about conducting research that's going to be useful in the real world. Not something that's going to go on some journal in a dusty shelf, but something that is targeting an audience that can make a difference with this material. The process of doing the research and writing it is to serve that community. To me, it's all those things bundled into one.

Diane claimed that so many of her colleagues refused to see service-learning as an “untapped resource” in the effort to make the world a better place by combining research and teaching with reciprocal service to give back to a relevant community.

Referring to the traditional academic pillars, Gary said “I never thought of them as three distinct functions.” Instead he declared, “It’s all about education.” Gary

admitted his views were not commensurate with peers in his department who valued the role of research more than teaching or service. Yet, he explained why he believed it was a misnomer to refer to UT-Austin strictly as a research university. “If what we’re here to do is just research, then the university would hire professional researchers...We do research, for the most part, because it provides opportunities for our students to learn.” Gary referred to the scientific method as a guide for how research and service could be merged as an effective educational tool. By addressing a social issue through research, students must understand the underpinnings of a problem and then “figure out a solution that's reasonable, creative, practical, and relevant.” Gary ascertained that the role of an institution like UT-Austin was to provide a safe and productive environment where students could earn a valuable education from professors who integrated their scholarship approach, rather than isolating their efforts to pursue pure research, disconnected service, or one-way teaching.

In the same way, Mike defended his position on why he reframed his role as a professor despite the fact that it differed from his colleagues. “We have differing attitudes about the very purpose of the discipline, and we differ on what the word ‘excellence’ means...For me it is one project. There is no difference between teaching, research, and service.” Mike challenged the traditional academic rhetoric with “an epistemological position” as he posed the question, “How can you do research that is not, at least in part, engaged in the community as a way to test what it is that you are arguing?” In teaching through service-learning, he found that all aspects of scholarship “fit together.” The rhetoric employed by the faculty in this sample illustrated why

service-learning an important element in their overall scholarship agenda. Because participants reframed the academic-societal norms and traditional three pillars, they were able to articulate how service-learning allowed them an opportunity to connect their intellectual assets with community-based research to address public issues within their specific domain.

#### **ALL POLITICS ARE LOCAL: REALITY.**

Although participants in this study shared a common frame of reference about the importance of service-learning, the reality of how they connected it to a scholarship/practice agenda varied based on prior experiences and perceived identity within their academic department. This structural description illustrates how participants described the difficulty in moving from rhetoric to reality in actually being recognized by their department and peers as an engaged scholar who leveraged service-learning courses as a vehicle to connect all academically relevant work (research, teaching, and service). Faculty agreed that most of these difficulties were “local” issues that rested within leadership of their discipline or department, not necessarily indicative of the larger institution. Interestingly, the gradation of their experience could instead be categorized and attributed to faculty members’ rank or status. Therefore, the results of this section are further broken down into three smaller segments to describe how faculty attempted to integrate service-learning as a component their larger agenda.

#### **Lecturer or Senior Lecturers.**

Participants who were either a lecturer or senior lecturer at the time of the study described their larger scholarship agenda as an important part of their role in the

department. Julie, a lecturer in *Humanities and Social Science*, said her ability to create an integrated scholarship agenda depended solely upon the needs of her department. “It depends on your chair and senior faculty. I had no expectation of getting a raise or any recognition for doing this. I was just really glad to be allowed to do it.” Julie said she was “academically and intellectually endowed enough” to be able to teach at UT-Austin, but she confessed, “I’m not going to win a Nobel Prize for my research... I do not have a research agenda in the way that other faculty members do. High on my agenda is making [my] classes interesting and relevant.” Recall Julie’s profile from the previous chapter where she only chose to return as a professor to UT-Austin after the former department chair left. Despite the fact that Julie was not required to have a research agenda in her role, she was not thwarted from connecting service with learning and disciplinary practice. In the interview, Julie smiled as she recalled barriers she conquered to “create the course, create new pathways, new relationships, and new ways of approaching material.”

Diane, a senior lecturer in the *Professional* discipline, said that her scholarship agenda depended heavily on her service-learning classes: “I’ve structured it completely differently [each time]—partly depending on my knowledge, partly in terms of the needs of the field, partly in terms of what students were in the class, and partly in terms of what issues were big.” As a non-tenured faculty member, Diane understood the importance of aligning her larger scholarship agenda with the needs of her students and discipline. Although she had strong convictions, Diane confessed, “I don’t ever doubt what I’m doing. It’s just, sometimes it’s really frustrating because it really bumps up against the



traditional academic expectations and validations and what is considered legitimate here.”

In a similar way, Linda recognized that she was able to integrate service-learning into her scholarship agenda because she served as a senior lecturer in a *Professional* discipline. She admitted that her peers were thankful for these efforts because “it certainly isn’t the most important thing since they’re evaluated on research... I don’t have a directed research agenda.... So I can pursue a [more integrated] teaching agenda.” Prior to the interview, Linda was at a meeting with senior faculty in her department. She said it was interesting timing to discuss the creation of a scholarship agenda because she just had a conversation with one of her tenure-track peers who described his dilemma.

He’s helped me understand something about tenure track [in my department]. To get tenure around here, you typically focus on a very small issue that you can define very well and then publish, publish, publish around that very tightly defined issue. And so, people aren’t really interested in investigating system-type issues... And, I think that’s one of the reasons why a lot of the really interesting work being done in research is happening at smaller universities where there isn’t this pressure to publish in top-level journals. It’s almost like the academic system is creating this churn, where faculty just churn over with the same small things in the same small areas—without the freedom to step back and look at systems. Well until at least they get tenure, they can’t step back and look at areas of the environment that truly need attention.

In her position, Linda is able to take a step back and evaluate systems, but her main focus is to incorporate service-learning as a cornerstone to a teaching and practice agenda. To that end, Linda was more concerned with her student course evaluations—a key component in her promotion criteria. Unfortunately, her student evaluation scores dropped a couple of years ago when a group of students reported, “service-learning was too much work.” Worried about job security since her senior lecturer position is renewed

on a two-year contractual basis, Linda decided to discuss it with her department chair. When the chair reaffirmed her important role as a service-learning professor, Linda was invigorated to persevere in her pursuit of an engaged scholarship agenda.

### **Tenure-Track Faculty.**

For Betty, an assistant professor in *Arts and Sciences*, the best projects incorporated research, teaching, and service. She argued, “It's not like we do some research, and then we do some education, and then we do some outreach. It's best when they all mix together. That's what I try to do in my own work too.” At the time of this study, Betty was at the midpoint of her journey on the tenure track. Although she was continuously urged by her peers and departmental leadership to reconsider the levels at which she pursued service-learning, Betty responded by saying, “I sound sort of like a broken record, but it seems like the most successful way to do these projects is to have them built into your research.” In fact, Betty organized her scholarship agenda based on experiences she has from graduate school. She had a mentor who urged her to supplement disciplinary-specific expertise by publishing articles based on her experiences of leading a service-learning class. Inspired by her graduate school socialization, Betty has been able to demonstrate the importance of research and service within her teaching role.

All of those things just make for a richer experience than if I just sat in my little ivory tower and never engaged. I think a lot of my work is about student learning, and about getting the ethics that you need to be a good leader in your field later. For me, that is directly related to service-learning. You can't fully engage with the ethics of an issue unless you are getting those experiences. Because I am so passionate about service-learning, I end up doing some of my research and publishing in pedagogy practice.

Betty's approach was to pursue one project that produced two strands of research—one that focused specifically on her discipline and another that analyzed the effectiveness of her teaching and learning strategies. However, she acknowledged this was only possible because “the culture is very supportive of applied learning.” One of the departmental leaders urged Betty not to teach in the summer because she needed to dedicate that time to write and publish. For an emerging faculty member, especially one with a heavy administrative load, Betty recognized this was meant to support her, not to deter. So she integrated service-learning as a core part of her scholarship agenda and found inspiration to publish through the generation of new material from her service-learning classes.

I think the likelihood that your class spins out of control is higher with service-learning, because there are so many other factors.... There are so many other people involved, and there are so many other agendas that come into play and have to be considered. It's so energizing, but also it takes so much energy. It can be taxing, that I think it's a risky scenario if anything surprises you, which of course something will along the way.

Although she acknowledged it was possibly a “risky” approach by integrating service-learning into a larger scholarship agenda, she confided that this would not be her goal if it were not supported by her departmental leadership. In order to move her scholarship agenda from rhetoric to reality, Betty concluded, “I'm luckily in a very unique department, that really values engaged learning.”

Pam, also at the mid-point of the tenure track in *Humanities and Social Sciences*, had a much different experience from Betty's. Pam returned to academia 18 years after she completed her doctorate and after extensive work as an administrator in various

school systems. She said the seamless integration of service-learning into a larger scholarship agenda was “difficult because I didn't come out of a Ph.D. program. I've had to start all over again and start a new research agenda. It's like I'm coming back for another Ph.D. really because I've been out in the field.” Pam recalled her hiring interview focused specifically on the work she did in the field, and she felt that her scholarship would continue as an extension of working directly in the community. “I didn't really have a research agenda when I interviewed because I was still in the field. I've had several people say it sounds like great work, but they don't understand it and there's no pursuit to find out.” She expressed feelings of frustration and isolation because she lacked support and understanding from leaders and peers in her department, and it left questions about her value to the organization. Pam believed the *reality* was that she was not supported within her department to demonstrate a clear connection between service-learning efforts to the overall research agenda.

### **Tenured Faculty.**

There were four faculty participants who were awarded tenure prior to their participation in this study. However, Anna was the only one who incorporated service-learning into a larger scholarship agenda as part of her tenure portfolio. Anna's curriculum vitae included an array of presented papers, master-classes and lectures at pedagogical conferences and international festivals. Through these experiences she integrated research, teaching, and service because “they cannot be broken apart or thought of separately” when it came to educating young emerging artists in her field. Anna declared, “Education is the core. It is the foundation of everything. No

technology, no money, nothing can replace education. And by education, I mean the development of the mind, not a particular skill.” Over the course of 20 years, Anna said she challenged students to experiment and engage through service-learning. Her research and performances reflect this teaching and learning scholarship.

I am someone that is very interested in research and results and how they can be used successfully.... There have been enough studies that confirm very clearly that we don't learn from explanations. We learn from doing. It's interesting for me to conclude empirically what has been a part of my life always.

However, when I asked Anna to what extent her departmental leadership and colleagues' valued service-learning as a part of her engaged scholarship, she said, “I think my colleagues do value and appreciate my professional integrity and the fact that I work crazy hours. It is understood and appreciated, but I am mostly appreciated for my performances at international venues.” As an arts professor, Anna's performance is analogous to the generation of original research for faculty in other disciplines. Therefore, she admitted, “When it comes to formal evaluation like annual reports, my application has to look good on paper. The visibility [of my performances] is valued more. The internal work between students and teachers in the classroom...I don't know if it's understood enough.”

Although Gary, Mike, and Gayle adamantly defended the use of service-learning as a pedagogical tool, they all waited until after they were awarded tenure to pursue it as part of their scholarship agenda. Mike said, “It wasn't until probably my fifth or sixth year that I began to introduce service-learning into my courses.” He was told it was “too risky” to infuse service and community-based practices into his portfolio while he was

applying for tenure. Nevertheless, since earning full professorship, Mike has integrated service-learning into his research agenda. He published a book with a colleague founded on their service-learning experiences and community-based research with students. He scoffed at colleagues who undervalued this rigorous incorporation of research, teaching, service, and publication. “Some think it's disruptive and that I should be stopped. Yet others think that it's just ‘research light.’ I'm not sure that there is a consistent view.” He went on to say that his recent nomination for a career research award ignited more passion to continue extending his decade-long efforts by seamlessly integrating research, teaching, and service.

Things were different for Gary, a full professor in *Arts and Sciences*. He felt that the opportunity to engage in service-learning happened organically as a result of his professional and personal experiences colliding with the needs of the department. Recall that Gary created a capstone service-learning class for students as a way to help his department fulfill accreditation requirements. At the time of this study, Gary had been leading a service-learning course for five years. When I asked if he incorporated service-learning experiences into a larger research agenda, he said it was only integrated insofar as having his disciplinary research inform his teaching. In the interview, Gary said he had explored the idea of publishing scholarship based on his pedagogical approach but had not yet pursued it because it was not the most valuable scholarship as defined by his department's cultural norms.

At the time of the study Gayle had taught service-learning courses for six years, and she viewed those efforts as an integral part of her revived scholarship agenda. She

strategically submitted applications to UT-Austin's Institutional Review Board so she could collect data on her students' progress and transformative learning along with community involvement and response through service-learning projects. Despite these efforts and intentions, Gayle admitted that the reality of turning this approach into a fruitful experience was difficult.

Sometimes you just can't do it all. [And it matters] to what extent your school or department understands that the research will take a bit longer because you're researching about something that has to happen first. And there has to be some level of sustainability of it for you to be able to publish off of it. I would say that's the challenge of being at a research institution. It's hard to maintain an identity as a strong researcher at the same time doing service-learning...but the urgency is there to actually generate the research that goes along with the service-learning.

Although Gayle recognized the efforts of several leading research universities to embrace more sustainable approaches to engaged scholarship, she said the reality of those efforts would be weakened if professors, like her, lacked the opportunity to collaborate and convene with like-minded scholar-practitioners.

### **The Hidden Tipping Point.**

The purpose of phenomenological research is to present the salient and most prominent themes related to participants' experiences. However, the description of this experience would be incomplete if discrepant data were not presented. The shared phenomena in this research question centered on the fact that all participants agreed that service-learning connected to the context of their larger intended scholarship agenda. Additionally, most of them recognized a gap between the rhetoric and reality of actually implementing this agenda, and to that end faculty said they fought the good fight to

execute a fully engaged scholarship model. Nevertheless, two of the nine participants shared an important caveat that I felt was important to convey in this findings section.

Mike and Linda claimed that service-learning professors were subjected to an additional level of scrutiny than traditional research faculty because of larger politically charged structures and cultures. Recall from Chapter 4 that Mike was locked in a three-year mêlée with peer faculty over how service-learning courses would fulfill degree requirements in his department. Based on this experience, Mike suggested:

I think you have to be willing to recognize that not everybody in your unit or even in your campus is going to be your friend. But rather, it's a place of great intellectual diversity. Individuals who pay too much attention to their personal identity can actually do damage not only to themselves, but to their cause and to their work because they tend to overstate the case.

Though he believed that service-learning courses “take more time and more energy than a typical course” and that it was “a mode of learning that can't be replaced,” Mike remained vigilant of the perception others in his department had of his efforts. Though he stood up for what he believed he was mindful that becoming too petulant would “relegate me to the academic periphery.”

In the same way, Linda echoed this delicate balance. She alluded to a hidden tipping point, a fine line, which could mean the difference between being viewed by colleagues as an altruistic trailblazer or as egocentric. She said it could be detrimental to your career

...If it looks too organized, or like you're building a little fiefdom. I mean, I've seen lecturers lose their jobs because they created too big of a business for themselves. Meaning, [their service-learning efforts] had them at the center, instead of the university[’s mission]. So I'm very careful to keep students and the university at the center of my efforts.



Although these sentiments were not shared among the majority of participants, it is an important detail that supports the creation the composite theme for this research question, *Fight the Good Fight*.

### **FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.**

The textural and structural descriptions for this research question make up the composite theme indicating how participants continued to fight the good fight—in other words, to advocate and defend a noble cause—in their effort to connect service-learning to the context of a larger scholarship/practice agenda. Faculty participants recognized that service-learning was not a mainstream approach to building a scholarship agenda. As such, they discussed their experiences having to defend their identity as a service-learning professor and to advocate for their ability to integrate the three traditional pillars of research, teaching, and service. Given their varied job classifications and hierarchies within the institution, each participant described a different journey in their commitment to fight the good fight.

One way that service-learning professors in this study fought the good fight was by creating opportunities to turn rhetoric (i.e. believing in the connection of service-learning to their larger scholarship/practice agenda) into reality (i.e. sustaining a research and practice agenda based on their service-learning experiences). They believed that UT-Austin had some structures in place to justify their engaged scholarship efforts, but many of them still struggled at their departmental level to be recognized and valued as serious scholar-practitioners or public intellectuals. One way they fought against academic-

societal norms was by trying to translate their efforts by mirroring traditional academic rhetoric. For example, Anna said that chemists have a laboratory on campus, but service-learning faculty have their lab in the community as they generate community-engaged research. Linda also referred to her classroom a laboratory for students to explore their strengths and skills in a safe, experiential environment.

Some participants felt that the academic-societal norms were slowly changing at public institutions. Linda noted, “In today’s society how can you be competitive without valuing all areas of research—including the scholarship of teaching and learning.” Participants in this study resisted a myopic view of the traditional academy and fought to leverage their academic autonomy to engage in research that fueled their personal and professional passions for transformative learning. Mike summarized the sentiment shared by faculty who fight this battle on a daily basis when he said that receiving approval to continue service-learning and engaged scholarship never results in “euphoric moments” or fist-pumping. Instead, he admitted, “[I]t’s more like a deep sigh, and we say, ‘Ok. We’re making some progress here.’ We realize it’s a long-term project.” Mike expressed what the other two participants in this study described— the good fight cannot be won without small victories to sustain momentum in securing the institution’s long-term commitment to service-learning. This theme illustrates how faculty persisted through vulnerable moments, despite criticism from departmental leadership or peers. All participants were willing to fight for their academic freedom to create a scholarship or practice agenda based on service-learning.

## **Summary: Core Essence of the Lived Experience**

Each of the three research questions was addressed in this study with a composite theme that emerged directly from the data and participants' voices. For the first research question, faculty described the implementation service-learning as knowing how to leverage *Rigor and Resocialization* to create opportunities for reciprocal and transformative learning for students. In answering the second research question, faculty described the impact of service-learning on their identity as allowing them to *Walk the Walk* as they bridged their professional, personal, academic, and civic dimensions into a single, authentic identity. Finally, in response to the third research question, faculty described how service-learning was only one component in their scholarship/practice agenda in their efforts to *Fight the Good Fight* and turn traditional academic rhetoric into the reality through research and practice. The three aforementioned composite themes are essential in supporting the overall core essence of this research study, and they illustrate the lived experience of faculty members who engage in service-learning at a research-intensive university, such as UT-Austin. Although each faculty member had a unique perspective, the purpose of this phenomenological research study was to boil down their aggregate experiences, identities, and scholarship approaches to encapsulate and articulate a single, shared experience.

The core essence of participants' lived experience can be represented by the phrase *Conscious Commitment: Mitigating Risk through Reward of Professional Integrity*—meaning, faculty made a conscious decision to be committed to service-

learning despite perceived risks because the ultimate reward was their ability to exhibit professional integrity. In light of traditional academic-societal norms, faculty mitigated the risk of teaching through service-learning by focusing on the rigorous and reciprocal nature of their courses. The reward of this work was two-fold: 1) faculty found professional fulfillment in creating transformative service-learning opportunities for students to learn, grow and develop, and 2) faculty used service-learning to bridge their personal and professional identities to create engaged, synergistic scholarship meant to challenge traditional academic rhetoric.

## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The preceding chapter directly answers the three guiding research questions by describing the lived experiences of exemplar service-learning professors at UT-Austin. The findings help to illuminate how these professors operated as officers of the academy, role models for students, and exemplars of civic engagement. By providing this in-depth look at how faculty members engaged in service-learning and how it subsequently impacted their scholarship/practice agenda at a public research institution, I am able to add new information to service-learning literature specifically about the professional identity of these faculty members and their level of commitment to the integrity of their discipline through civic engagement.

This chapter will critically analyze findings presented in Chapter 5 by discussing five key findings based on analysis derived from the theoretical framework (Demb and Wade's 2012 faculty engagement model) and secondary analytic lens (intersectionality). The second section of this chapter will discuss implications and provide recommendations for future research, policy, and higher education practices. The third section will outline limitations related to the methodology and sampling criteria of this study and propose future research ideas that could build off this dissertation. Finally, I will conclude this chapter with a personal reflection on the meaning of this dissertation study to my own scholarship/practice agenda.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This section outlines five major findings that align with the theoretical framework and the secondary analytic lens used in this study. These findings build upon the

composite themes and core essence described in detail in Chapter 5. The first four findings align with Demb and Wade's 2012 faculty engagement model (FEM), and include recommended modifications to the FEM by making the case for the: 1) addition of a student dimension; 2) addition of a societal/public dimension; 3) intersection of identities; and 4) importance of localized leadership. The fifth key finding suggests the addition of a supplementary dynamic decision model (expanded from Kolb, 1987). This is a unique contribution to service-learning literature because it coincides with the FEM and helps to describe how faculty who have engaged with this pedagogy over the course of time continue to synthesize factors and experiences for their benefit as they move forward in their academic life-cycle.

**KEY FINDING #1: STUDENT DIMENSION.**

The original faculty engagement model (FEM) designed by Demb and Wade (2009) categorized influential factors into three dimensions—*professional, personal, and institutional* (see Appendix A). In 2012, Demb and Wade published a revised version of the FEM in which they reorganized factors and added a fourth dimension: the *communal dimension* (see Figure 2.2). The revised FEM (2012) served as the guiding theoretical framework for this study. When I applied the FEM through data analysis and coding, many of the existing factors aligned with my findings and reinforced the viability of the model. However, one of the significant findings which emerged from this dissertation study was the strong influence of students as the reason faculty engaged in service-learning. The influence of students was not listed as a factor on the FEM, but it emerged

as the central element<sup>4</sup> when faculty participants described their experiences implementing a service-learning pedagogical approach. Aside from professors' own interest, students were the primary reason faculty engaged in service-learning. There were at least five ways faculty described the role of students as part of their service-learning experience, and subsequently a factor in their decision to continue to use it as a pedagogical tool in designing their courses.

### **Student Interest/Enrollment.**

Faculty participants relied heavily upon student generated interest. Seven of the nine participants used service-learning in elective courses; therefore, because students were not required to enroll in these elective courses as part of their degree plan, faculty relied upon enrollment rates as one factor that determined if they could continue teaching through service-learning. Four of the nine faculty members in this study taught a required course, yet they still stressed the importance of student generated interest and enrollment rates. If students chose to enroll in the same course taught by another professor without service-learning or if students organized against the pedagogical approach, faculty would have to reexamine their use of service-learning.

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<sup>4</sup> The Dedoose data analysis code co-occurrence table illustrated that faculty motivation was almost three times as likely to be applied to the passages with the codes related to "student learning" or "transformation" than any other code. This high-level frequency indicated how often participants related their motivation for service-learning as being directly tied to student learning outcomes and/or transformative learning experiences.

### **Student Profiles.**

Faculty participants admitted that they paid close attention to the profile and demographics of students who would be taking their classes. Some of the factors they considered were whether students were undergraduate or graduate, traditional or non-traditional students, commuter or residential students. Although participants in this sample were asked to discuss their experience teaching service-learning at UT-Austin, many of them still described their experiences teaching at other institutions where students' profiles, such as being a commuter student or full-time employee, made faculty reevaluate the practicality of service-learning.

### **Short-term and Long-term Learning Outcomes.**

All participants expressed the importance of experiencing and measuring students' learning, growth, and development. Pedagogical research has indicated that students learn and develop at higher rates just from the simple act of interacting with others in the community (Rhoads, 1998). In particular, quantitative and qualitative research has positively linked service-learning courses with an increase in students' comprehension of course content; understanding of the issues underlying social problems; sense of social responsibility; and cognitive and cultural development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). The results from my qualitative study reinforce these experiences and measures of holistic learning; in turn, it directly affected if and how faculty continued to use service-learning in particular courses. The short-term and long-term effects of positive service-learning experiences



fueled faculty desire to continue leveraging this approach. In the end, faculty continued to rely on service-learning as a tool to design courses that focused on transformative, applicable learning opportunities.

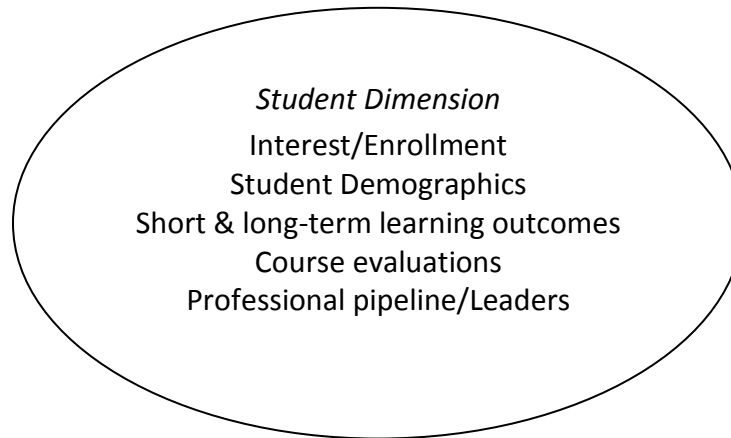
### **Course Evaluations.**

All participants described the importance of student feedback on course evaluation forms. Despite faculty participants' rank or status, all participants in this study said student feedback about their service-learning experiences was a factor that weighed heavily on their decision to continue to offer service-learning in the future. Prior research by Holland (1999) states that a lack of confidence with the skills and techniques of outreach and community engagement was one obstacle to faculty participation with service-learning. This phenomenon was echoed in my study. However, as faculty participants continued to receive positive course evaluations with high scores they gained confidence and were reassured that service-learning was an appropriate pedagogy for their course. Faculty were able to use the evaluations to demonstrate effectiveness of the course design to departmental leadership. Conversely, faculty participants cautioned that negative course evaluations or low scores could be harmful and deter future use of service-learning if departmental leadership viewed it as an ineffective method of content delivery. It must also be noted that non-tenure track faculty in this study emphasized the effect of course evaluations more so than those who were on the tenure track.

### **Developing Professional Pipeline of Future Leaders.**

Faculty participants argued that their students were a direct reflection of their professional and academic identity. This phenomenon was not cited in the literature, but it was a consistent theme among all participants in my study. Faculty participants recognized that they created stronger mentoring relationships with students through service-learning. Some student graduates returned to UT-Austin to serve as mentors to current undergraduates to help the faculty member strengthen the pipeline of leaders into their field or discipline. Several participants described the increase in letters of recommendation they wrote for students because they could speak to the transformation, learning and growth that took place for students over the course of their academic journey. These examples of a mentor-mentee relationship emerged in data analysis, and it became clear that faculty participants were proud of the role they played in developing the next generation of leaders and strengthening the professional pipeline for their discipline/field. Faculty participants said that students were a key part of their service-learning experience and a non-negotiable factor in the continuation of service-learning. Professors were committed to the integrity of their discipline, and they demonstrated this commitment by investing time and energy through service-learning to groom the next cohort of leaders to “carry the torch.” In the same way that renowned scientists groom their graduate students, service-learning faculty described their students as an important reflection of their academic identity because students were seen as an extension of a professors’ academic and professional lineage.

Based on the five aforementioned factors, I am expanding upon Demb and Wade's (2012) FEM framework to account for the importance of a student dimension. An illustration of the *student dimension* can be found in Figure 6.1. Factors within this dimension stem directly from the rationale provided by data in this study.



*Figure 6.1.* Newly created *student dimension* as an addition to the Demb and Wade (2012) faculty engagement model based on data from this study.

## **KEY FINDING #2: SOCIETAL/PUBLIC DIMENSION.**

Analysis of the data through the Demb and Wade (2012) FEM revealed a second significant dimension relative to faculty members' service-learning experiences: society and relevant communities. Similar to the first key finding, there was no existing construct within the current FEM that featured the role of society or the availability and/or interaction between community partners. The FEM did represent a factor of "community involvement" in the institutional dimension, but this was related to the institution at-large and its predisposition to host large-level community-based functions or events. Instead, participants in this study described at a deeper level how the

community played an important role in their decision to use service-learning as a pedagogy, and subsequently continued to engage in service-learning, based on at least three factors: 1) town-gown relationships, 2) community partner proximity and relevance (i.e. physical location as well as relevance to a topic or issue), and 3) the likelihood of sustaining a partnership.

### **Town-Gown Relationships.**

The first thing faculty assessed when considering a service-learning pedagogical approach was what issues existed between their chosen community and the university (i.e. town-gown relationship). These issues could be informed directly by the institution's history or through previous interactions, or lack thereof, between other professors or student groups. Faculty participants varied in their depth of their familiarity with UT-Austin's history, but each person was able to recall historical facts and discriminatory practices carried out by the University that led to disenfranchisement of both community residents and students. This working knowledge empowered faculty to take a proactive approach in preparing students to work in these contexts, as well as to re-orient community partners to service-learning by following best practices for community engagement. Julie, who wrote a book on service-learning, said that no professor chooses to engage with service-learning as a pedagogical approach without deeply "understanding this context and operating with awareness." Societal and public context was a core element that helped faculty participants design their courses with a balance between theory and practice, ensuring reciprocal learning with the community partner.

### **Community Partner Proximity and Relevance.**

Another aspect within the societal/public dimension that had a bearing on faculty experiences was the proximity of community partners and the relevance to a service-learning course. All faculty participants in this study said that their role at a public research institution was to create new knowledge for the benefit of society. Some faculty sought to create this knowledge on a local level, and their community partners were defined by specific locations. For example, when Gayle taught a class on international policies and social programming, it was important that her community partners for this course were located in a developing country. Gary, Mike, and Betty taught students on various topics such as affordable housing, transportation, and city infrastructures. Therefore, they chose to work with local neighborhoods that were in close proximity to the institution and that were traditionally underserved—with some of their work focused on the east side of Austin and in or around the Blackland neighborhood. Other faculty, such as Anna, Linda, Julie, Diane, and Pam chose to work with community partners that were not defined by a geographical region, but instead, were more appropriate and relevant to their course topics. For those faculty members, community partners did not directly tie to the historical context between UT-Austin and the east-side neighborhoods. Instead, their community partners included governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, school systems, or individual community members that had more relevance to their course topics.

The *communal dimension* in the 2012 FEM includes factors associated with a professional community and/or discipline-specific support (i.e. socialization of service-learning as a pedagogical tool, discipline-fit, support from trade or professional associations, departmental support and budgeting, etc.). The existing *communal dimension* does not include factors related to society or the public, such as town-gown relationships, availability of non-profit partners, or recent events or crises (e.g. natural disaster, population growth, etc.) that could prompt higher education institutions to action. Interestingly, Sandy and Holland (2006) found that community partners' dedication to student learning was the primary reason for their participation with service-learning classes. Consequently Demb and Wade's 2012 FEM is missing important factors that make the public domain and society at-large relevant to higher education institutions and to service-learning courses.

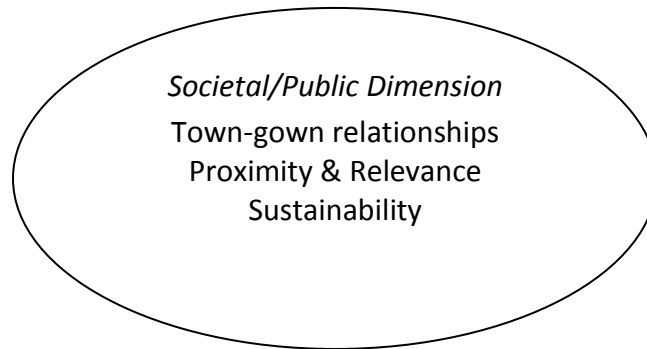
### **Sustainability of Partnership.**

Service-learning, and by extension engaged scholarship, is built upon the principle and best practice of reciprocity. A sustainable partnership could not exist without reciprocity— an essential component of service-learning that fosters a sense of mutual respect and responsibility between faculty, students, and community partners. Finding the right community partners meant that faculty participants had to consider the sustainability of long-term partnerships so they could address more systemic issues. Faculty participants said that reciprocity and trust were important components. This meant that the community partner also had to demonstrate viable interest, provide

resources and time, and commit to a model that focused on student and community learning.

Betty said, “It's very alluring to students to engage with all sorts of different communities, and feel like they're in some sort of savior role.” This echoed extant literature which documented poor practices between higher education institutions and community partners. Reciprocity and sustainability “challenges the academy's role as an expert arriving at the doorstep of a community with a plan in hand to fix problems or rescue the community without equal input and the creation of authentic community partnerships” (Gerstenblatt, 2012, p. 17). Earning the trust of community partners meant that faculty were following best practices, adhering to moral and ethical obligations as an institutional agent, and could ensure the long-term sustainability of projects. At the same time, faculty understood the importance of assessing community partners' commitment to a sustainable relationship.

Based on the three aforementioned factors, I expand upon Demb and Wade's (2012) FEM to take into account the *societal/public dimension*. Although not all faculty members linked their service-learning class to address some of the historical inequities between the institution and the local community, it is important to denote the context by which a public research institution interacts with society and public-at-large. Therefore, an illustration of the new *societal/public dimension* can be found in Figure 6.2. Factors within this dimension stem directly from the rationale provided by data in this study.



*Figure 6.2.* Newly created *societal/public dimension* as an addition to the Demb and Wade (2012) faculty engagement model based on data from this study.

**KEY FINDING #3: INTERSECTIONS OF IDENTITY.**

Intersectionality provides important information on the interplay of different identities that may not otherwise be considered if researchers only focus on a single socially constructed category. Individuals with a shared identity do not necessarily have similar experiences within the same context because that single identity collides with other identities and experiences, providing a unique lens for that person (Collins, 2000; Dill & Zambrana, 2009). Although intersectionality was traditionally used as a framework by Black feminists to discuss the dimensionality of race, gender, and socioeconomic class, I used it as a secondary frame by which to examine the possible interplay between various identities for service-learning faculty participants in this study. Using this lens, I found two common identity intersections between all participants: 1) professional and personal identities, and 2) socio-economic status and personal values/civic identity. Contrary to extant literature and prior quantitative research studies, I did not find that this study provided enough evidence to support a strong argument for the intersection of race and gender as it related to participants' identity as a service-



learning professor. One reason for this lack of correlation could be that race and gender were not an explicit thrust of the current research study.

### **Personal and Professional Identities.**

For participants in this study, the strongest intersection was between professional and personal identities. What was particularly interesting about this sample of faculty members was their deep connection with their prior work experience and learning how that factored into their identity formation as a professional—ultimately influencing their academic identity as a service-learning professor.

Early formative experiences in education and former professional positions influenced all nine of the participants to eventually choose a new career path as an academic. Because of their prior work experience, participants approached the academy from a practitioner lens; therefore, they found service-learning to be the ultimate bridge to intersect their professional and personal identities. In doing so, participants described how they connected the macro issues within their field/discipline with micro responsibilities and actions through service-learning to bridge their academic identity with their civic identity. The intersection between personal identity (i.e. family, early educational experiences, civic values, etc.) and professional identity (i.e. career, discipline, etc.) suggests the importance of studying intersectionality in tandem with a quantitatively derived model like FEM. By isolating these factors of identity within separate dimensions, researchers neglect the crucial interplay between these identities and may overlook the true motivating factors that support professors' service-learning experiences.

### **Socio-economic Status and Civic Identity.**

One intersection between identities that I did not expect to emerge as a salient theme in this study was the relationship between childhood socio-economic status and civic identity. Seven of the nine participants gave tangible examples of what it was like for them growing up in a particular income-level or class. Although the participants represented various socio-economic statuses throughout their childhood (e.g. low-income, middle class, wealthy), they could clearly delineate how that upbringing impacted their personal values and civic identity. For example, participants who described growing up in a low-income household said that background made them resilient, resourceful, and grateful. One participant in particular, Gayle, said that despite growing up poor her mother still found time to volunteer. This made a significant impact on her civic identity and taught her the value of giving back, despite how little one may have. The majority of participants said they grew up in a middle class or wealthy family. As such, their parents instilled a sense of responsibility by demonstrating how to recognize privilege and to be accountable for giving back to others. Despite their different socio-economic starting-points, participants illustrated a clear link to their civic identity—finding harmony with these values in their academic role as a service-learning professor.

### **Discrepant Data.**

Extant literature found that gender and race/ethnicity were influential factors in the level by which faculty participated in service-learning or engaged scholarship.

However, there is much discrepancy within studies. For example, Abes et al., 2002 and Vogelgesang et al., 2010 found that women faculty of color had a statistically significant stronger disposition toward service-learning and were more likely to engage in community service-related behaviors. Vogelgesang et al. (2009) suggested that the gap might be due to the greater proportion of women professors in applied fields such as education, health sciences, nursing, and social work where academic service-learning is more prevalent. Conversely, Demb and Wade (2012) found that male faculty participated in service-learning more than women. Unlike previous research, Demb and Wade also found that there were no statistically significant differences in overall participation for minority faculty compared to their majority faculty counterparts.

Participants for this dissertation study were not recruited based on their gender or race/ethnicity; consequently, the sample had little variability for both demographic factors. My sample population consisted of seven females and two males. Additionally, eight participants reported being Caucasian/White, and one participant reported being African American/Black. Participants were asked to discuss their personal and familial backgrounds as it related to their professional and civic identities, but little information emerged that specifically tied participants' race and/or gender as an influence or deterrence toward their service-learning identity. Two female participants mentioned their gender in passing to illustrate that their discipline was dominated by male professors, yet as a phenomenological study, there was not enough data to support a strong argument for the intersection of race and/or gender related to participants' identity as a service-learning professor or academician. A plausible reason for the lack of

association of race/ethnicity in this study could be due to the fact that Whiteness, as a construct, is not frequently discussed or examined by those who most experience it. Based on the over representation of White faculty members in this study, the concept and applicability of Whiteness could instead be viewed as an artifact of the sample.

**KEY FINDING #4: IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND POLITICS.**

Wade's (2008) dissertation study served as the foundational quantitative analysis that developed the first version of the FEM, later refined twice by Demb and Wade (2009; 2012). In all three iterations, the researchers found that the *institutional dimension* (i.e. mission and priorities, institutional type, leadership, budget, prestige, engagement structure, institutional policies, faculty involvement, and community involvement) had the "best developed factors" (Wade, 2008, p. 122), proving the strongest statistical correlations and demonstrating its effect on the likelihood that faculty members would participate in a form of engaged scholarship. This reinforced previous research studies (see for example Abes et al., 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Holland, 1997; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009; O'Meara & Rice, 2005) that touted the most significant factor by which to influence faculty participation in service-learning was through the larger institutional structure.

UT-Austin was an ideal site for this study because it addressed many of the barriers presented in literature that could deter faculty from engaging in service-learning or other community-based scholarship. While "controlling" for the institutional type in this study, I found that localized leadership—such as the department chair and even peer faculty—had much more of an influence on participation rates and the extent to which

faculty had a positive or negative experience with service-learning. Certainly, the FEM accounts for departmental and discipline support in the *communal dimension*, but it is worth noting as a key finding that my study results are more consistent with an earlier study conducted by Furco (2001) which examined two-year community colleges, four-year private institutions, and four-year public institutions. Furco found that “even when institutional rewards and incentives are in place for faculty, faculty members agree to develop high-quality service-learning experiences for their students only when they are convinced that engaging in service-learning will not be viewed negatively by their peers or their administration” (2001, p. 69). Without the genuine support of their department chair or a senior-level faculty member, participants in this study reported that they would not be likely to continue their service-learning efforts. This finding reinforces the importance of maintaining factors in the FEM that expressly relate to departments, disciplines, and specialized professional communities such as trade associations, campus committees, and faculty organizations.

**KEY FINDING #5: CONTINUOUS, DYNAMIC DECISION MODEL.**

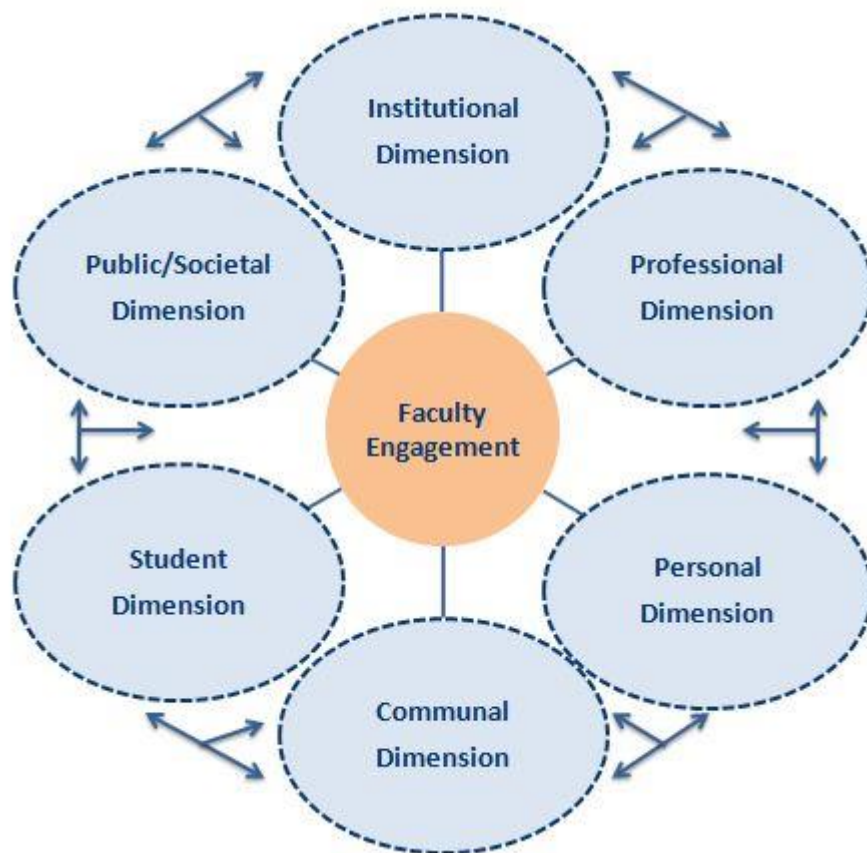
One of the most frequent themes I found through data analysis was the notion that faculty engaged in an active learning cycle of experience and identity development. Extant literature and previous quantitative studies depict a static point-in-time decision model to explain what factors influence a faculty member’s decision of why they would or would not engage in service-learning. Faculty in this dissertation study described having to constantly evaluate their options and weigh the risks facing them. They

described having to weigh their professional identity and desire for transformative learning against the social and political capital they may have to expend in defending/advocating for their pedagogical approach and scholarship agenda. They called upon various factors from multiple dimensions within the FEM to reevaluate the risk and reward of continuing to engage in service-learning.

Similar to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory (ELT) model (refer to Figure 2.1), faculty continue to use each semester of service-learning experience as feedback to inform their future course design/revision and to shape their identity and status within the department and/or institution. The ELT model consists of a four-step learning process: 1) concrete experiences; 2) observation and reflection; 3) forming abstract concepts; and 4) testing new situations through active experimentation (refer to Figure 2.1). I found that those faculty who are already engaged in service-learning or community-based scholarship follow this model in a unique manner, as illustrated in Figure 6.4.

Based on data, I propose two revisions to existing conceptual models. First, Demb and Wade's 2012 FEM should be revised. One of the revisions is to exchange the one-way arrows between each dimension and the middle "Faculty Engagement" sphere by a solid connecting line to show a mutual relationship and possibility for one area to affect the other (see Figure 6.3). Instead of assuming that each dimension directly affects a professor's decision of whether or not to get involved with service-learning, the model should illustrate that various factors are not isolated within each dimension. Therefore, a second revision to the model is that the parameter around each dimension is now

represented by a dashed line. The dashed lines represent the porous nature of each dimension in demonstrating how factors are not restricted within a dimension. To further this notion, the final revision to the model is the addition of multiple two-way arrows. Adding arrows around the model helps to indicate that factors within one dimension can interact with factors in another dimension—including the adjacent dimension as well as those across the model (meaning, position of each dimension does not matter on the model). These modifications to the FEM represent one way of reflecting qualitative data gleaned from this study demonstrating how professors simultaneously considered factors from all of the dimensions in order to decide if/how they would engage in service-learning. Another possibility of reconceptualizing the dynamic nature of each dimension can be found in Appendix H.

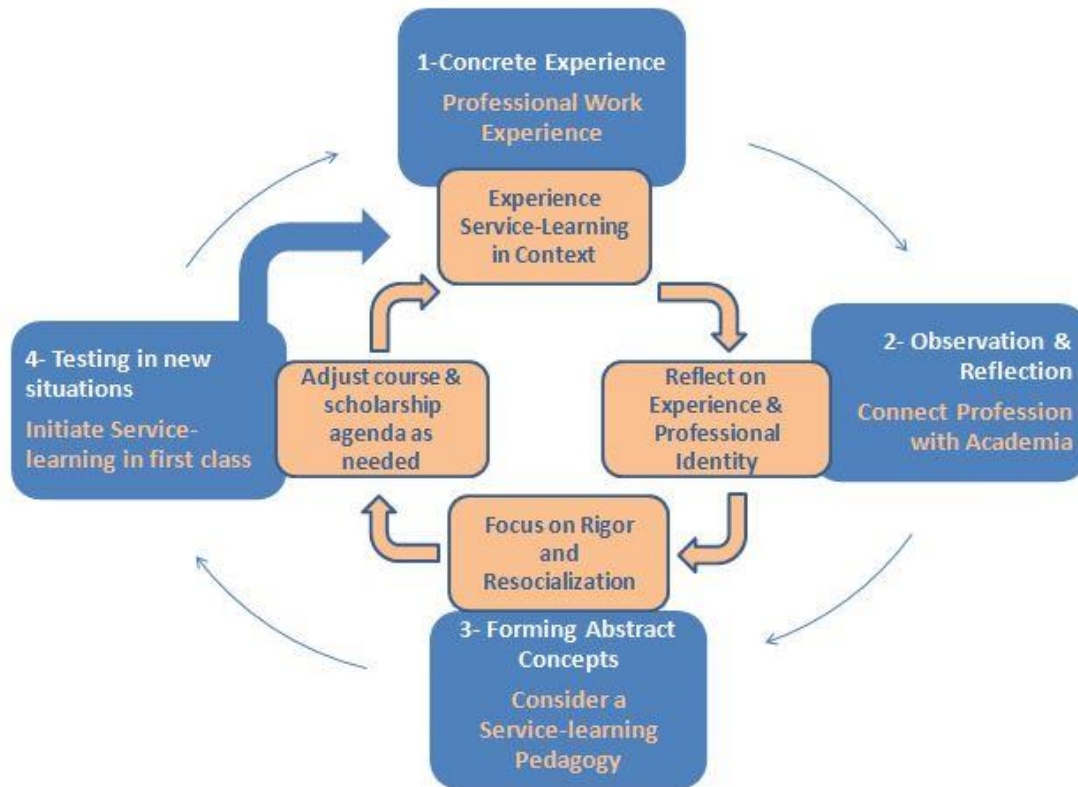


*Figure 6.3* Modification of Demb and Wade’s 2012 model to reflect qualitative findings in this study.

Based on the use of intersectionality, the aforementioned revision to the FEM conceptual model is insufficient as the only suggestion when considering how this study contributes to existing service-learning literature. Therefore, my second recommendation is to revise Kolb’s (1984) ELT model and present it as a complimentary framework to the FEM to demonstrate how faculty engage in a continuous, dynamic decision cycle. Based on data from this study, I created a revised conceptual model to represent how service-learning faculty go through the first sequence of the ELT model (depicted by the blue



boxes in Figure 6.4) and then enter into a more nuanced version of the cycle (depicted by the orange boxes in Figure 6.4).



*Figure 6.4 Reconsideration of Kolb's Model for Service-Learning Faculty.* Faculty participants described how they leveraged factors from the FEM to engage in a continuous learning, growth, and decision cycle around their use of service-learning as a pedagogical approach. This decision model can be illustrated as a modification to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory (ELT) based on specific experiences of service-learning faculty in this study.

Initially, the sequence of experiential learning began with a **concrete experience** when participants first engaged in professional work that illustrated a confluence between the field/industry, academia, and societal need. Once participants identified this niche

and implemented their first service-learning course, they **observed and reflected** about how to connect their professional experience with an academic identity. Participants in this study specifically talked about how they chose to become a professor because they wanted to help develop the next generation of leaders in their discipline. In order to make a difference at the academic level, faculty **formed abstract concepts** aimed at creating a rigorous course and to resocializing students, fellow faculty members, and university administrators to service-learning. Synthesizing these experiences, participants then sought to **test in new situations** by adjusting their service-learning courses or scholarship agenda as necessary. The second level of this cycle (depicted by the orange boxes in Figure 6.3) continued for faculty on a semester basis each time they made the decision to incorporate service-learning into one of their courses.

This revised conceptual model is not limited to service-learning experiences; it also can explain how faculty participants in this study constantly bridged their personal, professional, academic, civic, and identities (see also Figure 5.2). For example, one participant, Mike, was confronted by peer faculty in his department who questioned his service-learning approach and the amount of contact hours his students had with a client or community stakeholder. This conflict weighed on Mike's identity as he factored that experience in with his other service-learning experiences through observation and reflection. Mike had to make a crucial decision on how he would focus on rigor and resocialization in his courses and if he would expend social or political capital with his dean to argue against his peers. This example from the data serves to illustrate how this revised conceptual model reinforces how and why faculty participants were able to *walk*

*the walk and fight the good fight* as a result of their service-learning experiences at UT-Austin.

### **Implications for Research, Practice, and Policy**

The purpose of this section is to offer research, practice, and policy implications based on findings from this study. The first section will address how my analysis from this study contributes to higher education research. The second section will provide recommendations for how these findings may be used to inform policies and change practices within higher education institutions, particularly at public research universities.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH.**

The findings from my study uniquely contribute to higher education scholarship and build upon existing research. Wade's (2008) dissertation study served as the foundational quantitative analysis that developed the first version of the FEM, later refined by Demb and Wade (2009; 2012). Wade (2008) initially created the FEM and urged other researchers to "use the conceptual foundation for future engagement research [because] continued testing and revision of the FEM may eventually lead to a model that accurately predicts and explains faculty engagement participation" (p. 130). My analysis and findings provide at least three major implications as it relates to qualitatively testing the FEM.

#### **Validate the FEM as a Conceptual Model.**

First, this study used a qualitative approach to examine factors within FEM theoretical model. Results from this study confirmed that the quantitatively-derived

factors in the FEM were not only relevant when considering what factors affect a professor's *initial* decision or motivation to choose service-learning, but these factors *continued* to play a role throughout a professor's service-learning experience and were part of a dynamic on-going decision model.

### **Expand upon the FEM as a Conceptual Model.**

Data from this study lead to my expansion of the FEM with three important elements for consideration—the addition of a *student dimension*, the addition of a *societal/public dimension*, and the consideration that faculty couple their experiences with various factors in the FEM through a dynamic decision making experience that mirrors Kolb's (1984) ELT cycle.

The addition of a *student dimension* and *societal/public dimension* is warranted based on the frequency and significance that these two stakeholders had on faculty members' experiences. As a professional who has worked with service-learning and engaged scholarship for some time, it was not surprising that these two factors emerged in qualitative data because there are traditionally three key stakeholders for academic service-learning: the professor, the student(s), and the community partner. However, I was surprised by the fact that students and the public (or community partners) were not examined or loaded on to quantitative factor analyses as part of a professor's motivation toward or deterrence from this pedagogy. This discrepancy may be attributed to the purposeful sampling of participants in this study.

Divergent from most of the prior quantitative studies on faculty and service-learning, I only included participants in this study who were considered exemplars. As

such, I was able to determine how their lived experiences influenced the likelihood that they would continue to leverage service-learning as pedagogical tool. This differed from prior research which included faculty members regardless of whether or not they had a predisposition to utilizing service-learning as a pedagogical approach. The 2012 FEM conceptual model included 23 factors related to the professional, personal, institutional aspects of faculty lives. While my participants described the importance of these 23 factors, they also drew upon their most recent service-learning experiences, recalling positive encounters or negative consequences in utilizing the pedagogy. When asked why they continued to use service-learning, participants pointed to their most recent experiences. They described the level of learning and transformation of students; they described seeing tangible outcomes in communities; they talked about positive or negative feedback from peer faculty and departmental leadership; and they pointed to promotion or award they recently received. All of these near experiences informed their decision cycle, and that continued on a semester or yearly basis—not as a single point-in-time decision. The 2012 version of the FEM did not include “recent service-learning experiences” as a factor, but it must be considered as an important element in the decision making process for exemplar faculty.

### **Introduce Intersectionality as a Key Analytic Lens.**

Intersectionality was an important analytic lens to use alongside a model like the FEM because it exposed the opportunity for the interplay of different factors. The most salient intersection of identities was between participants’ early socio-economic status and their civic identity. Surprisingly, there was little data to support the intersection of

professional, academic or civic identity with race or gender. But the utility of intersectionality allowed me to consider how factors from different dimensions in the FEM could affect one another. For example, faculty participants rarely discussed tenure and promotion (factors from the *professional dimension*) without also talking about their previous experience (*personal dimension*), the institutional type (*institutional dimension*), and their department or discipline support (*communal dimension*). As such, the theory of intersectionality interacts on multiple and simultaneous levels and serves as an important secondary analytic lens for future related research studies.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE.**

The benefits of service-learning are well documented for students, communities, and institutions, but little research defines and conceptualizes the experiences of faculty who lead service-learning courses—inspiring the question, “What’s in it for faculty?” So often this question goes unanswered, despite the expectations placed on professors to extend their knowledge and resources to focus student learning on meaningful projects for societal good. The findings from this study demonstrate how faculty navigate academic-societal norms and the traditional disparate academic pillars (research, teaching and service) to have a positive experience and advance their careers. Data from this study show how leveraging service-learning as a pedagogical approach has been beneficial to faculty members, how service-learning helped participants find congruence with their professional and personal identities, and how participants were able to achieve some recognition for their engaged scholarship agenda.

Based on these findings, university administrators can have better insights in how to design programming and reward structures to support service-learning and engaged scholarship. In 2007 with the support of President Powers, DDCE launched a *Thematic Faculty Hiring Initiative* to help establish a critical mass of faculty whose teaching, research, and service would be rooted in diversity and community engagement efforts (DDCE, 2013). At the time of this study, at least 40 new faculty members were hired at UT-Austin under this initiative. Nevertheless, none of the exemplar faculty participants in my study were brought to the University under this program. Their struggles and experiences reflect the continued need to address the informal structures of the university by resocializing high-level administrators on campus. As a result, I suggest that university officials undertake efforts to train deans, department chairs, and staff on how to clearly outline promotion and tenure expectations and provide examples of how community engaged scholarship could be leveraged as a tool to gain experience and successfully progress.

In order to begin changing the informal structure and to address institutional culture, DDCE should be given authority by the President and/or Provost office to hold deans and department chairs accountable for reporting efforts of curricular community engagement efforts. Deans and department chairs across UT-Austin should be held to the same standards of providing 1) clear expectations and requirements for promotion and tenure, 2) ways in which service-learning can be a pedagogical tool that faculty can engage in and how it will be compared to other scholarship and service expectations, and 3) examples and best practices of service-learning and engaged scholarship within the

college/department or institution. Deans and department chairs should connect newly hired faculty to community engagement resources as part of their hiring and on-boarding process. Having access to a network of interdisciplinary faculty and a dedicated division on campus (i.e. Division of Diversity and Community Engagement [DDCE] at UT-Austin) as part of the on-boarding process immediately allows faculty the chance to connect, engage, find support networks, and locate resources for engaged scholarship. Additionally, universities should consider designing and implementing opportunities for faculty mentorship, faculty learning communities, and large-scale assessments to measure the academic outcomes from service-learning courses.

One of the most important reasons for undertaking this research at UT-Austin was my unique role as a graduate research assistant (GRA) in the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement (LCCE). In this position, confirmed by data in this study, I have learned that the most effective ways to support faculty is through the use of monetary incentives or by recognition of scholarship through publication or prestigious institutional or national-level awards. Both approaches are well served because faculty are able to translate these incentives to traditional academic-societal norms by demonstrating how they secured grant funding and how their scholarship has been valued by others in the academic community. An organization like the LCCE should continue to align support structures to these two principles. The creation of a faculty fellows program, supported by a competitive application process, could elevate faculty status within their department and within the institution. This type of program should provide faculty with course development grants to support research and publication related to service-learning. This



program could also assist with faculty recruitment and engagement in service-learning as this type of grant would be prestigious and would demonstrate the university's commitment and recognition of the importance of giving back to the community. Because localized leadership has proven to be such a key component or possible deterrent, the application process should include a nomination directly from a dean or department chair. Programs like this can only be successful if the organization assesses the impact of the program to make adjustments and to have data for wide dissemination. Sharing the success of faculty members who published, were awarded promotion or tenure, and/or received national recognition for their work will help to resocialize the informal structures and culturally address the rhetoric on campus to make engaged scholarship a reality.

While many scholars (see for example published works by Alexander Astin, Robert G. Bringle, Janet Eyler, Dwight E. Giles, Jr., Julie A. Hatcher, Barbara Jacoby, David A. Kolb, and KerryAnn O'Meara) have proven to be very influential in challenging traditional notions of faculty work; however, the body of literature on engaged scholarship suffers from one serious limitation: it does not provide suggestions on how to decrease ambiguity around what counts as engaged scholarly work or yield clear guidelines for the development of assessment mechanisms (Glassick et al., 1997). This is particularly important at a campus like UT-Austin because it has already surpassed peer institutions by adding service-learning as one measure for tenure and promotion (refer to site selection criteria outlined in Chapter 3). Data from this study should incite action for University administrators to develop clear and universal metrics

to remove the ambiguity around how to translate community-based research and service-learning efforts so that it is equally valued in the process. Faculty participants in this study were already aware of opportunities and potential benefits of activities like service-learning and community-based research, but they did not all have access to proper institutional mechanisms or mentorship to help them elevate this engaged work to the same level as traditional scholarship. Only by addressing this issue will UT-Austin fill the gap between institutional rhetoric and reality.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY.**

The current higher education climate, particularly in Texas, is experiencing the pendulum swing from *access* to *success* (completion) in higher education. One of the main thrusts behind the student success policy agenda is a push for institutions to demonstrate an increase in four-year graduation rates and the gainful employment of graduates. The confluence of these policy initiatives presents a ripe environment for public research institutions, like UT-Austin, to be innovative in its approach to service-learning as a pedagogical approach because service-learning participation has been linked to academic persistence and retention (Yeh, 2010; see also Tinto, 2003; Vogelgesang, Ikeda, Gilmartin, & Keup, 2002). More recently, Yeh (2010) suggested service-learning programs had a positive effect on low-income, first-generation college students because the “hands-on” learning model often satisfied these students’ differing educational needs.

Simultaneously, there is great interest and buzz in the educational policy arena around innovative teaching strategies within the science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines (STEM fields). Given the focus on preventing attrition from the

STEM pipeline, UT-Austin could be a policy leader in assessing the link between innovative teaching strategies such as service-learning and four-year graduation rates. This would also mirror national education priorities outlined by President Obama and recently echoed in a New York Times opinion editorial titled, “Professors, We Need You!” (Kristof, 2014). National policies and rhetoric like this challenge research institutions to create an environment where professors are rewarded by creating meaningful opportunities for students, particularly in the STEM fields, to address immediate societal problems such as urban renewal or energy independence. In order for UT-Austin to be a policy leader in this area, administrators must invest time and resources in developing a systematic survey to assess the link between service-learning and four-year graduation rates.

## **Limitations of Dissertation Study**

While this study had several key findings that contribute to the higher education literature, there were some limitations regarding the methodology, participants, and theoretical framework. A dissertation is inherently narrow in scope; however, I realized at times that I needed to broaden my focus on more than just service-learning because all participants described service-learning within the context of their overall agenda for scholarship or practice. Although service-learning was the focal point for this study, future studies should expand the methodology and participant selection criteria to include multiple forms of community-based research and engaged scholarship.

Methodologically, this study was limited in the perspective offered by collected data. Although I used several data sources to triangulate the phenomena, each source came directly from the faculty participants. Scholars who study identity development have asserted the importance of gathering data and viewpoints from other relevant people to provide alternative perspectives on the full identity of your main subject (Gee, 2000). In this dissertation, faculty participants were asked interpersonal reflection questions based on their assumption of others' views (e.g., "How would your colleagues describe your identity within the department?"). However, in this study I did not interview other faculty members, department chairs, or students to gather additional perspectives on the identity of my participants. Future research that examines the relationship between service-learning and faculty identity should strive to triangulate data by incorporating others' viewpoints in order to increase dependability.

Even with a variety of validity measures, there were (de)limitations on the methodological approach to selecting participants. First, faculty members who experienced positive experiences through service-learning were likely to continue utilizing the pedagogical approach, thereby being more willing to participate in this study. Additionally, the selection of a single university for the research, while intentional, does suggest that service-learning experiences, identity development, and scholarship agendas could be considerably different for faculty at other institutional types.

Another limitation of the study was the lack of diversity within the sample population regarding factors of race/ethnicity and gender. The majority of participants were of White/Caucasian; only one participant was Black/African American. As mentioned, there has been discrepancy within the extant literature about the significance and influence of these demographics. Some of the limitation is due to the population available for the study and for those who opted to participate. As mentioned, there were five other faculty members recruited for this study who either did not respond or who chose not to participate because they did not feel their courses met the rigorous definition of service-learning. All five of these participants were males, two of whom were men of color. Because this study used intersectionality as a secondary framework, I was able to recognize the interaction between participants' socio-economic status and their service-learning identity. However, the data were not rich with information about participants' experiences based upon their race/ethnicity or gender. One reason could be the lack of racial/ethnic diversity in the sample. Future qualitative research should take these

demographic factors into consideration as part of purposeful recruiting criteria for participants.

## **Future Research**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the lived experiences and identities of faculty members who chose to teach utilizing a service-learning pedagogical approach at UT-Austin. As a result, this study provided useful information about how faculty navigated academic-societal norms and the traditional disparate academic pillars to create a positive experience and advance their careers and to bridge their professional and personal identities. However, as I collected and analyzed data for this study, additional areas of investigation emerged related to alternative theoretical frameworks or different sampling methodologies that could be leveraged to advance this study.

The first recommendation for future research is to conduct this study using a variety of frameworks that challenge the manifestation of deficit language so prevalent in service-learning literature over the last two decades. So much of the work focuses on what service-learning faculty are *not* getting from their institution and how they are disenfranchised based on traditional academic-societal norms. Data from my study allude to the fact that professors are able to create positive environments to advance their careers, to earn promotion and/or tenure, and to find personal and professional fulfillment through engaged scholarship. Cultural deficit models focus on the negative beliefs and assumptions regarding the ability, aspirations, and work ethic of systematically marginalized peoples (Bourdieu, 1997). Future research could juxtapose this framework with a cultural capital perspective to assess the various types of social, professional, or academic currency that is considered valuable for these professors.

One of the problems in the service-learning literature is that faculty who use this pedagogical approach are often thought of as very different than their peers. My research provides analytic generalizability for readers to find commonality between study participants and faculty who do not produce engaged scholarship (Gilgun, 2010). Therefore, I urge future researchers to consider the manifestation of how positivism has infiltrated higher education and set up a dichotomy of scholarship that is considered “better” than others. I suggest the use of novel theoretical frameworks in this area, such as leveraging the work done by researchers such as Moll (1992) and Yosso (2005) who argue the importance of disrupting the deficit narrative to identify “funds of knowledge” or capital for traditionally marginalized or underrepresented groups. One of the key themes of my research was the “paradox of one”—meaning participants found their unique position as a service-learning professor to be advantageous in a variety of ways. Further qualitative research should explore this further to help change the deficit perspective for these faculty and truly help to answer the question, “What’s in it for service-learning faculty?”

Another recommendation for future research comes in the form of adjusting the methodology for sampling. For a number of reasons I focused this study on recruiting full-time faculty members, and did not screen for participants based on whether or not they were tenure-track. The results of this study aggregate the experiences of clinical faculty, lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. These different subgroups produced the most variance between participants based on their status or rank, especially as it related to the role of service-learning and their overall



scholarship/practice agenda. The academic life-cycle for these two types of professors is inherently different, so I suggest that future quantitative and qualitative research should disaggregate by faculty subgroups.

One of the most interesting homophilous characteristics of this sample population was the fact that they all had prior work experiences as a professional in their discipline/field. This was not a criteria utilized in the screening process, but it certainly provided a significant bias for the results of this study; based on this sample the primary pathway to service-learning was through professional/field work experience. I suggest that further quantitative and qualitative studies should be conducted, specifically at UT-Austin, to identify how service-learning professors may find other pathways into service-learning, community-based research, or engaged scholarship. It would be worth noting how professors who teach through service-learning and/or practice engaged scholarship do so without prior work in their field/discipline. Other questions to drive this research could focus on how and where faculty were socialized to the idea of service-learning and from what origin do they draw their professional orientation.

As part of this study, I collected information on service-learning faculty participants' rates of civic participation. It would be interesting to use this baseline of data to create a mixed methods study to compare and contrast differences between faculty who teach through service-learning and those who do not. O'Meara et al. (2011) called for future research on professors' civic participation as an important element in the study of the professional lives and work of faculty involved in community engagement.

Last, to echo a point already made in this chapter, it is paramount for a prestigious public research institution such as UT-Austin to invest time and resources in creating a large-scale longitudinal research agenda to examine student persistence and success related to service-learning participation. Most of the research that administrators rely upon for this link is at least a decade old. UT-Austin has extensive resources and leading education scholars who could advance this research and help make UT-Austin the policy leader in linking the scholarship of teaching and learning (and particular strategies such as service-learning) to academic persistence and graduation rates.

### **Concluding Personal Reflection**

During the last year of my doctoral program, I was afforded the opportunity to work on community engagement and service-learning initiatives through the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement (LCCE). As I collected and analyzed data for this dissertation study, I could see immediate applicability in our work. Namely, I began to see ways in which faculty could help us shift the institutional culture and rhetoric to recognize and value civic-engaged scholarship and service-learning—all with an eye toward student academic engagement, persistence, and success. At the time of publication for this dissertation, I served as a member of the steering committee responsible for writing and submitting UT-Austin’s application for the prestigious Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement<sup>5</sup>. It was an insightful process to

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<sup>5</sup> The classification for Community Engagement is an elective classification that involves data collection and documentation of important aspects of institutional mission, identity and commitments, and requires substantial effort invested by participating institutions (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, n.d.).

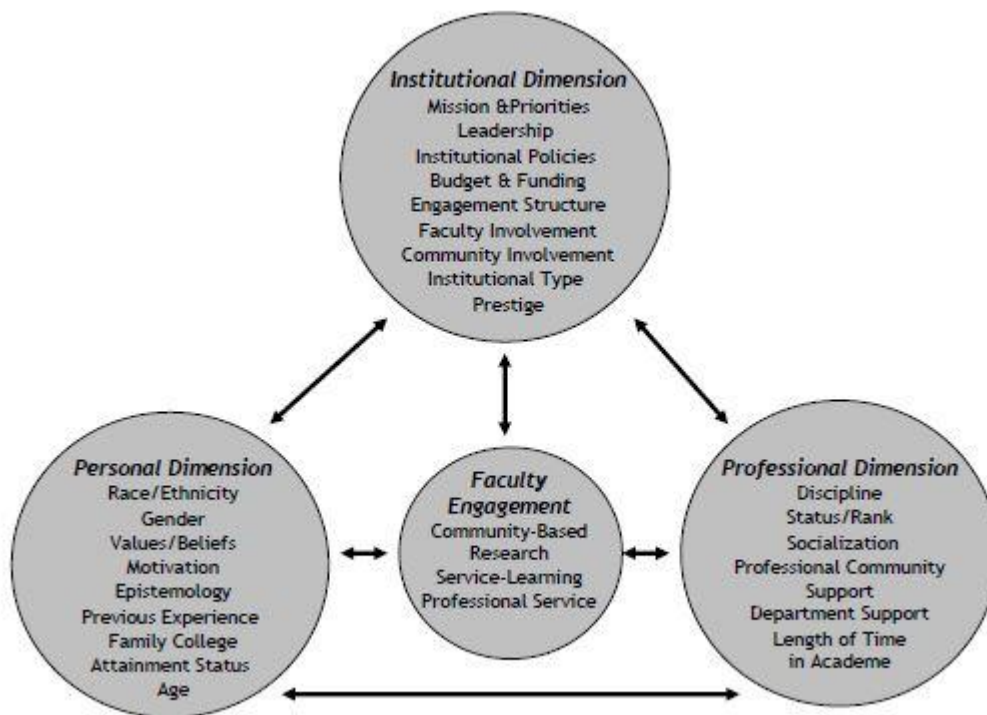
work with colleagues to address the underpinning of UT-Austin's community engagement initiatives and to provide documentation related to service-learning efforts. Moreover, I recognized the timeliness of my research study because the Carnegie Classification forced us to consider more than just UT-Austin's formal structure; it highlighted the importance of informal reward and recognition structures, professional development programs, and systematic assessments designed to collect data on community engagement and utilize it to enhance academic performance. As a scholar-practitioner in the field of higher education, this application process reinforced the significant role of administrators in developing, institutionalizing, tracking, and assessing community engagement and its link to student success.

As I continue on a career path as a scholar-practitioner, I intend to pursue a research agenda that identifies the intersection of three key areas: 1) the prominence and institutionalization of community engagement in higher education, 2) the role of faculty related to institutional mission, and 3) the link between high-impact educational practices on student persistence and completion (with close examination for first-generation college students). It is critical to assess the confluence of these three areas and to identify the process and outcomes related to faculty who employ high-impact teaching and learning strategies to engage students, address societal issues, and contribute to the well-being of society.

## Appendix A

### Demb and Wade's Original Faculty Engagement Model

This figure illustrates the original faculty engagement model presented by Demb and Wade (2009) before revising it in 2012. This proposed study utilizes the 2012 updated version for the theoretical framework, but the original model is included in the appendix as an additional reference and to note the evolution of the model.



The original faculty engagement model as published by Demb, A. & Wade, A. (2009). A conceptual model to explore faculty community engagement. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 5-16.

## Appendix B

### Email to Recruit Faculty Participants

Dear (Faculty Member's Name),

My name is Katie Pritchett, and I am a doctoral candidate at The University of Texas at Austin. I am currently working on my dissertation focused on the experiences and identities of faculty members who utilize service-learning.

Based on the courses identified by the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement (<http://ddce.utexas.edu/civicengagement/service-learning-courses-at-ut-austin>), I believe you might be a good candidate for my study. Additionally, I am looking specifically to recruit faculty members who meet the following criteria:

- a) employed as a full-time faculty member at UT Austin,
- b) have taught a class with a service-learning component within the last 12 months at UT Austin, and
- c) your course(s) meet the definition from Bringle & Hatcher (1996) stating that a service-learning class is “a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility” (p. 222).

If you meet the above requirements and are interested in participating in my study, please reply to confirm your eligibility. Deciding to participate is completely voluntary, and you may elect to discontinue your involvement at any time, without any negative consequences.

If you agree to participate, we will schedule two separate interview times, lasting approximately 60-90 minutes each, during the fall 2013 semester. I will also send you the interview questions ahead of time if you choose to review them and prepare ahead of time.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I am available via email, at [katie.pritchett@utexas.edu](mailto:katie.pritchett@utexas.edu) or by phone at 512-232-8127. Thank you and I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you,  
Katie Pritchett  
Doctoral Candidate, Higher Education Administration

## Appendix C

### Pre-Interview Questionnaire Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the experiences and identity of faculty members who utilize a service-learning pedagogy at a four-year public research institution. Please fill out the following background information. As stated in the Informed Consent document, your participation is voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any questions on this form.

Participant Identifier: \_\_\_\_\_ (*researcher use only*)

**Department:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Title:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**In addition to your title, circle the attribute(s) related to your position as a faculty member:**

Awarded Tenure

Currently on the Tenure-track

Adjunct Instructor

Clinical Professor

Lecturer

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race/Ethnicity:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Length of time teaching at UT Austin:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**List the courses you teach with a service-learning component at UT Austin:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever taught the same class (listed above) without service-learning at UT Austin? If yes, which course?**

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**Do you teach any other courses that do not have a service-learning component at UT Austin?**

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**In general, about how long (semesters or years) have you engaged in service-learning at UT Austin?**

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**In general, what types of issues do you and/or your students address in service-learning classes? (*Example:* education equity, capacity building at non-profits, community organizing, income disparities, housing/homelessness, etc.)**

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**Have you received any awards or honorary distinctions for your teaching, research, or service related to your service-learning course(s) or community engagement efforts? If yes, please list each.**

---

---

**Place a check next to all statements that are true of your activity within the last 24 months:**

- I voted in the most recent presidential election (November 2012).
- I voted in the most recent local election.
- I have contacted an elected official or governmental agency about a political or social issue.
- I signed a petition taking sides on a political or social issue.
- I have actively tried to change policies in a school, workplace, college, or neighborhood.
- I participated in a political rally, protest, or stand-in.
- I worked together formally or informally with others to solve a problem in the community where I live.
- I volunteered through an organization or in a community setting.
- I served on the board or committee of a non-profit organization.
- I wrote a letter or article for a magazine or newspaper about a political or social issue.

- I responded with a comment to an online news story or blog about a political or social issue.
- I have posted about political, governmental, or social issues on my personal social media pages (including, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.).
- I responded to the call for jury duty.
- I attended an organized religious service.

**Please use the space below to expand upon any the above statements that you checked. Indicate the type of political or social issue, the outlet or organization, and the frequency of your activity:**



## Appendix D

**Research Study Title:** Understanding the lived experiences and associated identities of faculty engaged in service-learning at The University of Texas at Austin  
IRB PROTOCOL #: 2013-08-0043

**Principal Investigator:**

Katie Pritchett, M.P.A.  
The University of Texas at Austin  
*The College of Education*  
*Higher Education Administration Doctoral Program*  
Telephone: 512-232-8127  
Email: katie.pritchett@utexas.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The principal investigator will also describe this study to you and answer your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part in the study.

**Your participation is entirely voluntary.** You can refuse to participate, skip any questions, or stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time, and your refusal will not impact current or future relationships with UT Austin or participating sites. To do so, simply tell the researcher you wish to stop participation. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent for your records.

**The purpose of this study** is to examine the experiences of faculty members who utilize service-learning in their course(s) at The University of Texas at Austin. Information gathered during the interviews will be used to identify common experiences shared by faculty. A secondary goal of this is to identify how faculty members' service-learning experiences influence their professional identities on campus. Lastly, a third purpose of this project is to provide administrators and professional staff who are involved with service-learning efforts a better understanding of faculty experiences to help create more effective mentoring professional development or training opportunities.

**If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to do the following things**

- Participate in 2 individual semi-structured interviews that will be audio recorded.
- Provide documents that may help to better understand your service-learning classes including, but not limited to: syllabi, curriculum vitae, teaching award nomination, published research article about service-learning, feature story, etc.

- Participate in follow up phone calls or emails if clarification is needed after an interview session.

**Total estimated time to participate.** The interview will take 60 to 90 minutes in each setting. Participants are also asked to participate in follow-up calls/emails if necessary—not to exceed a total of 60 minutes outside of interview time. There will be at least two days between each in-person interview.

**Risks** of being in the study are minimal and are assessed to be no greater than everyday life. If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks you may experience, you may ask questions now or call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

**Benefits** of being in the study. There are no external benefits for participation in this study. However, participants may enjoy the time reflecting on their experiences. Benefits that may accrue to society in general could include a better understanding of the faculty teaching experience at a public research university and assist administrators with improving faculty professional development.

**Compensation & Costs.** Participants will not receive monetary compensation for participating. It will not cost participants anything to participate.

**Confidentiality and Privacy Protections.** The interviews sessions will be audio recorded, and the audio files will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them. The recordings will be kept in a secure place (encrypted file folder on the investigator's computer). The recordings will be heard or viewed only for research purposes by the investigator. With the permission of participants, audio recordings will be retained for possible future analysis or for educational purposes at scientific or educational conventions or demonstrations. If a participant does not provide the research with permission to retain the audio file for future educational use, the audio recording will be erased after they are transcribed and coded.

The records of this study will be stored securely and kept confidential. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin and members of the Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any personally identifiable information. Throughout the study, the researcher will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have any questions about the study, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation please contact the principal investigator listed at the top of this page.

If you would like to obtain information about the research study, have questions, concerns, complaints or wish to discuss problems about a research study with someone unaffiliated with the study, please contact the IRB Office at (512) 471-8871, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (512) 232-2685. Anonymity, if desired, will be protected to the extent possible. As an alternative method of contact, an email may be sent to orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu or a letter sent to IRB Administrator, P.O. Box 7426, Mail Code A3200, Austin, TX 78713.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent to Participate in the Study:**

I have read the above information and have sufficient information to make a decision about participating in this study. I consent to participate in the study.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Consent for use of Audio Files for Educational Purposes:**

I hereby give permission to this researcher to retain the audio file from this interview for future educational research purposes.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Interview Protocol for First Interview

**Participant Identifier:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date & Time of Interview:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher Introduction:** Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I have given you a copy of the informed consent document so that you know the intention of this study and how I will keep participant information confidential. [Collect signature on Informed Consent in order to proceed with the interview.]

Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to answer any questions in this interview. With your permission, I would like to audiotape this interview. Can I get your verbal consent to begin recording our interview? [If yes, begin digital recorder]

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the experiences and identity of faculty members who engage in service-learning at a four-year public institution at which “engagement” is a stated institutional priority. I seek to understand how you use a service-learning pedagogy in your classes at UT, and to understand the meaning it has to you as a professional. Your insights and your beliefs are very valuable to this study. I have several questions prepared to help in providing a semi-structure to this interview. However, I may ask several follow-up questions to ensure that I accurately understand your experience. Examples of some follow-up questions are included in italic print within the interview protocol.

This interview serves as a time for you to share your personal history leading up to your decision to integrate service-learning into your classroom at UT Austin. These questions will focus on your life, teaching philosophy and pedagogy, and your experiences teaching service-learning at UT Austin. The second interview, which we will schedule at the end of this meeting, will serve as a follow-up to this interview by focusing on how these experiences relate to your professional identity. Do you have any questions? If not, let’s begin.

## **Part I: Background and Formative Education Experiences**

1. Let's start with a brief life history. Tell me about your family life, school experiences, or any major event that has shaped who you today--both personally and professionally?
2. Tell me about your undergraduate and graduate school experiences.
  - a. *Where did you go to school?*
  - b. *What did you study?*
  - c. *What types of professors inspired you?*
3. Did you participate in any experiential learning activities (i.e. service-learning, community-based research, internships, etc.) throughout your educational history?
  - a. *If so, at what point in your studies?*
  - b. *If so, what impact, if any, do you believe it has had on your teaching philosophy?*
4. Since completing with your highest level of education, have you held a job other than being a professor?
  - a. *If so, can you describe how that job has shaped your view of your teaching role, if at all?*
5. Have you had any experiences that connected you, a family member, or a friend to a particular community, non-profit, or social cause (e.g. family member affected by cancer and now have a strong affinity toward helping cancer research organizations)?

## **Part II: How Faculty Describe Teaching through Service-Learning**

1. When did you know that you wanted to be a professor?
  - a. *Were there any mentors that influenced you? Who and how?*
2. Which course(s) do you teach using service-learning?
  - a. *How long have you been using service-learning in your class(es)?*
3. Can you describe to me how you decided to use service-learning at UT Austin?
4. Can you describe to me your first experience teaching with service-learning at UT Austin?
  - a. *What's most exciting?*
  - b. *What's most difficult?*
  - c. *What's the first class day like? The last one?*

5. Can you tell me about a time when you felt affirmed in your decision to use service-learning in your class(es)?
6. In what ways, if any, do you feel you learn or grow as a result of implementing service-learning?
  - a. *How do you see your students and the community partners responding to this pedagogy?*
  - b. *How do the experiences shape you?*
7. What skills, qualities, and/or experiences have been important in your successful incorporation of service-learning?
8. Have you ever been deterred from using service-learning? Why or why not?
  - a. *Who or what has served as a deterrent?*
  - b. *How did you decide to continue utilizing service-learning?*
  - c. *What does that say about your level of commitment to service-learning?*
  - d. *How integral is it to your experiences and identity as a professor?*
9. How would you answer another faculty member who asked what benefits you receive as a result of incorporating service-learning you're your class(es) at UT Austin?
  - a. *What example or anecdotal stories would you tell?*

#### **Part IV: Wrap-Up**

1. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about your experience with service-learning at UT Austin?

**Researcher Conclusion:** Thank you for participating in my research study. I look forward to our second interview where we will discuss how your service-learning experiences may have shaped your professional identity, your research agenda, and/or your practice.

## Appendix F

### Interview Protocol for Second Interview

**Participant Identifier:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date & Time of Interview:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher Introduction:** Thank you for meeting with me again to conduct your second follow-up interview for my study. Last meeting, you signed the informed consent document so that you know the intention of this study and how I will keep participant information confidential. Do you have any follow-up questions about that process?

Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to answer any questions in this interview. With your permission, I would like to audiotape this interview. Can I get your verbal consent to begin recording our interview? [If yes, begin digital recorder]

As you may remember, the purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the experiences and identity of faculty members who engage in service-learning at a four-year public institution at which “engagement” is a stated institutional priority. I seek to understand how you use a service-learning pedagogy in your classes at UT, and to understand the meaning it has to you as a professional. Your insights and your beliefs are very valuable to this study. I have several questions prepared to help in providing a semi-structure to this interview. However, I may ask several follow-up questions to ensure that I accurately understand your experience. Examples of some follow-up questions are included in italic print within the interview protocol.

During the first interview, you shared with me your personal history leading up to your decision to integrate service-learning into your classroom at UT Austin. During this second interview, we will focus on how your service-learning experiences relate to your professional identity and how, if it all, it aligns with other areas of your research or practice. Do you have any questions? If not, let’s begin.

#### **Part I: Meaning of Service-Learning Related to Faculty Identity at Institution & Department**

- The academy traditionally maintains 3 pillars—teaching, research, and service.
  - a. *In what ways, if at all, has service-learning influenced your pedagogy, epistemological approach, or teaching style?*

- b. *Have you found that you are publishing or researching on similar topics as your service-learning efforts? Why or why not?*
  - c. *Has service-learning challenged your notion of these 3 pillars?*
- How would you describe UT's mission and core values?
  - a. *What does that have to do with your service-learning pedagogy, research, and your work, if at all?*
- What do you think your identity as a service-learning professor is within UT-at large?
  - a. *How would your colleagues describe your identity within the department?*
- In what ways does service-learning illuminate the overlap and competing interests of societal needs vs. University needs?
- What do you know about UT's history with exclusionary practices (ex. *Sweatt v. Painter*, *Fisher v. University of Texas*, etc.) and interaction with East Austin? *Does that influence your work? If yes, how?*

## **Part II: Personal**

- Have you shared service-learning class experiences with your family or social networks? Why or why not?
- In what ways, if any, have your service-learning classes shaped your civic participation (e.g. voting patterns, political activity, social justice orientation, volunteering, service as a board member to local organizations, etc.)?
- Are there other ways, aside from your service-learning class, that you feel you engage with the community?

## **Part III: Wrap-Up**

Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about your experience with service-learning at UT Austin?

**Researcher Conclusion:** Thank you for participating in my research study. I appreciate your time in participating in both interviews.



## Appendix G

According to the Carnegie Foundation, 15 other institutions in the United States share characteristics similar to UT Austin, based on the following criteria:

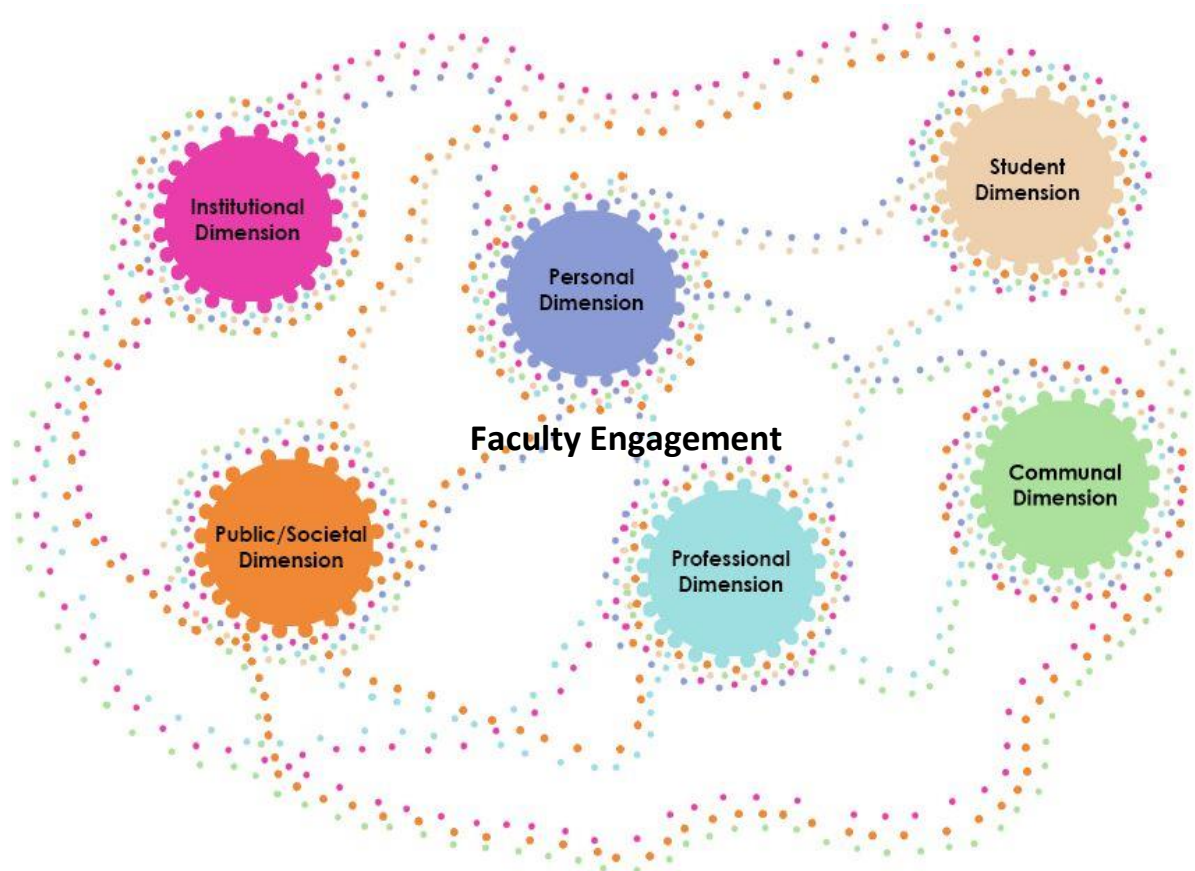
- 1) 4-year institution,
- 2) a public institution,
- 3) a high undergraduate enrollment profile (HU),
- 4) an institutional profile that is full-time four-year, more selective, with higher transfer-in rate, and
- 5) a research university with very high research activity (RU/VH).

Of these 15 institutions, 10 of them are also members of Campus Compact, a national coalition of 1,200 college and university presidents who have committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education (see bolded institutions below). UT Austin is the only institution in the state of Texas that meets both criteria from Carnegie Foundation and Campus Compact.

<b>Florida State University</b>	<b>Tallahassee, Florida</b>
<b>Iowa State University</b>	<b>Ames, Iowa</b>
<b>The Ohio State University-Main Campus</b>	<b>Columbus, Ohio</b>
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	New Brunswick, New Jersey
<b>The University of Texas at Austin</b>	<b>Austin, Texas</b>
University of Arkansas	Fayetteville, Arkansas
University of California-Davis	Davis, California
University of California-Irvine	Irvine, California
<b>University of California-San Diego</b>	<b>La Jolla, California</b>
University of California-Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara, California
<b>University of Georgia</b>	<b>Athens, Georgia</b>
<b>University of Maryland-College Park</b>	<b>College Park, Maryland</b>
<b>University of Missouri-Columbia</b>	<b>Columbia, Missouri</b>
<b>University of Nebraska-Lincoln</b>	<b>Lincoln, Nebraska</b>
<b>University of Oklahoma Norman Campus</b>	<b>Norman, Oklahoma</b>
<b>University of South Carolina-Columbia</b>	<b>Columbia, South Carolina</b>

## Appendix H

This is an alternative revised conceptual model, based on Demb and Wade’s 2012 faculty engagement model (FEM). It is a unique way to reconceptualize Figure 6.3 based on findings from qualitative data in this study. Figure 6.3 seeks to maintain the integrity of the original Demb and Wade model (2009; 2012). However, this figure is presented in the Appendix as an alternative way illustrate the interconnectedness and active decision cycle discussed by participants in this study. Each dimension is represented as a moving gear, and each dimension has the ability to “turn with” other dimensions to illustrate how factors within different dimensions can intersect to form meaningful, unique experiences for each service-learning faculty member. Although I have not settled on this alternative design for a conceptual model, I encourage other researchers to test this model and consider redesigning the FEM to reflect the interactivity and interconnectedness among and between each dimension, as displayed below.



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