

2023

The Quality of Centers of Teaching and Learning: What We See and What We Don't

Darrell H. Robin
darrellrobin@outlook.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Robin, Darrell H., "The Quality of Centers of Teaching and Learning: What We See and What We Don't" (2023). *Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations*. 7349.
<https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations/7349>

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research & Artistry at Huskie Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Huskie Commons. For more information, please contact jschumacher@niu.edu.

ABSTRACT

THE QUALITY OF CENTERS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: WHAT WE SEE AND WHAT WE DON'T

Darrell H. Robin, Ed.D.
Department of Counseling and Higher Education
Northern Illinois University, 2023
Katy S. Jaekel, Director

An institution of higher education will create a Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) as a hub for pedagogical and professional development for its faculty. While CTLs have developed over the past fifty years, their administrators and staff have endeavored to develop, strengthen, and enhance quality pedagogical skills for anyone who teaches for the college from adjunct instructors to tenured professors. Specifically looking at how Illinois community college CTLs provide professional development opportunities for educators, this critical summative content analysis considers what CTLs value in their professional development along with the types of support they provide faculty.

Relying on the conceptual framework of the hidden curriculum, findings reveal CTLs are inconsistent in their communication via public-facing documents and may espouse values and development that varies from what they digitally share through accessible materials via their website. Recommendations include providing more time for the development of CTLs for their administrators and staff, for the reflection of their process, to standardize their communication while making it transparent and to include diversity as a fundamental layer of their culture.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
DE KALB, ILLINOIS

AUGUST 2023

THE QUALITY OF CENTERS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:
WHAT WE SEE AND WHAT WE DON'T

BY

DARRELL H. ROBIN
©2023 Darrell H. Robin

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Doctoral Director:
Katy S. Jaekel

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Working backward...

from the dissertation writing and coursework at NIU, I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Quortne Hutchings for their kind and innovative educational approach. I reserve a special thank you to Dr. Katy Jaekel whose spark, wit, passion, and faith in education restored my belief in an abandoned process and renewed my resolve to teach and, more importantly, to learn.

Tricia, my best doc friend, your camaraderie and conversation embodied the best of us in our cohort. Your support was frequent, reliable, and transformative.

Toda raba, Dr. Razfar. Thank you for your spiritual guidance, your educational mentorship, and your belief that I could complete this journey fifteen years ago and today.

Dennis, without your symmetry and soul, I would not have improved my practice as a teacher and, more vitally, as a father.

Lennon, my son of peace, thank you for bridging the gap between generations.

Elisa, anything I can do, you can do better. I will never stop being proud of you. Better than pride is love and happiness. More, I cannot hope for you, daughter.

Solomon, my son of wisdom, you possess the infinity of energy, a boundless wellspring, an undying enthusiasm. Hone it to use your voice and to help others to use their voice to positively influence society.

Lauren, your love and your loyalty have no limits. Thank you for sticking with me through anything imaginable and everything unimaginable.

I would have never graduated high school... or college, if not for the original Doc, Richard Hanus, who inspired me, who nurtured my thoughts and writing (regardless if in pen, pencil, or chalk), who taught me almost everything I know about literature and composition, who taught me to teach by showing not telling, who befriended me, and who loves me. You are the Platonic Teacher. My privilege to know you can never be overstated.

Thank you to my parents who taught me to take on their best characteristics and the best features of anyone I ever encounter. You always made it clear that I should do everything in my power to be the best version of myself. It is still a work in progress.

DEDICATION

To my grandparents, Geraldine, Sol, Lowell, and Evelyn, who have passed from this world,
who did not leave without passing on to me everything I would need to be.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	viii
Chapter	1
1. DISSERTATION OF PRACTICE RESEARCH PROPOSAL	1
Introduction	2
Research Problem	4
Research Purpose and Questions	4
Literature Review	5
Description of Topic	5
Overview of CTLs	6
History of CTLs	8
Utilizing CTLs	9
CTLs in Community Colleges	10
Conceptual Framework	14
Research Design	15
Epistemology, Paradigm, and Theoretical Perspective	16
Methodological Approach	16
Research Sites and Documents	17
Methods of Data Collection	18
Methods of Data Analysis	20

Chapter	Page
Criteria for Trustworthiness	21
Delimitations	22
Positionality	23
Significance	26
2. SEEKING THE PUBLICLY DIGITAL FOOTPRINT OF CENTERS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING	27
Introduction	27
Situating Learning.....	29
Review of Relevant Literature	30
Conceptual Framework	32
Research Design	32
Research Site Selection	33
Carnegie Designation	34
Narrowing the Field	35
Document Selection	38
Critical Discourse Analysis.....	39
Data Analysis	40
Quality and Trustworthiness.....	41
Findings	42
Bureaucracies Are Not Excellence and Innovation	43
Conformity to Institutional Authority	45
The Edutechnical Help Desk	47

Chapter	Page
Substitution of Growth in Learning for Credentials	50
Discussion	52
Critical Naming	53
Thematic Analysis	56
CTL Finance Prediction	64
Delimitations	65
Recommendations	66
Conclusion	68
3. SCHOLARLY REFLECTION	69
Introduction and Context	69
Exigency to Reflect as a Scholar	69
Learning	71
Studying and Scholarly Background	72
Cautiously Optimistic	75
Working through Difficulties	76
More Learning and Future Opportunities	79
Application to Professional Practice	80
Application to Research	81
REFERENCES	83

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Carnegie and NCES Classifications of Illinois Community Colleges and Systems with Online CTLs.....	37
2. Carnegie and NCES Classifications of Illinois Community Colleges and Systems Chosen for Study.....	38

CHAPTER 1

DISSERTATION OF PRACTICE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Introduction

Starting in the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, governmental and private organizations supported the creation of preservice teaching programs at the master's and doctoral level (Cohen & Brawer, 1989). Preservice education is meant to teach teachers and instruct instructors, before they begin their careers, in the best practices of sharing content knowledge, managing classrooms, creating goals, and assessing outcomes while maintaining an objective of student growth. Preservice education was implemented, partly, to prepare and improve community college instructors through scholarship, professionalism, curriculum, and instruction beyond any content expertise they already possessed (Cohen & Brawer, 1989; Tsunoda, 1992). While secondary educators took greater advantage of these programs, preservice education did not source community college faculty, and the development of community college faculty continued to be a low priority during this time period (Brawer, 1990, Cohen & Brawer, 1989; Tsunoda, 1992). Preservice training programs in pedagogical skills, such as instruction and interaction with students, have not been valued for the pedagogical development of public community college instructors for decades (Tsunoda, 1992).

Pedagogical development for academic professionals shift focus from content expertise to the practice of teaching and assessment to help craft identities as educators (McCune, 2017). Pedagogical development draws on the influences and interrelation of contextual aspects and elements in higher education (Myllykoski-Laine et al., 2022). Pedagogical development, then,

becomes a process by which experts in a content area could become more contextualized and effective instructors beyond the experiences gleaned through their own teaching experiences and teaching communities (McCune, 2017; Myllykoski-Laine et al., 2022).

Research Problem

Centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) and/or faculty development were created to bolster pedagogical development and to enhance pedagogical skills for instructors in community colleges and universities, and the existence and purpose of these CTLs and other forms of professional development demonstrate a need for improvement in pedagogy beyond graduate preparation (Murray, 2020). Historically, preservice training was attempted at institutions and failed – or could be substituted for earning an advanced degree in a content area – or was not as preferable as CTL development (Tsunoda, 1992).

CTLs emerged and evolved alongside preservice education in the 1960s; although, they experienced a great period of growth in the 1980s for institutions of higher education unlike preservice education programs that waned at the same time (Cruz et al., 2021; Sorcinelli, 2020). CTLs develop the format by which faculty will improve but must also provide evidence that their function positively influences their practice of teaching (Rodriguez et al., 2015). Rodriguez et al. (2015) explain that “[i]n almost all institutions, instructors, now more than ever, must develop assessment tools aligned with course outcomes, document student academic achievement, participate in interdisciplinary projects such as service learning and general-education outcomes assessment, and familiarize themselves with emerging technologies” (pp. 3-4). Like the catch-all mission and function of a community college, CTLs serve as a locus for nearly every aspect of faculty development within and beyond the classroom (Bartholomew et al., 2018; Beaumont, 2020; Bahr & Gross, 2016; Dougherty & Townsend, 2006). Consequently, due to their

ubiquitous contribution to faculty, most institutions of higher education, inclusive of most community colleges, have some sort of CTL even when differently named. Bishop and Keehn (2015) report that “there is no definitive ‘list’ of U.S. higher education teaching and learning centers” (p. 6). However, according to the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (2019), there are 1,184 CTLs and programs affiliated with the United States and another 604 outside the U.S. and its territories.

CTLs can exist in a variety of different physical and virtual forms (Cruz et al., 2021). The materials of CTLs are steeped in pedagogical research and typically address how to deliver and interact with curriculum, how to vary and differentiate instruction, how to use technology to leverage curriculum and instruction, and how to create learning objectives and subsequently assess them (Rodriguez, 2015). These materials may require a physical space that could be a library if a dedicated CTL space does not exist (Cruz et al., 2021). Still, most of these materials exist asynchronously online and may require synchronous online interaction in today’s post-pandemic community college environment (Inman, 2021). From Google sites, to scholarly articles, to committee minutes, to instructional videos, to online pedagogical courses, to posted demonstrations and observations of actual classroom experiences, to mission and purpose statements, to faculty handbooks, to actual and sample course documents, CTLs provide materials to guide and support the faculty they serve (Elgin Community College, n.d.).

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this qualitative critical summative content analysis study is to explore how Illinois community colleges view CTLs as a means to develop pedagogical skill for instructors through the implicit and explicit messages conveyed through their professional development materials. Specifically, this study is guided by the following research questions:

- How do CTLs provide professional development opportunities for educators at community colleges?
- What do CTLs value in their professional development?
- What types of support do these CTLs provide faculty?

These questions will help to understand the role of curriculum and instruction within CTLs and their community colleges (Schubert, 1986). As CTLs engage in the curriculum and instruction of pedagogy, their curricular materials may be practical, guaranteed, critical, hidden, taught, intended, experienced, embodied, tested, and null (Schubert, 2007). Curriculum constitutes what matters, what is valued, by the people who choose it and use it for and in institutions, programs, and classrooms; and when it is overt, the institution openly and formally admits to teaching it (Schubert, 1986). Thus, the medium, or materials, by which the curriculum is shared, is influenced by and can influence CTLs. Without specific evaluations of CTLs and their materials, the hidden curriculum, which represents intended or unintended consequences of programs that are not explicitly planned for or shared, would remain unsurfaced (Schubert, 1986). To that end, attention must also be directed toward any institutional evaluations that affirm or deny outcomes based upon evidence derived from a CTL. This study of CTLs has significance for the overall development of community college instructors and can inform both administrations and instructors regarding communication, consistency, commitment, and development of CTLs and their success.

Literature Review

This literature review first describes the topic as it relates to the purpose statement and research questions of this student. Then, it looks at research that pertains to the overview,

history, and development of CTLs. Finally, the research of utilization of CTLs is examined along with a specific focus upon their use in community colleges.

Description of Topic

Currently, the State of Illinois and its public community colleges do not have formal requirements for the employment of its instructors beyond the accreditation standards supplied by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC, 2020). Beyond the 18 graduate semester course hours in a content area that are prescribed by the HLC, Illinois and/or the public community colleges could require a content degree at the Bachelor and/or Master level, hours of internship through observation and experience like student teaching, and undergraduate or graduate course hours in some field within education. The needs of different community colleges naturally vary by community, and some institutions have individual requirements overall or by specific content. But, in many instances, instructors can earn a teaching position in an Illinois public community college with no previous teaching experience and/or with no formal learning from education courses.

This situation is unique to Illinois public higher education as it is dissimilar to the Illinois public K-12 system that requires an internship of student teaching and coursework within education beyond the coursework and undergraduate degree within a content area. This lack of experience and education within an instructor could disturb student learning. Furthermore, an instructor who possesses this experience and education could make students feel more secure during their learning experiences. Such an incongruity at an institution could macroscopically alter the perspective of students' learning and how administrators and faculty view it as well; these disparate views have the potential to adversely affect an institution, its curriculum and instruction, and its good standing within a community.

Finally, even when Illinois public community colleges do not possess uniform or statewide standards for hiring instructors, they do create CTLs, which are sometimes also called centers for faculty development. The very existence of such an institutional organization tacitly acknowledges that there is some sort of deficiency or some necessary area of improvement within instructors that they did not possess upon hire.

Overview of CTLs

CTLs are supposed to assist as a result of the lack of preparation. Miller (1997) reveals that preservice programs for higher education were in disarray in the past and that CTLs represented a positive step toward helping instructors. Faculty development programs have a “primary interest in creating a culture of teaching excellence, advancing new teaching and learning initiatives, and responding to faculty needs” (Eddy, 2010, p. 20). Eddy (2010) also explains that faculty must first be responsible to their classroom teaching, which will go beyond content mastery to include “preparation [that] requires currency with new teaching strategies, incorporation of technology into classroom methods, and facing students who differ from those in the past with respect to demographics and preparation” (p. 21). CTLs are spaces where faculty can learn about best teaching practices and reflect on their use with pedagogical experts (Sorcinelli et al., 2011). These centers can also help instructors learn how to enculture environments that are learner-centered (Blumberg, 2016). Most faculty learning communities, whether incorporated as a center or a program, started to help faculty with teaching and have evolved to address technology, diversity and inclusion, and identity (O’Meara et al., 2018). Undeniably, these are key areas in which an instructor ought to have expertise (Bodily, 2021; Green and Ciez-Volz, 2010). Education classes could prepare one for the diversity of students

found at a community college (American Association of Community Colleges, 2022). But without that background, CTLs could pick up the slack.

Some institutions require work with such CTLs, but it is often voluntary participation from instructors who already want to improve their teaching instead of the instructors who may need it most (Neal & Peed-Neal, 2010). Those who do volunteer are likely to be successful when they participate frequently, transparently, and honestly; and CTLs work better when participation is voluntary (O'Meara et al., 2018). As CTLs have developed over the past fifty years, quality, assessment, outcomes, and pedagogical efficacy have improved when the centers have consistently supported faculty with time and resources (Sorcinelli, 2020). Still, such luxuries do not exist for all centers, if an institution even has one, which catches faculty in a type of circumlocution that can leave them almost the same as when they started teaching.

Consequently, evaluating CTLs can prove equally difficult, and they generally suffer from unclear goals, weak infrastructure, misguided mindsets, goals, missions, and poorly crafted curricula and evaluation frameworks (Hines, 2017). Thus, Hines (2017) argues “[t]hese factors demonstrate that a sound model for evaluating CTL programs must consider the larger picture of a center’s evaluation capacity, curricular structure, and evaluation planning process” (p. 1). Nevertheless, time is still an issue for faculty, and student time spent within an institution is exhaustive as well (Sorcinelli, 2020). Achieving positive outcomes through CTLs is possible but probably should not be completed in haste, which complicates how instructors and institutions use their precious time, which has been a struggle over more than half a century throughout their existence (Hines, 2017).

History of CTLs

CTLs are extremely valuable to institutions, educators, and students – and can assist in the areas of education and experience if an instructor did not engage in a preservice program. One possibility for the current lack of preservice programs is that they used to exist but were ineffective (Tsunoda, 1992). As guidelines and instruction have developed over time, the lion's share of effort by instructors and institutions was dedicated into developing and improving CTLs (Sorcinelli, 2020). Tsunoda (1992) points out that doctoral programs might have served as a suitable alternative to preservice training since more instructors were pursuing advanced degrees in the 1980s (Tsunoda, 1992). Fast-forward almost half a century and a review of the literature shows that the doctoral degrees did help with content knowledge but not pedagogical skill. But Palmer (1992), in the same journal as Tsunoda (1992), claims that “[p]reservice education will be of little help: the master's degree within the discipline has long been established as the credential of entry into the profession, and specialized programs designed specifically for community college teachers are rare” (p. 36). Rarity does not mean a total absence; in fact, Palmer (1992) identifies the genesis of a CTL as the solution and notes that any answer must have institutional and cultural buy-in. The aforementioned master's degree, as an entry credential, required a long period of training to become a practitioner (Palmer, 1992). In the 1970s, then, scholarship was assumed to lead to better teaching (Sorcinelli, 2020).

After the 1970s saw influencers champion institutional faculty development over a common preservice regimen, the 1980s foresaw that further evaluation of these programs would be necessary to further improve them (Eble & McKeachie, 1985). The late 1990s showed a lack of efficacy for faculty development along with the serious drain of resources; having a dearth in these areas strained improvement at both ends (Miller, 1997). This time period also brought

student learning into greater focus with the understanding that quality teaching through improved faculty development could assist it (Sorcinelli, 2020). At the turn of the millennium, more formal CTLs began to rise while their impact on assessment was still emerging (Sorcinelli, 2020). Murray (2002) learned that CTLs had yet to evaluate their own work and understood this area of development as central to the efficacy of their programs.

Entering into the last two decades, researchers focused more upon the level of impact on student learning and outcomes from CTLs (Sorcinelli, 2020). Beach et al. (2016) continued this research and reviewed evidentiary standards for assessment through program evaluation leading to greater accountability for CTLs. Sorcinelli (2020) categorizes faculty development during the 2010s as an evidentiary one and attributes efficacy to the wide range of materials and measurements used to determine the quality of CTLs along with innovative frameworks and strategic planning. These improvements have directly linked the faculty development within CTLs to a rise in student learning (Allen et al., 2019; Condon, 2016; Jankowski, 2017)

Utilizing CTLs

MacCormack et al. (2018) outline six levels that could outlive and outlast a student's time at an institution: "(a) faculty engagement, (b) faculty learning, (c) faculty implementation, (d) student engagement, (e) course-level student outcomes, and (f) institutional outcomes" (p. 1). These steps do not exist in isolation nor do they always happen consecutively, but as each step is integral to the process, one can see that immense amount of time and resources that are required to create, test, and revise the process. Even an initial investment of time and resources can prove extremely difficult for some underfunded or rural community colleges (Eddy, 2010).

MacCormack et al. (2018) believe that leaders in higher education seek to improve pedagogical skill and instructor accountability insofar as they desire quantity and quality for student

outcomes, culminating in degrees earned. This focus on product does not necessarily belay the process, but it does appear to view it as a means to an end. Dewey (1933) might find this stance problematic as intrinsic value is found in the process itself. It seems most pragmatic to place the majority of the institution and instructors' time and resources toward the process if a better product is desired.

The process by which a CTL can improve is bolstered by the key principles of relevance, rigor, context, and reliability (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015; Hines, 2017). Given that the process is iterative and given the amount of time it takes to engage in process, how can anyone, including college administrators and directors of CTLs, expect college educators to possess an iota of what they ought to have in order to be most effective and follow best practice in the classroom? CTLs may be more than a band-aid for the dearth of education and experience that some newly hired college instructors lack. In fact, they tie neatly into Dewey's (1916) ideal that process and the means have the most value – and the continuation of the process has merit due to good faith actors, measurable accountability, and progress.

CTLs in Community Colleges

It is possible that community college teaching may not be the primary career choice for most faculty (Fugate & Amey, 2000). Only within the past two decades has a possessing a Ph.D. really become a de facto criterion (Eddy, 2010). The economics and the constriction of the job market, which funnels doctors holding a Ph.D. from their desired research position at a university or college to a position focused more on teaching at community college, may change the competitive field for instructors who only possess a master's degree or graduate hours in a content area.

Still, many community colleges prefer instructors to have experience before they would consider hiring them (Sackris, 2016). Since many recently minted doctors of philosophy likely earned their degree in their field, instead of in education, at best, they had the opportunity to be graduate assistants on their path from the university professoriate to community college teaching (Sackris, 2016). But even as these people may take an unintended career path, it still affects the employment of instructors who might have more teaching experience and less content focus, which makes one wonder what constitutes quality and excellence in community college teaching (Green & Ciez-Volz, 2010).

Townsend and Twombly (2007) argue that community college faculty are generalists rather than the research specialists of the university level. Whether or not a Ph.D. is preferred, the main requirement for a community college educator is to have a specific level of content education, like 18 graduate hours or a master's degree equivalency, to allow generalization and instruction in an area (Miller, 1997). Graduate programs were intended to focus on content rather than prepare students to focus upon becoming an effective teacher (Austin, 2002). Green and Ciez-Volz (2010) understand that "command over one's subject matter is essential to sound instruction, yet a teacher's ability to communicate such knowledge through a variety of pedagogical approaches may be even more critical" (p. 85). Someone who earns a doctorate in a content area can be a good instructor, but natural inclination or faculty socialization is not automatic and cannot always be expected (Eddy, 2010). Twombly (2005) argues that the quality of faculty can be defined by institutions; sadly, just as the rise and fall of labor markets can hinge on these definitions, so does student learning. To preserve the latter and make it primary, selection committees need to be more selective in defining and determining teaching experience

as a mode of quality because “a capable teacher knows more than her discipline” (Green & Ciez-Volz, 2010, p. 85).

Some community colleges aspire to be akin to their university counterparts; however, most community colleges do not (Twombly & Townsend, 2008). This claim is true for most community college instructors insofar as a doctorate in their field is not required; rather the 18 graduate hour requirement for accreditation appears to be standard (Alexander et al., 2012). Further, a lack of formal pedagogical preparation exists for most community college educators who, by majority, only hold content area master’s degrees (Grubb, 1999). But Grubb (1999) would have agreed with Eddy (2010) as they both determined that if the emphasis of community college preparation is on content rather than pedagogical skill then the development of teaching methods is left to trial and error and socialization from existing faculty. Limiting external knowledge, faculty leaders, like community college department chairs, have usually come up through the same system (Prentice & Guillaume, 2021). Complicating the issue further, these chairs may find it satisfactory to have instructors emulate other successful faculty members, which is not inherently problematic on its own but cannot take the place of professional development or a center for teaching and learning (Alexander et al., 2012).

When explaining the difference between university and community college department chairs, Prentice and Guillaume (2021) explain that “[f]aculty members have the skills to focus intensely on one discipline area” (p. 353). Cross-apply this argument that professional development is lacking for department chairs to the requirement of professional development for instructors beyond their content area because they need more than content knowledge to succeed in the classroom (Dougherty et al., 2014). Consider that Dougherty et al. (2014) address contract bargaining for part-time contingent community college faculty concerning knowledge of

technology. Reasonably, one would expect full-time tenured faculty to have an equivalent or greater level of knowledge in the area of technology over part-time adjuncts – but also greater mastery over classroom management, differentiated instruction, and assessment practices.

These domains are some that one learns about in education courses and through the experience of teaching; but, to avoid a genetic fallacy regarding experience, preparation should consist of more than “observation, trial and error, and reading on areas of interest” because “[t]here is a difference between the skills required for classroom teaching and being a content expert” (Eddy, 2010, pp. 16, 23). Alexander et al. (2012) would continue this line of thought by acknowledging that an effective college teacher possesses subject matter expertise but also must engage in authentic delivery and assessment with the ability to differentiate both for diverse student learners.

Most public K-12 teachers across the United States of America require some sort of certification or licensure that requires pedagogical course work beyond the content area and an internship of some sort. Regardless of age, do all students deserve a learning experience with someone who is both a content-level expert and an excellent teacher? If faculty are to be held accountable for anything beyond their content knowledge, would not pedagogical training of some kind be prerequisite to earning a position to teach (Alexander et al., 2012; Green & Ciez-Volz, 2010)? Community college administrators have a host of needs from program development to recruitment and retention, which they could require from instructors and members of leadership (Gnage & Drumm, 2010).

Ultimately, community colleges look for people who fit their vision and mission, which is more likely to be someone who has studied education along with their content area since pedagogical classes help students understand the theory and practice of education (Alexander et

al., 2012). To that end, some instructors have difficulty assimilating into some diverse academic discourses, and few content specific programs outside of some select fields in the humanities offer practice for faculty members to socialize (Bodily, 2021).

Conceptual Framework

This study is first grounded in critical theory. Inherently reviewing the content of CTL documentation to determine value will reveal what power prevails as a result and in spite of what they produce and share with the public. Power leads to privileges only available to those who wield it. Because all instructors, even teachers of teachers and their pedagogies, wield power, they possess the privilege of shaping society through classroom situations, which are entirely social in nature (Young, 1992). In society, the evidence of how one views truth is experiential as Kant would explain the phenomena, which is the appearance, and the noumena, which is the thing itself (Emundts, 2008). This extended articulation from Plato's Allegory of the Cave (Eyer, 2009), where the shadow is a lesser yet wholly perceivable truth, can be akin to how CTL documentation and results represents actual and demonstrably effective teaching.

Critical theory causes one to discriminate on matters of truth and value and seeks to expose of any kind of social hierarchy as unjust (Anyon, 1980; Young, 1971). Freire (1993) upends socio-educational communities to shift power back to the students from the traditionally banked knowledge and truth of those who ran the educational systems. Giroux (2004) argues that pedagogy can grow from such social and local struggles and understands that democratic possibilities exist past the social truth of cultural fears and vogue standards as held by those in power.

While the lens of a hidden curriculum (Schubert, 1986) almost became part of research question during the genesis of this study, it was decided to best integrate it into a conceptual

framework instead. Community colleges produce hidden curriculum with their professional development training, and it is usually unbeknownst to instructors who were trained, who will then be unlikely to realize it as they instruct their students using their new and enhanced pedagogical skill. Schubert (2007) considers the hidden curriculum to be what is taught but not included in the official curriculum, which leads to veiled consequences that socially shape student outlook. In the case of CTLs in this study, the students are also instructors, who will perpetuate these unseen consequences of power and privilege to their students. Insofar as these social interactions are not explicitly governed by any entity as they are unseen, the potential for societal abuse through hierarchal power, intentional or otherwise, exists (Anyon, 1980; Giroux & Purpel, 1983; Schubert, 2007).

This conceptual framework guides this study as it answers its research questions. Determining how CTLs provide professional development opportunities for educators at community colleges provides an opportunity for a critical lens attuned to the hidden curriculum to understand what is and what is not seen in public documents. More critically, when studying what CTLs value in their professional development, this conceptual framework allows one to view CTLs and, by extension, community colleges as institutions that hegemonically oppress or systematically emancipate – or some hybridized version of both with tension leaning in one direction (Freire, 1993).

Research Design

This section of the study outlines the research design. It is inclusive of the theoretical underpinnings, methodological approach, specific site info, methods of data collection and analysis, an attention to trustworthiness and goodness, and researcher positionality.

Epistemology, Paradigm, and Theoretical Perspective

Underlying critical epistemology guides the theoretical choices for this study. Crotty (1998) proposes that research is constructed from the methods we intend to use, the methodology that governs our choice of methods, to the theoretical perspective and the epistemology that informs that perspective. Jones et al. (2014) consider that there are tensions that can occur when using a theoretical perspective if it is not used commensurately with epistemology and methodology. This level of alignment is achieved because with a critical epistemology and a critical paradigm, objectivity is not a goal of the study; rather, this study seeks to understand the differential in hierarchal power that exists within CTLs and community colleges when they provide public documentation on how they provide professional development opportunities for educators and what they value within this process and product (Creswell, 2013; Freire, 2017).

This critical worldview and this conceptual framework gird the need to democratically view the research while taking care to acknowledge and review the perspectives that exist within the respective institutions at CTL and community college levels (Creswell, 2013; Jones et al. 2014). These theoretical underpinnings provide the ability to critique the content of the community colleges' CTLs' public documentation to frame how they approach professional development and how they value it (Creswell, 2013).

Methodological Approach

This study will use a critical qualitative approach in order to view the research as a way to bring social change, social meaning-making, and potential oppression (Freire, 1993; Freire, 2017; McCoy & Winkle-Wagner, 2015; Schubert, 2007). Qualitative methodology allows for an immersion into interpretive evaluation rather than a need to measure or quantify (Mertens & Wilson, 2019). The influence of a critical worldview, the use of a critical framework, and a

qualitative approach can assist in understanding the nuances within the content of CTLs with an emphasis upon leveraging that understanding to resist oppression (Creswell, 2013; Freire, 1993).

Specifically, this study will use a critical summative content analysis. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) consider content analysis as a “qualitative research technique” that is “used to interpret meaning from the content of text data” (p. 1277). Instead of just counting instances of something within a text, qualitative content analysis examines language to categorize similar meanings (Weber, 1990). “These categories can represent explicit or inferred communication” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). This method aligns well with the conceptual framework that seeks to see what is and is not there (Schubert, 2007).

While there are three approaches to content analysis, this study will use a summative content analysis. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), “a study using a summative approach to qualitative content analysis starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content” to explore usage. However, the quantification here is not to infer meaning and goes beyond the appearance of specific content to include “latent content analysis,” which is the process of the interpretation of the content (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, pp. 1283-1284).

Research Sites and Documents

First, it must be determined how many Illinois community colleges have CTLs or some form of professional development documentation whether it be through web pages, handbooks, meeting minutes, or other documented publicly available through their websites. Upon determining that number, a set of sites – at least two urban, two suburban, and two rural Illinois community colleges – will be chosen for their materials to be reviewed.

Ideally, the sites chosen for this study will have established, or will be soon be establishing, a CTL. CTL web pages within the community college website would be the initial content to be collected. Then, a review of the content found within all subpages of such web pages would be conducted. This review would extend to any parts of faculty handbooks or guidebooks that also exist. It is possible that there are documents that will be found that have not occurred to me yet. Further, a review of what is not available from the main webpages and documents to the microscopic omissions within this content will take place.

Methods of Data Collection

Having a variety of perspectives through rural, suburban, and urban community colleges and their publicly documented CTL and professional development information is valuable within a qualitative design (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since each community college in Illinois has its own discrete set of resources based upon its community, there will be variety in the quality and accessibility of the data. As I navigate the electronic campus (webpages to documents), I will chronicle the steps, by search and/or by click, it takes to obtain the desired information or note its absence. Even though the qualitative data collected from each community college may not be identical in medium (i.e., handbooks, CTL webpage material, or meeting minutes), the subsequent analysis for each will follow the same process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While all available data will be collected to holistically describe the breadth of time and amount, only data from the past ten years will be analyzed. All of the data will be collected and reviewed electronically, which is the primary way in which the public would also receive these materials. As I collect this data, I will be sure to note the overall size of each site's data along with the length of each form of data collected from each site (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summative content analysis will be used to review the content found through the research sites and documentation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Summative content analysis requires researchers to count the pages that cover specific topics, in addition to categories of similar meaning, before describing, interpreting, and evaluating the content and its quality (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Collecting data to warrant future assertions for meanings or other programmatic features of CTLs will assist in making conclusions after the entire process is complete (Mertens & Wilson, 2019).

Codes will need to be developed to organize the content. Before analysis can take place when using a summative content approach, I must start to identify and quantify “certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use[;]” this process, then, is still part of data collection as “[t]his quantification is not an attempt to infer meaning but, rather, to explore usage” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). After coding takes place, data gets winnowed away due to not being relevant by falling within a code as not all textual data can be used in a qualitative study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Specifically, first and second cycle coding will be used where the first cycle is descriptive and the second cycle collapses in order to make meaning in the subsequent round (Saldaña, 2009). With these cycles, initial descriptions can evolve into larger claims as the codes move from small to large (Saldaña, 2009).

The key words for which I will initially search will be instances of *teach*, *learn*, *opportunity*, *value*, and *support*. I plan to annotate the data by searching for occurrences of what needs to be identified by looking for key words. Documents will be reviewed in their entirety, and the primary examination will be based on the documentary content, how much quantity and space is devoted to each issue, and what values are placed based on where and how these documents are found. Rather than just doing a key word search, documents will be reviewed to

see how they begin, end, and what they do and do not say, which includes arrangement, placement, and location of content and the digital document itself. The use of Microsoft Excel may be used once codes are established to demarcate the different instances overall and of each one. Using this type of method, I will still need to conduct line-by-line review; however, the process will be more efficient and create the ability to move to different parts of the data corpus more easily. Once these key terms are found to be present or absent in the content, the type and name of institution along with the type of medium in which the content originated will be identified and recorded. Future data analysis will likely require the need for other or revised terms to be sought within the collected data. I also anticipate that I may initiate revision before analysis as the data entry could hold the possibility of shifting perspectives, new questions, and different understanding of categorizing.

Methods of Data Analysis

I intend to follow the process that Creswell and Creswell (2018) outline for qualitative data analysis: I will “[o]rganize and prepare the data for analysis” by cataloging the chosen material from Illinois community colleges and sorting by rural, suburban, or urban institutions and then by medium type (p. 193). Then, using first level coding, I will complete an initial read through all of the data and annotate it electronically as I consider it macroscopically with the understanding that as I advance further in this process, themes may organically arise (Saldaña, 2009). It is important to note that for a critical summative content analysis, I will have certain words and content for which I seek prior to discovering what organic themes may also exist (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This step also aligns with the summative content step of exploring usage instead of inferring meaning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Upon coding the data, I will review the initial words for broader usage and patterns (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hsieh &

Shannon, 2005, Saldaña, 2009). As greater description and themes emerge, I will begin a second cycle of coding and interpret the context of their inclusion or, in some instances, their exclusion (Saldaña, 2009). Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggest generating at least five themes for a qualitative research study and note that the description of these themes often lead to major findings.

At this point, I would discover what juxtapositions exist between the various colleges and use this analysis to help respond to the study's research questions. Connecting the themes back to the conceptual framework of the hidden curriculum (Schubert, 1986) will take place throughout their description and interpretation. Representing the descriptions and themes accurately relies upon credibility by showing a consistency between textual evidence and interpretations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Weber, 1990). Descriptive summaries will be used to gain greater understanding over the themes, patterns, and trends found through the summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kortegast et al., 2021). This level of care with the data imbues the analysis with trustworthiness, which will be discussed overall in the next section.

Criteria for Trustworthiness

A researcher needs to be explicit, transparent, and hyper-descriptive as one writes about process in order to establish trustworthiness with readers (Jones et al. 2014). Critically, I believe that trustworthiness can stem from honest reflection and positionality. General trustworthiness can be achieved through data collection through multiple sites (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). It can also be established by using data from multiple sites that also have multiple socio-economic backgrounds by choosing urban, suburban, and rural colleges.

Advantages of collecting documents and other digital materials allows a researcher to have an unchanging account of language and evidence to which the authors have given attention; furthermore; this data is collected unobtrusively while capturing a specific perspective (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Having a peer review will add another measure of trustworthiness (Merriam, 1998). This study will be peer reviewed by a member of the Illinois Community College Board, who is also a doctoral student in the Ed.D. Higher Education program, to test the perspective of the reality of documentary content and analysis.

Specific to summative content analysis, the researcher must develop a complete understanding of the context of the content and clearly identify key categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Summative content analysis relies on credibility, which one can show by having textual evidence be consistent with interpretation (Weber, 1990). One must also develop a good coding scheme: “[c]reating and adhering to an analytic procedure or coding scheme will increase trustworthiness or validity of the study” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1286).

Delimitations

In data collection, the different types of documents found from each different Illinois community college could be a delimitation insofar as comparative norms are concerned (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). However, the use of common terminology, coding, and the thematic patterns that emerge through the use of summative document analysis should mitigate this delimitation. Applicable to this study, Creswell and Creswell (2018) also consider these delimitations when collecting documents as data: equity in articulation and perception of authors, protected access and ease of access, incomplete records, and authenticity. Specifically, in order, the critical nature of this study wants to consider inequity in authorship, the protected or

accessible nature of documents, the comprehensive public archive, and the accuracy of intent with regard to communication as it relates to this study's research questions.

To further consider the delimitation of access, all institutions who engage in CTL and/or professional development for faculty may not publicly make this information available. This lack of access does not preclude their work nor does it necessarily affect its quality in any way. This lack of access creates an absence in the data that can only be compared to what is found. This absence does allow the community to question why this information is not available. This response may already exist in other documents not being sought or analyzed within this study.

Specifically, within the data collection of this study, the choice that content analysis offers through its different approaches is a potential delimitation to the application of content analysis (Tesch, 1990; Weber, 1990). Even though summative content analysis provides researchers with an advantage to obtain unobtrusive sources of information with a potential insight into authorial language, a delimitation can exist in the findings due to a lack of attention upon broader data meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Positionality

Tension is not inherently negative; although, most people connotatively perceive it in that light. Denotatively, tension is the straining force that occurs within and/or around something due to its environment. In this regard, I view all bias, reflexivity, and positionality as causing tension in some way to all researchers. It is not inherently bad; and even when it is, positive outcomes can occur as a result of it – much like how a muscle must rip and tear before rebuilding itself with greater strength.

Cousin (2010) explains why positionality and reflexivity fight against the solipsistic nature some researchers might have if they did not consider these concepts as material parts of

their process. Cousin (2010) also fleshes out the social integration and reality-forming power of language and uses it to create a strong link between humanity and values. Language inherently creates tension as many people struggle to affix a word to a thought or feeling (Cousin, 2010; Roegman, 2018). These tensions could facilitate an evolution of how researchers depict their positionality and reflexivity (Cousin, 2010; Roegman, 2018). These same tensions occur in language found in the narratives and counternarratives of both the researcher and the subjects (Cousin, 2010; Milner, 2007; Roegman, 2018). Tension situates how a researcher will interact with the research, the subjects, and whether or not and to what extent positionality and reflexivity is used and revealed.

Language, both written and spoken, has always intersected profoundly in my life. In my first career, I taught a junior high to secondary bridge program that attempted to elevate students into Honors English when the elementary feeder district determined that particular students be sorted into regular English instead. Without doubt, I unknowingly engaged in deficit discourse as to whether or not the students, who were mostly non-white, could gain what they lacked to enter the higher-level class (Cousin, 2010; Milner 2007). As a white and middle-class male, though, I would often explain to my students that I, too, had been discriminated against many times in my life and that my ancestors were historically attacked due to our Jewish faith. I was careful not to conflate my tragedies and my ancestors' tragedies with anyone else's experiences, and I would go out of my way to explain that I could hide my faith if I were so inclined even when others cannot change their skin color. So, the target, or tension, in my case was deliberate and chosen. By no means does this absolve me of my privilege, which is great because I present as a tall, white, cisgender male, but I do try to show empathy, not insider status, when interacting with people who have literally told me that their teachers did not think they were smart enough to be

in Honors English because of the way they spoke English (Cousin, 2010; Milner, 2007). I have been denied access to employment and social circles as a result of people in power discovering my religion.

Nevertheless, I feel shame when I read about how the dominant discourse, of which I am a part, systematically marginalizes those who do not have the same opportunities because of a birth lottery (Rawls, 1971). I would like to think that I try my best to create a gray space between the dominant and marginalized worlds, but it is hard to accomplish as a result of my background and status (Cousin, 2010). Hopefully, positionality and reflexivity will equip me with the necessary tools to consider, contemplate, and articulate my role as a researcher so that I can use this role to help other students, teachers, and researchers obtain more equity to improve their education and their lives.

Relating directly to CTLs and the needs they serve, I have participated in countless formal and informal preservice trainings from secondary student teaching to researching pedagogy and training instructors within a local community college CTL. At all times, my faith served me culturally as improving oneself through education to help others through education is a core tenet of Judaism. I am qualified to conduct this study as a life-long learner who has always been a student and who has been an educator for more than half of my life.

I predict that most CTLs will operate in good faith through the distribution of their materials. However, I also assume, as is part of my worldview, that much is hidden or omitted, which undoubtedly shapes the narrative that is created by CTL documentation. This narrative could purposely have influence over the development of CTLs and how they function within the greater institutional setting.

Significance

This study has significance for how CTLs operate. It can inform their process by influencing their values through reflective practice. A shift in priorities could occur, which would also influence how much time and resources are spent in given areas of professional development. Further, beyond the actual shift toward enhancing the quality of practice, CTLs can also enhance the ways in which they communicate with their instructors and the public through their documentation.

This study also has significance for new and current research on the study of CTLs and professional development as it frames CTLs as having or lacking pedagogical values that may or may not align with institutional ones. Revealing what CTLs value and that relation to institutional support via professional development will inform new studies as they consider other ways in which this connection has influence over aspects of a community college and its faculty. Understanding how CTLs leverage curriculum and instruction in this way has significance for the students and the overall community as well since the perceptions of institutional and faculty interaction extend beyond the college itself.

CHAPTER 2
SEEKING THE PUBLICLY DIGITAL
FOOTPRINT OF CENTERS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Introduction

Community colleges serve their communities and are often created out of a need for a particular community. When its needs are met, the community is sustained and can flourish due to the open access and affordability that a community college can provide (Cohen et al., 2013). Centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) can serve an intuitive purpose that matches their name, and like the community colleges that house them, they exist to ensure that faculty can meet the needs of their students. Looking at the information that CTLs publicly provide their institutions and their community is one way to understand the intent of their existence and process.

To state the problem more specifically, for CTLs to be effective and seen as having quality by the community colleges that house them and the communities of faculty they serve, they need to embrace the mission, explicitly or otherwise, of supporting the faculty, students, and staff within their respective institutions (Bartholomew et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2015). Their process of offering support matters to their level of worth by those who perceive and judge them. Therefore, their focus on professional development, their offerings of professional development, and how they communicate their professional development opportunities via this mission, focus, and their intentional and unintentional omissions will send messages of what is and what is not valued within these learning spaces. As such, this summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) was guided by the following research questions:

- How do CTLs provide professional development opportunities for educators at community colleges?
- What do CTLs value in their professional development?
- What types of support do these CTLs provide faculty?

Understanding the role of CTLs is central in determining what is worthwhile to them in order to see how effective they can be in solving the problem of faculty who need professional development to improve their pedagogical practice. This study resulted in findings from these publicly available observations in order to understand how CTLs provide professional development opportunities for educators at community colleges, what CTLs value in their professional development, and what types of support CTLs provide faculty. Summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of publicly-accessible CTL websites was used to reveal, through the conceptual framework of the hidden curriculum (Schubert, 1986), with a critical lens, what is and what is not available to be seen, consumed, interpreted, and utilized (Anyon, 1980; Friere, 1993; Giroux & Purpel, 1983; Schubert, 1986).

The primary problem is that CTLs may not effectively communicate their priorities and process to their audience, which could influence their quality and how faculty, staff, and students interpret their quality. This study's findings are presented through intentional themes that were unearthed during the data analysis, which were derived from Illinois community college CTL websites through its methodological approach, site and document selection, and data collection to see what matters to CTLs and how they communicated their information to the public through their websites. These themes are presented each with a descriptive summary as the findings of this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Beyond connecting the themes to conceptual framework, interpretations and juxtapositions between them and the different Illinois community college

CTLs will be discussed. The final section of this study discusses how this research can influence the future of CTLs, inform new students, and call to action how to address the implications of what is missing from the research of CTLs.

Situating Learning

This study and researcher situated learning as sociocultural; the way people learn, and make meaning, is based within their families, environments, peer groups, institutions, and other social settings and communities (Gee, 1996). In this perspective, learning is historical, cultural, continuous, reflexive, process-oriented, purposeful, and outlined by rules and goals (Wertsch, 1995; Wertsch, 1998). In addition to these views, socio-cultural, as a term to describe these beliefs, involves cultural context as well as associations to the work of L. S. Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky (1978) argues that collaboration with both adults and peers is necessary in order to enhance educational growth: “[b]roadly speaking, Vygotsky (1978) posited that cognition stems from social interactions, which are mediated by artifacts of culture, such as materials, language, and symbols” (Jeong et al., 2022, p. 2). Socioculturally, this educational growth applies to higher education as instructors, ideally, learn from CTLs in order to best serve their students (Jeong et al., 2022). Sociocultural learning is a socially-constructed, continuous, lifelong process that is concerned with thinking as well as feeling and being (Gee, 1996; Razfar, 2012). Razfar (2012) argues that “learning is best understood as shifts in discourse over time” (p. 48). Time itself as a construct is static; rather, it is what changes, like one’s identity, understanding, and/or learning, that allows a mark of growth or decline, both changes, against stasis (Brown et al., 2005). CTLs serve as a channel or environment for learning as they exist in time and space. The people who administrate and staff CTLs can grow and learn, who will influence how CTLs influence how its institutional faculty grow and learn, who will ultimately influence their students.

Review of Relevant Literature

Institutions of higher education first started to create CTLs to serve as the core of their pedagogical training and support considering that many instructors possessed strong content knowledge without a comparable pedagogical background (Murray, 2020). Because CTLs quickly showed to be effective, preservice training for educators of higher education, beyond whatever was offered through their graduate programs, was no longer preferred (Tsunoda, 1992). Despite growing with preservice training at first, CTLs outpaced the former due to their ability to produce evidence that they improve the practice of teaching (Cruz et al., 2021; Rodriguez et al., 2015; Sorcinelli, 2020).

CTLs have evolved over time to focus upon professional development and instruction thereby taking a significant burden off the need to hone content, a task and skill reserved during graduate preparation (Cruz et al., 2021; O'Meara et al., 2018; Sorcinelli, 2020). Nevertheless, Illinois community colleges still have no formal requirement beyond the 18 graduate hours within a content area needed to teach at the college level to earn and maintain accreditation (HLC, 2020). Some kind of preservice training in education as a discipline could influence how CTLs function and embody faculty development (Bartholomew et al., 2018; Beaumont, 2020; Bahr & Gross, 2016; Dougherty & Townsend, 2006; Grubb, 1999; Rodriguez et al., 2015). Generally, those who are immersed in the academics of content may not have time for the academics of pedagogy including the time to reflect on their teaching practice and their development of it (McCune, 2017).

CTLs can only manage the audience they have rather than the programs who prepare their audience (Austin, 2002; Grubb, 1999; Eddy, 2010). So, whatever the lack of preparation may be, CTLs have a duty to determine levels of efficacy of their instructors before they even

attempt to engage in professional development if they hope to tailor it to best improve their faculty (Alexander et al., 2012; Dougherty et al., 2014). Dichotomously, CTLs could enculture teaching excellence while enhancing the use of technological methods (Eddy, 2010). In order for CTLs to provide an environment of learning, they must be able to focus on practice and reflection (Sorcinelli et al., 2011).

The evolution of CTLs along with the evolution of technology can include lessons to improve technological expertise (O'Meara et al., 2018). Still, the mission of a CTL can be hampered by topical overreach, a push to study whatever is educationally en vogue, and “a center’s evaluation capacity, curricular structure, and evaluation planning process” (Hines, 2017, p. 1). Time, to consider and to develop, to grapple and to grasp, to strengthen and to struggle, is the threshold by which quality CTLs could be evaluated (Hines, 2017). Time, though, like money, is hard fought and found; the lack of resources can drain a CTLs ability to innovate and function (Eddy, 2010; Miller, 1997; Murray, 2002; Sorcinelli, 2020). Extending upon this point, if CTLs lack this ability, then it can extend to the instructors’ ability to evolve as well (McCune, 2017).

Throughout the history of CTLs, the value of them has always had the potential to be institutional while always indirectly guiding student learning and outcomes – as the main audience of CTLs are instructors (MacCormack et al., 2018; Sorcinelli, 2020). Audiences, like the steps to any educational or pragmatic process, do not exist in isolation (Dewey, 1916; MacCormack et al., 2018). Rather, the context, in addition to relevancy and reliability, situate the classroom and, metaphorically and actually, the CTL for faculty (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015; Hines, 2017; Young, 1992). Nevertheless, institutional administrators, trustees, and other decision-makers may have alternative audiences in mind when developing curriculum, in general

or for CTLs, from the community to the local and state legislators to outside donors, which would unjustly affect CTL opportunity, value, and support (Anyon, 1980; Friere, 1993; Young, 1971). Instead, there ought to be a democratic model that encourages dialogue and collaboration between faculty, staff, and other relevant stakeholders that will endure during both times of growth and stagnation (Rodriguez et al., 2015; Inman, 2021).

Conceptual Framework

What is hidden is obscured from sight or discovery. Whether or not hidden or missing information is intentional can be difficult to ascertain, but it is possible to see what CTLs claim, how they provide information that is supportive or contrary to their claims, and observe the order, quantity, and accessibility of this information. These observations allow for a critique of CTLs through the lens of the hidden curriculum (Schubert, 1986), which CTLs may be using to indoctrinate their faculty and, possibly by extension, their community through what they do and do not model as their best practices.

The practices of CTLs, through their publicly-accessible institutional websites, provide the public and anyone learning about them, the ability to potentially learn about their purpose. This type of learning is the type of learning that CTLs, who operate diligently, hope to provide (Rodriguez et al., 2015). When acting in good faith, CTLs attempt to better instruction and assessment and to maximize educational opportunities for the faculty, students, and community that they ought to serve (Bartholomew et al., 2018). Because of this possibility, CTLs possess an authority that legitimizes their existence and their message (Friere, 1993).

Research Design

In order to bound the system geographically for comparison and due to researcher experience in Illinois community colleges, this study focused directly upon the CTLs of Illinois

community colleges. After obtaining a list of all community colleges from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB, 2020), a geographic list was completed next that separated the community colleges of the State of Illinois into northern, central, and southern regions based upon the longitudinal shape of the state, which followed this qualitative design (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Overall, there were 49 sites listed on the ICCB website; one of which is shared between colleges and other universities and two with district-wide systems – one system contained four community colleges and the one system contained seven community colleges. (ICCB, 2020). The site that was shared between colleges did not have a CTL and was excluded from consideration. Next, the list was separated by demographics consisting of urban, suburban, and rural areas using the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). NCES framework for locale also included the designation of a “town” in addition to the other three aforementioned basic types while relying upon “standard urban and rural definitions developed by the U.S. Census Bureau, and each type of locale is either urban or rural in its entirety” (NCES, 2022, p. 1). Sometimes, the NCES yielded a double-designation (e.g., city/suburb or town/rural) due to the sheer regional swath that the area covered (NCES, 2020). These “locales can be fully collapsed into [...] dichotom[ies] or expanded into a more detailed collection of 12 distinct categories” that hybridize and gradate the nexus of population that ripples inward to outward from urban through rural (Geverdt, 2019, p. 1).

Research Site Selection

This compartmentalization was necessary because, due to the use of a critical lens, this study was concerned with the potential biases that could exist within the citizens and institutions of such an area, the financial influence on and of these biases, and the lack of digital or physical access on and of these biases. Citizens of a community may be assimilated by its discourse just

as faculty are assimilated by their colleges (Eddy, 2010). These citizens may concern themselves with learning how to fit within the insular confines of their community and may not consider it possible or wise to move beyond it; the authoritarians of these areas may see fit to continue this assimilation as it feeds and sustains their authority (Giroux, 2003). Financial bias can stifle community colleges, even in affluent areas where resources may not be scarce but must be divided up amongst different institutional needs and wants (Mullin et al., 2015; Romano & Palmer, 2016). Finally, the distance that one needs to travel to gain access takes time and, the aforementioned, money while the same can be applied to instruments of technology, such as working and up-to-date computers combine with high-speed internet capabilities.

Geographical areas can be biased throughout urban, suburban, town, and rural areas; and the location of community colleges within Illinois can influence why and how they function, especially as they move closer or further away from the populace of Chicago. This study found that the concentricity of location does not automatically help or hinder the CTLs of a community college because the population of locale does not always correlate to the population of the institution (CCI, n.d.a; Gevert, 2019; NCES, 2020; NCES, 2022).

Carnegie Designation

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions (CCI), through the collaboration of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education, administrate and organize a refined “framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education” (CCI, n.d.a, p. 1). Instead of using the microscopic levels beyond the collapsed version of NCES data for this study (NCES, 2020; NCES, 2022), the Illinois community college data was then organized by Carnegie classification after the aforementioned initial NCES sorting. Using the “Institution Lookup” tool (CCI, n.d.a, p. 1),

Illinois community colleges were sorted by two-year designated “size and setting classification description” with data pulled from IPEDS completion and institutional information (CCI, n.d.b, p. 1). The possible categories for two-year institutions were *very small* with fewer than 500 students, *small* with 500-1,999 students, *medium* with 2,000-4,999 students, *large* with 5,000-9,999 students, and *very large* with at least 10,000 students: all of these numbers were based upon the most recent fall enrollment data indicating FTE enrollment; “because few two-year institutions serve a residential population, these institutions are based solely on FTE enrollment” (CCI, n.d.b, p. 1). Carnegie (n.d.b) states that size relates to “institutional structure, complexity, culture, finances, and other factors” that reflect on environment, population, programs, and services inclusive of CTLs (p. 1).

Narrowing the Field

The next step after gaining the necessary site information was to determine whether the 48 possible public community college sites had a public-facing CTL. First, a review of each college’s website was completed to discover if there was a CTL page or CTL info anywhere on the main website and check its accessibility. Twenty-nine of 48 of the possible Illinois community colleges did have accessible CTL information and/or a separate CTL website; note that one of the 29 CTLs represented four community colleges within a district system. Of the 19 sites that did not have accessible CTL information or a separate CTL page, one had evidence of the past existence of a CTL, and one college had evidence that a CTL was in the process of being developed. Finally, to help protect against the potential delimitation of research ability, Google searches containing the college’s name along with variations of *CTL*, *center*, *teaching*, and *learning*, with and without quotes to isolate and group key terms, were used to verify the data

found during the college website review. These searches did not unearth any new information, but one of the CTLs found through the college's website was not found within Google's results.

Cross-applying possible CTL data, NCES data, and Carnegie classifications yielded a list of 29 of 48 possible public community college sites inclusive of one now-defunct center and two district systems: one containing four community colleges and one containing seven community colleges (Table 1).

Taking into account all of the variables in the research site selection, including geographic and institutional diversity, seven CTLs were chosen for this study – all are two-year public Illinois community colleges – the following description puts the NCES designation to the left of the hyphen and the Carnegie classification to the right of the hyphen: one full system in the Eastern part of Illinois with a district-wide CTL that contains *town/rural-small* community colleges; another college in the Southern part of Illinois that is *town/rural-small*; one college from the other system in Northeastern Chicago that is *city-small*; another college from that same system that is *city-medium*; one college in the Northwestern part of Illinois that is *city/suburban-medium*; one college in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago that is *city/suburban-large*; and, one college in the Western suburbs of Chicago that is *suburban-very large* (Table 2). Each of these institutions had a dedicated CTL webpage within its main institutional webpage.

Table 1

Carnegie and NCES Classifications of Illinois
Community Colleges and Systems with Online CTLs

Name of Institution or College System	Carnegie Classification	NCES Classification
Abraham College	very large	suburb
Great Lake College	large	city/suburb
A	large	suburb/town/rural
B	large	suburb
Redbird College	medium	city/suburb
April College	medium	city
C	medium	city/suburb
D	medium	city/suburb
E	medium	suburb/rural
F	medium	city/suburb/rural
G	medium	city/suburb/rural
H	medium	suburb/town/rural
I	medium	city/suburb
J	medium	city/suburb/rural
K	medium	city/suburb/rural
L	medium	suburb/town/rural
M	medium	city/suburb
N	medium	city/suburb/rural
Skyline College	small	city
O	small	city/suburb
River College System	small	town/rural
P	small	town/rural
Q	small	suburb/town/rural
R	small	suburb
S	small	suburb
T	small	city/suburb/rural
U	small	town/rural
Midwest College	small	town/rural
V	small	suburb

Note. Names of institutions and college systems have been given pseudonyms. Names represented with solely letters were not selected as sites for this study.

Table 2

Carnegie and NCES Classifications of Illinois
Community Colleges and Systems Chosen for Study

Name of Institution or College System	Carnegie Classification	NCES Classification
Abraham College	very large	suburb
Great Lake College	large	city/suburb
Redbird College	medium	city/suburb
April College	medium	city
River College System	small	town/rural
Skyline College	small	city
Midwest College	small	town/rural

Note. Names of institutions and college systems have been given pseudonyms.

Document Selection

Each chosen site's CTL webpage was completely reviewed for all accessible subpages, documents, and other digital components such as posted videos and external links, with each step chronicled by search and by electronic mouse click while keeping track of size and scope (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While external links were noted when present, the content that they possess beyond their title was not used and remains unknown to this study. Through a left-to-right, top-to-bottom, approach, the information on each page and subpage was first read before any coding took place (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Saldaña, 2009). Some brief notes, inclusive of recognizing the key words that would eventually be used for the first round of coding and anything of interest or inconsistency, were taken (Saldaña, 2009). Because of the critical nature of this study and its conceptual framework, not seeing something to

which the page referred or something that ought to have been there based upon the logical progression of the page, was also noted in the first read-through.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Who speaks, writes, and teaches students matters to a society due to how it can characterize the influences of writing and speaking (Giroux, 2001; van Manen, 1994). Fairclough (2003) argues that “texts have social, political, cognitive, moral and material consequences and effects” (p. 14). The presence of these effects can be revealed by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Analyzing discourse, including the discourse of CTLs, then, becomes a matter of looking at intertextuality, genre, semantic relations, grammatical relations, vocabulary relations, and modality (Fairclough, 2003). As a multidisciplinary lens, CDA sets forth to look at the social effects of language and how these effects and the language from which they come problematize equality and justice in a given society (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Anything critical refers to a way of looking at the world with the goal of unearthing oppression in order to create a more egalitarian society; further, critically studying language’s influence over power and ideology can help excavate the institutional practices in higher education (Smith, 2013; Young, 1992).

In the case of texts and their analysis, criticism allows society to assess texts to see what power, which could be tacit, influences them (Hull, 1993). A text is any form of communication that deliberately conveys a message, and the language of texts contain power, discursively and societally, that may to oppress its consumers both tacitly and explicitly (Fairclough, 2003; Young, 1992). Using CDA for written texts requires analysis of social construction of a text across our own space and time (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Written text will make a person think, feel, and believe a denotative and connotative context that could potentially vary dramatically

(Young & Harrison, 2004). This effect is one way in which writing can manipulate its audience. Much of the discourse of CTLs is digital, even pre-pandemic, in order to create access and reach a wider audience.

Summative content analysis, which draws upon critical discourse analysis, is a tool by which to review and critique such materials (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Summative content analysis requires researchers to count the pages that cover specific topics, in addition to categories of similar meaning, before describing, interpreting, and evaluating the content and its quality (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Summative content analysis seeks to interpret meaning from the content of the data instead of just counting items within a text, and the categories that arise from the textual analysis can be tacit or explicit (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This method aligned well with the conceptual framework that seeks to see what is and is not there (Schubert, 2007).

Data Analysis

Summative content analysis guided the review of the selected documents (Hsieh & Shannon, 2015). Each page was initially counted to determine breadth of CTL material; then, after a second read of the materials, initial codes were developed to organize the content starting with “certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use[;]” this process, then, is still part of data collection as “[t]his quantification is not an attempt to infer meaning but, rather, to explore usage” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283) Irrelevant data that did not fall into the initial codes were excluded as not all textual data can be used in a qualitative study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The key words of *teach*, *learn*, *opportunity*, *value*, and *support* guided the annotation of the data during the first cycle of coding. Using a line-by-line method of summative content analysis, finding the presence or absence of the key terms helped to develop the first set of codes

(Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Saldaña, 2009). When key terms were found, location, then quantity, was also considered, which yielded the relevant first-level codes of *professional development*, *institutional compliance*, *micro-credentialing*, *instructional design*, and *technological support*. The arrangement of these codes was further analyzed in the same fashion to see their beginning and ending and their arrangement inclusive of central or ancillary placement and location on the main page and from the main page to any applicable subpages.

At this point, initial descriptions started to evolve into larger claims because the first cycle of coding was descriptive, and the next cycle collapsed in order to make meaning in the subsequent round (Saldaña, 2009). Another review was completed to see the different instances of each code throughout the data corpus. After codes were affixed during each summative content analysis of an Illinois community college's CTL documents, a review of the main list of colleges and Carnegie classifications were noted to isolate the demographical information of the college and, by proxy, the CTL. Cataloging the information in this way followed Creswell and Creswell's (2018) outline for qualitative data analysis. In line with this process was the summative content step of exploring usage before inferring meaning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Quality and Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is developed through honest reflection and documentation. In order to establish trustworthiness, this study was explicit, transparent, and descriptive regarding its process moving through each step, methodically, to avoid logical leaps and to highlight its incremental approach (Jones et al. 2014). This study also used collected data through multiple sites from multiple geographical, demographical, and socio-economical urban, suburban, and rural colleges (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). One of the advantages of collecting documents and other digital materials allowed this study and its researcher to have an unchanging account to language

and evidence to which the authors have given attention; furthermore; this data was collected unobtrusively while capturing a specific perspective (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Having a peer review added another measure of trustworthiness (Merriam, 1998). An Associate Professor from the Department of Counseling and Higher Education at Northern Illinois University, who is also the researcher's doctoral advisor in the Ed.D. Higher Education program, reviewed the data collection, coding process, and coding results to test the perspective of the reality of documentary content and analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1983). Additionally, the researcher and the reviewer independently analyzed the documents and then the codes to determine reliability (Burant et al., 2007; Saldaña, 2009). This type of checking, re-checking, and debriefing occurred three times throughout the data collection and coding process – inclusive of coding results. This kind of debriefing attempted to establish trustworthiness by uncovering researcher bias, testing the process, and seeing if reasonable and plausible considerations emerged (Lincoln & Guba, 1983).

Specific to summative content analysis, this study developed a complete understanding of the context of the content and clearly identified key categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Summative content analysis relies on credibility, which this study showed by having textual evidence be consistent with interpretation (Weber, 1990). Additionally, this study developed a coding scheme as “[c]reating and adhering to an analytic procedure or coding scheme will increase trustworthiness or validity of the study” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1286).

Findings

The second level of coding recognized the emergence of greater description and themes while the interpretation of their inclusion or exclusion and their usage and patterns took place (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, Saldaña, 2009). The process yielded four

main themes: *Bureaucracies Are Not Excellence and Innovation, Conformity to Institutional Authority, the Edutechnical Help Desk, and Substitution of Growth in Learning and Credentials.*

Each has its own subsequent section where each is described to gain a more complete understanding over the themes, patterns, and trends found through the summative content analysis and is representative of major findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kortegast et al., 2021).

Bureaucracies Are Not Excellence and Innovation

Almost half of the CTLs reviewed for this study had the word *excellence* in their titles. A CTL could be different from a CETL beyond the addition of *excellence* in the title to brand it. Generally, taking CTLs at their word with good faith, one finds an inordinate frequency and placement of such materials on their sites with the appellation of *excellence* or *innovation*.

One of the CTLs chosen for this study that used *excellence* in its title, that consisted of a college-wide system of Illinois community colleges, does not make any reference to *excellence* until the bottom of the page where it reads (xxxx is to redact identifiers):

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides relevant professional development, onboarding, and academic support for xxxx faculty, staff and students, as well as professional development and workforce opportunities for external constituents including K-12 institutions, economic development associations, and manufacturing facilities within District xxxx. **The mission of XXXX is to deliver exceptional education and services to improve the lives of our students and to strengthen our communities and the CETL exists to fulfill that mission** (River College System, 2023a, p. 1).

This quote is subordinated beneath six compartmentalized picture links, prefaced only by “LEARN MORE BY CLICKING BELOW” (River College System, 2023a, p. 1), and has no reference or indication of *excellence* of any kind prior to this placement. The bold type of the second sentence is pulled directly from the site; again, it is at the very bottom of the page with no

indication that it is there. This bold type contradicts the import that it normally projects because the entire statement is written in a font that is at least two sizes smaller than the rest of the font on the page (River College System, 2023a, p. 1). Yet, this sentence does make a nod to *excellence* via the college's mission that is encompassed within the CTL's mission.

This theme was not exclusive to this small, rural community college system-wide CTL. One of the largest, city/suburban, Illinois community colleges has a similar pattern. Great Lake College calls uses the title of the "Academy for Teaching Excellence" as their title (Great Lake College, 2023a, p.1). Unlike River College System, this title is at the top of the page, in a larger font with a blue color to distinguish from the other black font, and serves as a landing page before sharing the mission and linking to another domain where the actual CTL has all of its material (Great Lake College, 2023a).

First, it should be noted that the word *learn* is not present within the title and only present once on the landing page and thrice on the main domain page within a plethora of other text. Next, the indicated "excellence" that is linked to a "vibrant teaching and learning culture" on the landing page (Great Lake College, 2023a, p.1) does not contain any further explicit references to *excellence* on the main landing page outside of the name of the center (Great Lake College, 2023b, p. 1). What the main domain page does contain is a myriad of links that appear to be copied from other places such as faculty handbooks as information for evaluation is quadruplicated (Great Lake College, 2023b, p. 1). Another example of this CTL's priority is that it lists "Teaching Support" last after these previously mentioned copied links, calendars, and upcoming programs. What could be centralized and prioritized is placed last.

Still, connections exist between *innovation* and *excellence* as a pattern for administrators and staff of CTLs. Clicking on the "Academy Staff" link, in smaller font, at the bottom of the

main domain page (Great Lake College, 2023b, p.1), shows that the Associate Provost, and a host of other administrators who directly work in other areas, supervises this area as a subset within many other departments. This infrastructure exists as it connects to four other areas of faculty development and engagement, instructional design and technology, adjunct faculty outreach and support, and distance education quality and support: each of these subsets has their own set of goals that are only accessible through another page and within another step of dropdown menus (Great Lake College, 2023c, p. 1). Separately or collectively, these fields can comprise of a fully-functioning CTL that includes *excellence*; however, the examples given for each field respectively – “Communities of Practice[,], Instructional Support Workshops[,], New Adjunct Faculty Orientation[, and] virtual classroom support” – are all items that appear to be part of other entities as well (Great Lake College, 2023c, p. 1).

Conformity to Institutional Authority

None of the CTL data for this study revealed the impetus or process for developing the mission, vision, or values for the colleges or the CTLs themselves. Aside from the occasional link to CTL administrators, along with the ability to contact them through email, the human aspect and the exigence of the compositional standard is unknown. Using the key terms to move toward the code of *institutional compliance*, the other codes also overlapped this one because *professional development*, *micro-credentialing*, *instructional design*, and *technological support* are all ways in which institutions can require *institutional compliance* that is met through the institution’s authority.

Within another Illinois community college system that does not have a college-wide CTL like the one mentioned in the previous theme, only two of the colleges have CTLs. While both designated as city schools by the NCES, one has a Carnegie classification of small and another

of medium. This example best serves this theme because one of the CTLs ceased operation in 2020 while the other is still operational today. The operational one changed its name from the standard CTL designation to “STEM Center for Teaching and Learning” (Skyline College, 2023, p. 1). This CTL still appears to function as a result of its STEM focus, which sorts the type of *teaching, learning, and opportunities* available and *valued*. This STEM CTL only has a summary along with a mission and vision on its page, which broadcasts the potential of *professional development* and *micro-credentialing* without any substance (Skyline College, 2023, p.1).

Alternatively, the other CTL in the same system has two pages: one for a summary and a mission – and another for “Fall 2020 Sessions” that include such *professional development* and *opportunities* as: “Learn to Bake Bread[...] The Baking Powder Wars [...] The Art of Arabic Calligraphy[...]and] Spend a Night in Prison! Visit a Prison Museum” (Redbird College, 2023b, p. 1). The first, second, and final sessions on this list were all presented by the Dean of Instruction. This page was only accessible through Google search and not through the main CTL page that contained zero links to further CTL information (Redbird College, 2023a, p. 1).

There were other educational offerings such as “What Can We Do About Information Disorder?[...] What are Open Education Resources (OERs)?[...] How to Be an Anti-Racist Reading Group [...] Yeats’s Teahouse [...] I Paid for This Research Paper and All I Got Was This Passing Grade [...] and Visual Textuality: Using Images and Films to Teach Composition” that contain both content-specific and pedagogically-general topics for instructors; all of these sessions are taught by faculty instead of an administrator.

Beyond their class list and offerings, CTLs can link their mission to the college’s strategic vision in order to get closer to meeting and exceeding key goals and achieving desired outcomes. Redbird College lists such a common statement under its mission and past its goals in

the same size, color, and style of font to read, “In all cases, the TLC integrates its activities, services and priorities with the Strategic Plan of xxxx College and guidance from the Faculty Senate’s Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee” (Redbird College, 2023a, p.1). Forming a pattern that connects to Redbird College, the links at Redbird College lead to the combination of mission and course offerings together through its “TLC Toolbox” link (Redbird College, 2023a, p. 1) that follows to “Assessment Learning [...and] Best Practices” as well as a host of other online tutorials such as “Blue Print for Online Courses [...] Classroom Technology Instructors [...] and Web 2.0 Tools (Redbird College, 2023b, p. 2).

Most of the other examples in the data that pull codes *institutional compliance* overlap with *technological support* because the Institutional Technology department, as an arm of the institutional administration, can literally control the flow of information through what is and what is not posted on webpages, inclusive of what instructors can do within the institution’s learning management system.

The Edutechnical Help Desk

Technological advancement moves faster today than ever before, and the same rule applies to educational technology. How instructors use it, leverage it, interface with it, and struggle with it are all realities that exist before one even considers how technology affects students and how the instructor’s technological acumen can affect them. CTLs can incorporate support as it is necessary to underpin and utilize technological tools.

Much of the data suggests that emphasis is placed on learning the technology where the key words of *learn* and *support* that evolved into the codes of *professional development* and *technological support* is really about mastering online teaching and instructional technology. In almost half of the CTLs studied, half or more of the information revolved around how the center

could assist in troubleshooting, which is a basic step-by-step process to alleviate technological mishaps and misunderstandings. Beyond the content of the material, layers and subpages are devoted to instructional technology.

For example, Midwest College is housed under “online learning” under which there are three more categories of “educational technology” (Midwest College, 2023a, p. 1). The actual CTL is not found until one reaches a fourth sublevel under “Instructor Resources” – but by the time one arrives here, one sees that the past three pages solely contained *technological support* information and was titled accordingly. Once at the fourth, of five, sublevels, one comes upon the “Faculty Knowledge Base” that cannot be accessed through any other method than typing in the exact URL into a browser, which means that search engines, both external like Google – and even internal on the college’s own site, do not index this page (Midwest College, 2023d, p. 1).

This page has three subpages of its own split into “Academic[...] Office/Institutional[...] and Video” (Midwest College, 2023d, p. 1). While the “Video” page leads to a studio that shows how to post a video on a learning management system, the “Office/Institutional” page has two subsections of its own dedicated to “Printing/Copying” and “Microsoft Word” (Midwest College, 2023e, p.1). The “Academic” page contains four subsections: one for “Moodle” with 13 sections, 11 videos, 66 links, and 13 linked pages; one for the xxxx PeopleSoft system that has 4 sections, 16 links, and 4 linked pages; one for “Google Tools” that has 4 sections, 12 links, and 4 linked pages; and, one for “Online Services” that has 5 sections, 22 links, 1 video, and 5 linked pages.

This breadth and depth of this *technological support* demonstrates the pattern of Edutechnical Help Desks across CTLs. When analyzing sections like these, the key words and the codes all overlap with *technological support* because the *professional development*,

institutional compliance, *micro-credentialing*, and *instructional design* all link back to troubleshooting. Even when *instructional design* has connection to technology, such as building a class within a learning management system, it connects to “weekly updates” on how to navigate the interface of email, web design, or projection screens (Midwest College, 2023e, p. 1).

More than a quarter of the largest CTL site that was chosen for this study is linked to “Learning Technologies” (Abraham College, 2023a, p. 1). With over 30 links to technology per page, 1/6th is devoted to “Pedagogical Considerations” as they connect to “Remote Teaching” (Abraham College, 2023b, p. 1). These considerations appear to be genuine and robust; here is an example of scope for one of five considerations:

Be flexible. Be flexible with yourself and your students in the eventuality of a campus shut down. Remember that you and your students "signed up" for a face-to-face class - remote learning may not have been on anyone's mind and the shift will likely be jarring for all of you. Don't try to recreate your classroom in an online environment, and don't expect your students to find their footing immediately. If you're asking students to complete assessments in a new environment, consider making these low-stakes or even no-stakes initially. Give thought to the strictness of your attendance policy in light of a shut-down (Abraham College, 2023b, p.1).

This tip does not contain any technical jargon. It contains *flexible* language that references technological environments connecting to pedagogical environments. The sentences are all written in an imperative rather than declarative sentence structure, which places a request or command on the reader instead of stating fact, therefore being instructive. Almost all of the sentences are written affirmatively except one with a “not” and another that contains two negatives – both contractions of *do not*. Words like *consider*, *give thought*, and *remember*, can be reflective and uncertain in nature, which contradicts a strict imperative tone or a certainty of instruction. While acting in good faith to connect with instructors beyond the Edutechnical Help Desk, this information represents about 1/60th of the material related to *technological support*.

Substitution of Growth in Learning for Credentials

All learners are different and, beyond how they learn, what they need to learn can depend upon their internal and external circumstances. Therefore, the type of college, or the need for college at all, is as subjective and circumstantial. Some students want to learn for the sake of learning, and some want to use it as a means to an end (Dewey, 1916). In the latter instance, this end is usually some type of specific job or some type of promotion within a career that requires a credential. Even with this fact pattern, an educational program of some sort is necessary for achievement. With *micro-credentialing*, one can earn a badge or an icon instead of a certificate or degree.

All of the key words used to develop codes could be found across the data as well as the overlap of many codes because *micro-credentialing* can take the form of *professional development* through the process of earning the credential; of *institutional compliance* through the adherence to standards that likely are only insularly valuable; of *instructional design* through the standards, procedures, and of progression through instructional composition.

All of the CTLs in this study offer some type of *micro-credentialing* in lieu of *teaching and learning* such as “Master Online Teacher Certification[...] Master Online Leader and Administrator[...]and] Digital Accessibility for Educators” (River College System, 2023b, p.1). River College System provides *technological support*, along with the other codes for this study, and *micro-credentialing* was found more than those other codes.

After navigating to the main CTL site, a box containing the words “professional development” are in the middle-left of the page, a place to where the eye would naturally travel on most English-oriented canvases (River College System, 2023a, p. 1). Is *professional development* the same as *micro-credentialing*? One can lead to the other as seen through the

positioning on the page for these codes. This pattern is also seen at Midwest College where positioning for *professional development* is centered and links to *micro-credentialing* opportunities with each link, consisting of five subpages, each leads to another possible badge or credential along with the support that is titled on the first two pages with “Professional Development” and then “Faculty Training” (Midwest College, 2023a, p. 1; Midwest College, 2023b, p.1).

River College System also has a banner of links running across the top of its page, where the fourth one reads “Badging” (River College System, 2023a, p. 1). This link takes one to the “Digital Badges” page where three pictures with rotating links appear: “What Is A Digital Badge[...] How Do I Get A Badge[...] and] What Are The Uses For A Badge” (River College System, 2023d, p. 1). Combined, these pictures rotate to reveal:

[1] A digital badge is a visual representation, in place of a traditional paper certificate, that conveys a skill or achievement that has been acquired. These badges showcase growth, new accomplishments, and a belief in continuous education and learning [2] The CETL offers the Educator Excellence Badge for all adjuncts who complete the Orientation course, as well as Tier 1 and Tier 2 course work. Adjunct instructors should complete both the Educator Excellence form, as well as the Self-Evaluation form to begin the process. [CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#) [3] Digital badges can be embedded into emails, LinkedIn, and other social media. These showcase a pursuit of learning and show your passion for education. If you would like help embedding a digital page, please contact xxxx, the CETL Instructional Designer for assistance [...] [CONTACT XXXX](#) (River College System, 2023d, p. 1).

The evolution is shown from “a traditional paper certificate” to “[a] digital badge” and “showcase” appears twice without an indirect object (River College System, 2023d, p. 1). The “showcase” of “growth” and “passion” connects to the *professional development* by way of earning the badge as an accomplishment (River College System, 2023d, p. 1). Further, this *professional development* and *micro-credentialing* connects to “excellence” in the title of the center and of the “Educator Excellence Badge” itself (River College System, 2023d, p. 1).

Connecting also to *technological support* and the previous theme of help desks, this quote offers “help embedding a digital badge” as the acquisition of the new skill does not necessarily or inherently provide one with the ability to display the badge to others like students and other faculty (River College System, 2023d, p. 1). The CTL acknowledges that the badge is meant to be seen visually beyond what has been learned.

These transactional credentials, which are micro due to their emphasis on individual “skill or achievement” and “Tier 1 and Tier 2 course work” are meant to be “embedded into emails, LinkedIn, and other social media” to be constantly displayed, which directly enhances *institutional compliance* to those who communicate with the badge earner (River College System, 2023d, p. 1).

Discussion

The sorting of the Illinois community colleges made for an interesting juxtaposition because the size of school and geographic populace had seemingly no detectable influence on the amount or depth of material that a CTL possessed. By comparison and by contrast, Skyline College and Midwest College, which are both small schools by Carnegie classification, had an uneven number of documents (CCI, n.d.a). Skyline College, which is a city school by NCES framework, which was also part of a larger community college system, had almost no material posted compared to Midwest College, which was a small, town/rural school, that had over five sublevels and over 100 discoverable links (Geverdt, 2019; NCES, 2020; NCES, 2022). A similar comparison and contrast occurred, respectively, with April College which was a medium-city school, and Redbird College, which was a medium-city/suburb school (Geverdt, 2019; NCES, 2020; NCES, 2022).

Unremarkably, the two largest CTLs selected for this study, Abraham College, which was considered to be very-large and suburban, and Great Lake College, which was considered to be large and city/suburban, had the greatest amount of materials of any CTLs studied and rivaled each other for both breadth and depth (Geverdt, 2019; NCES, 2020; NCES, 2022).

Notwithstanding all of these demographical and geographical features, all CTLs were able to be critiqued by the themes of this study through the evolved coding process (Saldaña, 2009).

Critical Naming

Community colleges serve their communities. In part, their name indicates their function. Centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) should also exist to match their name. It is also possible that CTLs do the opposite of what they claim to be. The names of CTLs that can include *excellence* and *innovation* will be discussed shortly, but a focus on the main parts of the name – *teaching* and *learning* – must first be addressed.

One main feature of the data as a whole, that was discovered through the analysis from key words to codes to themes, is that while *teach* and *learn* were found in some conjugated iteration nearly within all CTL material, *teach* always proceeded *learn*. This positioning of the data paralleled the literature where Centers for *Teaching* and *Learning* as titular establishments are almost never referred to as Centers for *Learning* and *Teaching*. This order could imply that *teaching*, as an action or an enterprise, ought to or needs to come first. This implication solidifies the authority of those who contain the knowledge (Friere, 1993). Notably, *learning*, then, gets subordinated, which can be emblematic of those who engage in that act with teachers (Young, 1971).

Further, in the data as a whole, *teach*, as a key word, overwhelmed the instances of *learn* with the focus on the former. The actions taken by CTLs could be seen as heavy handed toward

the notion that a philosophical ratio of pedagogy should be more *teaching* than *learning*. Insofar as such disparity exists, it belies the conjunction *and* between *teaching and learning* and is more of an option where *or* might be more appropriate. Centers for Teaching *or* Learning would gain little traction in educational circles; nevertheless, the option would at least provide a choice to instructors who utilize such centers. In reality, the choice has already been made by institutional powers, regardless of executive level, to simultaneously prioritize and devalue certain thoughts and actions no matter what name the CTL possesses.

However, what one can learn from names can create an irony for the authority that CTLs attempt to yield. It is precisely this authority that can allow CTLs to function negligently or maliciously (Giroux, 1983; Friere, 1993; Schubert, 1986). The function of CTLs depend upon what they value. As this study attempted to understand CTL opportunity, value, and support, critical theory guided the “careful reflection on the taking for granted of socioeconomic class structure and the ways in which curricularists unwittingly perpetuate such structures” (Schubert, 1986, p. 133). This slant on critical theory inches toward what is hidden but also recognizes the negligent factor of banking power as an unintentional consequence (Friere, 1993; Schubert, 1986). CTLs cannot be value-neutral if education is value-laden, but that does not mean that they are intentionally harming the community, faculty, or students. Even when unintentional, miseducation can cause harm if authority amasses status to dominate and subordinate (Giroux, 1983).

Considering how silence, withholding or misnaming materials, even when unintentional, can affect faculty and students, it is important to consider that social acts have consequences: how CTLs center information and how we highlight what CTLs value can prevent and erode unintentional damage. Questioning and reflecting upon social organizations, their power, and

how they institutionalize education bring inequities to light to be criticized and, hopefully, revised (Schubert, 1986). These revisions can be driven through collaboration to secure equity and shared authority in order to avoid the reproduction of class hierarchy – and to acknowledge what power can hide or what is unintentionally shared, omitted, and named as curriculum (Schubert, 1986).

In addition to what is not there, sometimes additions of *excellence* and *innovation* are part of the CTLs name such as a Center for *Excellence* in Teaching and Learning or Center for *Innovation* in Teaching and Learning. These nouns are not adjectives, but they almost function as descriptors because they modify and amplify the type of teaching and learning that is completed within this construct. If teaching and learning are verbs instead of nouns, which they can be, then the adverbs of *excellently* or *innovatively* would make an attempt to show to what extent the center is excellent or innovative. Sometimes having to share a description or to what extent one does something is to have an insecurity due an actual deficit or lack of it. Further, words like *excellence* and *innovation* sound outstanding because they also carry that denotation and connotation.

CTLs can function as they claim without having to superfluously add flair. Most educational titles of learning spaces lack these extra words simply because they are not necessary. There is not a School of Excellence in Liberal Arts or College of Innovative Health Sciences because such appellations are not found to be necessary in the field or to persuade people to utilize that level of the institution. Without professing too much, and by simply and concisely doing as one should do, acting as one should act and being named accurately is sufficient. If CTLs need to bolster their attendance, their utilization, their function, or their

quality, then they need to engage in some critical diagnostics instead of looking to a name change as a solution.

This analysis of critical naming is a key contribution of this research to the field. Beyond a semantic argument, reconceptualizing Centers for Teaching and Learning and Centers as Learning and Teaching makes good on the type of emancipation that CDA can do for a text (Fairclough, 2003; Young & Harrison, 2004). Centers for Learning and Teaching puts students first – as prominent actors in the process of education – and allows them to be seen as the primary reason education is worthwhile (Schubert, 1986). In this iteration, the experiences of students also come first, and the secondary inclusion of teachers is not a subordination but rather a proper placement insofar as they uphold the students on their journey.

Thematic Analysis

The four emergent themes of this study, *Bureaucracies Are Not Excellence and Innovation*, *Conformity to Institutional Authority*, *the Edutechnical Help Desk*, and *Substitution of Growth in Learning and Credentials*, were analyzed through lens of critical theory and conceptual framework inclusive of Schubert's (1986) hidden curriculum using summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This combination allowed for a macroscopic socio-ideological critique and a microscopic view of presented language and potential influence. The present findings were discovered through the scrutinization of CTL language, arrangement, frequency, repetition, and accessibility. CTLs generally presented their information in similar ways, and these similar presentations also mimicked what is and what is not said: how CTLs provide professional development opportunities for educators at community colleges, what CTLs value in their professional development, and the types of support that CTLs provide faculty.

CTLs must not exclude libraries from CTLs in lieu of other bureaucratic divisions if all or part of their stated purpose was to help teachers and learning through their materials. Inclusive of *Bureaucracies are not Excellence and Innovation* included an abundance of the key words of *opportunity* and *value* - and the key words of *teach* and *learn* which, in the case of this theme, evolved into *professional development* and *instructional design*, to support a bureaucracy that could intend to sustain itself. Bureaucracies generally add stress to an educational environment instead of, ironically, creating a bureau that somehow eases a process like professional development (Prentice & Guillaume, 2021). Professional development opportunities cannot be linked to self-sustaining processes who hire new administrators to develop new opportunities to justify their hiring and continue ad infinitum via circumlocution. CTLs should value professional development linked to *innovation* and *excellence* when these words represent pedagogical intentions instead of bureaucratic ones; after all, “[i]f the ideology that propels a society is itself created rather than received, it follows that it can be re-created” (Schubert, 1986, p 319). This critical thought assumes that value creates control over learners within a bureaucratic system.

Consider the quote from the findings:

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides relevant professional development, onboarding, and academic support for xxxx faculty, staff and students, as well as professional development and workforce opportunities for external constituents including K-12 institutions, economic development associations, and manufacturing facilities within District xxxx. **The mission of XXXX is to deliver exceptional education and services to improve the lives of our students and to strengthen our communities and the CETL exists to fulfill that mission** (River College System, 2023a, p. 1).

The mention of the word *excellence* in the quote does not connect with catalog of common topics upon which most CTLs focus. In fact, the catalog, inclusive of *professional development* and, implicitly, *instructional design* by way of the former as well as “academic support” that succeeds

the title moves well beyond the institutional purview of a CTL's function support institutional instruction to include workforce and economic development for external public, and some private, entities (River College System, 2023a, p. 1). This mission explains less about what it sets out to do and more about the justification of why the CTL "exists" (River College System, 2023a, p.1). In the instance of CTLs claiming *excellence*, they appear to justify existence in some self-sustaining bureaucracy where the center is a bureau within the macroscopic institution like a painted wooden doll encased within her Russian sisters. At the point when the college acknowledges this notion within its own bolded yet microscopic and subordinated claim, it is like an asterisk on the word *excellence* within the title. As structures claim *excellence* and subsequently necessary levels of infrastructure, bureaucracy of the academy can take hold in this guise. True excellence relies on faculty involvement and faculty leadership for all aspects of collegiate curriculum and instruction, which would include CTLs (Campbell & Bray, 2018; Kezar & Lester, 2009).

Necessary levels and repeated information, pushing forward the notion of excellence through quantity or, whereas any amount of redundancy is concerned, copies may serve as a failsafe to ensure that faculty are notified about the evaluation process and what it entails; and at the same time, it creates a bureaucracy where segments of handbooks are repurposed under the guise of a CTL that has authority due to bureaucracy (Cohen, et al., 2013). It could also be a case of protesting too much in order to secure ethos where it is not deserved. The CTLs without mention of *excellence* in their title make seldom reference to it except when speaking about *innovation*. But as far as *innovation* compliments *excellence*, it serves as a vehicle for bureaucracy. Despite the codes of *professional development* and *instructional design* developing through the key terms *support* and *opportunity*, it can be argued that an "Academy of Teaching

Excellence” serves as an umbrella of sorts to connect and supervise the different aspects of the institution, which also could be a veiled attempt to justify bureaucracy (Great Lake College, 2023a).

Bureaucracy can lead to conformity – especially when occupational survival is at stake. But institutions demand ubiquitous compliance to their authority through hard governance (Campbell & Bray, 2018). Consequently, CTLs are often petri dishes for the multiplication of rules and regulations that can change a culture. Even when implicit or hidden, requirements can turn educational leaders into encultured learner-followers through repetition and reinforcement, and “[a]ccepting the status of learner is something that is not a mere matter of free choice within one’s niche” or within CTLs (Schubert, 1986, p. 319). When explicit, veiled necessities become threats to status. What is not unknown, but usually implicit, is the extent to which CTLs use the aforementioned bureaucracy in the previous theme to hegemonically guide their instructors to conform to their philosophy and pedagogy. This theme unearths the act of asking or telling their instructors to comply as community colleges and their CTLs can sometimes be more about compliance instead of learning.

Compliance, institutional or at the CTL level, whether obvious or subverted, can be unintentional or a means to an end. Conformity occurs internally from undergraduate through graduate education and is cemented in the society of the academy and the institution (Museus & LePeau, 2019). The parallel must be made to the classroom where teachers can knowingly or unintentionally push compliance on their students; and, in a domino effect, the teachers who engage in CTLs that behave this way, regardless of intent, may be doing so without even knowing it. In regard to the example in the findings that contained many classes that seemed to exist outside the realm of standard teaching and learning, like baking and Arabic calligraphy,

many people will enroll in sessions with the Dean of Instruction, who teaches such classes, because she has the power to evaluate faculty members (Redbird College, 2023b). Without judging the merit of these classes or how they fit in the larger educational context, if these types of courses are what the CTL offers, and they are offered by someone in authority, then those who wish to curry favor, especially non-tenured and adjunct faculty are being asked to comply through participation. The status of the Dean is important because the rank can be associated authority even if it is actually due to longevity or some other reason besides academic or administrative ability (Tsunoda, 1992).

The contrast between the session titles at Great Lake College and who presents each session is stark in regard to authority. The authority of the institution is in contrast with the authority of the content experts who teach at the college. The conformity to institutional authority is not inherently problematic beyond the restrictions on choice. Statements do not have to pervade the material of a CTL to be true, but institutional planning is inherently planning for compliance, whether for the state or the institution, since plans do not come to fruition without acceptance and execution from human capital, which are instructors for CTLs (Perna & Finney, 2014). This same occurrence held true for the other CTLs in this study, but the others did not have session titles that were aberrant to the nature of teaching and learning beyond content areas.

CTLs used to execute this level of compliance can often resort to the conversion of educational needs to technological ones to secure agreement through technological orthodoxy especially if educational technology specialists are either running or predominately staffing the CTLs. Instructors may be dependent upon CTLs that are really help desks in disguise if they rely on them as their sole source of assistance (Rodriguez et al., 2015). In this theme, this dependence breeds an institutional compliance out of teaching survival as most community college teaching

today, especially post-pandemic, requires a learning management system and other technical components (Inman, 2021). Educational needs can be technological, at times, but when conflated or imbalanced, CTLs are reduced to help desks. Designed to appear to address the fast-paced transition to online learning, and sometimes to impersonate a panacea for pandemic problems, help desks are not CTLs (Inman, 2021). Even when a portion of a CTL appropriates its materials toward the help desk, it can do so at the detriment and loss of growth in learning. Consider that the following quote from the findings attempts to professional development and guidance when it could be fostering a reliance on technological help and authority:

Be flexible. Be flexible with yourself and your students in the eventuality of a campus shut down. Remember that you and your students "signed up" for a face-to-face class - remote learning may not have been on anyone's mind and the shift will likely be jarring for all of you. Don't try to recreate your classroom in an online environment, and don't expect your students to find their footing immediately. If you're asking students to complete assessments in a new environment, consider making these low-stakes or even no-stakes initially. Give thought to the strictness of your attendance policy in light of a shut-down (Abraham College, 2023b, p.1).

This tip could be comforting to an instructor who is uncomfortable or has little experience with online teaching. At the same time, it refers to the situation as a predicament that was chosen. That could be true, or it could be gaslighting. It could be that someone wanted to be online, but logically, why would the instructor have chosen it if they needed this advice to remove some apprehension? In fact, most instructors, especially non-tenured and adjunct, can be at the mercy of their administrator's class scheduling especially if faculty lack leadership and shared governance (Kezar & Lester, 2009). At the same time, it is non-tenured and adjunct instructors who might best benefit from a quality CTL, and they certainly are the ones who are more likely to attend either out of obligation, advancement, or interest. Furthermore, the negative words like

“don’t” and the if/then logic of the statement seems to contradict the very concept of “flexibility” that is at the beginning and the heart of this consideration (Abraham College, 2023b, p.1).

Even if instructors could navigate the vast amount of material and obscured links to find this page or were directed toward statements like these, the proportional amount of overall material that they represent coupled with their negative and imperative nature potentially dissuades instructors from adhering to them – to reading them – to even attempting to access them. CTLs are tasked with supporting faculty to meet the needs of student learning even if it means supporting them technologically (Beaumont, 2020). Without oversimplifying the findings, the *Edutechnical Help Desk* reinforces the two previously described themes while paving the path for the last one, which connects them all together, and the substitution of education for technology is akin to the substitution of growth in learning for credentials.

As CTLs exist interdependently within Illinois community colleges, they indirectly assist instructors to help students earn credentials, as most community college experiences end with a certificate, associate degree, or general education package that allows students to transfer to four-year universities as juniors (Illinois Articulation Initiative, 2023). In general, macro-credentials already are forced upon those who compete in a capitalistic society and are subsequently “enslaved by participation” in the system; nevertheless, these endeavors differ from the micro-credentials, where certificates are valued “to the point that the symbols of intelligence become reified or take on a life of their own” in conjunction with institutional compliance (Schubert, 1986, p. 319). Those who have micro-credentials, who earned them from micro-credentialed experts, sacrifice their awareness, their potential to grow, and their holistic learning (Greene, 1978; Schubert, 1986). With *micro-credentialing*, growth in learning is substituted for a badge or an icon instead of a certificate or degree.

Micro-credentialing could serve the institution (Yu et al., 2015). But it could serve the institution more than the educator and lock them into chasing after status, especially when many schools do not allow instructors to teach online for them without this status. *Micro-credentialing* can be presented as *opportunities* by institutions to have *value* due to their proximity on the CTL main pages (River College System, 2023a; Skyline College, 2023; Midwest College, 2023e). CTLs present the information in such a way that institutional growth is really *institutional compliance* and not for growth in learning. Consider this following quote from the findings section that suggests growth in learning but might be a substitution of such for credentialing:

[1] A digital badge is a visual representation, in place of a traditional paper certificate, that conveys a skill or achievement that has been acquired. These badges showcase growth, new accomplishments, and a belief in continuous education and learning [2] The CETL offers the Educator Excellence Badge for all adjuncts who complete the Orientation course, as well as Tier 1 and Tier 2 course work. Adjunct instructors should complete both the Educator Excellence form, as well as the Self-Evaluation form to begin the process. [CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#) [3] Digital badges can be embedded into emails, LinkedIn, and other social media. These showcase a pursuit of learning and show your passion for education. If you would like help embedding a digital page, please contact xxxx, the CETL Instructional Designer for assistance [...] CONTACT XXXX (River College System, 2023d, p. 1.).

The evolution from “a traditional paper certificate” to “[a] digital badge” is not a problem if portability to future institutions is possible; however, when “showcase” appears twice without an indirect object – to whom will these badges be showcased (River College System, 2023d, p. 1)? Again, if it is learning for learning sake, and one is showcasing “growth” and “passion” like how a child may keep trophies on a shelf in the back of a bedroom or how an adult keeps them in a box in the garage but never throws them away, then there does not seem to be an issue (River College System, 2023d, p. 1). The problem could be that the value and the implicit and explicit meaning of these badges is contrary to the mission of CTLs insofar as they profess to sincerely improve the practice of teaching and learning; although, the problem might not be sincerity at all

but rather a purposeful decision that the institution makes through its own mission and administration. Some CTLs weave bureaucracy, compliance, and technological tutorials into their credentialing process by requiring tiers and pitting faculty against each other through leaderboards (Yu et al. 2015). To be fair, in this particular example, participation doubled, but that could be a feature of compliance rather than a virtue.

Transactional credentials are meant to be a means to an end rather than having a goal that rests upon growth due to emphasis on showing it off despite a “belief in continuous education in learning” as those intrinsic qualities are not dependent on a “showcase” nor is their authority steeped in a badge but rather through what one has learned (River College System, 2023d, p. 1.). As an emissary of these badges, these people gain authority through the badge and the institution as a main or sole facet of the process instead of focusing upon the growth of learning. Furthermore, if one clicks the “CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS” link (River College System, 2023d, p. 1), the exigence to earn the badge is muddied by the promise that adjuncts “are expected to engage in ongoing professional development as a condition of continued employment[.]” can earn stipends, increase their base pay, and can only access “a la carte” courses of professional development that includes topics they may want to study sooner (River College System, 2023e, p. 1).

CTL Finance Prediction

Examining the demographical and geographical characteristics of the CTLs of this study did not lead to any findings of any influence on the CTLs materials. Barring this data set, a prediction could still be made using the logic that financially-stable areas are able to better fund their CTLs, which could improve the quality, quantity, and sustainability of their materials (Mullin et al., 2015; Romano & Palmer, 2016). In the same vein, such flush coffers could also

catalyze the agenda of those who already hold power they could either fund their agenda with impunity or, more likely, shackle themselves further to special interests that may not align with the mission of the CTL, the college, or the community.

The other side of this prediction applies to the more rural areas where funds evaporate quickly. Instead of augmenting the efforts of CTLs, their ability to sustain functioning programming may weaken with each fiscal term. Still, when colleges reclaim whatever power and influence the CTLs had if they disband, then the compliance factor from the head of the hydra that remains could be just as strong. Lacking access due to funding, colleges will have greater control over the information they disseminate. To be clear, these critical predictions are not supported by the data or findings of this study, but this research would be remiss without providing this possibility for the future of CTLs, their demographical and geographical information, and their financial futures as it pertains to their ability to protect and gird the well-being of education.

Delimitations

Besides the delimitations outlined in this study's proposal inclusive of those argued by Creswell and Creswell (2018), Tesch (1990), and Weber (1990), for two of the CTL sites, additions, omissions, and revisions have occurred since the data analysis. Additionally, the masking of the identities of the Illinois community colleges and their applicable administrators delimits the critical theory used to guide this study as critiques can have more influence when speaking truth directly to power. This circumstance coincides with the delimitation of the researcher's recent promotion from collegiate faculty to administration, which can create a subconscious bias. At the same time, the researcher must be careful to not overcompensate for the potentiality of this bias. Using the criteria for trustworthiness and adding this fact to the

researcher's positionality, both of which are originally outlined in this study's proposal, can account for these subsequent delimitations.

Recommendations

First and foremost, those who would form, advise, and administrate CTLs should consider the spirit of the espoused values of their institutions and their organization. They should consider the educational and the emotional well-being of their infrastructure, what they project to the public, and how they project it (Rendón, 2014). This reflection could prove vital over the current focus upon learning management systems, instructional design, and technological advancement for the sake of itself.

In the case of community colleges and their CTLs, they could revise their curricular paradigm to account for the disenfranchised if they recognized inequity in society and wanted to have a more direct impact their intended audience (Schubert, 1986; Schubert, 1989). Instead of focusing on “credentialed certainty [and] assert[ing] control over those who receive[,]” (Schubert, 1986, p. 319), and instead of attempting to control what people learn through institutionalized and hidden curricula, those who purport to center upon teaching and learning could reject the enslavement of the mind – and learners would not have to accept their subservient status. Free to experience knowledge and the quality of teaching, learners would negligently or maliciously be forced to conform to the competition of credentialed and educational survival (Schubert, 1986; Schubert, 1989).

When combined with the intended and taught curricula, the hidden curriculum can further reinforce the promotion of societal inequity (Schubert, 1986; Schubert, 2007). Institutions of higher education can unearth and question the hidden curriculum is to learn who might benefit and who might be harmed (Schubert, 2007). Institutions of higher education can determine if

they have hidden curricular messages and eschew them and their potential conformity to stifle social class through outlook and attitude if they seek to enforce injustice (Anyon, 1980; Schubert, 2007): “structures of schooling teach much that is not included in the official curriculum” (Schubert, 2007, p. 404). Evaluating the hidden curriculum of CTLs expands the societal conscience and consciousness and exposes the layers within an institution for critique (Friere, 1993; Schubert, 1986).

Beyond this type of reflection, educators should spend more time thinking about what learning theories underpin their practice and explicitly share the genesis and thought process of what they do and why they do it in their materials. The same ought to be true for the assessment of their outcomes. It is understandable when CTLs use institutional and accreditation criteria to measure their outcomes, but their assessment should also be authentic (Cruz et al., 2021; MacCormack et al., 2018; McCune, 2018).

To improve their authenticity, CTLs could look at diversity more carefully. This study did not focus upon race or gender, which is hardly exhaustive of diverse groups, but tried to consider ethnicity from a macro-lingual perspective as well as class. If CTLs provided more opportunities, or even more reflective materials documenting meetings and initiatives regarding diversity of teachers and students, they would get closer to serving the diverse needs of these diverse groups.

Another form of diversity is in status. There was seldom a diversity of status in the administration of the CTLs in this data whether they were run by a Dean, a faculty advisor, or a technological design specialist. Encouraging CTLs to host a diversity of influence, to engage in shared governance (Cruz et al., 2021; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Tarker, 2019). Whenever possible, non-teaching members of the CTL should teach a class for which they are qualified to instruct to

develop and maintain the empathy that is required of educators so that they can apply this quality to the CTL (Rendón, 2014). Further, professional development for CTL administrators in the form of graduate pedagogical coursework should be required unless they already possess some type of applicable degree in education beyond their content-specific credentials.

Finally, CTLs must move past the artificial aspects of their bureaucratic and compliant creations and, instead, hone their own craft to engage instructors in the same way they might wisely suggest instructors to engage their own students. To avoid hypocrisy, CTLs must inform and persuade through relevancy, multimodal environments, and community. They can do so through listening, conversation, and reflection to develop their cultural competencies and the culture of their CTLs (Rendón, 2014).

Conclusion

This study can contribute to the revision of how CTLs think, value, and act. CTLs can revise their priorities to fulfill the explicit promises they make. CTLs can revise the materials in their language to reflect these explicit promises. Communication solves all problems, but it can also create some along the way. By considering how they present their material, CTLs can occasionally avoid the pitfalls of scrutiny because if they operate with integrity, then they have one fewer problem about which to worry.

CTLs should not communicate effectively because they want to avoid problems. They should want to do so to best serve their instructors and their students. Anyway, CTLs will never be exempt from critique – only, potentially, from what these critiques reveal.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOLARLY REFLECTION

Introduction and Context

The idea of a scholarly reflection seems automatic to me. Still, if I had paid more attention to the macroscopic picture that my professors and my passing perspective presented to me, I might have completed this chapter earlier. Hindsight is 20-20; and 2020, if I recollect correctly was a terrible year. It started out fine with earning acceptance to this doctoral program while ignorant masses of people unwittingly partied while vectoring disease as the decade came to a close. But, year-end parties never appealed to me just like how Holden Caulfield's need to get a sad or a bad goodbye never appealed to me; seriously, it didn't even appeal to me when I was enamored with the character in my youth only to discover that, as I aged, he was a whiny punk (Salinger, 1945). I don't know if these types of parties appealed to my uncle either, but I do know that I had the foresight not to travel when he wanted to go out. Sadly, he died from COVID shortly after starting this program. Dr. Hu was gracious and accommodating with my course work at the time.

Exigency to Reflect as a Scholar

Is this introduction scholarly? To me, it is. Uncle Bobby never wanted me to be a punk; and as an attorney, he often had to weigh the spirit of the law with the letter of the law. It is something that I think about a lot, and I apply it to my scholarship and my pedagogy. Starting with my philosophy of education, which is communication-based and student-centered, I never want to allow schooling to get in the way of my education as Mark Twain once mythically

explained. In this regard, the spirit of education supersedes the particular set of rules of a school, which are ironically in place to enhance education. Practically speaking, the best practices of teaching should not be conflated with the conventions of teaching. Scholastically speaking, critical theory can emancipate students while stifling a critique that might fall into a denotative and connotative line as students mimic an infantry (Young, 1992).

As lawyers grapple with the spirit of the law and the letter of the law to determine justice, they quickly realize that it is a tricky task when considering intent to advocacy to fairness; all of which are left to a judge who ultimately arbitrates based upon facts but whose broad discretion can account for more than a rupture in the penal code. In this metaphor, lawyers represent the educators, who constantly deal with the conflict between the spirit of education versus the authority of education. Ideally, there would be no conflict, but as external powers exert their control upon *who can say* and *what can be said*, attorneys must advocate for their clients as sure as educators must advocate for their students.

Who is the judge in this metaphor? It could be the students if they wielded the power of community in community colleges. They could but often do not as a result of a multitude of socioeconomic issues... or they do and become one of the puppet masters where politics impersonate justice. Besides marionettes and a quick civic lesson on the separation of powers, none of these entities are entitled to be *prima facie de facto* judicial; rather, they execute and legislate. "Reserving judgments is a matter of infinite hope" regardless of one's station in life; but, even as it comes to CTLs, "a sense of the fundamental decencies is parcelled out unequally a birth" (Fitzgerald, 1925, p. 1-2).

It is in this regard, and in the giant footsteps of critical scholars who came before me and who were far more articulate and judicious, that I wished to look at how Illinois community

college CTLs communicated with their various audiences in order to understand how they squared the spirit of education with the authority of education. As someone who attended law school but never became a lawyer, and as someone who coached more Debate champions than having won tournaments himself, I found myself scrutinizing CTLs because of how their nexus served to intersect my worlds of teaching and learning. Teaching is not the professoriate just as learning is not the student body. These ideas do not transcend people, per se, as they are nothing without people; yet, these ideas are also so much more. These ideas represent who teachers and learners could be – their potential.

Learning

Initially, I saw the potential in the pedagogical programs that help grow the teaching abilities of K-12 teachers as a way to help higher education instructors move beyond their content expertise and seize the opportunity to become master educators. It was difficult for me to reconcile the idea that instructors of higher education, who are teachers and learners some of the most complex curriculum we formally share with students, would lack preservice pedagogical training and even lack the requirements to obtain it in the field. Surely colleges would not allow their students to be guinea pigs to an instructor without these skills. Even as far as chicken and egg arguments go, an instructor who has never taught but has studied teaching might have a better chance at doing well than one who has not. Instructors who engage in internship or student teaching, then, have practical experience, even if as apprentices, that better qualifies them to teach.

As I researched this topic throughout my initial doctoral studies, I quickly learned that the preservice programs had been retired and replaced with the ex post facto approach of CTLs. Some of the literature considered them to be panaceas; some were honestly critical about their

ability to function; and, some were modestly hopeful about their ability to assist instructors to reach their pedagogical potential. Ignoring the critical voice of my left shoulder, I rightly saw the potential in CTLs to nourish this pedagogical growth.

I continued my research and began to execute my study while firmly remembering my past and present positionality as a secondary educator turned college professor turned college administrator who was always a student first. This process caused me to slowly turn back to the left, back to my dominant hand and back my dominant discourse of critique; the critique that stemmed from decades of explicating composition and reading the papers of students who attempted the same. It seemed to me that the CTLs – of which I was a part, of which I began to study before I entered this program, and of which I did review for this dissertation – had lost sight of what was most important: *learning*.

Studying and Scholarly Background

Before I entered the world of educational scholarship, I studied English composition and literature. I was versed in the latter and loved the spirit of it, but the letter of the word intrigued me; perhaps, it was the attorney buried deep within me. Learning about the art and science of composition illuminated my mind as strict adherence melted away to give rise to the rhetorical stance and the ability to influence understanding through compositional choice. In the wrong hands, influence turns into manipulation, and choices seem malicious. In either case, choice denotes intention and control; usually, choices result in predictable outcomes. In this moment of understanding, I knew that I could use these skills as a teacher to create greater buy-in and, hopefully, greater learning by teaching composition as a way of pulling back the Wizard's curtain to expose exactly how Oz was governed. If students could learn the recipe, the secret sauce, the passwords to access via reading, writing, speaking, and listening – which are all

reciprocal skills – then, they could reclaim authority that was taken by them because they would literally become authors.

This goal worked well for a time, from remedial to honors and Advanced Placement English Language, until I came to teach a bridge class that would help junior high students destined for regular-level classes level-up to advanced classes if they completed a rigorous summer regime. This class was called Project Excel. What was a surprise to me in my first year, which subsequently became the norm, was the selection of only minority students for the opportunity. On the second day of the second summer I taught this class, a 4’11” 13-year-old Latina student exclaimed to me, “Why am I at Mexican day camp?” Coming from Mexico to the United States when she was very young, and in spite of what the junior high school thought about her potential to do well in honors English, she wielded amazing linguistic skills with a poetic grace that surpassed all of the dead white males of the canon.

Unlike my student who became an English teacher and a Debate Coach, I learned that students in my own graduate studies, who did not speak English as their native language either, were unfairly assessed for their writing abilities by people who had no business to question their communication or compositional skills. Hypothetically speaking, does a professor of astrophysics who holds a Ph.D. in the field possess expertise in the field of writing? Maybe. Are they qualified to assess it? Maybe. If they choose to assess it, should it be worth the lion’s share of a grade for a class beyond the actual content taught? No.

My point in sharing this section is manifold. First, it speaks to the contrast of the spirit of the law and the letter of the law – or the spirit of education and the authority of education – because even though I met the diamond in the rough, the student who the system almost failed, who would make every hour of learning to become a teacher and every word I ever wrote to earn

that title worthwhile, too many of my other students and too many of my cohort peers did not get a fair shake beyond their ethnic and linguistic origins. They did not study writing.

I am hardly a good writer, and I'm only a better speaker when unequivocally given the floor; but my native English-speaking privilege coupled with my choice, partly borne out of my privilege, to study English composition, amplified my privilege to a distinct advantage that should not have allowed me to do better in life than some of my students and peers, who are infinitely smarter and more capable than me if we were speaking and writing in the same language. Extend this point to academic discourse wherein a curricular and instructional language matures within teachers and students as they spend more time reading, writing, speaking, and listening within an academic culture (Young, 1992). Discourse can assimilate, and CTLs can be lead the process or end as product from such persuasive acts of communication (Fairclough, 2003). As CTLs function in good faith to help instructors help students, the possibility for them to also educate about diversity, equity, and inclusion and center the instructors, and the center itself, as an intersection to strengthen and enhance what their audience knows about good pedagogy while helping them become proficient and then exceptional in areas that need growth (McCune, 2018).

Studying CTLs may be easier for me because I come from a compositional history and discipline, but my interest in them is also part of my history. In addition to Writing Centers being very similar to CTLs in regard to their creation, mission, and function, I think that their connection transcends that of other traditional success centers that help with all tutoring for all classes. Both Writing Centers and CTLs seek to transform how one thinks in terms of invention, arrangement, and style to influence their audiences, who reciprocally have audiences of their own to influence.

Cautiously Optimistic

Having to explain what went well during this study requires me to engage in litotic gymnastics. I have never been a very good optimist. I would consider myself to be an optimistic pessimist. The glass is half empty... but I'm ok with it. Even when considering what did not go as expected, which will be expanded in the next section, I would argue that every slant and every setback is technically something that went well because it all gave me a chance to revise and improve. Drawing from my composition background, the opportunity to engage in process is priceless. Every time I reflected on a portion of the study or a paragraph or a line or a word, I considered how I could improve it. When confronted with my own criticism or the feedback from my advisor, the step back that I could was to gain vantage and understanding of how to best advance rather than to diminish my progress. Beyond those general and specific attempts at revision, and due to my understanding of arrangement coupled with the strong methodological and methods training of this Ed.D. program, I contend that the entire process went well.

Looking carefully at public-facing documents presented unique challenges but mostly provided me the access required to harness the approach of this study and to employ a fitting analysis of the findings. At no point in the past did I seriously consider interviewing faculty or administrators of CTLs because I wanted to look exclusively at the documented communication of CTLs. Still, this approach allowed me to move through the IRB process quickly so that I could spend more time engaging in summative analysis with the documents (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Besides my understanding that “[t]ime is never time at all” (Corgan, 1996, p. 1), the notion of access, in spite of and as a result of time, was of fundamental importance to the success of the study as the data analysis hinged on what could and could not be seen (Schubert, 1986). In this regard, the inability to access potentially stored data was a touchstone for the findings and

bolstered the critical conversation between researcher and research because the conversation between CTLs and their public audience could be ideal or strained (Creswell, 2013; Eddy, 2010; Giroux, 1983).

Most vitally, what I view to be the most advantageous part of this process was the ability to be a formal student again. My advisor, who was also one of my professors for a few classes, embodies everything that is right in education and struck the ideal balance between guidance and feedback, direction and execution, and support and independence. Without walking these tightropes with me, I do not believe that I would have been as successful at discovering and utilizing theory and practice, implementing methodology and methods, analyzing and coding the data, and writing and revising my chapters. My advisor rekindled my passion and faith in teaching, learning, researching, and writing through scholarship and, more importantly, through words and actions. Of particular note, both explicitly and, probably, subconsciously, I try to apply the qualities of Gooblar (2019) and Rendón (2014) toward everything educational that I think, say, or do as I situate myself between teacher and learner. While this wisdom did not always apply to CTLs, and while I would never try to force a square peg into a triangular hole, the notion of what could be missing (Gooblar, 2019) and the sensing and feeling of pedagogy (Rendón, 2014) could have positive effects for CTLs and everyone with whom they interact. Finally, using all of this pedagogical wealth kept me optimistic when I had difficulties.

Working through Difficulties

Instead of thinking about this section in chronological order, I want to consider size and scope. The macroscopic issue that caused consternation for me was when my advisor helped me realize that I had a tone issue that could unintentionally affect how readers would view this dissertation and threatened the findings because I had conflated some discussion portions for it.

Ironically, because I was so close to this issue, it became a broad concern. Going back through my writing, ego aside, and trying to rethink what I was thinking when I wrote the previous words and attempting to add, omit, revise, and reorder became much more of Herculean task than I had anticipated. This process hamstrung me given my timeline and new responsibilities as an administrator at a new school. Still, mostly believing that education is not a means to an end, I had to sacrifice some sleep and well-being to get the work done (Dewey, 1916).

Upon further reflection of the return on investment for devoting this time and effort, I came to the conclusion that I was still thinking *wrong*. Violating Dewey's (1916) core principle of intrinsic learning made me realize that the completion of this work might earn me a degree and a title and a better future, but how I now understand CTLs and how they can help and hinder students matters infinitely more to me. This practical and worthwhile application of learning outweighs any misguided perception of the ivory tower or banker of knowledge (Schubert, 1986; Friere, 1993).

Moving to a more microscopic view of what did not go as expected during this study leads me to bring up the public-facing document access again. While I mentioned it earlier as a boon for the study in regard to what CTLs provide or lack, it also problematized what I could select for data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saldaña, 2009). Notwithstanding time, this potential impediment guided me away from developing codes and emerging themes. It is not so much that this part did not go well, but it was not expected because certain codes and themes seemed to be going in a particular direction regarding access only to realize that in some cases there was a lack thereof.

One personal decision that came unexpectedly was the lack of using an ICCB administrator to serve as a peer reviewer as a measure of trustworthiness to consider the

unchanging account of data that would have been collected without obstruction while securing a point of view (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam, 1998). I had intended to implement this measure but ultimately decided against it because of the lack of information aforementioned and the inability to verify what had and had not changed within documents and digital materials as evidence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the future, I would still recommend peer review, particularly someone with the perspective held by the Illinois Community College Board if some semblance of guarantee could be established regarding the shifting nature of digital documentation. This review would still help trustworthiness by testing perception and reality of documentary analysis.

The largest source of frustration came at the smallest levels via coding. To say that I had a conundrum with this part of the process is an understatement. First, I had only engaged in coding twice before, and one of those times was a decade prior when completing my Ph.D. work. Reading an entire textbook on coding was helpful, but I felt that I was practicing as a neophyte instead of as a doctoral student (Saldaña, 2009). At first, I had spent too much time attempting to quantify data and got caught in the minutia of all of the links, sentences, and words. I wish I had possessed the foresight to see that I was doing exactly as a student should do, practicing the craft in order to learn it, but lack of experience that translated into a demonstrable lack of progress stifled me. I made attempts to read a multitude of similar dissertations that would be similar to mine as well as many journal articles that I would wish to emulate for future publication. I would be lying if I said that discourse failed to assimilate; in reality, I had not spent enough time immersed in the discourse – and the time that I had spent with it and in it was ten years ago (Fairclough, 2003).

I fired off emails to my advisor frantically seeking help after reading; besides possessing good grace, good countenance, good sense, and good will, Katy possesses invaluable expertise in this area beyond experience and practice but due to background and content-specific engagement as well. I could argue that I was seeking validation for my research sensibilities; but besides that fact, I really needed to see someone talk and walk through the process. Spending no more than an hour revitalized my spirit and my resolve to look at the data more holistically without shying away from what could emerge. It was not a panacea because I needed to devote the time to implement my new understanding of how to code to best engage in summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). With both, however, moving forward became possible and falling backward, which still occurred many more times, became so much more palatable. I firmly understood, as I hoped I could have previously, that there are no shortcuts, fast tracks, or skips in process. As a result, I had greater appreciation for my past, both pedagogically and compositionally, and for my present where teacher and student came full circle as I developed this study and myself.

More Learning and Future Opportunities

CTLs have the ability to serve as centers of reciprocity, akin to the phenomenon that I experienced throughout this dissertation, provided that administrators help them to supply the necessary framework inclusive of time, pedagogy, and communication (Reed, 2013). The first one is what eludes many and eluded me during the majority of dissertation writing. Regardless, if CTLs are transparent about their timelines for development of pedagogical skills, and they scaffold their resources, inclusive of time, they can deliver and engage in quality programming for community college faculty and staff.

As far as pedagogy is concerned, CTLs need to take inventory of the educational background and skills that their faculty possesses. A wise first step would be to review the base educational requirements for their instructor positions at all levels from adjunct through professor. Next, they should consider their baseline, if different from that level, and how to achieve it if raising the bar through human resources and higher administration is not possible. CTL administration and staff should consider what pedagogical skills transcend content areas when engaging in this process to move toward a more consistently-delivered curriculum for the students of the institution (Schubert, 1986). Taking inventory of what the CTL values and why should front these proceedings and prompt administrators to include a host of experienced and new faculty and staff in order to leverage shared governance, diverse philosophies, and content expertise (Reed, 2013).

This step would be invaluable regarding communication as the stakeholders and audience of the CTL are all involved in the development beyond their mission, vision, and values. But all of the aforementioned opportunities should also be publicly chronicled and posted on the CTL access for posterity, access, and further revision. Beyond the value for accreditation purposes, this level of transparency will raise trust in the CTL, which can raise usage of the CTL, which can engage more faculty who can positively influence and educate more students.

Application to Professional Practice

There is little doubt that I will use this study to inform my own professional practice at my current institution. We have an amazing Faculty Development Coordinator who excels at in her position. More could still be done despite her best efforts as she does not possess full release time beyond her obligation as a full-time professor. Additionally, there is no formal CTL at my institution beyond what is housed digitally and the sessions and classes that we offer both online

and face-to-face. Again, the Faculty Development Coordinator has completed high quality work and continues to improve and grow our faculty, but if she could gain assistance via CTL staff and specialists and/or gain full release, we could move in an even more positive direction.

Using my research and experiences, I know that my administration supports my efforts to support our faculty development, and even as early as my interview process when I was in the midst of this research, we discussed how I could be instrumental in establishing our inaugural CTL. I do not know if it would fall under my supervision, but I prefer to take a more collaborative stance and approach anyway. Moving past a lot of the obstructions caused by COVID will likely allow us to create a CTL that is housed both physically and digitally. This study has prepared me to inform the creation process, particularly regarding the pedagogy, communication, and documentation, by sharing best practices and recounting the missed opportunities of the CTLs that I studied to understand how we can seize upon what we can do well and bolster our areas of improvement.

Application to Research

This research contributes to how CTLs communicate their values to their audience and the public. While upholding the mission, vision, and value of their respective institutions, CTLs must adhere to their own or create their own in tandem with the institution if lacking them. How CTLs adhere to their own promises of professional development relates to those who administrate and staff the CTL in regard to what they think, why they think it, and how they convey these thoughts to the public. Philosophy and pedagogy as abstract concepts require concrete implementation, and this study contributes to the research of how CTLs implement these concepts and how well they do it.

This research also contributes to the revision process in which CTLs ought to engage as they attempt to convey their intentions and remediations of professional development for their instructors. Practicing what they profess to embody will be a large part of whether or not CTLs can be successful in cultivating communication. Effective communication between college administration, CTLs, and faculty can improve institution integrity, morale, and student success. Only through reflective practice can CTLs prioritize their time and resources to best create and deliver professional development.

As CTLs move more toward an online presence due to technological advancement and global pandemics, they will need to be mindful of their public documentation. This research supports a transparent and comprehensive documentation process where access is unfettered to anyone with an internet connection. CTLs need to remember that their pedagogical values will be on display; this research encourages alignment with the institution but also with the needs of the faculty and the community. The influence of these materials grows as the public trust of the CTL grows, which is more possible through transparency, which extends to positive perceptions of the CTL and what it can help faculty accomplish with students.

REFERENCES

- Alfred, R. & Linder, V. (1992). Empowering faculty through redefined work roles. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 79, 49-59.
- Allen, D., McPherson, M.S., Nilson, L.B., & Sorcinelli, M.D. (2019). ACUE student, faculty, and institutional impact research: Independent review process and findings. *Association of College and University Educators*. Retrieved from <https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ACUE-Research-Review-Findings-2019.pdf>.
- Alexander, A., Karvonen, M., Ulrich, J., Davis, T. & Wade, A. (2012). Community college faculty competencies. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 36(11), 849-862.
- American Association of Community Colleges (2022, March). Fast facts 2022. <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/2022/02/28/42888/>
- Anyon, J. (1980). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education*, 162(1), 67-92.
- Austin, A. E. (2002). Preparing the next generation of faculty: Graduate school as socialization to the academic career. *Journal of Higher Education*, 73, 94-122.
- Bahr, P. R., & Gross, J. L. (2016). Community colleges. In M. N. Bastedo, P. G. Altbach, & P. J. Gumpert (Eds.), *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges* (4th ed., pp. 462-502). Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bartholomew, T., Wright, M. C., & Michaels, C. (2018). Partnering with teaching and learning centers for curricular assessment: A case study of best practices. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 155, 21-29.
- Beach, A., Sorcinelli, M.D., Austin, A., & Rivard, J. (2016). *Faculty development in the age of evidence: Current practices, future imperatives*. Stylus.
- Beaumont, J. (2020). Cross-disciplinary professional development at community college. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 44(2), 99-116.
- Bishop, M. J., & Keehn, A. (2015). *Leading academic change: An early market scan of leading-edge postsecondary academic innovation centers*. William Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation. <https://www.educause.edu/sites/default/files/library/presentations/E15/PS11/LeadingAcademicChangeProjectReport.pdf>

- Blumberg, P. (2016). Assessing implementation of learner-centered teaching while providing faculty development. *College Teaching*, 64(4), 194-203.
- Bodily, B. H. (2021). Playing in the sandbox: A narrative approach to faculty development. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 45(5), 309-323.
- Brawer, F. B. (1990). Faculty development: The literature – an ERIC review. *Community College Review*, 18(1), 50-56.
- Brown, B. A., Reveles, J. M., & Kelly, G. J. (2005). Scientific literacy and discursive identity: A theoretical framework for understanding science learning. *Science Education*, 89(5), 779-802.
- Burant, T. J., Gray, C., Ndaw, E., McKinney-Keys, V., & Allen, G. (2007). The rhythms of a teacher research group. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 9(1), 10-18.
- Campbell, E. & Bray, N. (2018). Two sides of the same coin? Analysis of faculty and administrators’ perspectives on governance. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 42(12), 893-907.
- CETL – About (n.d.). *Elgin Community College*. Retrieved September 10, 2022 from <https://cetl.student.elgin.edu/about>
- Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (n.d.a). Home page. <https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu>
- Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (n.d.b). Size & setting classification. https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/classification_descriptions/size_setting.php
- Chalmers, D., & Gardiner, D. (2015). An evaluation framework for identifying the effectiveness and impact of academic teacher development programmes. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 46, 81–91.
- Cohen, A. M. & Brawer, F. B. (1989). *The American Community College* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Cohen, A. M., Brawer, F. B., & Kisker, C. B. (2013). *The American community college* (6th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Condon, W., Iverson, E., Manduca, C., Rutz, C., & Willett, G. (2016). Faculty development and student learning: *Assessing the connections*. Indiana University Press.
- Corgan, W. P. (1996). Tonight, tonight [Song Recorded by The Smashing Pumpkins]. On *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness*. Virgin.

- Cousin, G. (2010). Positioning positionality: The reflexive turn. In M. Savin-Baden & C. Howell Major (Eds.), *New approaches to qualitative research: Wisdom and uncertainty* (pp. 9-18). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage.
- Cruz, L., Huxtable-Jester, K., Smentkowski, B., & Springborg, M. (2021). Place-based educational development: What center for teaching and learning spaces look like (and why that matters). *To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development*, 40(1), 75-104.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Heath.
- Dougherty, K. A., Rhoades, G., & Smith, M. (2014). Bargaining for part-time, contingent faculty. *The NEA Almanac of Higher Education*. National Education Association.
- Eble, K. E., & McKeachie, W. J. (1985). *Improving undergraduate education through faculty development: An analysis of effective programs and practices*. Jossey-Bass.
- Eddy, P. L. (2010). New faculty issues: Fitting in and figuring it out. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 152, 15–24.
- Emundts, D. (2010). The refutation of idealism and the distinction between phenomena and noumena. In P. Guyer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (pp. 169-189). Cambridge.
- Eyer, S. (2009). Translation from Plato's Republic 514b–518d ("Allegory of the Cave"). *Ahiman: A Review of Masonic Culture and Tradition*, 1, 73-78.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.

- Fitzgerald, F. S. (1925). *The great Gatsby*. Scribner's.
- Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.
- Freire, P. (2017). *Education for critical consciousness*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Fugate, A., & Amey, M. J. (2000). Career stages of community college faculty: A qualitative analysis of their career paths, roles and development. *Community College Review*, 28(1), 1–11.
- Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses* (2nd Ed.). Taylor & Francis.
- Geverdt, D. (2019). *Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates Program (EDGE): Locale Boundaries File Documentation, 2017* (NCES 2018-115). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics.
- Giroux, H. A. (1983). *Theory and resistance in education: A pedagogy for the opposition*. Bergin & Garvey.
- Giroux, H. A. (2001). *Theory and resistance in education: Towards a pedagogy for the opposition*. Bergin and Garvey.
- Giroux, H. A. (2004). *The terror of neoliberalism*. Garamond Press.
- Giroux, H. A., & Purpel, D. (1983). *The hidden curriculum and moral education*. McCutchan.
- Gnage, M. F. & Drumm, K. E. (2010). Hiring for student success: A perspective from community college presidents. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. 152. 71-80.
- Gooblar, D. (2019). *The missing course: Everything they never taught you about college teaching*. Harvard University Press.
- Green, D. & Ciez-Volz, K. (2010). Now hiring: The faculty of the future. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. 152. 81-92.
- Greene, M. (1978). *Landscapes of learning*. Teachers College Press.
- Grubb, N. W. (1999). *Honored but invisible: An inside look at teaching in community colleges*. Routledge.
- Hines, S. (2017). Evaluating centers for teaching and learning: A field-tested model. *To Improve the Academy*, 36 (2), 89-100.

- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis, *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.
- Higher Learning Commission (2020). Determining quality faculty through HLC's criteria for accreditation and assumed practices. https://download.hlcommission.org/FacultyGuidelines_OPB.pdf
- How Many Centers for Teaching and Learning are There? (2019). *Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education*. Retrieved September 10, 2022 from https://podnetwork.org/content/uploads/Wright_PNN_NoCTLs_Jan2019_update2pdf.pdf
- Hull, G. (1993). Critical literacy and beyond: Lessons learned from students and workers in a vocational program and on the job. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 24, 308-317.
- Illinois Community College Board (2020). Illinois community college list – students. <http://www2.iccb.org/students/your-college-plan/finding-a-college/illinois-community-colleges/>
- Illinois Articulation Initiative (2023). What is IAI? <https://itransfer.org/aboutiai/index.php>
- Inman, J. (2021). Growing pains (and opportunities): Launching a center for teaching and learning during a global pandemic. *To Improve the Academy*, 39(3). 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0039.303>
- Jankowski, N. (2017). *Unpacking relationships: Instruction and student outcomes*. American Council on Education. Retrieved from <https://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Unpacking-Relationships-7>.
- Jeong, S., Clyburn, J., Bhatia, N. S., McCourt, J., & Lemons, P. P. (2022). Student thinking in the professional development of college biology instructors: An analysis through the lens of sociocultural theory. *CBE Life Sciences Education*, 21(2), ar30.
- Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2014). *Negotiating the complexity of qualitative research in higher education: Fundamental elements and issues* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Kezar, A., & Lester, J. (2009). Supporting faculty grassroots leadership. *Research in Higher Education*, 50(7), 715-740.
- Kortegast, C. A., Jaekel, K. S., & Nicolazzo, Z. (2021). Thirty years of LGBTQ pre-publication knowledge production in higher education research: A critical summative content analysis of ASHE conference sessions. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 68(10). 1639-1663.
- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage.

- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 163–188). Sage.
- MacCormack, P., Snow, M., Gyurko, J., & Sekel, J.C. (2018). Connecting the dots: A proposed accountability method for evaluating the efficacy of faculty development and its impact on student outcomes. Association of College and University Educators.
- McCoy, D. L. & Winkle-Wagner, R. (2015). Bridging the divide: Developing a scholarly habitus for aspiring graduate students through summer bridge programs participation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 56(5), 423-439.
- McCune, V (2018). Experienced academics' pedagogical development in higher education: time, technologies, and conversations. *Oxford Review of Education*, 44(3). 307-321.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. Jossey-Bass.
- Mertens, D. M. & Wilson, A. T. (2019). *Program evaluation theory and practice: A comprehensive guide* (2nd ed.). Guilford.
- Miller, A. A. (1997). ERIC review--back to the future: Preparing community college faculty for the new millennium. *Community College review*, 24(4). 83.
- Milner IV, H. R. (2007). Race, culture, and researcher positionality: Working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen. *Educational Researcher*, 36(7), 388-400.
- Mullin, C. M., Baime, D. S., & Honeyman, D. S. (2015). *Community college finance: A guide for institutional leaders*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Murray, J. P. (2000). Faculty development in Texas two-year colleges. *Community College Journal of Research & Practice*, 24(4), 251-267.
- Murray, J.P. (2002). The current state of faculty development in two-year colleges. In C.L. Outcalt (Ed.), *Community college faculty: Characteristics, practices, and challenges*. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 118, 89-97. Jossey-Bass.
- Museus, S. D., & LePeau, L. A. (2019). Navigating neoliberal organizational cultures: Implications for higher education leaders advancing social justice agendas. In A. J. Kezar & J. Posselt (Eds.), *Administration for social justice and equity in higher education: Critical perspectives for leadership and decision making*. Routledge.

- Myllykoski-Lane, S., Postareff, L., Murtonen, M., & Vilppu, H. (2022, May 16). Building a framework of a supportive pedagogical culture for teaching and pedagogical development in higher education. *Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00873-1>
- National Center for Education Statistics (2020). Locale lookup. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/maped/LocaleLookup/>
- National Center for Education Statistics (2022). Definitions. <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/annualreports/topical-studies/locale/definitions>
- Neal, E., & Peed-Neal, I. (2010). Promoting your program and grounding it in the institution. In K. Gillespie, & D. L. Robertson (Eds.) *A guide to faculty development* (2nd ed., pp. 99-115). Jossey-Bass.
- O'Meara, K., Templeton, L., & Nyunt, G. (2018). Earning professional legitimacy: Challenges faced by women, underrepresented minority and non-tenure-track faculty. *Teachers College Record*, 120(12), 1-38.
- Palmer, J. (1992). Faculty professionalism reconsidered. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 79, 29-38.
- Perna, L. W., & Finney, J. E. (2014). *The attainment agenda: State policy leadership in higher education*. Johns Hopkins.
- Prentice, M. & Guillaume, R. O. (2021). Job perceptions of community college and university department chairs. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 45(5), 351-365.
- Razfar, A. (2012). Discoursing mathematically: Using discourse analysis to develop a sociocritical perspective of mathematical education. *The Mathematics Educator*, 22(1), 39-62.
- Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Oxford University Press.
- Reed, M. (2013). *Confessions of a community college administrator*. Jossey-Bass.
- Rendón, L. (2014). *Sentipensante (sensing/thinking) pedagogy: Educating for wholeness, social justice, and liberation*. Stylus.
- Rodriguez, N. N., Brennan, S., Varelas, A., Hutchins, C., DiSanto, J. (2015). Center for teaching and learning on tour: Sharing, reflecting, and documenting effective strategies. *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning*, 7, 3-21.

- Roegman, R. (2018) Seen, unseen, and unforeseen dangers: what a White emerging scholar learned about positionality in research with racially diverse practitioners. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 31(9), 836-850.
- Romano, R. M., & Palmer, J. C. (2016). *Financing community colleges: Where we are, where we're going*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Sackris, D. (2016). Preferred qualifications: Community college teaching experience. *Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges*, 16(1). 12-15.
- Saldaña, J. M. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.
- Salinger, J. D. (1945). *The catcher in the rye*. Little, Brown.
- Schubert, W.H. (1986). *Curriculum: Perspective, paradigm, and possibility*. Macmillan.
- Schubert, W. H. (2007). Curriculum inquiry. In M. F. He, & J. Phillon (Eds.) *The SAGE Handbook of Curriculum and Instruction* (pp. 399-419). Sage.
- Smith, K. (2013). Critical discourse analysis and higher education research. *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research*, 9. 61-79.
- Sorcinelli, M. D. (2020). The evaluation of faculty development programs in the United States. A fifty-year retrospective (1970s- 2020). *Excellence and Innovation in Learning and Teaching*, 5(2), 5-17.
- Sorcinelli, M. D., Gray T., & Birch, A. J. (2011). Faculty development beyond instructional development. *To Improve the Academy*, 30(1). 247–261.
- Tarker, D. (2019). Transformational Leadership and the Proliferation of Community College Leadership Frameworks: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 43(10-11), 672-689.
- Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools*. Falmer.
- Townsend, B. K. & Twombly, S. B. (2007). Community college faculty: Overlooked and undervalued. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report*, 32(6).
- Tsunoda, J. S. (1992). Expertise and values: How relevant is preservice training? *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 79, 11-20.
- Twombly, S. (2005). Values, policies, and practices affecting the hiring process for full-time arts and sciences faculty in community colleges. *Journal of Higher Education*, 76(4), 423–447.

- Twombly, S. & Townsend, B. K. (2008). Community college faculty: What we know and need to know. *Community College Review*, 36(1), 5–24.
- van Manen, M. (1994). Pedagogy, virtue, and narrative identity in teaching. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 24(2), 135-170.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic content analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1995). The need for action in sociocultural research. *Sociocultural studies of mind*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1998). *Mind as action*. Oxford University.
- Wodak, R. & Meyer, M. (Eds.) (2001). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. Sage.
- Young, M. F. D. (1971). *Knowledge and control: New directions for the sociology of education*. Collier-Macmillan.
- Young, R. (1992). *Critical theory and classroom talk*. Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Young, L. & Harrison, C. (2004). *Systemic functional linguistics and critical discourse analysis: Studies in social change*. Continuum.
- Yu, L., Dyjur, P., Miltenburg, J., & Saito, K. (2015). Micro-credentialing: Digital badges in faculty professional development. Proceedings of the IDEAS: Designing Responsive Pedagogy Conference, 82-89. Calgary: Werklund School of Education.