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A STUDY OF THE ADJUNCT FACULTY EXPERIENCES IN THE

CREATION OF A TEACHER WORK SAMPLE

A Dissertation

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Approved:

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Dr. Victoria Robinson, Chair

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Dr. Lynn Nielsen, Committee Member

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Dr. Frank Kohler, Committee Member

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Dr. Barry Wilson, Committee Member

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Dr. Melissa Beall, Committee Member

Anna L. Conway

University of Northern Iowa

May 2010

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Levin Family for believing in me and instilling the value of life-long education.

I am forever grateful to my Grandpa Alexander Levin, a WWII veteran who was there for me for the 13 years of my life. He was my best friend and the kindest person I have ever known. I can never forget him. I have no doubt that had it not been for the war and some unfortunate circumstances of living in the Soviet Russia, he would have completed his PhD in Mathematics and would have done it brilliantly.

I am deeply indebted to my parents Dr. Isaac and Elena Levin for their warm encouragement for me to pursue higher education and become a better person. Their love, care and support provided the foundation of my life and certainly my college education. Through their examples and strong belief in me I was able to find my passion for being an educator and discover the endless potential of college teaching.

I am also very grateful to my two Grandmothers, Polina and Masha, who have shared with me their love, their friendship and their wisdom. Thank you for always being proud of me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to my husband Shane for his infinite support, his encouragement and patience. He provided help and advice during my completion of this doctoral program. Thank you for being there for me. I am very thankful to Shane's parents Barb and Elmer Conway for their support and faith in me.

I would like to acknowledge the help, guidance and support of my doctoral committee members: Dr. Victoria Robinson, Dr. Frank Kohler, Dr. Lynn Nielsen, Dr. Barry Wilson and Dr. Melissa Beall. Their insights, kindness, and patience in helping me craft my research were greatly appreciated.

I am deeply thankful to Dr. Victoria Robinson for helping me pursue my passion for working with adjunct faculty and for suggesting the Teacher Work Sample methodology. Her enthusiasm and help were invaluable.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. John Henning who offered his help and gave very valuable feedback on the first three chapters of this dissertation. I am also very thankful to Ms. Janet Witt for her great help and guidance with the previews.

I wish to extend my gratitude to the provost of the DMACC Urban Campus, Dr. Laura Douglas, for her support and help with conducting this research. Thank you for making me believe that all the obstacles of doctorial study are bearable.

This dissertation would not be possible without the help of six amazing adjunct faculty members who were the participants of this study. Their willingness to give of their time, their hard work and their critical reflections became the basis for this study. I thank each one of them from the bottom of my heart.

This dissertation is about values, struggles, teaching excellence and commitment to professional growth of the community college adjunct faculty members. I hope that this study will encourage other instructors (full-time or part-time) to continuously reflect on their teaching practices and not stop discovering their amazing potential of teaching in college.

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May 2010

ABSTRACT

Part-time and adjunct faculty members have been present in institutions of higher learning since the founding of this country. These groups of faculty provide a variety of unique professional experiences to their students; they offer financial savings and scheduling flexibility for their colleges and on many levels, adjuncts offer a range of other valuable contributions to their institutions. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher Work Sample. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching practices. Teacher Work Sample methodology was chosen to be the foundation of this experience due to its growing popularity with education programs.

This was a qualitative case study in which data were gathered through individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of the TWS training workshop and the overall ratings of adjunct TWS units (on a scale of 1 to 3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics. The study involved a total of six adjunct participants that were subject to the part-time provisional certification requirements of the Des Moines Area Community College, and who were currently teaching associate degree and technical diploma level courses at the community college.

This study indicated that the Teacher Work Sample methodology was perceived to be an effective tool to assist in the professional growth of adjunct faculty members.

This study is consistent in its findings with other studies that suggest that the TWS is an assessment method that is a valid tool to assist in the training of modern teachers. Previously Teacher Work Sample methodology has only been used to demonstrate teaching preparedness of the teacher candidates. This research presented adjunct community college faculty members to be a new target audience of the TWS method.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the first part of the twentieth century, American colleges and universities

invited part-time faculty to teach on their campuses in order to increase the prestige of the

school and attract new audiences to participate in higher learning. Many schools

gracefully offered part-time employment to various experts and prominent figures so that

they would provide one of a kind part-time instruction and share their unique experience

and knowledge with students. During the first half of the twentieth century a variety of

college disciplines, be it medicine science, art, or philosophy showed a strong

outnumbering of part-time faculty versus full-time faculty (Cohen & Brawer, 2003;

Jacobs, 1998).

The situation with part time faculty employment status started to change in the

sixties and seventies, when higher education was becoming more and more a domain of

the general public and thus: "the dramatic expansion of American higher education made

it imperative to increase the use of part-time faculty." (Jacobs, 1998, p. 11) The concept

of part-time faculty as a "special asset" or a "prestigious marketing tool" was rapidly

disappearing from the scene of the academic community in the sixties, giving way to new

linguistic terms and metaphors to describe this group of educators, such as:

"nonregulars," "sessionals," (Hess, 2004) "the invisible faculty," (Gappa & Leslie,

1993)"second-class citizens," (Wallin, 2004a) "freeway flyers" and "missing in action,"

(Banachowski, 1996) "scholar gypsies" (Pratt, 1997).

Skyrocketing enrollments, especially with the newly established community colleges, inevitably demanded the need for additional teaching faculty. One of the most significant increases in the number of adjunct faculty members both in four-year and two-year colleges occurred in the past three decades. Pratt, Courteau, Gluck, Kasper, Swonder, Thompson, et al., 1992, report that nationally the percentage of part-time faculty doubled between the years of 1970 and 1992. Wallin (2004a) states that "the biggest growth spurt occurred between 1987 and 1993, when eighty two percent of the 120,000 new faculty members hired during that period were for part-time positions." (p. 374) According Gwendolyn Bradley (2007) with the American Association of University Professors 52.3 percent of faculty were employed in part-time positions in 2005– 2006.

Current research of the part-time faculty status in American system of higher education consistently points to drastically poor working conditions, meager salaries, lack of professional development opportunities and an overall voiceless position of adjunct faculty within the academia (Berry, 1999; Jacoby, 2006a; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Nelson, 1997; Roueche, Roueche & Milliron,1995; Wallin, 2004a,). With the realization that it would take a national reform to change and improve the situation with part-time employment, this research study was designed to approach adjunct employment on a microscopic level (with only six research participants). The focus of this research was to examine the experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher Work Sample.

From its creation community colleges are known to be open-access higher education institutions that provide community education and meet economic development needs. These institutions of higher learning are recognized for their academic programs that meet learners' needs and provide workforce training at a lower cost. Community colleges are also known as teaching institutions where "a large majority of the faculty are oriented more toward teaching than toward research." (Huber, 1998, p. 24) Scholarly research and academic publications do not appear in the full-time faculty contract and do not constitute faculty tenure.

In recent years, secondary education has come under scrutiny and pressure with more accountability being demanded from colleges and especially schools. Several different types of assessment measures are being used to make sure that those who are starting their teaching careers are able to demonstrate their level of preparedness. Many secondary teaching programs require that their candidates receive licensure and go through assessment programs that include standardized tests and portfolios to demonstrate their teacher competency. Historically pre-service teachers have been assessed through a variety of standardized tests. Examples of tests include Praxis II of the Educational Testing Service and various state assessments. Often "teacher candidates must receive a passing score on these tests before they can be recommended for program completion and/or their initial teaching license." (Mallein, 2003, p. 2) McConney, Schalock and Schalock (1998) state that performance assessments programs are known to be method through which one can evaluate what pre-service teachers know, believe, and are able to do. The authors also state that the time and money required to use

performance assessments is balanced by the possibility offered to assess pre-service teachers' ability to apply teacher learning. Teacher Work Sample methodology is one of the assessments programs that require teacher candidates to produce credible evidence of their effectiveness in fostering student learning. The TWS method originated at Western Oregon University in the late 1980s that was created as a response to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future's recommendation to develop teacher knowledge about curriculum and assessment, and specifically the pre-service teachers' ability to foster student learning (McConney, et al., 1998, p. 343).

The method requires the beginning teacher to create a TWS unit (or a narration), which allows the teacher candidates to complete numerous tasks such as : (a) analyze the context in which they teach, (b) pre-test students on specific skills, (c) design and teach a unit based on the results of the pre-test, (d) administer a post-test, (e) analyze the students' learning gains, and (f) reflect on their own learning. Additionally, a Teacher Work Sample represents a reflective process of thinking about teaching and student learning and is also the collection of these products.

While a teaching licensure is required in most states in order to teach in secondary schools, many institutions of higher education require that college instructors have a master's degree but not a teaching license. On average a full-time community college faculty member spends fifteen hours per week teaching in classrooms and the rest twenty five hours a week are devoted to teaching preparation, campus service, tutoring or advising students. Besides their commitment to teaching and student learning, community college faculty members have a strong commitment to and responsibility for professional

growth in order to support all students and match their learning styles. While the full-time faculty are able and are required to partake in professional development every academic year, similar opportunities for part-time faculty are virtually unknown.

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher Work Sample. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching practices.

Teacher Work Sample methodology was chosen to be the foundation of this experience due to its growing popularity with education programs. Since its creation, the TWS method has been only used with school teacher candidates, thus the researcher also wanted to examine the applicability and impact of the TWS methodology in a college setting.

<u>Statement of the Problem</u>

Part-time and adjunct faculty members have been present in institutions of higher learning since very early on. At the time the study was conducted, adjunct faculty constituted sixty percent of all faculty members in American postsecondary institutions. These groups of faculty provide a variety of unique professional experiences to their students; they offer financial savings and scheduling flexibility for their colleges and on many levels, adjuncts offer a range of other contributions to their colleges. Currently there are a lot of forces on a college campus, especially community college campuses that hinder continuity, inhibit a sense of common purpose and mission, and thwart the

professional development of adjunct professors. Recently, two key elements to effective

instruction have received increasing attention in teacher education and professional

development: (1) the ability for teachers to reflect on their teaching and (2) the ability of

teachers to meet minimal standards of instructional effectiveness. Since the Teacher

Work Sample addresses both of these elements, the purpose was to examine the

experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and

implementation of the Teacher Work Sample.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Was the TWS perceived to be an effective professional development tool when
   introduced to the adjunct faculty?

2. How did the Teacher Work Sample practice build on the adjunct previous
   experiences with professional development?

3. When community college adjunct faculty completed a TWS what obstacles and
   challenges did they experience?

4. How did the Teacher Work Sample affect the adjuncts' teaching and how did this
   process contribute to their reflective thinking about teaching and learning?

Theoretical Framework

According to Creswell (1998) "qualitative researchers increasingly use a

theoretical lens or perspective to guide their study and raise the questions …they would

like to address." (p. 131) In order to obtain a better understanding of the experiences that

community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the

Teacher Work Sample, one must conceptualize how learners learn and incorporate their previous experiences to further their knowledge.

The human capacity for critical thinking and the unique ability of humans to analyze and reflect upon their own actions is discussed in the works of many prominent philosophers of education of the twentieth century such as John Dewey or Donald Schön. As a formative method of assessment of teachers work, the Teacher Work Sample method is grounded in the need for continuous reflection about specific pedagogical actions inside the teacher's classrooms and also, the connection between teacher's behavior and student learning. Recognizing that reflective thinking is at heart of any pedagogical activity, the researcher used King and Kitchener's reflective judgment model (1994) as the theoretical foundation for this study.

Reflective Judgment Model

King and Kitchener (1994) developed the reflective judgment model (RJM) in an effort to explain how individuals rationalize their judgments when faced with complex problems. The authors connected the processes of human cognition and reflection through the exploration of reflective judgment or epistemic cognition. The RJM model describes "a developmental progression that occurs between childhood and adulthood in the way people understand the process of knowing and in the corresponding ways that they justify their beliefs about ill-structured problems." (1994, p. 13) As a result the authors proposed a seven-stage model that illustrates cognitive development of the learner. The model attempts to show "the relationship between the epistemological

assumptions people hold and the way they make judgments about controversial issues." (King & Kitchener, 1994, p. 6)

The model is grounded in John Dewey's (1933) argument that true reflective thinking is initiated only after the individual's recognition that a real problem exists. Dewey (1933) suggests that logics alone is not sufficient enough to resolve these problems, rather, they are resolved when a thinking person identifies a solution to the problem that temporarily closes the situation (King & Kitchener, 1994). The RJM model evolved out of both the cognitive developmental theories of the seventies (Piaget, 1977) and more recent constructive-developmental perspectives (Kegan, 1982). The authors of the RJM base their model around the three shared features from each of the theories. Those are: (1) the underlying assumption that meaning is constructed, (2) the emphasis on understanding how individuals make meaning of their experiences, and (3) the assumption that development (not just change) occurs as people interact with their environments (King & Kitchener, 2004, p. 9).

The same three principals were driving the investigation of this dissertation's research study: (1) the underlying notion that community college faculty performance is inevitably linked with the instructor's comprehension and assigning meaning to what's happening in their classrooms, (2) the emphasis on understanding how college instructors make meaning of their experiences in the classrooms, including examination of their lesson plans, student work, classroom interaction and etc., (3) the inevitable need to connect individual reflections about teaching and learning with external environments, such as communication with their colleagues, exposure to various teaching and learning

methods through opportunities for professional development as provided (or not) by their colleges.

The reflective judgment model consists of seven stages of thinking that are classified in three categories of pre-reflective thinking (stages 1, 2, and 3), quasi-reflective thinking (stages 4 and 5), and reflective thinking (stages 6 and 7) that focus on an individual's concept of knowledge and process of justification.

The first three stages represent the learner's assumption that all knowledge is certain. Knowledge is absolute and can be observed. Students in this stage discover the already known through active listening and observing those who share the knowledge with them, be it teachers or researchers. Downey (2002) notes that "longitudinal studies of the reflective judgment model with traditional age students have revealed that pre-reflective thinkers are generally found in the high-school to early college age groups." (p. 5)

Stage two of the model (and its stages 4 and 5) represents those who view knowledge as uncertain, subjective and not always immediately accessible. (Downey, 2002) notes that the stage of quasi-reflection characterizes the thinking of college students including graduate students, when the learners begin the process of more complex reasoning and cognitive development.

True reflective thinking as illustrated in the last stage of the model (stages 6 and 7) comes with the acceptance that knowledge is temporarily uncertain until such time when the learner provides or discovers the right answer. Knowledge is a process of inquiry that is subject to re-evaluation in the light of new evidence. During this period

thinkers build up knowledge and evidence in order to defend their own vision of the problem. Downey, (2002) notes that few college students are able to reach this developmental stage of reflective thinking.

The authors of the reflective judgment model discuss that the notion of critical thinking and reflective thinking are often used interchangeably. However, King and Kitchener (1994) indicate two major differences between critical thinking and reflective thinking that are essential to their reflective judgment model. Critical thinking is viewed as equivalent with logic and consists of a set of skills or general principles that are applied to solve problems (King & Kitchener, 1994). Critical thinking is used to solve well-structured problems which have a single, correct answer and can be solved with deductive logic with a high degree of completeness, certainty, and correctness (King & Kitchener, 1994). Critical thinking requires individuals to participate in a process of critically evaluating all perspectives.

The central role that an individual's epistemic assumptions have in recognizing problematic situations is at the heart of reflective thinking. It is used to solve ill-structured problems which cannot be described with a high degree of completeness or solved with a high degree of certainty (King & Kitchener, 1994). Reflective thinking requires "the continual evaluation of beliefs, assumptions, and hypotheses against existing data and against other plausible interpretations of the data." (King & Kitchener, 1994, p. 7) The authors note that if individuals do not see a controversy, or a problem, or if they use preconceived assumptions, stereotypes and absolute generalizations, they do not have a need to participate in reflective thinking. According to King and Kitchener

(1994) only adults have the epistemic assumptions required to participate in true reflective judgment.

Another foundation of the RJM is stage theory that was developed by Rest in the 1970's who argued that reflective judgment occurs in continuous stages and thus is constantly developing and moving forward. As mentioned above, the reflective judgment model consists of seven stages of thinking that are classified in categories of stages that focus on an individual's concept of knowledge and process of justification. King and Kitchener (1994) suggest that development in reflective thinking be characterized as

> ...waves across a mixture of stages, where the peak of a wave is most commonly used set of assumptions. While there is still an observable pattern to the movement between stages, the developmental movement is better described as the changing shape of the wave rather than as a pattern of uniform steps interspersed with plateaus (p. 140).

The same stage approach was at heart of this project's study. By offering the research participants a new step-by-step framework for looking at their teaching and student learning (in a form of a Teacher Work Sample), the researcher was able to examine instructors' ability to reflectively think about their practices. The research design of this study specifically allowed for an incremental approach: both group and individual sessions were distributed evenly throughout the whole academic semester allowing the participants to progress and reflect from one stage of their TWS completion to the next. The need for observations, and multiple individual and group interviews with the participants was also inspired by Schön's (1987) assumption that reflection is both an in-action and on-action process, evolving in a stage-like manner.

Contextual support and the overall environment is yet another important foundation in the reflective judgment model. The authors discuss that no skills exist independently of the environment and that the skill level that an individual is able to demonstrate will be highly dependent on the surrounding conditions. The authors note that: "contextual support can be provided by offering participants a high-level example of the skill, the opportunity to ask questions about the example of the skill, the chance to practice the skill in a variety of settings and so on." (King & Kitchener, 2004, p. 11)

The choice of adjunct faculty as the only participants of this study versus any other category of instructional faculty was driven by the researcher's own experience as an adjunct faculty and also by the researcher's literature review of the working environment of today's adjunct faculty. The latter strongly suggests an obvious marginalization and isolation of adjuncts from the entire college community (Hess, 2004, Jacobs, 1998, Wallin, 2004a).

The common argument that the environment affects the behavior of an individual and vice versa without doubt explains why many part-time faculty experience ambivalence and frustration with their role and status not just within the college, but also in their classrooms: a culture of separation, in which part-time and full-time faculty describe themselves differently to students ("I have no office hours" and "I have no phone on campus" Jacobs,1998, p. 17) creates inequalities for students and injures the institution.

The intention of this project was to examine in what ways was the Teacher Work Sample an effective professional development tool for community college adjunct

faculty. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching practices. Needless to say that due to the limitation of the scale of the project, the opportunity was given on a very micro level - six research participants total.

Research Methodology

Through this qualitative research project multiple data sources were utilized by the researcher, the data were gathered through the individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of TWS training session, and the overall rating of adjunct TWS units (on a scale from 1-3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics.

Significance of the Study

Based on this qualitative research project, the study contributes to the understanding of how Teacher Work Sample methodology can be used as one of the venues for professional development for community colleges' adjunct faculty. The study adds to the body of knowledge about the role of Teacher Work Sample methodology and its impact on the reflective thinking ability of teachers.

The need for more exploration of the topics of part-time employment in American colleges and the applicability of the TWS method, as a performance based approach to teaching is evident. Presently, there are only few recent studies that involve adjunct faculty as research participants in professional development programs; most commonly it's the full-time instructors who have been the target participants. And so far there are

no scholarly studies that applied the TWS method on a post-secondary environment or part-time college faculty in specifics.

The study presents adjunct community college faculty to be a new target audience of the TWS method. Through the exploration of the professional needs of adjunct faculty it is hoped that this project will move higher education institutions towards more inclusive practices with part-time faculty. Institutions of higher learning must come to realize that the current poor conditions of part-time faculty employment hurt the entire college community. As Wallin (2004b) states:

> Community college administrators are often concerned that faculty members understand that they are teaching adult students with a variety of needs, backgrounds, and abilities. However, they often do not bring that same thinking when planning and organizing professional development experiences for part-time faculty. (p. 8)

It is also hoped that higher education institutions will assist their part-time faculty with continuous opportunities for professional growth and that colleges would be able to fully benefit from the vast talents and reflective thinking abilities of its adjunct faculty.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include only using community college adjunct faculty members. The scope was narrowed further by using only one community college in the study. Not conducting the study in other colleges and not employing part-time faculty who teach in four-year institutions served as another limitation.

The researcher acknowledged that the small sample from which to draw representative qualitative data to be the major limitation of this study. Only six community college adjunct faculty members participated in the project. However, this

was chosen as methodological strategy, the sample was purposive that permitted to accomplish the goals of this research. Six adjunct participants of this study allowed the researcher to provide a detailed look and an in-depth descriptive investigation of the process of completion and the overall impact of the TWS methodology with adjunct faculty.

As another limitation, it should be acknowledged that the subjective bias of the investigator is present in any research. This researcher has been an adjunct faculty member for four years at an institution that fits the parameters of this case study. However, regular review of the data and the utilization of a variety of research methods such as: face to face interviews, observation, focus group interviews, analysis of TWS units, were utilized to minimize the scope of this limitation.

Finally, due to a limited time and scope of the project, this study only employed part-time faculty; no attempt was made to investigate the impact of the TWS methodology with full-time college faculty.

<center>Definition of Terms</center>

Adjunct Faculty: the term refers to persons teaching employed by a postsecondary institution in any teaching capacity other than full-time.

Case Study: "an exploration of a 'bounded system' or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context." (Creswell, 1998, p. 61)

Reflective Thinking Model: The reflective judgment model was developed by King and Kitchener in 1994 in order to describe the development of epistemic cognition and to

understand the process of an individual's knowledge and justification of beliefs. It is a framework for how an individual perceives and attempts to solve ill-structured problems. The reflective judgment model consists of seven stages of thinking that are classified in three categories of pre-reflective thinking (stages 1, 2, and 3), quasi-reflective thinking (stages 4and 5), and reflective thinking (stages 6 and 7) that focus on an individual's concept of knowledge and process of justification.

Teacher Work Sample Methodology (TWSM): originated at Western Oregon University in the 1980s is an approach to teacher education that has a goal of providing teacher candidates "with tools that focus their attention on the instructional needs and progress of their students." (Girod, 2002)

Teacher Work Sample: a process and a product and that pre-service teachers develop in order to demonstrate their ability to link their teaching with students' learning. A work sample is comprised of multiple components, such as setting, rationale, goals and objectives, plans and materials, assessments, student learning analysis, evaluative essay, reflective essay, and appendices (Girod, 2002).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents an in-depth review of the existing literature focused on the adjunct instructor's experience in American institutions of higher learning and the Teacher Work Sample Methodology. The review of literature provides a context for understanding the issues surrounding this study; specifically this chapter will discuss the following: (a) brief history of part-time instructors and the appearance of community colleges, (b) pressures and reasons for hiring part-time instructors, adjunct faculty profile, (c) description of the TWS method (d) description of reflection theory.

<u>Brief History of Part-Time Instructors and Community Colleges</u>

It is not at all uncommon to hear terms like 'downsizing, 'subcontracting,' 'cost-cutting,' 'outsourcing,' and ' corporate mentality,' being used in the media to refer to American businesses and for-profit organizations. Yet, they same definitions are now applied and utilized in the context of contemporary educational organizations; specifically, postsecondary institutions. Hess (2004) refers to those colleges as "corporate-style institutions." (p. 5) One of the strongest examples of downsizing-subcontracting-cost cutting-outsourcing processes in the academia is the current reliance on part-time faculty to teach a majority of college-level courses. In this connection Shumar (1999) discusses colleges' corporate approach to the issue of adjunct faculty. The author states:

> This fact was only beginning to be felt by the late sixties, because the powerful image of "community scholars" successfully concealed vast infrastructure changes that only came to light during the social and political ruptures of the 1960's and 1970's...The managerial class of higher education experts became the

majority voice in higher education. Of the two levels of corporate control in the university (the direct wielding power of the president and board of trustees is the primary one) the second, and more obvious, is the dominant ubiquitous imagery of corporate structure. The corporate mentality frames all problems as instrumental issues, effectively silencing non-corporate voices and alienating faculty from the process of decision-making and problem solving (p. 72).

Indeed, higher education institutions have been largely dependent on part-time faculty for the past fifty years. Different authors provide different statistics in their works to illustrate this, but all of their calculations support this fact. Roueche, Roueche and Milliron (1996) state that by 1966 the national average of part-time faculty represented about 38 percent. By 1980, the average number of adjunct instructors increased to between 50 and 60 percent (Roueche, Roueche & Milliron, 1996).

One of the most significant increases in the number of adjunct faculty members both in four-year and two-year colleges occurred in the past two decades. Wallin (2004a) states that "the biggest growth spurt occurred between 1987 and 1993, when 82 percent of the 120,000 new faculty members hired during that period were for part-time positions." (p. 374) Pratt et al., (1992) reports that nationally the percentage of part-time faculty doubled between the years of 1970 and 1992. According to Schuster and Finkelstein (2006), between 1970 and 2001, the number of part-time faculty in higher education increased by 376 percent, or approximately at a rate of more than five times as fast as the full-time faculty increase for the same time period. "By 2001 the number of part-timers exceeded the entire number of full time faculty in 1969-70 and was closing relentlessly on the total count of full-timers." (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006, p. 40) Moser (2000) reported that the "contingent professionals now make up approximately 60

percent of all faculty in the United States; their proportion relative to tenured faculty has grown by about 1 percent a year since the early 1970's." (p. 2)

Another important aspect that has been outlined in the literature of postsecondary part-time teaching appointments deals with the overall mission of bringing a temporary faculty member on board. Leslie (1998) notes that adjunct faculty have been employed by colleges since the Middle Ages when "an ecclesiastical tradition to send priest-scholars to different universities to pursue their scholarly interests and to work with others." (p. 10) Gappa (1984) discusses that the status of part-time professors in the nineteenth century was considered rather prestigious; typically it was a church minister teaching part-time and later accepting a clerical appoint.

In the first part of the twentieth century, the idea behind inviting a part-time faculty was connected with the notion of increasing the prestige of the school. Various experts and prominent figures were invited to provide short, part-time instruction in order to share their unique experience and knowledge. Jacobs (1998) especially points out the medical field and the appointment of part-time clinicians that commonly outnumbered the number of full-time faculty. The situation changed in the early fifties, when higher education was becoming more and more a public domain, "the dramatic expansion of American higher education made it imperative to increase the use of part-time faculty." (Jacobs, 1998, p. 11)

The appearance of community colleges was preceded by junior colleges (that operated starting from the late 19th century) that were seen as "blending in the issues of vocational and collegiate education." (Cohen & Brawer, 2003, p. 33) The Truman

Commission of 1947, in many ways continued the vision of junior colleges, except now

they were coined as 'community colleges.' Below is an excerpt of its mission:

> The Community College seeks to become a center of learning for the entire
> community, with or without the restrictions that surround formal course work in
> traditional institutions of higher education. It gears its programs and services to
> the needs and wishes of the people it serves (President's Commission on Higher
> Education, 1947, Vol. 1, pp. 69-70).

After the Truman Commission, enrollment in community college continued to grow. By

the end of the 1960's, due primarily to the baby boomers, enrollment nearly quadrupled

and community colleges were operating in every state. It was during that time that open

door policies were established and put in practice. Providing accessible education to the

community became the fundamental operating philosophy of community colleges. Higher

education was now seen as a vehicle for social mobility (Cohen & Brawer, 2003).

Community colleges began offering adult basic education programs, vocational and

technical training that was geared towards specific needs of each community. By the mid

1970's full-time student enrollment significantly decreased, whereas part-time student

enrollment went up. That factor started a new page for community colleges: more and

more students were attending part-time while working full-time. In the 21st century,

community colleges are still facing increased enrollments; the use of distance education

is one of the most valuable tools in providing accessible education for everyone.

As a result of skyrocketing enrollments, community colleges extended their reach

and offered courses in high schools, senior centers, and prisons. Dougherty (2004) notes

that because of the open door admissions, community colleges, unlike any other colleges,

are able to attract a tremendous diversity of students from a variety of socio-economic

backgrounds: "they are [community colleges] more willing to take 'nontraditional' students: high school dropouts, the academically deficient, vocational aspirants, and adults interested in education as a leisure pastime." (p. 379) Consequently, community colleges are dominated by trends in enrollment and the inevitable need for additional teaching faculty, rather than historically established visiting experts.

According to data from Bradley (2007) with the American Association of University Professors, 52.3 % of all faculty members in postsecondary institutions occupied part-time positions in 2005-2006. The current trend of a growing dependence on part-time and temporary faculty in postsecondary institutions can be compared with the general statistics of temporary workforce in the nation. In their article, Feldman, Doerpinghaus, and Turnley (1995) reviewed the numbers of temporary workforce in the U.S. For the year of 1995, temporary employment represented about 20 million of workers; the authors note that this number corresponds to a significant, a 300 percent increase of temporary employees since 1985. David Gordon, in his book *Fat and mean: the corporate squeeze of working Americans and the myth of managerial "downsizing"* (1996) discusses the two types and approaches to labor-management. One, which results in employment-security, strong unions, and general stability of the employee, and the second type, that implies little job security, minimal wage incentives, and minimal employee involvement. The author's conclusion is not surprising: "The United states tends more and more to represent the archetype of the latter [2nd type] system..." (p. 63)

Technical Rationality and the Corporate Approach to Education

Purpel (1998) discusses the influence of corporations on higher education; the author notes that colleges and universities are forced to teach more vocational and technical courses than traditional liberal arts, such a trend is driven by the need for students to be more competitive, be tested more on their specific knowledge, and be more prepared for business employers. The author notes that:

> Mergers, buy-outs, downsizing, layoffs, union-busting are obvious manifestations of this hysteria spurred on by the fantasy of enormous wealth and power as well as the nightmare of being wiped out. This kind of vicious competition has contributed to a very significant reeducation in the number of satisfying job opportunities and to incessant and cold-blooded efforts to reduce personnel costs (p. 357).

Purpel (1998) maintains that as a result of abiding by the mentioned above ideology, educational institutions put themselves in a vulnerable position, by allowing its staff to feel threatened by possible losses of medical benefits, savings, and most importantly, "dreams for peace and justice." (p. 357) Purpel (1998) concludes that current educational trends are more about "harnessing educational institutions" (p. 358) than encouraging democratic learning practices and well-rounded educational experiences for students.

In this connection one cannot help but notice the reoccurring parallel between the employment practices of the U.S. businesses in general, and hiring trends in postsecondary institutions in specific. Nelson (1997) discusses the change in organizational model of contemporary colleges; the author refers to Aronowitz's statement (as quoted in Nelson, 1997) who calls contemporary higher education institutions as "knowledge factories" (p. 188) versus the previous notion of 'community

of scholars.' The new way of looking at colleges as 'businesses' and students as 'customers' has significantly impacted the use of part-time faculty. As with the retail giant, Wal-Mart, where the majority of employees are hired on a part-time basis with minimal (if any) benefits, adjunct faculty serve as a "cheap-labor" solution for the contemporary educational businesses or "knowledge factories."

Most importantly, the prolific use of part-time faculty in American colleges does not occur independently of other factors in the society. Higher education institutions (especially the community colleges) have been growing rapidly for the last fifty years; today's huge influx of part-time versus full-time teaching appointments is an effort for the institutions to remain in the business and serve their customers in a cost-cutting and a downsizing manner. One might wonder; if full-time teaching employments are a "no-go" for most colleges and adjunct instructors are such a popular, cost-saving way-out, why don't all of the college's personnel shift to part-time employment? American colleges could garner themselves great savings with more equality and less emphasis on the hierarchical power of privilege.

Clearly, the historic view of colleges as a 'community of scholars' is losing its ground due to the large influx of adjunct faculty. Schuller (1990) notes that English universities large numbers of adjunct faculty signifies the disappearing notion of 'academic community.'

> The idea of an academic community rests not only on the majority of academics enjoying the same terms of employment; it rests on their sharing the same reward system. ...The greater the variation in pay scales, and in the discretionary elements in salary and remuneration packages generally, the less support is given by individual material bonds to the notion of community. Academic solidarity may not reach its highest form in the sharing of terms and conditions, but the

absence of community in such matters may pervade other, more intellectual, aspects of life together (p. 6).

Pressures on the Ground for Increased Hiring of Adjuncts

It is not an exaggeration to say that part-time faculty is the backbone of most of the postsecondary institutions. Nelson (1997) proposes that higher education as a whole has become "structurally dependent on a pool of cheap labor to teach its lower-level courses." (p. 5) Gappa and Leslie (1993) discuss the status of part-time instructors in the USA, the authors note that:

> At many institutions, the use of part-time and temporary instructors has become a way of life. Budgets are balanced and classes assigned on the assumption that 20, 30, or 50 percent of all undergraduate sections will be taught by faculty members who are hired for a temporary assignment (p. 56).

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (1995), part-time faculty is the largest segment in the American community college system. Wallin (2004a) remarks that "without the use of adjunct faculty, most community colleges could not come close to meeting student demands for courses." (p. 373) The author also notes that without the work of adjunct faculty, community colleges could not accomplish their teaching mission while maintaining core values of access and affordable education. By hiring large numbers of temporary teaching staff community colleges reflect the current trends of the American economy; in fact Wyles (1998) refers to this situation as a microcosm of United States' national economy.

As the literature examination suggests, there are many reasons why postsecondary institutions continue to increase their use of part-time faculty. In brief, those reasons include financial constraints of colleges' budgets, fluctuating trends in college

enrollment, necessary substitution of full-time faculty, bringing specialized knowledge and skills to the college curriculum, as well as enhancing cultural and diversity profile of college faculty (Leslie & Gappa, 2002; Nelson, 1997; Pratt, 1992; Storm-Gottfried & Dunalp, 2004). In the following pages, I will explore those reasons as well as the benefits that are automatically granted to colleges that resort to adjunct employment.

<u>Cheap Labor</u>

Barbara Ehrenreich in her foreword to Cary Nelson's *Will Teach For Food* (1997) states that in an effort to shift from full-time employment to part-time employment, postsecondary institutions participate in "hyper-capitalism, bandit economy, [and] moral numbness." (p. ix-xi) She also notes that heavy reliance on part-time instructors teaches students that "some lives are valued a lot more than others." (p. ix-xi)

It is not an overstatement to say that part-time faculty is a cheap and a cost-effective solution for American colleges. Jacobs (1998) calls fiscal consideration to be the primary reasons why part-time faculty members are hired. By admitting adjunct faculty on board, the departments grant themselves budget flexibility which is achieved "at the cost of exploiting part-time faculty, who work with little or no job security, low wages, few benefits, and lack of opportunity for professional development or advancement." (Jacobs, 1998, p. 12) By adding part-time and temporary teaching positions to their schedules, institutional administrators also achieve a degree of budgetary flexibility that is a significant benefit for any administrator. In this connection, Jacobs (1998) states that "Budget flexibility is an important goal of administrators, and the increased use of part-time faculty is one way to achieve it." (p. 12)

As stated earlier, community colleges are the largest group of postsecondary institutions that depends on part-time teaching staff. Part-time faculty commonly bring unique experience and specializations with their employment for the price that costs colleges four, five, or even six times less than inviting a guest lecturer or offering a full-time appointment. Adjuncts are also not expected to be promoted and they generally do not have the right to raises. As far as adjuncts' pensions, health insurance, and sick leave are concerned, they all also cost colleges very-very little (Mangan, 1991).

Gappa (1984) explores the reasons why community colleges, more than other types of colleges, rely so heavily on part-time teaching. Among many points, the author stresses that part-time faculty members allow for expansion of vocational and technical programs "at a time when community colleges were least able to compete for teachers bent on academic careers." (Gappa, 1984, p. 3) Thus, the departments are able to balance their budgets and at the same time add first-hand experts to their curricular. Even though Gappa's (1984) research report was published over 20 years ago, one would hardly argue that much has changed for the better since 1984. On the contrary, most American colleges entered the twenty first century with inevitable budget contractions, growing enrollments, and increasing demands for more specialized educational services. Unless institutional administrators find the "miracle" money to hire full-time versus part-time (which I am, unfortunately, very pessimistic about) the current situation of part-time employment will not improve.

Why Hire More Adjuncts? For All-the-Other-Reasons.

The use of part-time faculty allows a lot of flexibility for the department. Here, the researcher is talking about scheduling and staffing flexibilities. The college is not expected to make any commitments to adjuncts by hiring them exclusively on an enrollment-changing basis (Roueche et al., 1996). It is certainly a convenient flexibility for colleges; they are able to offer more sections of a course in case of increasing student enrollment, or temporarily cut unnecessary sections (and working hours for part-time faculty at the same time). Nelson (1997) discusses the broad notion of 'flexibility' that adjuncts grant to their institutions. He states: "part-time faculty make for 'flexibility,' a code word referring to the ability to hire and fire employees at will to meet changing needs and changing budgets." (p. 4)

Another most common explanation found in the literature deals with adjuncts being experts in their particular fields (Leslie & Gappa, 2003; Pratt, 1992; Storm-Gottfried & Dunalp, 2004). It is rather common that, prior to their teaching, adjunct faculty worked in the business field for a number of years and thus, they possess expert knowledge on the subject. This pattern especially applies to high-demand areas of study that suffer from shortages in instructional staff. In this connection it should be also noted that many adjuncts posses years of real-world and hands-on experience compared with regular full-time faculty.

With a strong pool of qualified part-time instructors, colleges have the flexibility to offer specialized courses that may have a temporary and limited demand. The researcher's literature review also indicates that it is rather common for the part-timers to

be hired on a last minute basis and, in this case, the administrator's preference goes to whoever is able to fit another class in his schedule, versus any other criteria (such as how long the instructor has been employed by the college, his or her individual schedule preference and other). The researcher's own experience supports that account; the researcher was told that she would be able to teach a couple of courses four days prior to the beginning of the semester. The researcher remembers a feeling of happiness and loss at the same time, or what Seibert (1996) calls a "sink or swim" situation. Spinetta (1990) notes that in many institutions of higher learning, the employment of part-time faculty can be characterized as a casual departmental affair rather than a planned institutional effort.

It should be pointed out that adjunct faculty is a very diverse group of instructors. Their diversity may pose an extra benefit for those colleges that do not have enough diversity among full-time faculty. Beem (2002) calls this adjunct function as "add-ons." (p. 7) By hiring selected members as part-time faculty, institutions are able to balance their college-wide numbers in faculty's cultural backgrounds, ethnic profiles, and expert knowledge. Puzziferro (2004) in discussing the use of adjunct faculty to teach online courses, notes that "By recruiting outside of local community, colleges are able to attract a fascinating and highly diverse group of faculty, who are not only diverse geographically, but also bring a variety of backgrounds, motivations for teaching, and experience." (p. 126)

Who Are the Part-Timers?

As stated earlier, part-time faculty members are not a homogeneous group of instructors, on the contrary, their group represents a diverse cluster of various characteristics and backgrounds. Gappa and Leslie (1993) discuss the fact that the common stereotype of part-time instructors being "an anonymous mass of laboring drones" (p. 17) is no longer true. Indeed, if I look at some of my colleagues at the community college where I currently teach, the diversity of experiences among us, the variety of our age groups, our motivations for accepting part-time employment and the educational and ethnic backgrounds are rather conspicuous. In the discussion of today's portrait of current part-time faculty, it is crucial for administrators and policymakers to understand that not all part-time faculty are the 'same,' and the 'one size fits all' type of approach to part-time faculty may not be the most efficient.

Part-time instructors are labeled in a variety of ways (occasionally rather creative and conspicuous). Roueche et al. (1995) list several names, they include: "associate faculty, temporary faculty, temporary part-time faculty, community faculty, reserve faculty, supplemental faculty, and percentage instructors," (p. 2) adjuncts may also be called "nonregulars," or "sessionals." (Hess, 2004) Clearly, the labels imply a provisional and partial status of an instructor. Other labels include "the invisible faculty," (Gappa & Leslie, 1993) "second-class citizens," (Wallin, 2004b), "freeway flyers," "missing in action," (Banachowski, 1996), "highway flyers," and "scholar gypsies," (Pratt, 1997) "the fast food clerks at McUniversity." (Krier & Staples, 1993) Cohen and Brawer (2003) make a striking analogy, the authors state that "part-time

instructors are to the community colleges as migrant workers are to the farms." (p. 86)

Some of the books written about adjunct faculty in American colleges are given rather

expressive titles, those examples include "Strangers in Their Own Land" by Roueche et

al. (1995), "The Invisible Faculty," by Gappa and Leslie (1993) "Will Teach for Food,"

by Nelson (1997) "Ghosts in the Classroom," by Dubson (2001) "Academic

Sharecroppers" by Fountain (2005).

Adjunct Profile

Studies by authors like Conley and Leslie (2002), Gappa and Leslie (1993),

Roueche et al. (1995) indicate that on average, part-time faculty members are younger

than full-time faculty. The 1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF-93)

studied almost 400,000 of part-time faculty. The data suggest that the average age of

adjunct faculty was 46 years. The report suggested that 45 percent of adjunct faculty

were females. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) in discussion of general faculty trends

notes that (the most striking demographic development over the past several decades is

the extent to which the faculty have become increasingly *female*." [author's italics] (p.

50) The NSOPF-93 report stated that most adjunct faculty are white (87 percent) and

married (75 percent). Most of adjuncts surveyed in study (60 percent) work on a term by

term contract, 12 percent of the respondents reported being affiliated with the union.

Why So Many Instructors Teach Part-Time?

The researcher's literature review suggested that most adjunct faculty teach

between three and five courses per semester, sometimes in as many as four institutions

(Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Nelson, 1997; Roueche et al., 1995). Various reasons

motivate educated professionals to teach on part-time basis. Wallin (2004a) states that

adjunct's reasons for making a part-time commitment "are as diverse as the students they

serve." (p. 374) Many members hold a profession outside of academe (especially in the

fields of nursing, medicine, journalism, police science and law), they have chosen to be

an adjunct faculty to realize their personal potential for teaching and community

involvement. Some are also recognized and published authors who turn to part-time

teaching for their personal enjoyment. Banachowski (1996) notes that many adjunct

faculty members rank higher than full-time faculty in professional qualifications. Some

instructors see part-time employment as a bridge for full-time position, while others

prefer part-time employment due to their small children or retirement from another job.

However, the majority of adjuncts teach part-time because they were unable to get a full-

time teaching position, their primary goal is to earn money and a make a living.

<u>The Impact on Students, Academia, and Society as a Whole</u>

A lot is at stake when one seriously surveys at the situation of part-time faculty

employment; however, in order to be able to analyze how exactly adjunct employment

affects our society, it is important to make a parallel to the secondary education. Giroux

(1993) discusses the overall trend that currently dominates public secondary education,

specifically teacher education. The author suggests that the increasing technocratic

approach to teacher preparation and classroom pedagogy results in an obsession with

receiving "value for the education dollar." The bottom line of this ideology is that

students are looked at not as human beings who are willing to learn and become educated

citizens, but as "products" or "producers" who are trained to be able to complete specific

tasks. As far as teachers are concerned, their role is narrowed to delivering, or as the Giroux (1993) calls it, "executing" (p. 274) the 'right' knowledge, skills and capacities for effective know-how. Teachers' function is then defined through the process of preparing future generation for work, but not for life, Giroux (1993) notes that:

> Curricula approaches of this sort are management pedagogies because the central questions regarding learning are reduced to the problem of management, i.e., 'how to allocate resources (teachers, students and materials) to produce the maximum number of certified...students within a designated time.' (p. 274)

The current situation in postsecondary education, especially at the level of community colleges, reflects a trend of rising student enrollment and increased demand for undergraduate education. Almost since the time of its creation, community colleges have been practicing an open-door policy, allowing people from all socio-economic backgrounds to enter college with merciful admission and modest (compared to other colleges) tuition prices. Traditionally, community colleges have opened doors to those who would not have been able to attend college; it's even common to hear the media call it a "learning revolution" when referring to today's rising enrollments in community colleges. Above all, the status of an associate degree in today's society is viewed more as a standard achievement rather than a unique accomplishment.

While community colleges generally have 'forgiving' enrollment practices, many working students tend to sign up for classes at a later date, thus creating an urgent need for college administrators to add sections of classes . In order to meet the demands of rising enrollments, community colleges often resort to a pool of adjuncts or well-known community members with the intention of conducting last minute job searches and job offers.

This situation is an example of what Giroux (1993) calls a 'technocratic ideology' that takes place in the context of contemporary education. Community colleges do not want to deny any student-customer their services, and due to certain time constraints, not too much effort can be invested into finding the best candidate among the pool of candidates to teach a specific class. In other words, following Giroux's ideology as applied to the postsecondary setting, the college's mission is to allocate 'an adjunct' and make sure that he is able "to produce the maximum number of certified students within a designated time." Jacobs (1998) suggests that the current pattern of hiring adjunct faculty promotes unfairness and inequality of college practices; the author states:

> Institutional administrators are often expected to justify the inequities and inconsistencies of this amalgam of policies and practices to students and parents, as well as to legislators and trustees. The problems are complex and so are explanations. A variety of instructional circumstances converge, and the quick fix is often to use part-time faculty (p. 14).

In this connection, let's look at some of the implications that the situation of quick hirings pose for colleges' students and their communities. The question can be then formulated as following: "How much do the mentioned above 'quick fix' policies cost our society?" By giving part-time instructors a short notice about their upcoming teaching schedule, college administrators are automatically limiting the instructors' chances for sufficient preparation which in turn, reduces the chance to accomplish a successful and productive learning environment for students. Since the status of a temporary instructor rarely allows any flexibility to pick your own textbook and/or identify any further teaching materials, adjunct faculty may find themselves in a disadvantaged situation from the offset, since they realize that they are not properly assimilated to their teaching role.

They may also be unfamiliar with the college's specific methods of grading, syllabus preparation, project-assigning and evaluation. These issues alert us about the lack of adjunct integration into the college's culture and, in a sense, marginalization from the rest of college community. Existing literature on this topic suggests that the pattern of poor management of adjunct workforce is rather common, it also points to the heavy teaching load that part-time faculty willingly carry out; for example, Marshall and Rossman (2006) note that:

> Adjuncts frequently teach a heavier load than their full-time colleagues, and often must do so at multiple colleges that are great distances from one another, minimizing time available on campus to meet with students, prepare for class, work in the library, or simply become part of the college community (p. 4).

During student-recruiting and public relations campaigns, colleges and universities claim that they will guarantee an opportunity for quality education with highly qualified and competitive faculty and staff. Based on the existing research, it is clear that part-time faculty members who teach the majority of undergraduate courses are not receiving sufficient professional and financial support to implement their best teaching potential. Thus, in most cases, the slogan of 'best education with best faculty' is little more than a myth since the above descried practices rely on the luck of the draw. Colleges need students to stay in business; so unless the conditions of adjunct faculty significantly improve and student learning becomes a priority, these slogans will continue to remain nothing more but catchphrases.

Another aspect that needs to be mentioned deals with that the fact that the quality of adjunct's teaching, as well as the progress of his the students' learning, is directly linked with instructor's keeping pace in his academic field, attending professional

conferences, reviewing professional journals, and eventually, contributing something of his own scholarship. Unfortunately, these prospects are rather unlikely for part-time faculty due to their lack of time and money, as well as college's intention to support those activities. As a result, students' learning is yet again at stake, though some instructors may probably not realize it. In a sense, it can be argued that the institutions are redefining the concept of 'faculty work'; the college simply needs teachers to teach and nothing else. The fact that faculty scholarship sharpens and improves their teaching is clearly ignored. On a side note, it should be pointed out that despite the mentioned above limitations, many adjunct instructors show overall excellent teaching practices.

By hiring the majority of their faculty to teach part-time, institutions of higher learning are denying their students opportunities to work with instructors one-on-one to receive personal advising and gain more insights of the teacher's expertise, vision and expectation of the course. Jacobs (1998) notes that poor working conditions and meager compensation of the work of part-time faculty

> ...means that students can have significantly different educational experiences, particularly in regard to their access to faculty members, based on arbitrary scheduling decisions. This puts some students at a disadvantage and creates an inconsistency of standards for (and services to) all students (p. 14).

For some students, individual consultation with their instructors is an important denominator whether or not they will be able to pursue their education and graduate. "This challenge is especially hard because community college students often require high levels of support and care from their faculty." (Jacoby, 2006a, p. 1)

From an administrative perspective, excluding pay for any duties other than classroom teaching may appear as a cost-effective solution, but from an educational

perspective, these policies are damaging the entire college community because they devalue the foundations of the academic learning, as well as student-teacher work. This is yet another element of support of the underlying technocratic and instrumental ideology discussed by Giroux (1993). Teachers are seen as performers who are "professionally equipped to realize effectively any goals that may be set for them." (p. 275) Part-time teaching faculty members are not seen as transformative intellectuals or reflective practitioners (Giroux, 1993) who are "free men and women with special dedication to the values of the intellect and the enhancement of the critical powers of the young." (p. 275). Rather, they are by necessity the technicians whose mentoring and direct communication with students is not presumed or valued by their colleges.

The researcher's literature review suggests no mention of part-time faculty being called as 'educators.' The absence of this term as applied to adjunct group of faculty is rather conspicuous and once again points to the low status of part-time faculty in the academia. Purpel (1996) defines educator as a person who connects classroom practices with the society. The author calls educators "social leaders, cultural advocates, moral visionaries, spiritual directors who chose to do their leading, advocating, visioning, and directing in institutions labeled schools and universities." (p. 361) In our current society, the term 'educator' is directly associated with the position of a full-time faculty who is a teacher, a well-published scholar, and overall, a respected member of the academic community.

So why is it not popular to put the two words together: adjunct + educator? The absence of contractual obligations, lack of schedule stability, lack of benefits, and pay-

per-course payment system is hardly a possibility for the current portrait of an 'acknowledged educator.' Clearly, the conditions of adjunct employment and their voiceless position within the academia prevents from listing them under the 'educators' category in the current phonebook of American academic society. But they are! They are unacknowledged transformative intellectuals and educators that contribute tremendously to students' learning and understanding of today's society. Berry (1999) concludes his article about the issues of part-time faculty stating the need for adjunct acknowledgement in the current educational system, and the importance of part-time faculty involvement with college's governance and decision-making process. The author notes that if part-time faculty members are granted the status they deserve, "we can rededicate ourselves to reaffirm the quality of 'democracy's colleges." (p. 6)

While these realities seriously compromise the ability of part-time faculty to work effectively, the impact of the wide-scale reliance on adjuncts extends beyond these immediate circumstances. Current working conditions that are created by colleges for its part-time faculty in many ways imply that these part-timers are not a valuable segment of college faculty; it also eliminates adjunct members from faculty's role within the college community. The latter factor clearly indicates a significant threat to the profession of teaching as well as the overall integrity of American colleges. As indicated earlier, poor working conditions and lack of college's involvement in the professional lives of its part-time faculty may ultimately lead to negative consequences for the institutions and their community.

With the lack of job security and a term-by-term contract, it is undeniable that part-time faculty feel very insecure. Sonner (2002) suggests that the concern about grade inflation in American colleges is a measure that many part-time faculty resort to in order to continue their employment and grant themselves a greater degree of 'stability.' Jacoby (2006a) notes that "Part-time instructors sense that their evaluations by students are likely to be lower if their grading is based upon rigorous standards." (p. 2) In this context, it is crucial not to underestimate the overall importance of the issue; by giving out higher grades, the instructor (maybe even unconsciously) exaggerates his students' academic standing and raises the students' self-esteem. The author notes that "In addition to the direct impact of the higher grades, the situation increases pressure on the full-time faculty to give higher grades if students come to expect them." (Sonner, 2002, p. 8)

The scope of the issue becomes rather serious because it covers a significant portion of student population unsatisfied with their grades and a no less significant portion of full-time faculty population whose work and evaluation strategies are undermined. Yet again, the solution to this problem is simple. The college and its staff need to offer opportunities for professional development and support for the adjunct. The department chairs should work directly with part-time faculty, conduct student evaluations to ensure that adjunct's grading standards are consistent with the rest of faculty members.' In turn, this strategy will make sure that students' academic standing is not an indicator of the status of employment contract of their teachers.

By limiting the amount of full-time teaching appointments, the institutions are implementing cost-effective solutions that consecutively also challenge the work and

presence of the full-time faculty group. Kavanagh (2000) discusses that the phenomenon

of a wide scale use of part-time instructors in American colleges poses a significant threat

to the teaching profession and to the overall integrity of the university "through a

systematic devaluing and elimination of the faculty's role within the university

community." (p. 27) Since the appointment of part-time faculty, in most cases, does not

suppose and/or fund any professional activities outside the classroom (such as student

advising, scholarly research, departmental activities, college governance etc.), the work

of full-time faculty, whose responsibilities include all of the above mentioned duties, is

significantly diminished. Kavanagh (2000) suggests that, the work of teaching becomes

separated from the work of curriculum development, it also appears separated from

student advising, and finally, teaching becomes also alienated from any participation in

colleges' events and governance. Smith (1980) maintains that:

> Part-time faculty are asked to enter the classroom and accept the responsibility to
> teach while at the same time they are often encumbered by inadequate support
> systems, lack of understanding of the philosophy of the community college,
> inaccurate perception of their students, unclear course syllabi, and little
> knowledge of alternatives available to them (p. 17-18).

Clearly, it is not just the full-time faculty who are put in a vulnerable position, but

most importantly, it is the students whose learning opportunities are yet again affected.

Because their part-time faculty are not able to donate their time, and thus denied the right

to be part of professional development. Adjuncts are also not able to address the

educational and learning needs of their students during curriculum development

meetings. Part-time faculty members are denied opportunities to suggest ideas for

modifications of college curricula, they do not have a chance to contribute to the issues of

institutional and/or departmental governance, and finally, part-time instructors are inevitably deprived of the opportunity for a formal exchange of their professional tips and pedagogical advice that are commonly discussed in curricular meetings as well professional conferences. Participation in the latter ultimately results in improved teaching practices.

The rhetorical questions can then be formulated as follows: "Who, better than the teaching instructors know about the necessary modifications of their college's curriculum and student needs?" and "How does the elimination of part-time faculty from college's professional development activities serve the interests of the institution, its students, and its community?" The answer is obvious; part-time faculty should be recognized as "increasingly important players in the teaching and learning process," (Roueche et al., 1995, p. 120) part-time faculty should be integrated into the college community. The stakes are high, because this situation affects negatively not just students' learning, but consequently colleges' reputations, as well as the economic growth and job stability of students' native communities.

In many ways extensive reliance on part-time faculty poses a threat for academic work and the notion of academic scholarship. Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, and Terra (2000) discuss the changing context of modern universities; specifically the authors mention the new role of entrepreneurialism of American colleges. The authors state that traditional academic tasks, especially, scholarly work and teaching are redefined: "... teaching was earlier affected by research. Teaching is currently expanded by students

testing their academic knowledge in 'real world situations' and acting as intermediaries between the university and other institutional spheres." (p. 316)

Graduation rate is yet another factor that is found to be connected with part-time teaching appointments. In his studies Jacoby (2006a) and other scholars found that "higher part-time faculty ratios are significantly and negatively correlated to student graduation rates." (p. 3) However, these research findings do not stop colleges from hiring new adjuncts each semester. In this connection it is important to mention 'credentialism,' an operating business ideology that is applied not just to the corporate sector, but also to the secondary and postsecondary educational institutions. Collins (1979) suggests that we are currently living in a credential society that is based on the bureaucracy of power of the dominant elites. The ideal of a 'truly educated' person is understood from the perspective of the credentials that the person earns as a result of his studies. The credential earned (such an MBA, or B.A.) is then assessed from a perspective of further credentials that it will lead to, such as specific job titles and the degree of power that it the job may assume, in other words, the importance of education is boiled down to how 'saleable' is a particular degree. "Credentials not personal growth through learning have become the focus of educational institutions and the link between educational time service and employment has been clearly replaced by a credentials link." (Gibbs & Morris, 2001, p. 83)

Allowing credentialism to dominate in education means that colleges and universities are no more looked at as historic centers of knowledge and personal growth neither is it a learning community. Murphy (1998) contended that educational credentials

monopolize access to on-the-job training. In today's society higher education is not a value unless it prepares and trains the student for his work. With the increasing power and influence of the corporate sector on institutions of higher education, credentials start to dictate one's educational path. In other words, our society demands that prior to their college application, students should estimate the value of specific credentials, and their subsequent transferability into further credentials, that may be earned based in each degree program.

> Higher education through institutional audits may become regarded as fit for purpose only when it equips graduates, cost-effectively, with the skills for employment in a wide range of occupations, crafts and professions and sidelines its contribution to the student "being educated" in order to maximize the speed to market of these skill 'carriers.' (Gibbs & Morris, 2001, p. 83)

Because the appointment of part-time faculty members does not suppose any engagement in academic research and scholarship, the work of full-time faculty is once again undermined. Historically, higher education faculty were expected to commit much of their time towards research and scholarly inquiry, their academic freedom has traditionally been protected by academic tenure. With the current situation of shrinking budgets in American colleges and the subsequent trend of replacement of retired full-time faculty with part-time teaching appointments, it will be increasingly difficult to protect academic freedom when the large proportion of college faculty will never achieve or be protected by academic tenure. Jacoby (2006a) notes that: "With two part-time instructors employed for each faculty person working full-time, public community colleges now function to warehouse surplus instructors, becoming sites in which apparently untenable faculty aspirations for good faculty jobs are "cooled out." (p. 1) In the long run, the use of

part-time faculty will eliminate the university's role of intellectual leadership and, instead, transform higher 'learning' with higher 'training.'

The Future of Higher Education and Part-Time Faculty

Without the acknowledgement of the need for all faculties' input into college's curriculum development, governance, and educational policy, "the university begins to look less and less like an institution that values faculty and student input in formulating the educational goals and objectives of the institution." (Kavanagh, 2000, p. 28) One of the major challenges that higher education faces today is the presence of corporate business model that dominates in most institutions of higher learning. As discussed earlier; this approach to education allows promoting credentialism and the pecking order, with part-time faculty being at the bottom of the hierarchy. Clearly, the entire society is affected by this approach to education (from students and their families to the nation's labor force development and economy), and part-time faculty are only a small fraction of the total number of people affected. Brown (2001) notes that the hegemonic credentialing ideology that currently operates in education must be confronted and challenged by education professionals, otherwise, the author anticipates a very degrading future of education in this country. He notes:

> The overproduction of graduates and the lengthening of credentialing sequences are root causes of these crises, but collapse is a protracted event. Fateful indicators of crisis, unfolding over time, include declines in enrollments and school closures, rising tuition costs, public attacks on educational credibility, grade inflation, and the general multiplication of cheap degrees. A number of these signs are becoming visible in the United States today. (p. 29)

The emergence of virtual, for-profit universities is one of the recent products of the corporate mentality that is applied to education. the researcher believes that Brown (2001) indirectly refers to virtual universities in his quote mentioned above, specifically the part about "multiplication of cheap degrees." For example, at one of the most successful for-profit universities, the University of Phoenix, nearly the entire faculty body is represented by part-time teachers; these instructors are able to conduct their virtual teaching from all parts of the United States. University of Phoenix's instructors are given a script for each course that they must adhere to, student progress is measured by the university's strictly defined outcomes for each course, both the course content and student outcome are tightly controlled, not only by the teaching instructors but, most importantly, by the University of Phoenix administrators. Issues of faculty governance, professional development, academic freedom or tenure are simply out of the question for the University of Phoenix's teaching staff. The instructors are the technicians who deliver the prescribed, rigid teaching content; by no means can this group of faculty be called 'transformative intellectuals' or 'educators.' Higher "learning" is transformed into a kind of "training" in which important issues of job security, academic freedom and institutional support of its faculty are not discussed. In fact, the only full-time faculty members at the University of Phoenix are full-time administrators, who can hardly be referred to as 'faculty.'

The University of Phoenix is an excellent example of how the work of faculty is devalued and diminished whereas the corporate or "money-talks" values rule the academic learning. In other words, "As business models increasingly shape higher

education, corporate principles replace academic values, and making a profit elbows out the public good as the primary goal of colleges and universities." (Moser, 2000, p. 2) This situation clearly undermines the historic role of colleges and universities being the centers for intellectual leadership. If credentialism continues to dominate in our society, the academy will follow the lead and entirely lose the status of intellectual scholarship and academic excellence.

It is apparent that the future is not at all clear in regards to what changes will happen in regards to adjunct employment, the stabilization of their status, the necessary socialization within the academia, and the improvement of their working conditions. With today's booming trends of hiring part-time instructors, institutions of higher learning are more than likely to continue this tradition. As stated earlier, factors such as increasing student enrollments and decreasing college budgets will continue to affect the abundant reliance on part-time faculty. Nelson (1997) suggests that the collapse of academic job-market means that the overwhelming majority of part-time faculty will face either a worsening future or no future at all in the academic world.

However there should be mentioned another factor, or a new trend, as suggested by the literature, that is likely to affect the situation in regards to current and future part-time employment. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) refer to the notion of "vanishing professorate," the authors note that nowadays it is common to see full-time, tenure track retiring faculty being replaced by multiple part-time non-tenure faculty appointments. The authors state:

> That brings us to the crux of the 'silent revolution' that we believe is reshaping the academic profession, and ipso facto, faculty roles as teachers and as

knowledge producers. Perhaps the sharpest difference between the contemporary
faculty and their predecessors a generation ago is seen in the kind of academic
appointments they hold. In 1992, more than four-fifths (83.5 percent) of the full-
time experienced faculty (seven or more years of teaching) held 'regular,' that is,
tenure or tenure-track appointments, compared with only two-thirds of new
entrants (66.8 percent) in 2001. (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006, p. 21)

Most of adjuncts before beginning their part-time teaching career in colleges

started as graduate teaching assistants. Nelson (1997) points out the contribution of

graduate students in his discussion of issues of part-time employment. The author notes

that it is cynical on colleges' part not to include graduate students into the notion of part-

time employees (since many of them will join the part-time teaching staff upon

graduation). Looking ahead, Nelson (1997) presumes that the future is not very bright for

graduate students willing to teach full-time. He maintains that the collapse of academic

job market "means that most graduate students can no longer look forward to tenure-track

jobs. When they finish their Ph.D.'s, they may actually have to turn to sill lower-paid

part-time employment." (p. 5)

Along with the fact that full-time academic job market is projected to be

continuing its decrease, yet another factor seems to be affecting the situation. Pratt (1997)

in Cary Nelson's *Will Teach for Food* (1997) refers to the national statistics of part-time

faculty's education level. The author emphasizes that increasing numbers of part-time

faculty holding doctorial degrees only make the situation even worse. The author states:

Aspiring faculty with the terminal degree, teaching experience, and scholarly
activity, often with a list of publications, crowd a part-time market that was once
predominantly made up of people with master's degrees and limited credentials
beyond graduate course work. The better the credentials of prospective part-time
faculty members, the more apparent the professional debasement of them
becomes. (p. 267)

Isn't it an inescapable irony that more education means fewer chances to find a full-time

employment within *educational* institutions? The obvious, and in a sense rhetorical,

question that comes to mind is about the worth of terminal degrees in today's society.

Finally, the prestige of graduate degrees and aspirations for teaching in

postsecondary institutions will continue to be negatively affected. In this case, graduate

programs will be progressively shrinking, losing its enrollments and demand for graduate

education. How many students will continue to pursue their graduate degrees with no

future of full-time teaching employment or professional recognition?

<u>What Can Be Done?</u>

I think it is quite unrealistic to say that the financial side of the issue of part-time

employment can be easily fixed; unfortunately, colleges' budgets cannot be rewritten to

offer every part-time faculty member full-time employment. However, I believe that a lot

of changes can be done in regards to the social aspect of the issue. Issues such as adjunct

participation in professional development, departmental engagement and support, the

opportunity to be heard by the college and its administrators, reasonable office space, all

these conditions are possible with very little involvement of colleges' budgets.

Another important aspect, as reflected by Wallin (2004a), deals with the fact that:

> Community college administrators are often concerned that faculty understand
> that they are teaching adult students with a variety of needs, backgrounds, and
> abilities. However, they often do not bring that same thinking when planning and
> organizing professional development experiences for part-time faculty. (p. 8)

The researcher would also add that college administrators need to be concerned about the

working conditions when they hire adjuncts. In other words, college policy makers

should worry that high teaching standards which are expected from part-time faculty are

not justified by their working conditions, little if any support from their departments, and limited salaries that adjunct faculty generally receive. As a side note, if currently American colleges differentiate working conditions and pay for full-time versus part-time instructors, why don't students get an option to pay less for their tuition if they are taking a class from a part-time instructor or pay more for the class that is taught by a full-time professor.

One of the most commonly cited works that exists in the literature about the role of part-time faculty in higher education belongs to Gappa and Leslie's book, titled: *The Invisible Faculty: Improving the Status of Part-Timers in Higher Education* (1993). The essential question that guides the authors' research is stated in the preface of the book: "How can institutions expect people of talent to contribute to quality educational programs when those same people are victims of medieval employment conditions?" (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. xi) The authors' research documents that part-time faculty have strong feelings about their role in campus life as well as their degree of involvement. "For the most part they feel powerless, alienated, invisible, and second-class." (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 180) Based on the results of their research, the authors conclude with a set of recommended practices (a lot of which refer to the issue of professional development and social integration) to be utilized by higher education institutions in order to make sure that part-time faculty members are valued, heard, and supported in what they do. It is crucial that colleges utilize a transformative, multi-dimensional approach to the way part-faculty should be integrated in the academia. College departments should take a proactive role in providing and rewarding

collaborative incentives for all faculty members; creating opportunities for more

socialization, eligibility to participate in pedagogical and leadership training, addition of

mentoring programs involving all faculty. Among other authors, Gappa and Leslie (1993)

cite several low or no-cost strategies that will enhance the contribution and working

conditions of faculty in the academia. The authors' suggestions go hand in hand with the

number of recommendations that reflect on professional standards for adjunct faculty

created by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 2006). These

guidelines provide fair and civil strategies that include some of the following excerpts:

- Selection and hiring based on clear criteria with standards commensurate with the assignment and the institution's mission.

- Active recruitment and selection of the best available candidates, and efforts to maximize the employment of individual part-time faculty members, rather than fragmenting assignments to employ more individuals.

- Long-term planning whenever possible, to provide for extended terms of appointment consistent with institutional needs, thereby also providing sufficient job security to encourage and support continuing involvement with students and colleagues.

- Provision with each appointment of a clear contractual statement of expectations and assignments including in-class teaching and such other responsibilities as course preparation, student advisement, and service.

- Provision of orientation, mentoring, and professional support and development opportunities

- Provision of appropriate working conditions essential to perform assigned responsibilities

- Integration in collegial processes (including governance) related to contractual responsibilities for teaching and curricular planning.

- Access to all regular departmental communication.

The need for unionization of all part-time-faculty is yet another necessary recommendation that becomes more and more apparent. Unions generally protect their full-time members and grant more job security. However, whether adjuncts should form their own unions or belong to the same unions as full-time faculty is a matter of opinion.

Finally, the researcher would like to add that the fundamental foundation of education is democracy. A democratic institution of higher learning is founded on the principles that shape its policies in democratic directions. We all have a stake in examining and changing the situation of current systematic restructuring of higher education, the understanding of teaching and learning integrity. Any reform effort begins with personal commitment and energy towards a desired goal, we all must commit ourselves to the goal of advocating, and informing our communities, campuses, and state legislatures of the necessary strategies that will impact the future of higher education and its representatives. If we do so, then we have will have a chance for improvement of higher education; the future of democratic education depends on us.

Dewey stated the following about democracy:

> The devotion of democracy to education is a familiar fact. The superficial explanation is that a government resting upon popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and who obey their governors are educated. Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can only be created by education. But there is a deeper explanation. A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. (p. 233, as cited in Edgar, Patton, & Day-Vines, 2002)

Teacher Work Sample

Former Assistant Secretary of Education, Diane Ravitch, published a book in 1995, *National standards in American education: A citizen's guide*, which discusses

national standards and demand for a national curriculum. The author notes that student

achievement can only be improved through a set of clearly defined standards of what is

being taught and the kind of performance expected. Ravitch (1995) compares education

with other areas of American life that follows various standards and laws: "Americans

...expect strict standards to govern construction of buildings, bridges, highways, and

tunnels; shoddy work put lives at risk." (p. 8) Education is no exception, the author

maintains, because "standards are created because they improve the activity of life." (p.

8-9) Over the recent years, there's been a lot of discussion of the fact that education is

becoming a field that is heavily dominated by political influence and a one-size-fits-all

type of approach to student learning (see No Child Left Behind Act as an example).

Shapiro, (1986) in the article *Curriculum alternatives in survivalist culture: Basic skills

and the minimal self* points out that unfortunately, our contemporary perception of the

role of teachers and students in the educational community has reversed its direction; the

author calls for a change in the perception and points out the need for an alternative

curriculum that would underline pedagogical practices that encourage the sense of

democracy:

> the emphasis is on the classroom as a place of dialogue, on the student and teacher
> as co-inquires, the centrality of the interpretation of experience and the pursuit of
> meaning, and the relationship between the practical and the theoretical, have been
> well elaborated in a tradition that stretches from Dewey to Freire. (p. 300)

Darling-Hammond (1997) discusses an increased demand for teacher

effectiveness in today's educational community. The author argues that although

teacher's preparation directly influences students' learning, currently the educational

system in the U.S. does not require teachers to provide evidence of the knowledge they

need to help students become successful. As a result, many educational researchers like Apple (1993), Brantlinger (2003), Giroux (1993), Shapiro (1986) and others address in their works the notion of educational accountability and a need for a reform in today's curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future stated in the report *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* (1996) that most schools and teachers cannot achieve the goals of educational standards, not because the teachers are incompetent or unwilling but due to the lack of know-how, and due to the fact that there is not sufficient support from their school systems. The commission recommended the reinvention of teacher preparation and professional standards so that professional development of teachers (be it issues dealing with curriculum, assessment, teacher licensures, or multicultural competence) would be placed at the core of all teacher preparation programs.

In 1991 the Oregon legislature passed a school reform to make a "paradigm shift" from how things used to be; this legislation was part of the Education Act for the 21st Century. The goal was to restructure current schools' educational system in ways that would result in students meeting higher standards. McConney et al., (1998) discuss the new emphasis that was placed on developing content and performance standards. More attention was placed on accompanying assessments for benchmark grades in schools and entry to state supported colleges and universities. Another goal was to redesign teacher licensure requirements that would reflect the new model of schooling. Thus, the new appraisal method has been developed for "emerging teachers (given the constraints of the student teaching experience) and grounded in the complex reality of what teachers do.

This appraisal method has become to be known as Teacher Work Sample methodology

(TWSM)." (McConney et al., 1998, p. 345)

The Teacher Work Sample (TWS) has been developed as part of the U.S.

Department of Education Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant Consortium, the

Renaissance Partnership Project, a five-year initiative whose mission is to improve

teacher preparation and learning opportunities for teachers and their students. The

project started in Western Oregon University, where the graduates of the teaching

department were asked to demonstrate their teaching skills prior to receiving their

licenses. The goal of the project at Western Oregon University was to create:

> ...a fully developed, validated, and reliable TWSM that provides conceptual
> framework with which teachers and teacher development programs (pre-service
> and in- service) can think about, practice, and demonstrate their proficiencies
> along a number of dimensions related to schools. TWSM is a methodology
> designed to serve training and research functions, as well as evaluation and
> licensure functions. (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p. 28)

By completing Teacher Work Sample units, the graduates were able to

demonstrate evidence of their preparedness to start teaching jobs as well the quality of

their preparatory pedagogical skills. In 2002 there were eleven teacher preparation

universities in ten states who were involved with the Renaissance Partnership Project.

According to the Renaissance Partnership website:

http://www.uni.edu/itq/ProjectOverview/index.htm the participating eleven institutions

have put forward several performance areas that (if improved) are believed to indicate a

significant increase in the ability of teacher candidates and school practitioners to

facilitate learning of all K-12 students.

The TWS is comprised of two major parts: The prompt and the rubric. The prompt provides guidelines on completing the set of teaching tasks; it is also made of questions that lead to critical thinking about teaching and learning. Fredman (2004) notes that the TWS prompt guides the instructors to critically reflect on their teaching and it "provides opportunities for reflective practice throughout the process ... TWSM ...reinforces the act of reflection." (p. 7) The author also notes that reflective practice must be taught, since it is not an inherent skill that most teachers possess from the beginning.

The rubric offers a checklist about what should be included in each section as well as a scoring rubric for judging the candidate's performance and teaching exhibits. Henning (2005) states that the TWS allows teachers to "design, assess, revise, and revise a unit of instruction according to the seven processes that are fundamental to high quality teaching." (p. 194) Participating teachers (or student teachers) have to design a 2-3 week unit of instruction (that is written according to the Teacher Work Sample performance prompt) in relation to the context (learning environment) in which learning occur.

The first unit is prepared in accordance with the guidance of the university supervisors and is used to assess how prepared the teacher is to independently prepare the second unit. The second unit is prepared by the teacher alone, without any help from the university supervisor; the latter only reviews and appraises the unit after its submission. Ayers, Schalock, Schalock, and Wright (1997) refer to the TWS process as a measuring device; the authors maintain that TWS allows measuring the learning gain which is shown through the difference between the pre-and post- assessment scores. Teacher

Work Sample has also been recognized as "a model for thinking about teaching and

learning" (Devlin-Scherer, Burroughs, Daly, & McCartan, 2007, p. 51) as well as an

assessment tool that allows to link teacher education and preparation with student

learning. Henning (2005) stated that: "Part of the increasing interest in TWS

methodology has coincided with the consonant movement towards constructivist and

sociocultural perspectives that favor performance-based assessment." (p. 189)

Tucker and Strong (2005), stress the importance of teachers' engagement in pre-

and post- reflection of their teaching and their impact on student learning. Each unit

reflects teachers' preparation and their pedagogical skills, lesson designs, student

learning, community involvement and other components. Each teacher has to develop

appropriate student assessment to measure student progress and overall learning.

Schalock, Schalock and Girod (1997) refer to TWS as an "outcome-based and

context-dependent theory of teacher effectiveness." (p.18) McConney, et al., (1998)

mention that the way TWSM is used at Western Oregon University allows teachers to

address and focus on the following crucial issues:

1. What are the learning outcomes I want my students to accomplish?
2. What activities and instructional methodologies are appropriate or necessary
   for these students to achieve these outcomes?
3. What resources and how much time do I need to implement these activities
   and methodologies?
4. What assessment activities and methodologies are appropriate for these
   students and these outcomes when using these instructional methodologies?
5. How successful was I at helping each of my students achieve the learning
   outcomes desired?
6. What went right? What went wrong? Why? (p. 346).

The authors note that in order to provide answers for the following questions and develop

necessary skills for standard-based teaching, one must go through 10 distinct steps:

1. Define the sample of teaching and learning to be described;
2. Identify the learning outcomes to be accomplished within the work to be samples;
3. Prior to instruction, assess students' status with respect to the post-instruction outcomes to be accomplished;
4. Develop instruction and assessment plans that align with proposed learning outcomes and current status of students with respect to the proposed outcomes;
5. Describe the context in which teaching and learning are to occur;
6. Adapt the desired outcomes and related plans for instruction and assessment to accommodate all students and the demands of the teaching-learning context;
7. Implement a developmentally and contextually appropriate instructional plan.
8. Assess the post-instructional accomplishment of learners, and calculate each student's growth in learning;
9. Summarize and interpret the growth in learning achieved (or lack thereof) for the class as a whole and for selected groups with the class.;
10. Examine and reflect on student learning in light of the pre-instructional developmental levels of students, targeted learning outcomes, the context in which leaching and learning occurred, and personal professional effectiveness and development (McConney et al., 1998, p. 346-347).

The TWS unit must be designed in a way that emphasizes the seven teaching processes (as outlined in the prompt); those processes, or also known as "performance standards." (Renaissance Partnership, 2002) Each section has a maximum page limit and asks the author to interpret and rationalize each step of the teaching process in accordance with student learning progress as well as the effectiveness of teaching methods. Each section is also inevitably bound with the teacher's reflection process. The TWS prompt provides very specific questions that lead the teachers to critically reflect on their teaching experiences and methods. Below is an excerpt from the 2002 RTWS Teaching Processes Prompt and Scoring Rubric:

> **TWS Standard:** The teacher analyzes the relationship between his or her instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice.

Task: Reflect on your performance as a teacher and link your performance to student learning results. Evaluate your performance and identify future actions for improved practice and professional growth.

Prompt: Select the learning goal where your students were most successful. Provide two or more possible reasons for this success. Consider your goals, instruction, and assessment along with student characteristics and other contextual factors under your control. Select the learning goal where your students were least successful. Provide two or more possible reasons for this lack of success. Consider your goals, instruction, and assessment along with student characteristics and other contextual factors under your control. Discuss what you could do differently or better in the future to improve your students' performance.

Reflection on possibilities for professional development: Describe at least two professional learning goals that emerged from your insights and experiences with the TWS. Identify two specific steps you will take to improve your performance in the critical area(s) you identified. Suggested page length-2 pages (January 2002, p. 16).

As seen above, the instructor is encouraged to practice his reflective thinking throughout the narrative. The ultimate goal is to go beyond the narrative and practice reflective thinking as part of every step that instructor takes when preparing for a class, conducting a session, or evaluating student progress. In other words, Teacher Work Sample prompts the teacher that reflection requires more work than merely thinking about teaching or describing the day's events, but it relies on systematic analysis of various aspects of teaching and student learning.

According to McConney et al. (1998) the three key ingredients that guide the teacher through the process are (1) issues of alignment (such as the alignment of outcomes to instruction, instruction to assessment, assessment to outcomes); (2) consideration of the specific context within which the instruction and assessment occur; (3) a diversity of instructional and assessment strategies they would use.

Stronge and Tucker (2000) note that completing TWS is a comprehensive, complex project that requires "instructional design, development, delivery and assessment; using TWSM requires a significant time commitment." (p. 39)

The Teacher Work Sample is described to be both a product and a process of evaluation of teacher's work. As a product, the Teacher Work Sample can be used as a tool to measure the instructor's ability to aid students' learning progress. The TWS model of performance-based evaluation reveals the instructor's overall level of competency for a teaching career; finally the TWS methodology is also adopted for professional development and teacher education programs.

As a process, the Teacher Work Sample allows the instructors to study their students and reflect how teaching performance is connected with student achievement. Teacher Work Sample methodology is a model for reflective thinking about teaching and learning, placing student learning at its core. Even though reflective practice has not always been part of teacher-education programs, this methodology names reflection as the key component and tool for professional growth, as Doyle (1990) stated "teacher preparation should foster reflective capacities." (p. 6) Fredman (2004) noted that "reflection is one of the most important tools teachers use for professional growth." (p. 7) Gore (1987) noted that "reflection has become part of the language of teacher education." (p. 33) Gore (1987) also observed that there were two ways of understanding reflective thinking: One that was predominately seen in a more technocratic setting that was limited exclusively to the teacher's work: "Teachers thinking about what happened, and what else they could have done to reach their goal." (p. 36) The other way looked at the

process more holistically, taking the idea of reflective teaching beyond classrooms and allowing it "to include consideration of ethical, moral, and political principles." (Gore, 1987, p. 33)Beatie (1995) discussed the need for reflective practices among teachers concluded that "when student teachers and cooperating teachers can engage in inquiry and reflection necessary to challenge their practices and change the stereotypes of teaching and learning that currently exist, they can overcome "obstacles to reform." (p. 53)

The major underlying premise of the Teacher Work Sample model is that reflection is not an internal or natural skill that we are all born with, instead reflective thinking is a life-long process that must be taught and practiced throughout the entire teaching career. Kohler, Henning and Usma-Wilches, (2007) examined teacher's work samples in order to determine student teachers' ability to make instructional decisions as well as teachers' reflective practices. The author's findings suggest that:

> ...many novice teachers had difficulty with this process of reflection. For instance, only 40 percent of participants provided specific examples of the student cues that precipitated their instructional decisions. This implies a lack of recognition that student cues are important to instructional decision-making, which seems like a critical element of reflection. (p. 2014)

Teacher Work Sample also allows to look at the notion of credibility of teaching licenses with a new perspective: instead of relying exclusively on students' grade point averages earned in a teacher education program, or testing the students on their knowledge of the content of the entire program, TWS allows a more comprehensive measurement of students' work together with an assessment link of the effect of student teaching and pupil learning.

Reviews of TWS

In 1998 Schalock, Schalock and McConney conducted a study that provided empirical data to support the belief that prospective teachers have a strong influence on student learning, the authors conclude that it is more than reasonable to ask new teachers "to demonstrate and document this influence within the context of an accountability, licensure, or quality (effectiveness) assurance system." (p. 271) Kohler et al., (2008) examined TWS narrative accounts of 150 students in order to analyze their ability to make instructional decisions as they engaged in teaching. The results of the study indicate that TWS is a reliable method for examining the instructional decisions of student teachers. The study showed data to support the belief that student teachers were able to successfully complete several aspects the instructional decision process with considerable skill. The article also suggests that many beginning teachers had difficulty with the process of reflection. The author notes that for many student teachers the problem was to "establish a logical connection between the results of their formative assessment and their instructional modification… it appears that many student teachers failed to consider the consequences of different solutions to an instructional problem, which has been described as a more developed form of reflection." (p. 14)

In his critique of the TWS method, Airasian (1997), discusses that in practice, it is a difficult task to achieve quality teacher-developed measures of student learning; the author notes: "One primary concern is the quality of the pre- and post- tests constructed by teachers to assess their pupils' learning." (p. 47) The author believes that TWS can not yet prove the link between pupil gains and teacher performance indisputably: "the raw

gain scores do not provide a direct indication of the unique contribution a teacher makes to the gains." (p. 49) Airasian (1997) maintains that other factors such as pupil's prior knowledge, socioeconomic status, or language proficiency may also contribute to the learning gains. The author calls the method "unfinished, and underexamined in many regards, [it] holds promise for improving teaching and helping to understand teachers' contributions to pupil learning." (p. 52).

Mallein (2003) discusses the advantages and challenges of completing a Teacher Work Samples for student teachers. The author examined 134 surveys of student teachers' who were developing work samples and their 85 cooperating teachers. Based on the author's research, such advantages of TWSs as: the close alignment between the work sample and the work of and subject of teaching, the teacher's own learning that developed as a result of reflections, and teachers' awareness of their impact on student learning came into view from the data. The challenges revolved around the time required developing a TWS, the difficulty of the tasks within the Teacher Work Samples, and the training required to complete the tasks.

Stufflebeam (1997) has reservations about applying the theory and methods of TWS in high-stakes settings of teacher evaluation. The author raises questions about the issues of reliability and the measures used in TWSM the author states:

> ...the teacher can 'assist' the pupils in completing their post-test examination. Experience has shown that many teachers will do this if the stakes are high. If Oregon uses the pretest-posttest differences in pupil scores to support high-stakes decisions, then this may direct teachers' construction and use of work samples to teaching to a biased, easy test and helping the pupils do well on the posttest (p. 58).

Stufflebeam (1997) maintains that in its present form, TWSM can be used as a tool for training teachers to construct performance tests and obtain feedback for improving their teaching; however the method overall should not be used for informing high-stakes decisions in regards to teacher licensure and/or employment. In conclusion, the author adds that "Ironically, TWSM, for all its limitations, is one of the best available teacher evaluation techniques. It's more systematic and useful for assessing teacher effectiveness based on pupil outcome data than are most other practices of teacher evaluation." (p. 61)

Both Airasian's and Stufflebeam's observations about TWSM were acknowledged by Schalock, Schalock, and Girod in the same book: *Grading teachers, grading schools* (1997). The authors agreed that several aspects of TWSM are still unfinished and appear to be evolving. As their main argument, Schalock, Schalock, and Girod (1997) refer to the appearance of new empirical evidence that cites remarkable amount of variance in learning gains, the authors also cite new advances in how information obtained through TWSM can be used confidentially, and how the TWS methodology holds potential not just for teachers, but for the entire educational community. The authors see potential for bringing more legitimacy to the teacher licensure and preparation programs and overall, a broader range of application of the data obtained through this method.

In their study Gipe and Richards (1992) examined the relationship between future teachers' reflections and growth in the teaching abilities in an early field placement. The authors stated that in existing teaching programs that emphasize reflection, students are "less anxious about teaching, and they are more able to think and talk about teaching and

learning." (p. 53) Gipe and Richards (1992) confirmed the direct link between

reflectivity and novices' teaching; the authors also concluded that the more student

teachers reflect the more their teaching abilities will improve. Additionally, the authors

strongly recommend journal-writing for teachers as a "vehicle that promotes and

documents reflective thinking." (p. 52)

Tucker and Stronge (2005) note that one of the major advantages of TWSM is

that it considers the context of teaching and learning and allows to promote more

naturalistic student learning. The authors add that the "teaching-learning connection

embeds assessment in daily teaching." (p. 35) Through continuous reflection and focus

on self-assessment and pupil achievement, TWSM doesn't only teach the instructor to

place student learning always at the core of any activity, but it also serves as a criterion of

excellence in teaching. Reviewing TWS methodology, Darling-Hammond (1997) notes

that despite the already significant contribution to the development of teacher evaluation

programs, further work needs to be done to employ TWS as a tool not just for the student

teachers , but even for the veteran teachers. Finally, Darling-Hammond (1997) states that

TWSM should be commended for its reflective approach to teacher assessment, emphasis

on the contexts of the classroom and placing student at the core of learning:

> There is value in an approach to teacher assessment that points practitioners to the
> careful evaluation of practices, contexts, and outcomes, including the systematic
> consideration of student and teacher work. I have no doubt that this encourages
> teachers to reflect on their work in ways that are extremely productive for
> developing diagnostic habits of thinking as specific practices (p. 257).

To summarize; the existing research on Teacher Work Samples reveals both

strengths and weaknesses of the method. The advantages of Teacher Work Samples refer

to the focus on fostering reflection, assessing teacher performance in a given context; measuring skills that are not readily measurable by other assessment methods, predicting effective teaching; and providing an instructional experience directly applicable to classroom teaching (Darling-Hammond,1997; McConney & Ayers, 1998; Schalock, Schalock & Girod, 1997; Tucker & Stronge, 2005). The weakness of the Teacher Work Sample method include the amount of time to complete a TWS, and the difficulty of addressing the issues of "content and construct validity" especially with beginning teachers, signifying that teachers are teaching to essential standards at the grade level not the lower level standards that are easier attained (Airasian, 1997; Mallein, 2003; Stufflebeam 1997; Tucker & Stronge, 2005).

The research to makes a case for Teacher Work Samples as a measure of teacher effectiveness; however none of the research (yet!) looks at a possibility of using the TWSM in a postsecondary classroom.

<div align="center">Reflection Theory: Dewey-Schön-Yancey</div>

A lot of theories were published about the human ability for reflection. For this study the author reviewed the work of Dewey, Schön and Yancey.

Dewey

Theoretical discussions of reflection started with John Dewey's work in the early 1900's when he published *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education* (1916). The central idea of that work was that people learn from their own experiences throughout their life.

> Since in reality there is nothing to which growth is relative save more growth, here is nothing to which education is subordinate save more education... The

inclination to learn from life itself and to make the conditions of life such that all ill learn in the process of living is the finest product of schooling (Dewey, 1916, p. 51).

The author states that for humans, it is critical to systematically analyze our experiences. In order to do so, one must be able to identify the problem; collect evidence and related information that could help solve the problem, and finally, be able to test the proposed ideas. By combining these steps, the person has an opportunity to go through Dewey's method of inquiry that includes thinking about doing and doing with thinking. Dewey (1916, 1933) notes that teachers are no exception in this situation; their knowledge and practice of classroom teaching and learning can equally advance through this cohesive method of inquiry.

In 1933, John Dewey defined reflective thinking as an:

active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends....it includes a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality (1933, p. 9).

Dewey (1933) argued that reflective thinking enables teachers to think about the outcome of their actions with consideration of their past experiences and intellectual development derived from their formal study of education. Dewey (1933) suggested that without reflective thinking, teachers merely repeat mindlessly (or recite) the practices of their own past teaching. Reflective thinking, as a part of the critical thinking process, helps learners to analyze and make judgments about what has happened in their classrooms. He drew a distinction between reciting and reflecting: "to re-cite is to cite again, to repeat, to tell over and over." (Dewey, 1933, p. 260) A major problem of many teachers, according to the author, is their lack of preparation that leads to recitation. During each preparation

stage, the teacher should be adjusting the subject matter to the level of his or her students

and their experiences. In other words, the teacher should always think about students'

intellectual development in a systematic matter that is reflected through a set of questions

like "By what applications shall I help my students grasp the new material?" or "What

activities of their own could illustrate the new principle?" Dewey (1933) notes that the

skill of a teacher is evaluated by his or her ability to manage the "pipes:"

> The mind is not a piece of blotting paper that absorbs and retains automatically. It
> is rather a living organism that has to search for its food, that selects and reject
> according to its present conditions and needs, and that retains only what it digests
> and transmutes into part of the energy of its own being. (p. 262)

The author describes the concept of reflective thinking as a meaning making process that

moves the learner from one experience to the next. To Dewey, reflective activity occurs

when a person decides to face a perplexed or confused situation, the author outlines five

aspects of reflective thought, and those are:

1. *Suggestion*, a mode of thinking in which, confronted with some difficult

question, one's mind leaps forward desperately to some possible solution. It is a kind for

dramatic rehearsal, when one finds himself in a difficult situation, and the only one

suggestion is popping up.

2. *Intellectualization*, a mode of thinking in which a directly experienced

difficulty is turned into a problem to be solved, a question for which an answer must be

sought. Intellectualizing a situation involves identifying the conditions that constitute the

problem.

3. *Hypothesizing*, a mode of thinking in which one considers one hypothesis

("what if") after another as means by which to engage in direct observation,

experimentation, and other means of collecting factual information. The idea of solution is guided by emergence of hypotheses.

4. *Reasoning*, a mode of thinking in which one elaborates on the initial suggestion; reasoning helps to go in depth of the problem and extend the knowledge.

5. *Testing*, a mode of thinking in which the hypothetical solution is proven true or false, valid or invalid, practical or impractical in imaginative action or overt experimentation.

The author notes that each of the aspects does not necessarily follow one another in a strict order; on the contrary, each stage may be introductory to new observations and new ideas. The author also specifies the two phases of reflective thinking as (a) a state of doubt, and (b) an act of searching to find the material to resolve the doubt. According to Dewy (1933), pre-reflection is the process that immediately occurs when one finds him or herself in a perplexing situation, whereas post-reflection is experienced when the doubt has been dispelled.

Among some of the characteristics of reflective thinking, as suggested by Dewey, are: reflection as a systematic and rigorous way of thinking that stems from scientific inquiry; reflection needs to happen in community of interaction with others; reflection demands attitudes that value intellectual growth of oneself and others.

Schön's Concept of Reflective Practice

In his book *Educating the reflective practitioner*, Donald Schön (1987) introduced the concept of reflective practice. The author notes that reflection is the central element in being able to resolve ill-defined "problems of real-world practice." (p. 4) Schön states

that modern schools and universities design their curricula in accordance with the paradigm of technical rationality. In this view the teacher or the administrator is concerned primarily with instrumental problems; those are the kind of problems that can be solved by the application of scientific knowledge. The style and methods of teaching in a technical practice are typically narrowed to available body of theories and training of technical skills of day-to-day practice "...practitioners are instrumental problem solvers who select technical means best suited for particular purposes." (p. 3)

Schön (1987) argues that most problems in real-world practice can not be solved by direct application of factual knowledge. Due to uncertain, unique, and often conflicting nature of the real-life situations, one has to go beyond the theories and techniques and engage in "reflection-in-action," a thinking that allows us to "reshape what we are doing while we are doing it." (p. 26) When one experiences reflection-in-action, he/she is able to go beyond available theories and respond or invent new rules on the spot. It is this kind of reflection that allows the person to behave "more like a researcher trying to model an expert system than like the 'expert' whose behavior is modeled." (p. 35-36)

Schön (1987) suggests that students learn skills by practicing them; here, the differentiation is made between coaching and teaching. Coaching is understood as the process of telling and listening, demonstrating and imitating. Teaching (versus coaching) is not effective enough because teaching does not allow the student to do the discovery for him/herself (the author also refers to education versus training paradigms p. 92).

In order to be able to solve real-world problems; one requires the artistry of problem-framing, as well as implementation and improvisation in addition to the technical expertise. Schön (1987) highlights the importance of the coaching process for learning the artistry of practice:

> He has to see on his own behalf and in his own way the relations between means and methods employed and results achieved. Nobody else can see for him, and he can't just see by being 'told,' although the right kind of telling may guide seeing and thus help him see what he needs to see." (Schön, 1987, p. 17)

The dialogue between an educator (or the coach) and a student involves a chain of reciprocal actions and reflections. Neither teachers nor students who enter reflective practicum can know from the start what it is they need to know or do, according to Schön, knowledge and artistry can only be gained in doing.

The second type of reflection occurs when we reflect *on* an action; this is the type of reflection when we think about what happened after the action. Unlike reflection *in* action, when we reflect in the midst of an action without interrupting it, our reflection *on* action "has no direct connection to present action." (p. 26) By engaging in reflection on action, the individual is able to make a detailed analysis of the event, and possibly develop a more systematic review of his actions and experiences. Schön suggests that insight and new understanding can be reached through reflection on problems that are encountered in real life; by using reflection-on-action practitioners are able to develop their practice. Thus "reflective transfer" enables the learner to carry some verbally explicit theory to new situations where it can be put to work and tested, found valid and worthwhile, or be reinvented.

The third principal component of reflective learning developed by Schön (1987) is called *knowing in action*. It implies a spontaneous process when the experienced practitioner is both knowledgeable about the theory involved and is skilled in the task. This process is something we do on a regular basis; we do not have to think through it, we just do it; and thus our knowing is *in* the action.

Yancey

Schön's concept of reflection in action and reflective transfer were re-theorized by Kathleen Blake Yancey (1998) in her book, *Reflection in the writing classroom*. Launching from Schön's work, Yancey suggested three types of reflection: *reflection-in-action*, "the process of reviewing and projecting and revising" that "takes place within a composing event, and the associated texts;" *constructive reflection*, "the process of developing a cumulative, multi-selved, multi-voiced identity" that "takes place between and among composing events, and the associated texts" and *reflection-in-presentation*, "the process of articulating the relationship between and among the multiple variable of writing and the writer in a specific context for a specific audience, and the associated texts." (p. 14-15)

Reflection-in-action represents the entire composing event: it involves hypothesizing, reviewing and revising process. Reflection-in action may take a form of companion piece where the "student can talk about whatever they think is important for the reader to know as she or he reads the primary text." (p. 31) Reflection-in-action represents a composing event when the writer focuses on the relationship between the

writer and the text; and the relationship between text and the reader. Yancey (1998) calls reflection-in-action both a process and a product.

"Constructive reflection grows out of successive composing events;" (p. 14) it is a reflection over multiple writing events over an extended period of time (what Schön called reflection-on-action). Yancey (1998) describes constructive reflection as coming "between and among the drafts." (p. 51) If reflection-in-action can be private and public, constructive reflection is only a private and an unarticulated process that represents multiple composing events and the writer himself. Constructive reflection is the "cumulative effect of reflection-in-action on multiple texts" (p. 51) and thus, constructive reflection "entails reflective transfer-that is the writer's ability to gather knowledge and apply that knowledge to similar problems." (p. 51)

Reflection-in-presentation is represented by public documents and portfolios, in other words it is a public representing of the self. An important difference between reflection-in-action is that reflection-in-presentation is prepared for an audience and may take several forms: the autobiography, the individual annotation, or the presentation. Yancey (1998) points out the social and presentational (not just individual) aspects of reflection-in-presentation, thus "reflection is both individual and social: in part, it is through the social that the individual comes to know." (p. 72)

Donald Schön (1995, as cited in Yancey, 1998) commented on Yancey's three types of reflection:

> Clearly, it is one thing to be able to reflect-in-action and quite another to be able to reflect on our reflection in action so as to produce a good verbal description of it; and it is still another thing to be able to reflect on the resulting description (p. 71).

Yancey (1998) discusses the notion of curriculum and some of the assumptions that we have about it, the author notes that on the one hand "we want students to actively engaged in the curriculum we bring to them" (p. 171) but on the other hand, "we want this curriculum to stay within the parameters we have set; we want it to be the one we design and deliver." (p. 171) Further, Yancey presents 3 types of curriculum that are present in the classrooms.

The first is the *experienced curriculum*, the course that's actually created rhetorically as students receive it and make it their own. The author compares it with attending a professional conference; there is an announced theme which governs the kinds of session offered.

The second type is the *delivered curriculum*, the specific curriculum that is designed by each instructor and is discussed in each syllabus. Commonly it is reflected under the headlines "course goals," "course competencies" and "course assignments."

The third type is the *lived curriculum*, the curriculum that the students bring with them to any classroom. As Yancey explains, each student brings with him or her a set of experiences and connections, "this provides the context through which the course will be understood, experienced, received, interpreted." (p. 172) The author calls the lived curriculum a kind of contextual, cumulative reflection on the experience of all previous curriculums.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the process that was used to investigate if the Teacher Work

Sample is an effective tool to assist professional growth of adjunct faculty at community

colleges. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences that community

college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher

Work Sample. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work

Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and

whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching

practices.

This qualitative study allowed an in-depth investigation of the impact and

applicability of TWS methodology in a community college setting. Through this

qualitative research project multiple data sources were utilized by the researcher, the data

were gathered through the individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews,

observation of TWS training session, and the overall rating of adjunct TWS units (on a

scale from 1-3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics. Merriam (1998) notes that

"understanding the case in its totality, as well as intensive holistic description and

analysis of a case study, mandates both breadth and depth of data collection." (p. 135)

This qualitative study utilized face-to-face and focus group interviewing for data

gathering. It was the responsibility of the researcher to collect the data and then to "make

sense" of what was collected, through interviews, documents, and observations (Guba &

Lincoln, 1981). All of the participants of the study were required to participate in a

special interactive training workshop that was specifically designed to provide information about Teacher Work Sample methodology and its application. Each participant completed one TWS unit which was then evaluated by independent university raters.

This chapter describes the research setting and its participants, data sources, data collection and data analysis procedures.

Qualitative Study Design

In order to investigate whether TWS could be utilized effectively to assist with professional growth of adjunct faculty at community colleges, qualitative research study design was chosen. Qualitative research has a long history in anthropology and sociology; it has become an accepted method of inquiry in the social sciences and education disciplines and is no longer limited to these disciplines (Merriam, 1998). Qualitative inquiry is especially useful in understanding human experience, as it allows the perspective and voice of the participants to be explored and understood. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) strongly suggested that qualitative research belongs to no single discipline since it allows the researcher to use a wide array of methods that are not distinctly its own when studying a social phenomenon.

Creswell (1998) presented eight reasons for using qualitative research versus any other method, those were:

1.   First, select a qualitative study because of the nature of the research question. In a qualitative study, the research question often starts with a how or a what so that initial forays into the topic describe what is going on.

2. Second, choose a qualitative study because the topic needs to be explored.

3. Third, use a qualitative study because of the need to present a detailed view of the topic.

4. Fourth, choose a qualitative approach in order to study individuals in their natural setting.

5. Fifth, select a qualitative approach because of interest in writing in a literary style.

6. Sixth, employ a qualitative study because of sufficient time and resources to spend extensive data collection in the field and detailed data analysis of "text" information.

7. Seventh, select a qualitative approach because audiences are receptive to qualitative research.

8. Eighth, and finally, employ a qualitative approach to emphasize the researcher's role as an active learner who can tell the story from the participants' view rather than as an "expert" who passes judgment on participants. (p. 17-18)

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher Work Sample. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching practices.

In order to find out and provide an in-depth account, the researcher intended to justify the choice of the method by following Creswell through every step (in this case it was 8 steps) of the way.

1. The first reason- the goal of this study was to investigate whether the Renaissance Teacher Work Sample was an effective tool to assist professional growth of adjunct faculty at community colleges, and the subsequent questions would be asked on the basis of "how so." For example two of the four research questions would be formulated as "What were the obstacles and challenges (if any) that were experienced by the adjuncts during their completion and experience with the TWS method?" or "How did the completion of a TWS unit prompt adjuncts to new ways of looking at their teaching practices?" Clearly, just as Creswell suggested these research questions started with a "how" or a "what" so that initial forays into the topic to describe what is going on.

2. Even though the topics about the impact of adjunct faculty in higher education and the methodology of the TWS as a performance based assessment tool were consistently represented in research magazines, there continued to be a need for more exploration. For example, there were fewer studies published when the adjunct faculty were selected as the only research participants in professional development programs (typically it's the full-time faculty who have been the target participants). Secondly, the researcher of this study did not come across a single article that applied the TWS method on a post-secondary environment or with part-time college faculty in specific.

3. Through uncovering the rich descriptions offered from the face-to-face and focus group interviews, the researcher would be able to record and analyze details

concerning the participants' experience with the Teacher Work Sample

methodology and its applicability to the adjuncts' every day teaching.

4. The fourth reason for conducting qualitative research was driven by the fact that,

this project was conducted in the participants' natural setting. The TWS training

workshop, both face to face and focus group interviews were conducted either in

the adjuncts' offices or classrooms on the campuses where they taught.

5. The opportunity to employ a slightly less formal literary style for this project was

an important characteristics of this dissertation that made the process more 'real'

and 'closer to home' for the researcher herself. Additionally, the fact that the

researcher herself was an adjunct faculty member for several years aided in

establishing a less formal and a friendly communication tone with the research

participants.

6. During the research process both types of interviews were utilized as primary

methods for data collection. Personal observations and the overall TWS ratings of

adjuncts TWS units were utilized as secondary sources of data collection. This

approach allowed sufficient time and resources for extensive data collection in the

field. The researcher's first-hand experience of being an adjunct faculty member

and the disappointment of not being included in professional development

opportunities assured the researcher's interest and the need for new scholarship in

this area. Additionally the qualitative setting allowed for a more personalized and

an inclusive investigation with the adjunct participants who often feel invisible or

left behind by their colleges.

7. In order to find out how the adjunct members view their teaching practices and whether the TWS method prompted them to think more reflectively about their practices, the researcher was relying extensively on qualitative data sources, such as interview transcripts and observation. No other method would allow the participants to offer such an in-depth and an intrapersonal look at their teaching.

8. The last, eighth reason for conducting qualitative investigation was due to the fact that the researcher herself was able to be an "active learner" throughout the whole process and not just collected data but learned from the participants and formulated her own vision of the research process and its significance.

Case Study

The goal of conducting a case study was to expand and generalize theories and not to enumerate frequencies (Yin, 2003, p.10). The results of this study may be transferable to other colleges and its faculty who may consider using the TWS model to increase teacher efficacy and student learning. Eisner (1991) pointed out that more than abstractions can be generalized—skills and images could as well. We learn a skill in one situation and transfer it to another. While the foundation of the TWS methodology was set in the secondary system of education, this study showed the applicability of the TWS method on college campuses. "For qualitative research, this means that the creation of an image-a vivid portrait of excellent teaching, for example, can become a prototype that can be used in the education of teachers or for the appraisal of teaching." (Eisner, 1991, p. 199)

Merriam (1998) stated that the most common conceptualization of generalizability is "reader or user generalizability," whereby readers themselves determined the extent to which findings from a study can be applied to their context (p. 28). A good case study is, according to Stake and Kerr (1995), an "interactive communication, first between the single researcher and the case, later with the reader." (p. 136)

As with any research approach, however, there are limitations to using a case study approach. Case studies can be time-consuming, and can oversimplify or exaggerate: "they tend to masquerade as a whole, when they are, in fact, just a part." (Merriam, 1998, p. 12) In addition, case studies have been faulted as not being generalizable. Stake and Kerr (1995) commented that "the real business of case study is particularization, not generalization. We take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others, but what it is, what it does." (p. 8) However, Merriam (1998) believed that, if a case study is the best approach to answer the research questions, then its strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

<u>Description of the Setting</u>

The study was conducted at a two-year public community college in the state of Iowa during the summer of 2009. Des Moines Area Community College was established in 1966 as a publicly supported comprehensive community college. First classes hosted 28 students and were held in a former grocery store. In 2006 (40 years later), DMACC opened doors to thirty two thousand students enrolled in continuing education and business training courses; classes are held at six full-service campuses in an eleven

county, mid-state region. Today, the college district is comprised of 6,550 square miles, representing approximately 11 percent of the land area of the state. The college offers more than 3,000 classes that represent 75 career programs (vocational and technical) and transfer degrees. DMACC offers 71 degrees and diplomas, 48 certificates of specialization and 10 pre-professional programs (DMACC Academic Quality Improvement Program [AQUIP], 2006). DMACC's demographic situation is unique because it serves several district demographic populations in one college system; it should be noted that about 20 percent of state's population resides within the district.

> It is an urban college; enrolling the largest minority population of any higher education institution in Iowa. It is a rural college, as one of its campuses serves rural communities with declining populations. Another campus sits squarely in the middle of the fastest growing area of the state. Other campuses serve suburban areas and small cities (DMACC AQIP Systems Portfolio, 2006 p. v).

DMACC's mission is to "offer quality programs and courses to meet the different community interests, student abilities and personal objectives to citizens of all ages and levels of education for the our pose of improving the quality of life, the economic conditions and the public welfare of our state. "(DMACC's Annual Foundation Report, 2006).

In 2006 DMACC employed 764 people in full-time employment (faculty, administration, professional and support staff), 703 people part-time (administration, professional and support staff). DMACC's staff is highly educated. Eighty eight percent of DMACC employees have a bachelor's degree or higher; 95 percent have at least an associate's degree." (DMACC AQIP, 2006 p. viii)

In the year of 2006 there were a total of 770 adjunct faculty employed by the college. There were 364 male adjunct instructors and 406 female adjunct instructors. The average age of adjunct faculty group in 2006 was 47.5 years; the average age of female adjuncts was 46 years and male adjunct instructors were 49 years. The highest degree attained were distributed as following: high school diploma or equivalent: 2 women, 8 men; certificate or diploma: 12 women, 8 men; Associate degree: 25 women, 21 men; bachelors degree: 114 women, 74 men; master's degree: 200 women, 165 men; education specialist Degree: 5 women, 7 men; doctorate degree: 30 women, 69 men; none listed: 18 women, 12 men.

During each academic semester DMACC's campuses offer a variety of learning and professional opportunities for its full-time and part-time faculty. Those events include professional training, guest speakers, and professional workshops. While the participation in those events by part-time faculty is not a requirement, occasionally adjunct faculty receives various incentives for their participation, such as stipends or prizes. DMACC's Human Resources webpage states that "Adjunct faculty is encouraged to participate in professional development events, however, at this point, it is not a requirement. Our long-term goal is to have training opportunities available to adjuncts, but issues related to timing and financial resources have to be worked out." (http://www.dmacc.edu/hr/hrfaq.asp, retrieved November 2nd, 2008)

Participant Selection

This study employed purposeful sampling. All the participants of this study were represented by a group of adjunct instructors who were subject to the part-time

provisional certification requirements of the Des Moines Area Community College, and who were currently teaching associate degree and technical diploma level courses at community college at one of the college campuses. Patton (1990) stated that purposeful sampling seeks information-rich cases that can be studied in depth. Purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to select participants with relevant experiences that are permissible for the best possible data to be collected. Additionally, the respondents had no relationship with the researcher.

All participants were clearly aware of the reasons and purpose of this study. To ensure participant safety, informed consent was obtained from each individual participant to ensure his or her willingness to participate. The provost of Urban Campus at DMACC agreed to provide a letter of cooperation for this project. Flexible sampling procedures are typical characteristics of qualitative studies; participants chosen for qualitative studies are usually selected purposefully rather than randomly.

The criteria for the sample in this study were formulated in a form of an electronic survey that were sent electronically by the researcher to identify specific criteria of adjunct demographics such as:

- Length of part-time employment

- Divisional or instructional area

- Formal teaching preparation (such as a teaching license)

- Willingness to participate in further professional development

The results of the survey were analyzed by the researcher in order to identify six participants for the study who met the following criteria:

1. The candidate did not have formal teaching preparation (such as a teaching license).

2. The candidate has been teaching part-time for five to ten years.

3. All of the candidates work in the same divisional or instructional area (such humanities, education, business, or sciences).

4. This candidate will be eager to engage in further professional development.

Procedures

Teacher Work Samples

Each participant was required to complete one work sample. As a performance assessment method, Teacher Work Samples provide teachers with a means to determine the impact of their teaching on student learning. As shown on the table below (on the following page), the TWS includes seven components: (a) a setting describing the classroom, school, and community context in which the participant is teaching; (b) goals and objectives for the instruction; a rationale communicating why these pupils need this instruction at this time; (c) lesson plans outlining the tasks, activities, and materials in the unit; (d) an assessment plan; (e) and charts of student achievement outcomes; (f) an interpretive essay connecting the assessment outcomes with future instruction; (g) and a reflective essay describing teachers' learning. The seven components are: contextual factors, learning goals, assessment plan, design of instruction, instructional decision making, analysis of student learning, reflection and self-evaluation.

Through the creation and development of their work samples, adjunct instructors were able to accomplish multiple tasks such as: (a)analyze the context in which they teach, (b) pre-test students on specific skills, (c) design and teach a unit based on the

results of the pre-test, (d) administer a post-test, (e) analyze the students' learning gains, and (f) reflect on their own learning. The participant also documented their ability on these tasks by creating their TWS document.

Independent university raters were able to evaluate adjunct Teacher Work Samples according to the TWS scoring rubric. The raters were asked to read the Teacher Work Samples and using the TWS Scoring rubric, identify the score for each document. Listed below is an example of one of the components of the TWS scoring rubric, the Learning Goals rubric. (see Table 1, p. 86)

Teacher Work Sample Training Workshop

As discussed earlier, all of the participants were required to participate in an interactive workshop that was specifically designed for adjunct faculty members to provide information about Teacher Work Sample methodology and its application. The workshop was led by a professor in the field of educational leadership who has dedicated a great amount of work towards the development and application of the Teacher Work Sample methodology.

The workshop included the following components:

- Overview of the history and purpose of the TWS (using current research studies and articles)

- A step by step explanation of the prompt and rubrics

- A discussion on how each of the 7 TWS processes in connection to adjunct's world

Table 1

The Learning Goals Rubric

Rating→ Indicator↓	1 Indicator Not Met	2 Indicator Partially Met	3 Indicator Met	Score
Significance, Challenge and Variety	Goals reflect only one type or level of learning.	Goals reflect several types or levels of learning but lack significance or challenge.	Goals reflect several types or levels of learning and are significant and challenging.	
Clarity	Goals are not stated clearly and are activities rather than learning outcomes.	Some of the goals are clearly stated as learning outcomes.	Most of the goals are clearly stated as learning outcomes.	
Appropriateness for Students	Goals are not appropriate for the development; pre-requisite knowledge, skills, experiences; or other student needs.	Some goals are appropriate for the development; pre-requisite knowledge, skills, experiences; and other student needs.	Most goals are appropriate for the development; pre-requisite knowledge, skills, experiences; and other student needs.	
Alignment with National, State or Local Standards	Goals are not aligned with national, state, or local standards.	Some goals are aligned with national, state, or local standards	Most of the goals are explicitly aligned with national, state, or local standards.	

- Reading a TWS as a group with discussion about teaching and learning process involved

- Scoring a TWS and comparing scores

- Small group work on describing contextual factors at the Community College

- Discussion of challenges that may occur as a result of completing a TWS, including pre-assessments, design of instruction for engagement, and evaluation.

Data Collection

Through this qualitative research project multiple data sources were utilized by the researcher, the data were gathered through the individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of TWS training session, and the overall rating of adjunct TWS units (on a scale from 1-3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics.

Individual Interviews

Two sessions of face-to-face interviews were conducted throughout the study. The interviews lasted approximately sixty minutes in length. The subjects were interviewed in their offices, as they felt comfortable and familiar with the setting. The interviews were audio taped, with the approval of the participants. In-depth interviews are defined by Taylor and Bogdan (1984) as "face to face encounters between the researcher and informants directed toward understanding informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations expressed in their own words."(p. 88) The selection of the individual interview as a method for this study allowed the researcher to learn in the respondents' own words what constituted their process of thinking about their teaching, what reflective thinking about teaching meant to them, what constituted their assessment of student learning, and if the TWS experience contributed to their professional improvement.

One of the reasons why the researcher used interviewing was to improve the understanding of the social context of thinking about learning. Fontana and Frey (as cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) note that the goal of any interviewing is to gain an understanding and it is essential that the researcher establishes a rapport with its participants. The authors discuss that face-to face interviewing allows the best opportunity for establishing rapport with participants, gaining trust since un-structured or semi-structured interviews can provide "a greater breadth of data than the other types, given its qualitative nature." (p. 74) It was very important for the researcher to build a rapport with her participants throughout the research process. Face-to-face interviewing allowed the best opportunity for that and the researcher was able to build common ground through a live dialogue with the adjuncts. Previous adjunct experience of the researcher served as a strong bridge for mutual connection and understanding. As Taylor and Bogdan (1984) conclude "establishing rapport with informants is the goal of every field researcher." (p. 36)

Face-to-face interviewing took place in a series of meetings. The first individual interview took place after the participants had gone through the TWS training workshop; during that session, the researcher started with the purpose of study and a discussion of procedures, explanation that the interviewing process and data collection/analysis; the participants were informed that they would be invited to provide feedback and input into the project throughout the research process. The goal of the first interviews were to get to know the respondents a little better and find out some of their initial approaches to

student learning, thinking about teaching and overall adjuncts' role in the college classroom.

Most importantly, these first interviews created an atmosphere in which the participants were likely to talk freely and openly. The questions were open-ended to foster a discussion, as for example: How do you evaluate/asses your own teaching? What have been your joys as a teacher? What have been your greatest challenges to overcome as a teacher? Looking back on your teaching career, what have you changed or how have you improved? What areas of teaching would like to improve? What keeps you in the classroom? Detailed question lists from these interviews are provided in the Appendix A section of this paper.

The second round of individual interview took place after the adjuncts completed and taught their TWS units. During that session the researcher was interested in adjuncts' reflection on their experience with the TWS. As Taylor and Bogdan (1984) note "Especially toward the end of the research, after the observer has established relationships with people and gained 'insider knowledge,' open-ended interviews with informants can be relatively focused and specific." (p. 68) In this second session of personal interviews, the questions were more specific and they revolved around the adjuncts' ability to critically think and make connections between their every day teaching and the TWS standard of teaching. The questions also revolved around the seven TWS standards and indicators, which according to the TWS methodology are:

1. The teacher uses information about the learning/teaching context and student individual differences to set learning goals and objectives, plan instruction, and assess learning.

2. The teacher sets significant, challenging, varied, and appropriate learning goals and objectives.

3. The teacher uses multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals and objectives to assess student learning before, during, and after instruction.

4. The teacher designs instruction for specific learning goals and objectives, student characteristics and needs, and learning contexts.

5. The teacher uses on-going analysis of student learning to make instructional decisions.

6. The teacher uses assessment data to profile student learning and communicate information about student progress and achievement.

7. The teacher analyzes the relationship between his or her instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice.

Examples of some of the interview questions were: "As you taught using your TWS unit and having gone through the whole process, what have you learned about yourself as a teacher?" Which of the seven teaching process has been most challenging? Why? Would you say that this instrument allows a richer understanding of your own teaching and your students? Why or why not? Having completed your unit and applied it to your teaching, has there been any change in your teaching and approach to student

learning? How do you perceive that your pedagogy has been altered as a result of your participation with the TWS instrument? Would you say that this instrument is for every community college instructor? Why or why not? Question lists from these interviews are provided in the Appendix B of this paper.

Taylor and Bogdan (1984) discussed potential drawbacks of interviewing, the authors note that one of the major challenges is that interviewing is verbal data or talk; the authors warn that there can be a great discrepancy between what the respondents say and what they actually mean. To reduce the potential for this discrepancy the researcher relied on transcripts of the audio-taped interviews with the participants. Another limitation with interviewing is that interviewers "do not directly observe people in their everyday lives, they are deprived of the context necessary to understand many of the perspectives in which they are interested." (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p. 82)

Through this qualitative research project multiple data sources were utilized by the researcher, the data were gathered through the individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of TWS training session, and the overall rating of adjunct TWS units (on a scale from 1-3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) summarize that even though skillful research interviewing allows the investigator to learn how the informants view themselves and their world, "it is almost never possible to predict exactly how an informant will act in a new situation." (p. 83)

Focus Group Interviews

The data collected for this research project included two audio-taped focus group interviews which were transcribed and analyzed. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to gather additional relative data for the research. The focus group interviews were directive and included semi-structured questions to encourage participants' reflections about their experiences using the TWS method. Focus group interviews took place at the community college during and after completion of the Teacher Work Samples by the participants. Both group interview sessions focused on the reflections of the adjuncts about their TWS experience. The participants were asked to reflect about teaching and learning process involved, and discuss the potential for using a TWS model as one of the venues for professional development and growth.

The first session was conducted while the adjuncts were in the midst of completing their TWS narrative; specifically it was held around the time when they will have completed their design for instruction portion of the unit. The respondents wouldn't have taught the unit yet and the researcher was interested in the respondents' reflections about the process so far, the challenges that the participants were currently facing as well as the overall sense of direction. The interview questions were open-ended and allowed room for new themes and topics to be discussed. The sub goal of the first focus group session was to encourage a comfortable environment of sharing ideas, increase the overall commitment thorough open discussion and interaction of participants with each other. It was also the hope of the researcher that this focus group interviews would serve

as a support session for each of the responds due to their communication both with the researcher and each other.

The second session of focus group interviews was conducted once all participants reached the analysis of learning section of the unit. While the participants did not totally complete the units yet, they were much closer to its finish and by this point they had also taught the unit. The researcher's goal was to capture and reflect how the adjuncts were doing at this stage of their TWS journey. During this session the adjuncts were encouraged to share parts of their units and reflect on their new additions about approaches to their teaching. Once again, it was the belief of the researcher that the group in a session of peer review with one another through their detailed discussions of their TWS units. The researcher was also interested if the adjuncts discovered any new potential about their own pedagogy at that point, or any reflective abilities that they were unaware of previously.

Both focus group interviews were conducted to disclose major themes in the participants' responses to help answer questions whether TWS was a useful professional development method for community colleges' faculty. The advantage of utilizing focus group interviews for this study was to gain an in-depth understanding whether TWS methodology is useful and applicable for a community college instructor.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) discussed the challenges and benefits of focus group interviewing. Among some of the challenges, the authors discussed the role of the researcher and his or her capability of balancing a directive role of the interviewer with an indirect role of moderator, the balance between following the script of questions and

the evolving patterns of group interaction. Among other threats, there is potential for the group to be dominated by one member of the group, or groupthink. As far as the benefits, focus group interviewing allows the researcher to produce rich data. This method of data collection can provide rich qualitative data, and that is a key reason for its employment in this investigation of the effectiveness of TWS methodology for adjunct faculty.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) note that focus groups typically elicit a range of opinions of people across several groups. The data are then compared between various groups to then construct results and concepts of the data. Finally, utilizing focus groups as the method of data collection provides a more natural setting where respondents can build upon each other's responses, allowing group discussion to happen naturally and free of structured and formal questions which are most often utilized in individual one-on-one interviews.

<u>Observation</u>

Another reliable source in qualitative case study methodology is observations. Angrosino and Mays de Perez (as cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) discussed that observation has been characterized as the "fundamental base of all research methods in the social and behavioral sciences." (p. 107) The purpose of conducting observation of the training workshop was to provide yet another data source of the adjuncts' professional growth expectations, level of motivation and professional interest and reactions to the possibility of integrating a new reflective approach to their teaching. The researcher relied on the observation as another channel for understanding how adjuncts perceived and applied the TWS methodology.

Erickson (as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) said that "as an ethnographer I have an obligation to have been there." (p. 113) This means immersing oneself in the total environment in order to develop a rich understanding of the context. Through the observation of adjunct initial reactions and level of engagement in the workshop, the researcher was looking for data that would show what constituted adjuncts' reflection and approach to their teaching. Additionally, the researcher was looking at the overall level of importance of this professional development experience for adjuncts and potential for limitations and barriers with the TWS completion. Note-taking was used to enhance the accuracy of the data.

Data Analysis

Triangulation

Triangulation of data sources helps to produce clear understanding of data. Interviews, observations, and TWS documents provided triangulation of data necessary for the study's confirmability. Through this qualitative research project multiple data sources were utilized by the researcher, the data were gathered through the individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of TWS training session, and the overall rating of adjunct TWS units (on a scale from 1-3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics.

Triangulation of sources occurs through examining the consistency of different data sources. Interviews and focus group interviews provide the greatest depth with multiple sources of rich data. Focus group interviews elicit different types of responses than what are offered in the interview settings. Sometimes participants are more willing

to share their experiences in a group, rather than sitting alone in an interview setting. Conversely, the opposite may also be true because some individuals would rather share their experiences individually than in a group setting. Additionally, the researcher's observations of the training workshop, and the overall ratings of adjunct TWS's yielded rich data that, together with other data sources it resulted in corroborating information.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) discussed the effectiveness of color coding in qualitative research. The researcher will use color-coding as the main procedure in data analysis. After conducting individual and focus group interviews, and after completing the observations of the TWS training workshop, the researcher arranged the data by topics and analyzed each respondent's information to gain a clearer picture of each adjunct's perspective.

During the process of data collection, the researcher was also looking for key themes and reoccurring issues, as well as new emerging ideas. The researcher read and reread many times the transcripts from the interviews and observations then highlighted the themes and subthemes that emerged from each respondent's perceptions about their experience with Teacher Work Samples. After analyzing these subthemes, the researcher grouped them into the larger themes such as personal stories, reflection, professional development, challenges associated with the TWS, potential transferability of TWS onto college setting.

The larger themes were chosen because they emerged from all the data. The researcher coded each comment with a color, for example: yellow for teaching excellence, blue for professional development, and red for TWS applicability for a

college instructor and etc. The researcher created a color text of each of the respondent's data and went though each respondent's answers and cut and pasted the data into a new document entitled by each theme. So for professional development theme, for example, there were quotations from each respondent that had been indicated by their color and organized by the subtheme.

Checking for accuracy was an important aspect of data analysis; therefore, the researcher used the member check technique. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) member checks represent "the most critical technique for establishing credibility." (p. 314) The researcher made sure she clarified with the participants either through face-to-face or electronic communication certain notions, ideas, or themes that would be stated during interviews for accuracy and credibility. Additionally, the participants were given an opportunity to review data transcripts and other materials related to their participation in this research after the data analysis was completed.

Along with coding and categorizing of interview and observation data, each work sample was evaluated by an independent rater according to the TWS scoring rubric. Each rater used an established TWS assessment protocol to analyze each work sample. These overall ratings (on a scale from 1 to 3) by the independent raters were also incorporated into the data analysis procedures.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher Work Sample. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching practices. This chapter presents an analysis of the themes that emerged as a result of the individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of TWS training session, and the overall rating of adjunct TWS units (on a scale from 1-3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics.

As stated in the methods chapter, for this research qualitative method was used to gather and make sense of the data. The following research questions guided this research study:

1. Was the TWS perceived to be an effective professional development tool when introduced to the adjunct faculty?

2. How did the Teacher Work Sample practice build on the adjunct previous experiences with professional development?

3. When community college adjunct faculty completed a TWS what obstacles and challenges did they experience?

4. How did the Teacher Work Sample affect the adjuncts' teaching and how did this process contribute to their reflective thinking about teaching and learning?

The following four themes emerged as a result of this study: (1) adjunct excellence in teaching and joys of teaching, (2) importance of professional development and continuous growth for adjunct faculty (3) rewards and challenges associated with the adjunct use of the TWS method, (4) applicability of the TWS method for a community college adjunct faculty member: reflections on-action and in-action.

Theme 1: Adjunct Excellence in Teaching and Joys of Teaching

The joys for teaching in college classroom and the enthusiasm to be continuously growing as an educator were one of the strongest topics of discussion that were emerging throughout the entire study.

Interestingly enough, the researcher found this emergent theme to be directly correlating with the research question one of this study which asked "Was the TWS perceived to be an effective professional development tool when introduced to the adjunct faculty?" After completing their Teacher Work Samples, the participants suggested that this process has contributed to their existing joys for teaching and enthusiasm for professional growth. They felt more prepared and self-confident about the subject they taught and more prepared to engage their students in in-depth discussions in their classrooms.

In the following pages the researcher will address further themes that discuss more specifically adjuncts' commitment and need for professional development as well as the participants' engagement with reflective practices. However, it is important to start with teaching excellence, a theme that embraces a variety of topics and attitudes and serves as an umbrella to cover an assortment of sub-themes of this research project.

As an observer of the Teacher Work Sample workshop, the researcher noticed how engaged all six participants were during the training session. Their engagement was not only evident from the verbal communication that was happing during the workshop but also the nonverbal cues that were displayed by the participants. Those included active nodding, smiling, gesturing while talking, and steady eye-contact with the moderator and each other, as well as relaxed postures that signaled the comfort level of the attendees.

During the workshop, all participants asked direct questions of the moderator and of each other, and all six members took notes. It was evident that the topics presented by the moderator were thought provoking for the participants and that the participants right away could apply the TWS material on to their teaching practices. Below are examples of a few questions and comments that participants discussed during the first two hours. In the opening of the workshop, participant [Moses] asked the group and the moderator:

> How do you decide what to teach, some teach the whole book, others teach just the most important material from the book? I found it very helpful to ask them to write down what you learned from the class and collect it at the end of each session. [Moses]

Member [Brett] responded that he:

> Had previous discussions with other colleagues about how do I know that I am doing a good job [as a teacher]? How do I measure what I am doing? I regard class room discussion as being a goal of assessment and my question is "how do you measure that?" I am allergic to the idea of clickers in large lecture 2halls. [Brett]

Participant [Pete] shared the following:

> I think about my ability to truly address individual student needs...and that to me for true address if I am doing a good job; how I can help them go outside the box?

How do I appear engaging in the classroom to all of my students, including those who have a disability, rehabilitation issues or just different learning styles? [Pete]

Overall the genuine interest of participants in the new methodology was evident through the conversational style of the workshop. Additionally during the lunch break in the cafeteria all participants and the workshop host continued their vibrant discussions and stayed on the topic of assessment in higher education and how they individually have been assessing their teaching.

Throughout the four rounds of interviews adjuncts' reflections about various learning and teaching styles was one of the largest discussion points within the teaching excellence theme. Many participants discussed the need to able to adjust and modify their teaching style to meet the needs of their students. Most of these discussions also signaled to the investigator that the participants were continuously reflecting on their teaching and learning progress. Participant [Kate] discussed the following:

> I believe that the teacher has to get the students involved in learning. As far as learning, I learn visually and kinesthetically. And I also can learn from lectures and synthesize and apply the concepts as I am hearing them, but I think a lot of people do not learn best that way. [Kate]

In this theme many participants discussed the need for more learning and exposure to professional events in order to better their teaching skills and expand their teaching repertoire here is [Brett's] experience:

> I made the time to go through the distance learning teaching online teaching workshop and I thought ok that is fine and it was actually very worthwhile for me to do; because I was able to see where I would apply it immediately. Or some of the workshops I have been to in previous years where I go to the Carroll Campus and I would take a particular workshop on WebCT that was like ok that's great, that was worthwhile because I could use it right away. And it's the same thing with the TWS that it is something that I can use immediately. [Brett]

Besides mentioning the need to continue growing professionally, many adjuncts discussed their every-day struggles. One of the prevailing ideas shared by participants during the interviews was that pedagogical challenges that adjuncts had been going through were necessary ingredients of their jobs. For some it was a challenge to cover the entire material of the course within a short amount of time, for others it was a challenge to meet students' learning needs and be able to adjust to their pace. Having adequate time to measure students' learning progress was among the challenges being discussed. Here is [Moses'] reflection:

> I just fall back on the tried and true because doing qualitative assessment I think is very difficult and it would require follow up over a year, five years because I know in my own case a lot of the things that I have learned in my undergrad, four years in school, didn't really click for me until years later. How do you measure that? I don't think that there is any reasonable way do to it unless you design a longitudinal study of some sort, and those are very expensive and time consuming, researchers get old and retire in the middle of them and all those problems.
> But you know is what we have is the best we can do kind of system and tends to rely on numerical measurements. I give exams that honestly are multiple choice, matching and with a few essay questions but the weight is on those recall and recognition types of questions rather than on synthesis and analysis type questions. [Moses]

However the way some adjuncts dealt with those pedagogical challenges and how they approached it, spoke for itself, and clearly demonstrated to the researcher their commitment to better their teaching. Here is [Gabriela's] example:

> Challenges could be anything; for example for the longest time I struggled with articulating of medical psychology. I called doctors, I called surgeons, I have called everyone to try to get them to come to my class and help these kids understand it. Because it is very, very hard for me to teach it, because from a biological sense I am just not very good at that, and instead of trying to find someone else to do it, I needed to figure out the best way to effectively teach my class. So I came up with this experiment where we made eatable brains and I brought in different candy and fruit and we knocked out the different parts of the

brain with the fruit and the kids got it, I say kids, but my students got it. So I think that is a challenge, it is finding creative ways to help students learn and that is always a struggle because that takes time and it takes getting away from the syllabus and it stretches me. [Gabriella]

The flexibility of being sensitive to the environment (or what the TWS rubric identified as contextual factors) and being able to adjust their teaching to best fit the changing needs of the community was another obvious indicator of adjuncts' passion for their profession. Adjunct participant, [Gabriella] made the following comment:

It [philosophy of teaching] changes from class to class. Mostly my classes are making sure of meeting the students where they are. And that changes every single day. I need to be able to move outside of my syllabus and deal with the issues at play. Right now in my classrooms the classrooms are full, students are on an emotional high because of the economy. I can't just sit up there and talk about normal psychological things, not with other things going on in our world. Today we just had an open forum and a discussion about some of the big time things that are going on.
I had to adjust the discussion today because I knew there were some needs on the floor and I that is my philosophy, meet the students where they are, take care of the issues at hand that need to be taken care of, but at the same time make sure that the students feel that I am approachable. [Gabriella]

When clarifying why the participants chose to teach at the community college as a opposed to a private college or university most participants pointed out the focus on teaching and being able to help students of different backgrounds. Here is what two participants had to say:

Many of them [students] have had great obstacles to overcome in their lives - and yet here they are, trying to learn and grow. I really admire our students. Some of them come from some of the same circumstances as our clients at the counseling agency. What I find interesting is that as counselors, we can work with clients to try to increase their sense of self- confidence but when they come into my psychology class (which is difficult - I require a lot of them) and they are able to succeed, I have seen their confidence level increase in a way that it did not with counseling alone. [Kate]

Adults aren't testing the water, they know exactly what they want, and they have a sense of urgency. They are returning back to school after 5, 10, 15 years because they have to for whatever reason. And I like dealing with that, I like the stress, the anxiety I like the feeling of working with that type of students. And I really feel that there might be something that I can give them as well as something that they can give me in the learning process so I think that's why adult students make sense. [Jenni]

Another subtopic that emerged as a result of the question about why the participant chose to teach in a community college had to do with creative possibilities of the instructor. Throughout the interviews the participants referred to it as the *"flexibility to deviate,"* [Pete] *"openness to new approaches,"* [Kate] *"opportunity to play around and experiment,"* [Brett] or simply *"being ready for the unexpected."*[Jenni] It was evident to the investigator that their creativity in the classroom was driven by their passion for being teachers. For example, [Pete] made the following observation about his creative method that has worked for his Spanish II course:

One thing that I have done is everybody got an envelope, they did not know what it was; they were not supposed to share it with anybody. So two peoples' envelopes would be from Madrid, one person's envelope would be from the community of Madrid, two peoples envelopes would be from Sophia, two would be from Sebastian... Eventually the persons for the community of Madrid and the two people who are picking out five spots they want to hit in Madrid are all going to come together.
The first thing that they are going do to is decide how many days they want to spend on the trip. Train in Sophia how much is that ticket? ... By the end of the semester they should have realistic rough itinerary and a cost per person. I think that most of the students in my class that are in Spanish II and the ones that came to be in my class again, they are really interested in doing something like this; directly applying their language skills so they can see how feasible it is to plan a trip or how easy it is to put something like that together. [Pete]

Theme 2: Importance of Professional Development and Continuous Growth for Adjunct Faculty

The theme of the importance of professional growth was in direct connection with the research question number two of this study which states: "How did the Teacher Work Sample practice build on the adjunct previous experiences with professional development?"

All of the participants considered the TWS experience to be a useful tool in their professional growth and they discussed the how this TWS experience helped them to grow professionally.

Prior to the official start of this study all six of the future participants discussed their interest and previous experiences with participating in professional development. The latter became evident when the six adjunct participants confirmed their participation with the TWS project and volunteered their time during their regular summer semester to complete their TWS units. It should be added that the community college where they hold their employment does not offer any form of teaching units or other rewards that could be used as a stimulus to complete the study. These adjuncts participated out of their pure interest to grow professionally and become more educated in the field of teaching assessment.

When the researcher asked the participants why they decided to participate with the TWS study many of them talked about the need to grow to be better teachers, but also the need to expand their professional portfolio's and be able to compete with other

educators while applying for full-time teaching positions. Below is participant [Moses']

reflection why he joined this research study:

> Two things, one I want to brown nose to get a job, but that hasn't worked right?
> And the other side of it simply is that I have a professional standard that I hold
> myself to. I want to be up on the current learning, I want to develop networks
> with collages in and out of discipline, and I want to have conversations that lead
> to better and better teaching insights. It is about professional ethics. [Moses]

In the third chapter of this paper that discussed research methodology behind this

TWS project, the investigator mentioned that the study was completed primarily through

an interactive workshop, observation of the workshop, as well as individual and focus

group interviews. The workshop was specifically designed to allow an interactive format

that permitted room for discussions and reflections. Several comments were made by

participants throughout the interviews that indicated the need for more opportunities like

the TWS workshop to get together and discuss professional events but also get to know

each other. Participant [Pete] mentioned that "one of the things that drew me to this

particular study was that part of the discussion was the big question that I would always

talk and think about: so how do we know what we are doing works?" Participant [Jenni]

shared her thoughts about the TWS event and stated that the TWS in its existing design

was not sufficient for adjunct faculty and she stated: "I would add to the workshop a topic

of teaching techniques and different teaching styles. Because for many new adjuncts it is

the biggest challenge; so to me the need for that kind of training is obvious." Adjunct

faculty member [Kate] commented on why she wanted to be part of the study:

> You know I always try to participate with those kinds of initiatives on campus.
> For example recently another adjunct has attended one of the workshops on urban
> campus on neuropsychology and he said and the person who taught it said that
> current research shows that we should teach less, but teach it better. It has

impacted me tremendously, because I realized that I need to reduce the material I am teaching.

For participant [Gabriela] participating in professional development opportunities was a venue to better her teaching and she also mentioned her interest in becoming professionally involved with pedagogical trainings in order to help other teachers:

> I don't know if this will ever happen but I would love to be so comfortable with teaching that I can get up in front of groups of people, like the people who come in for professional development, and teach them, about implemented strategies and ideologies. I think to be at that point in your career I think that is awesome; I think that you've arrived then. And right now I just look up to those people and I write down everything that they say, and I try to implement it. So if I could get to a point like that, that would be amazing. But I'm not there yet, I have got to work. [Gabriela]

Adjunct participant [Brett] talked about the need for repeating the TWS workshop with adjunct faculty and allowing even more time than the original workshop for adjuncts to reflect and relate about their practices. Below is a quote from his reflection:

> As adjuncts, how much time do we have to figure out best practices? You can have discussions and that is one of the reasons I always liked it when we had those get-togethers with faculty, you know when there was money for such things, but we should do them anyway. If we had some sort of those moments to talk about stuff because there is chances to compare notes to get tips, to get references, to share ideas. Those things I think are really necessary part of being good instructors. To have this TWS project come along was like ok, now, it is this workshop where you get to take more time to look at how you do things and to talk with other people, kind of like YES! YES! And we would need more time next for the workshop. Maybe a 5 hour day devoted exclusively towards discussions and applications... [Brett]

Continuing focus on teaching and becoming better at that craft was one of the reasons that attracted some of the participants to teach in a community college: "at the community college, our focus is on the teaching and on the students, and so that's what I

am all about." [Pete] Adjunct participant [Brett] shared some of his frustrations while

teaching at a four year research university:

> Oh yea there is no real, there is a verbal encouragement to engage in good teaching; the institutional support is strongly for research. To me my mind boggles when I consider what happens to graduate students who get their master degrees or doctorates and then go and then are expected to know what to do and how to do it. But in particular for a two year institution like a community college because the focus of a two year college is on instruction and I think that means for adjunct faculty they don't know that is actually what it [instruction] is about. [Brett]

However for [Moses], an adjunct faculty who has been teaching for many years at

a community college and has been continuously working on his teaching skills, the

question is now about also doing some research in his field of teaching. [Moses] admits

that a community college is not interested in him doing research:

> Yeah, most adjunct faculty I have talked to do not engage in research or if they do it is relatively minimal. I think for the most part what I see adjunct faculty doing is trying to find that sweet spot between how many classes are they offered to teach and they can teach and it is smart for them to teach. My sense is that we are all under a little bit of pressure to do a little more than perhaps we should. What I am running into now is that I am at the level that I like doing the instruction I am doing now but I would like to do some research. And unfortunately there is no space for that in a community college today... [Moses]

Reflection on your own teaching skills was named as one of the obvious needs

why adjunct instructors were looking forward to new professional development events.

"There is nothing worse than having the feeling that you did a good job and then having

the tests come in and you realize that you've done something really wrong." [Kate]

Keeping up-to speed with research on teaching and learning is another important aspect

that was mentioned by the participants. Participation with professional events, attending

conferences and staying updated on the scholarly publications was also a path for

member [Moses] to be a holistic teacher in the classroom:

> I drive myself to read constantly, and when it's appropriate to draw it into the
> classroom whether it is a newspaper article, or work of history or non-fiction of
> some sort, when appropriate, I want to draw it into the classroom partly because it
> will be interesting to the students, partly because it keeps my teaching fresh, in
> my own mind. And partly because it also models one of the larger goals to get the
> student to look at other resources pull in this other information and how does it
> connect up with what you are focused on right now? Make those leaps of
> synthesis and integration. [Moses]

Another sign of the need for professional development became evident when

adjuncts were asked to reflect about what happens with faculty who do not wish to be

part of any professional events and use the same method of teaching and content for

many decades. The majority of participants emphasized that those individuals were

depriving their students and themselves significantly. Respondent [Kate] noted that:

"those people are static! And I don't think this is the right approach to teaching, maybe

these individuals should not be college teachers in the first place." For participant [Brett]

lack of professional growth on behalf of college instructors meant that students' learning

needs were not being met:

> They [students] understand that the teacher is teaching by rote, they understand
> that the teacher is just teaching. Like when they say well 'he was just teaching
> from the book.' And when they say something like that, what they are really
> saying is that my instructor is checked out. And if the instructor is going to check
> out that means that I am going to check out as a student. [Brett]

Additionally [Brett] proposed to use the TWS study as a new vehicle to reach those

faculty members who have been previously hesitant to engage in any other workshops:

> The TWS is a way to maintain a connection between the material-the student-and
> the instructor. So if you set it up again in an interactive focus-group kind of way,
> you will be able to involve those who typically ignore these events. And if you

engage in what you are dealing with, then you stand a change at keeping your students engaged. [Brett]

Several participants mentioned that the amount of reflection about your own teaching and students' learning varies based on the person's background and their desire to stay competitive in their subject field. Those who were not interested to advance their professional growth were named by both [Gabriela] and [Moses] as "cookie cutter teachers." While the participants noted that there may still be quite a few of those cookie-cutter teachers nationwide, most disciplines and subject areas imply continuous update on the current research. Additionally it was pointed by the participants, that for adjuncts the challenge is to find the time to stay updated and informed:

> In anthropology things change every couple of years at most because of the new developments which have to do with what is going on in the world. And then you get into some of the hard sciences and the textbook that is in printed during the same year as you are teaching has already been out of date for eight months by the time it is in print. So where do you find the time to stay up to date with your interest or your discipline as a general content area? I think that is very difficult to do, very difficult. [Moses]

Theme 3: Rewards and Challenges Associated With the Adjunct Use of the TWS Method

The third theme that emerged from the data appeared to be in direct connection with research question number three of this study which states: "When community college adjunct faculty complete a TWS what obstacles and challenges do they experience?" While this research question is focused around the obstacles and challenges associated with the adjunct TWS experience, major rewards associated with the TWS experience have also emerged as a result of data collection.

All six participants of the study admitted that they had participated in at least one professional development event before participating with the TWS method; however

every participant noticed that the TWS methodology offered a different and more

comprehensive approach to teaching assessment. According to [Kate] the TWS method

allowed her to look at her teaching in different eyes; the method involved for her the four

R's: Reflect, Reconsider, Restructure, and Reorient:

> It puts before most faculty who haven't been in the primary or secondary system the opportunity to sit down and hopefully think about their curriculum in ways they haven't really approached it before and so I think that is always a valuable experience because of that opportunity to reflect and reconsider, restructure, reorient all those things that is a process that I personally don't mind going through. [Kate]

One of the repeating adjunct comments about TWS experience was that the

method was new to them; in this sense novelty was defined as a positive experience

however on the other hand it required a lot of time for completion:

> Most of the workshops I've been to address one teaching format, and this is a more comprehensive approach to teaching, that's the big difference and therefore requires more work. Even doing one unit running through this approach is a lot of work. [Moses]

> I have to agree 100percent with you [referring to Moses], there is not enough time to do this, like you are rushing through it, because there is guidelines and deadlines, and I never even thought about it from an advantage point that this a comprehensive way of holding yourself accountable as you teach. Because it is our jobs as instructors to accommodate student learning needs and so this does that. And in fact I think that all the different professional development opportunities that I've participated at DMACC, this is the first one that forces you to look at things from each perspective and that does take a lot of time to incorporate all of these things into a class. [Gabriella]

> I'd say this is more comprehensive than service learning or learning communities in some ways. And those take plenty of time if you get involved with. The TWS really takes a lot of time to think through and to create the content and the format and so forth. [Jenni]

> I definitely would shorten some of the rubrics, and this study made me realize that I teach too much. I've been through the neuropsychology workshop where I

learned that we should "teach less, but teach it better" and the TWS experience also made me realize that. [Kate]

The organization of the Teacher Work Sample and its seven rubrics and prompts that the adjuncts were asked to follow have been noted by many participants to be beneficial and served as a stimulus to stay on task and better their teaching. During the interviews, the researcher asked the respondents to mention if they would keep all the rubrics or make any changes. The majority of respondents, but not all, suggested combining a few rubrics into one; however others insisted to keep it the way it had been designed. Members [Gabriela] and [Brett] and [Pete] stated that they would keep the organization the way it had been designed originally by the TWS authors:

> Well, being the type "A" person that I am, I followed exactly the packet, I thought it was a good guide, preventing me to having to draw my own outline. So I went down the list, I started with contextual factors, addressed the community, district and school factors, classroom factors, etc, after each rubric I went back and checked with the scoring rubric to make sure that those who have been scoring this, would give me a three for each rubric and I've done that for all the sections. So that is working for me. I try getting chunks done when I have a few moments. It causes you to think deeply about things. [Gabriela]

> The real benefit, as far as I can tell, is take one part of it, write out any rubric, and then see how your thinking changes as a result of this and the way you think about it. And how even doing it for this one bit is making me change how I think about everything else that I would do. So I would keep it the same sequential manner. [Brett]

[Pete] stated that this experience was "a new journey for me and I want to take according to the seven milestones and enjoy the route and the experiences. I wouldn't change it."

[Moses] suggested shortening the Learning Goals and the Design for Instruction rubrics:

> I think the learning goals may be something that could be a very short part because the competencies already exist. So learning goals is competencies basically. So that one could be shortened or eliminated. I don't know design for instruction I guess I learned that, I learned how to approach various topics in my

own way rather than rely entirely on textbook chapters and such. But if you had to under pressure of time the design for instruction could be shortened. [Moses]

For [Kate] it made more since to combine the Assessment Plan and the Design for

Instruction rubrics:

> The easiest rubrics were the Contextual Factors rubric and the Learning Goals were my most favorite and easiest to address. I would combine the Assessment and the Design for Instruction and the Instructional decision making rubric as one. [Kate]

[Jenni] suggested combining the Analysis of Student Learning and Self-Evaluation and

Reflection as one rubric:

> I think that Analysis of Student Learning and Self-Evaluation and Reflection rubrics seemed repetitive so I was trying to find additional things that I hadn't already said. [Jenni]

The respondents were also asked if they would keep the same organization of the

TWS process, would they keep all the components such as the introductory workshop,

individual and group meetings if they were to do it again in the future. All of the six

participants insisted that more time for the workshop was absolutely necessary than the

original four hours. Participant [Jenni] and [Kate] noted that they would include more

workshop and group meeting hours, especially for those who have not taught much at

Urban campus. They added that those were meetings were very valuable to them. A few

participants pointed out that the TWS study would be a great training for every new

adjunct before they start their teaching for DMACC. Here are participant [Kate's]

thoughts:

> I think that this would be a great aid for the new beginning adjuncts that may not have had a chance to do something like this before. It would be great if we could do it before each semester starts, you will definitely need to expand the workshop and add more group meetings for them. But that would be great. [Kate]

To the researcher's complete surprise three out of six participants even volunteered to come back and serve as mentors for other adjuncts who would be completing the TWS project in the future at DMACC.

> I definitely think that you should repeat the same organization of the process for other adjuncts and I would be willing to come out and be their TWS mentor and help in any way that I can. [Gabriela]

John Dewey (1933) discussed reflection as a systematic and rigorous way of thinking that stems from scientific inquiry. He also discussed the fact that reflection demands attitudes that value intellectual growth of oneself and others and thus reflection also needs to happen in community of interaction with others. Throughout the study many participants mentioned that the special benefit of this project was an opportunity for them all to get together and hear each other. Many noticed how great it was for them to meet each other and realize that they all face similar daily struggles being college instructors. All participants recommended increasing time for the TWS workshop and focus group meetings' in the future studies. Below are a few comments from the participants:

> I liked the group setting, because you are able to hear feedback from other instructors that are going through the same thing you are going through. The first meeting was great, you did a wonderful thing. And it was a really good introduction it probably could have been longer, or at least could have something that preceded it maybe a little bit before the meeting. [Gabriela]

> This was a great format. I saw a lot of benefit to what you did. It is always a great thing to reevaluate yourself and think together with others what I can do differently, what I could do better. [Jenni]

> If you do this again, I would increase the amount of group time and maybe add more workshop content especially for our new adjuncts, things like Bloom's

taxonomy and all that because many have no training about that. But overall I really enjoyed our group discussions. [Pete]

Participant [Gabriela] suggested that the TWS methodology should serve as mandatory training for everyone on campus, be it full-time or part-time instructors. Another suggestion was to utilize the TWS rubrics that could serve as the template of expectations for all instructors at DMACC. She also noted that in her view, the method would be fully encouraged and supported by the college administration:

> I think that it would be beneficial for adjunct as well as fulltime faculty. I think it should be something that everyone should have to do before they even start regardless. Because I think it would be a great way for Laura as the Provost to implement it into the structure. A lot of different colleges and universities out there have a template for how they would like you to teach in the classroom and a lot of people have a problem with templates but what I like about them is that they are uniform and you don't have to worry about someone not doing what they are supposed to be doing because they are held accountable.
> And I think that the TWS can hold people accountable for what they are doing in the classroom, so they can't space it off for three hours or drinking coffee or whatever the case maybe it just provides a template and a check and balance for the professors. [Gabriella]

The circumstances of holding part-time instructional positions, teaching in more than one institution, and not being able to have an individual office with paid office hours place an additional challenge for adjuncts to be organized and well-prepared for their classes. While one may assume that organization is an expected characteristic of any teaching job, in reality college instruction, and especially community college teaching where the student population is extremely diverse, often appears more spontaneous than pre-structured, with creativity and intellectual freedom frequently overruling the organizational side of teaching.

According to the participants, the TWS method and its detailed rubrics, specific

examples, and checklists were invaluable tools for reflection and successful unit

completion. Participant [Gabriella] noticed that it was easy to follow the prompts and the

rubrics because "this [TWS unit] is all organized for us, the authors of the Teacher Work

Sample method are doing the all the work." It should be also added that all the

participants of the study received the highest overall score of a "3" for their TWS

documents from the independent raters at the University of Northern Iowa.

The goal of the TWS method is to engage the instructor in the long-term

reflection about their teaching and student learning. The process would not be possible

without questioning yourself every step of the way, changing the established pedagogical

approaches, and planning ahead. In other words, one of the biggest benefits of this TWS

study was that the participants were able to demonstrate on-going assessment of their

teaching and continuous growth as educators. Below are a few examples of adjunct

reflections and peer-sharing from a focus group interview:

> [Moses]: I state on the front page that I look at the rubric on the back and change
> my prompts. One of the prompts is community. And I will read off my sheet here:
> *Community: differing views of appropriate gender roles and women's identities in
> light of cultural/ethnic/socioeconomic variability and arrival of recent
> immigrants. Is assimilation occurring? Is it always good? Gender flexibility:
> androgyny, GLBT questioning of gender/sexual identity as an ascribed status or
> fixed identity, shifts in male and female roles, backlash among religious/cultural
> "conservatives" School: results of 2004 adjunct survey at DMACC RE: gender
> skews among adjuncts according to "traditional" male and female disciplines,
> professions, occupations (the gender "hangover").* So it got me thinking about
> the diversity of students that we have here and in my classroom and it's been
> quite interesting, but also the school itself where we try to push the nontraditional
> hires, and I am not sure that it is always successful…

> [Brett]: I find myself thinking what can I implement now but also how can I
> implement this in the fall; and how would I go about doing this in a way that

actually gets some of this stuff. In terms of the contextual factors that I have been paying attention to but as we point out earlier not as comprehensively as I might have used it in the past.

[Pete]: I am continuously shuffling different pieces and I am enjoying the opportunity to do so. Though I am not a type A personality, I enjoy the well-structured plan for each rubric and shuffling different rubrics helps me to construct a holistic and well-grounded framework of what is happening in my classrooms and why it is happening.

[Jenni]: Because my students come with very minimal skills, my goal is to meet them where they are at and provide a comfortable environment. The TWS rubrics are very essential for me because I am able to reflect and analyze each objective and I have done a lot of changes since I started with this study. This is really exciting to me.

Other members coined the experience with the TWS methodology to be

"analytical and synthetic." [Moses] Synthetic in a sense that it allowed him to structure

his teaching so that the students in his introductory course move from what the

participant called "simple road mining at the beginning to more intermediate and higher

level thought process by the end" [Moses] To do so, according to [Moses] the instructor

had to carefully structure a course in a reflective, gradual way that inevitably requires a

lot of time to evaluate and design.

Two of the six participants were instructors of sociology and anthropology and

two adjuncts taught psychology for many years, through the meetings, they all shared that

the Contextual Factors rubric was by far the easiest one for them to address. During the

focus group interview all four participants were united stating that without analyzing the

audience and the environment that has influenced students' lives and it would be

impossible for instructors to conduct learning that is tailored and reflective of student

experiences. Some of the participants also mentioned that it was the easiest rubric to

work through. Below is participant [Brett's] revelation about what he was able to observe

through his reflection on the contextual factors rubric. He suggested there has been a

major shift in the way students are 'trained' to approach learning:

> … for traditional students coming from high school these days my genuine
> assessment of them is that many of them are being taught how not to learn. That
> really consists of regurgitating certain facts, of being able to find it the quickest
> on Wikipedia, to basically not having to think for them or to think for themselves
> as little as possible. We weirdly argued ourselves arranged ourselves in the
> educational system, if we are not careful we end up to the sort of instructor that
> taught the funnel period education, you know, students are empty vessels and you
> put the funnel in their head and you pour the knowledge in and hope it doesn't
> leak out. And I think we are adopting that position where there are an awful lot of
> students that have leaks and have no particular interest in hanging onto anything
> that you might funnel into them. I think one of the challenges that any educator
> has to face is how do you help students unlearn that process of not wanting to
> learn how to you help them rediscover any interest, much less joy in learning? But
> we need to find ways that we can get students to see that learning is about them, it
> is not about us, it is about them! [Brett]

Participant [Pete] referring to [Brett's] point stated above suggested that instructors are to

blame for this situation, referring to what other participants named as a "cookie-cutter

approach" to teaching. He continued supposing that is why students get so surprised

when the instructor deviates from the syllabus:

> if you have laid everything out in front of them and you cannot surprise them.
> You need to prepare, you need to really prepare, and you need to think through
> carefully what you are about. And you if change something, it has to be
> intriguing both to you and them, challenging them to be even more reflective and
> think critically and to evaluate collectively what it is that they have learned in
> their learning. [Pete]

Different participants pointed out different TWS rubrics that challenged them. For

example for instructor [Moses] the Learning Goals rubric was one of the most creative

parts of his entire TWS unit, at the same time while working through it, he realized how

his he likes to depart from the pre-established goals for the sake of rigor of the

discussion:

> I never know what is going to come out of my mouth at certain points, and it
> makes it livelier for the students if I haven't said it twenty times already. But that
> also means there are going to be departures from sub-competencies that are a big
> challenge for me and that may at the same time be the toughest one. [Moses]

For participant [Jenni] one of the most challenging processes in the study was

working through the Assessment Plan rubric. Since Jenni taught college preparatory

classes for her the biggest challenge was to assess how successful her students would be

in a regular college class after the take a course with her. Since [Jenni] never got to meet

her students after they completed her course and evaluate their effectiveness in a real

college class, this rubric made her think about long term assessment, Jenni concludes

that this discussion made her think about: "what I can do, rather than what I can't do."

[Jenni] Participant [Pete] also suggested that the Assessment rubric was quite

challenging for him:

> It is so easy to fall back on multiple choice tests that you run through the scanitron
> and it takes exactly 2 minutes to grade it. But is this the best way to assess their
> learning? Or can I spend more time and find a way to see their reflective and
> analytic abilities, the Bloom's taxonomy type stuff... [Pete]

For members [Brett] and [Kate] and [Moses] the Learning Goals rubric appeared

to be most difficult to address, since they all taught introductory classes, they discussed

the fact that it is important to teach what Brett coined as the "panoramic" view of the

subject, so that students are informed about the whole spectrum of the field of study.

The challenge for both of them was whether the students are able to truly see the holistic

picture of the field, or if they saw it as a "topic of the week" type of study. Both

participants discussed the challenge of teaching their classes in a global perspective that would prompt students to be analytical and be able to see the whole spectrum of the subject matter rather than disjointed pieces of it. The solution that the participants have arrived at as a result of this rubric discussion was that they should scale back their teaching content, but be able to teach it better. Another area of discussion was devoted to whether or not instructors should or should not teach chapter by chapter, following the order of their textbooks or approach it with more flexibility.

Since the TWS instrument presented a clearly organized format that many participants (if not all) enjoyed following the prompts and were able to earn the highest scores on the scoring rubric, the adjuncts discussed the idea of whether or not each classroom experience should be marked by planned organization and planning on the part of any college instructor. The five out of six participants agreed that teaching according to the chapter order was not as important, as long as they were covering the competencies and attempting to show students a more holistic approach to learning:

> I am constantly asking myself am I on track, or are the students on track in the classroom? And in some ways that is strong because it keeps you on track and doesn't allow a whole lot of digression, and sometimes it is a weakness, and sometimes the digressions are extremely interesting in themselves that can eventually be tied back. You can touch on the abstract surface all the way through the course and never really give the students the sense that there is any depth to it. You got to stop once in a while and concentrate on the case study or something like that, so that they are aware of the great depth and then they learn that this abstract level really does have some way of generating questions about highly specific human motives and behaviors. [Moses]

Participant [Pete] disagreed, pointing out that the discussion should be subject specific, and that the same approach could not be applied for teaching grammar for example, where strict and sequential order of topics to be taught is crucial.

The time factor was certainly one the major challenges that was identified by adjuncts. While this study was done within one and a half months during the summer semester, all participants noted that more time would allow producing even higher levels of reflection and creativity. Additionally it was challenging for the instructors to teach their units before the end of the summer semester (needless to say that summer semester is the shortest semester of the academic year). Some were able to teach their entire units, others incorporated some topics of their TWS units, but were unable to teach the entire unit due to time limitations. The discussion of time will continue in the following chapter when the researcher will present further suggestions and possible modifications for the TWS method used in a community college setting. Knowing how little time is available for professional development for adjunct faculty, one of the suggestions from the participants was to add some writing assignments through the workshop and other TWS meetings.

> Yeah and part of this in doing it, like for example, do it for each elements in this pole, in this work sample. It would get people to see that oh well then this is what I should do, ok. To have them get something out of it to take and then repeat that process. But in my mind that is just from the prospective of thinking that if I am learning this stuff, if I'm forced to roll up my sleeves then make it happen, then ok I can do that. [Brett]

The ability to come back systematically and revisit the TWS unit and continuously revise it was another suggestion and challenge at the same time that was suggested by participants:

> In a perfect world I would have more time to do it; I think the target audience it's designed for is a semester long maybe even a year of internship experience. I do feel, and it might just because of where my life is right now, that I feel that I am trying to grab the moment, just to get things down on paper. And I would like to re-visit an experience like this in the future, just to kind of see where I am at a

couple of years from now or something. And to be able to take some more time at it. [Gabriela]

Theme 4: Applicability of the TWS Method for a Community College Adjunct Faculty Member: Reflections On-Action and In-Action.

The last theme that emerged from the research data was related to research question number four of this study that stated "How did the Teacher Work Sample affect the adjuncts' teaching and how did this process contribute to their reflective thinking about teaching and learning?"

The participants of this study discussed how their TWS experience has helped them to reflect on their roles as adjunct faculty and their ability to modify their instruction to better suit their classroom dynamics on a day to day basis. Additionally they were able to better reflect on their previous days teaching experience and better prepare the next days' lesson plans.

The researcher was interested to find out whether the reflective practice identified by Donald Schön (1987) who discussed reflection as the process of in-action and on-action was applicable to the adjunct experience with the TWS methodology. Schön (1987) stated that "reflection-in-action," is a thinking that allows humans to "reshape what we are doing while we are doing it." (p. 26) When one experiences reflection-in-action, he/she is able to go beyond available theories and respond or invent new rules on the spot. According to Schön (1987) by engaging in "reflection-on-action" the individual is able to make a detailed analysis of the event, and possibly develop a more systematic review of his actions and experiences. Schön suggests that insight and new understanding

can be reached through reflection on problems that are encountered in real life; by using

reflection-on-action practitioners are able to develop their practice.

All adjunct participants of the study mentioned the crucial role of reflection in the

Teacher Work Sample methodology. Throughout two group and individual interviews

many participants observed that without reflection the TWS method would fail.

Interestingly, all participants of this perceived their TWS unit preparation and reflections

to be both on-action and in-action. Below are a few examples from [Moses], [Brett], and

[Gabriela]:

> I tend to think before I do things very much on the fly and so much of my own
> reflecting is in the classroom is in action. I see that partly as a product of necessity
> maybe mostly necessity because of lack of time to sit down and meditate on
> things. Or be rewarded for taking the time to, yeah exactly. And at the same time
> I think that the TWS requires the on-action the after the fact or the head of the
> time to keep up what is coming up or what just happened so forth. So doing in-
> action takes less time and so is time efficient which is the nature of the global
> economy. [Moses]

> My experience with this was probably a little bit of both. Maybe you are
> reflecting in the action of teaching or engaging with the students but you are also
> reflecting outside of the classroom. I would think that you would need to do both
> to be a professor that was able to meet the needs of the students. [Gabriella]

> It was and has been both. I always reflected in action, but that is something I
> have always done. The question is one more of reflection on action, how can I
> relate that to, how can I make that an ongoing cycle between reflection in action
> how can I take those reflections on the moment and put it in a framework that
> allows me to use it effectively for reflection on action and how do I take the
> conclusions out of that and put them back into what I actually do, how I act in the
> classroom? And so to me the TWS is this has been this real, it is like a
> framework, it allows me to bring some pieces and to say "this is where this works,
> this is where this doesn't." [Brett]

In his book, *educating the reflective practitioner*, Donald Schön (1987) stated that

modern schools and universities design their curricula in accordance with the paradigm of

technical rationality. In this view the teacher or the administrator is concerned primarily

with instrumental problems and subsequently the styles and methods of teaching in a

technical practice are typically narrowed to available body of theories and training of

technical skills of day-to-day practice where there is little room for continuous reflection

on the instructor's part. The researcher asked the study participants to reflect if the TWS

method fits Schön's paradigm of technical rationality in today's system of higher

education. In regard to Schön's paradigm the participants suggested that the TWS method

is the opposite of this trend in approaching teaching and learning. The researcher inquired

what the participants thought happened to the rest of the teachers who didn't engage in

reflection about their teaching. Here the answers varied, but they all pointed to the

obvious need of introducing more opportunities for professional development such as the

TWS project:

> In my opinion those instructors live in the dark. They are static. They have no idea that teaching is all about self-analysis and continuous improvement. I have learned so much through this study with you about what I should be doing in my Introductory Spanish II; it opens new possibilities for me, even with my on-line class. [Pete]

> And I suspect in education, some people who work in higher education probably think abstractly. But for the person submitting the Teacher Work Sample it is important to reflect and to show that it is a reflection and not just on the "what's" and "how's" but the "why." [Brett]

> What we do is a service to our students, and students need to see some sort of return on their investment, if we speak of technical rationality here in college. And no matter where I am teaching I must look at the competences or the rubrics, to make sure that I can do the most of my job and make sure that I can get the most of the students to come out at the other end. It is like a little "factory" [laughing]. It is not like you can have everything you need in a can and each time open it and "eat" the same thing...teaching is all about reflecting and changing everything on a day-to-day basis, about what's happening in the world and what connections I can make for my students .. [Jenni]

...Some people are more reflective than others. Some people develop it [reflection] over time. An instructor that is chronically unreflective is therefore kind of a cookie cutter teacher. I think that is a problem because many disciplines change and some change rather rapidly. [Moses]

As far as applicability of the TWS method for the community college system and overall instructors of higher education, all six participants saw direct transferability of the method as a college professional development experience.

I would call it an opportunity for faculty development. Why? Because it puts before most faculty who haven't been in the primary or secondary system the opportunity to sit down and hopefully think about their curriculum in ways they haven't really approached it before and so I think that is always a valuable experience because of that opportunity to reflect and reconsider, restructure, reorient all those things that is a process that I personally don't mind going through. [Moses]

This opportunity also allowed me to reconsider my course and modify it for an online version. It takes a lot of thinking, designing and evaluation, and the rubrics brought me much closer to where I wasn't before I started this. So I think this is valuable for face-to-face instruction but also online! And I would like everyone on our campus to continuously go through it. [Pete]

This process is very valuable for teaching in college because I am able to step back a bit and look at my teaching form the outside, and find my new potential as well as fix some problems. [Jenni]

My deep desire is, if I had all the time in the world, would be to apply the TWS framework to all of my classes, all of my stuff and knowing that there wasn't time for that what it has made me do is think a little more carefully in all the areas that I have not done this TWS unit on. Because I concentrated on just one unit out of my intro course, and so it has made me think a lot more about ok so if I were doing it for unit 1 or unit 3 or unit 4 what would I do? So to that extent it has been very good. [Brett]

Throughout the interviews adjunct participants brought up the aspect of being paid for their participation in professional development. Many participants referred to them not being able to afford to attend professional development events without a stipend. Lack of funding for adjunct professional growth is a topic that has been well

published in today's scholarly research, but without allowing a budget for it, any professional development initiative, be it the TWS study or any other, cannot be fully appreciated by the participants. One of the research participants called it an unethical to not be paid for professional development and office hours, when instructors prepare for their teaching and work with students one-on-one: "I would go this far and say that the lack of explicit encouragement of office hours is a severe ethical breach, it is an ethical breach for an academic institution." [Moses] Participant [Gabriela] suggested that:

> Adjuncts have things to do and they don't get paid enough to do it. I think compensation would be a definite benefit and incentive for faculty and it could be something small like for the hours spent on this you are compensated for the hours that you worked on the sample.
> I would definitely advocate for this TWS project as long as we would have meetings that we are paid for and we were on the same page about how we want to educate faculty and adjunct about this program. [Gabriela]

At the end of the study, all participants insisted to keep the TWS experience for professional development at DMACC; however the participants suggested that minor changes to the format of the study could be made. While in the next chapter the researcher will discuss the implications of this study and possible directions that can be taken in regards to the TWS method with community colleges, it is important to mention that all participants discussed the fact that reflection about your teaching and assessment of learning must be happening on a continuous basis be it through the use of the TWS framework and its rubrics or any other reflective framework.

Results

Research Question 1: Was the TWS perceived to be an effective professional development tool when introduced to the adjunct faculty?

All of the study participants admitted that they benefited from their TWS experience from beginning to the end of the project. The benefit of the TWS experience

was noticeable from the observation of first meeting; when the participants were actively participating with the training and from the first minutes of the TWS workshop they were applying and connecting the TWS material with their teaching practices. Unanimously all six participants admitted that the Teacher Work Sample was invaluable for their professional growth and should be incorporated as part of the professional portfolio offered at the Des Moines Area Community College. Another suggestion was made for DMACC's administration to utilize the TWS rubrics as a hallmark template of expectations for all instructors at the college.

The TWS method's organization was identified by the study participants as one of the most obvious advantages of their entire experience. Staying organized and well-prepared for their classes is obviously a great challenge for many adjuncts due to the fact that their working conditions in most community colleges do not include an opportunity of having individual office space with paid office hours. In many ways the organization of the TWS method with its specific rubrics, prompts and checklists helped the participants to stay on track and work on their units in increments.

Following the organization allowed the participants a unique view on their teaching and they were able to see their teaching from new angles. Many participants suggested that the study was the most comprehensive study that they have ever participated in. It was suggested by some participants that that TWS was more comprehensive than some of the service-learning or learning-community trainings that they had been part of. All adjunct participants of the study admitted that every single

rubric of the seven TWS rubrics had value and allowed them to gain an in-depth reflection and assessment of their teaching.

Many suggested writing the Teacher Work Sample was a new way to develop and document their teaching successes and failures. Since this method encourages detailed descriptions, the adjuncts suggested that writing the TWS was a process that should be on-going and continuously evolving.

However, the opinions varied on how the organization of the TWS rubrics for future college instructors could be modified: some suggested that the organization of the TWS study should be left as is, without any changes allowing the participants to dive deeply in their pedagogical reflections. Others proposed the following changes:

a. Combining the two rubrics: Analysis of Student Learning and Self-Evaluation and Reflection together.

b. Combining the three rubrics: the Assessment rubric, the Design for Instruction and the Instructional Decision Making rubric.

c. Shortening the Learning Goals and the Design for Instruction rubrics and combine the two rubrics into one.

Completing the Teacher Work Samples also helped the adjuncts gain a sense of belonging to DMACC's academic community. The training workshop, individual interviews and focus group meetings helped the participants get acquainted with each other, discuss the challenges and joys of teaching at DMACC, find commonalities and peer-share their TWS works in progress. All the participants mentioned that they enjoyed the group discussions that were an emphasis of this study.

Additionally many adjuncts felt that completing their Teacher Work Samples and earning the highest scores for their work and receiving a TWS certificate was an accomplishment that helped their self-esteem and boosted their professional confidence as educators.

Research Question 2: How did the Teacher Work Sample practice build on the adjunct previous experiences with professional development?

The two major obstacles that were identified by the participants were lack of time and lack of money to support their work. The adjuncts had a little over a month during the summer semester to write their TWS units and go through the workshop, group meetings and individual interviews. All participants suggested that more time would allow producing even higher levels of reflection and creativity. Reflection and creativity were named by the participants to be the benefits of their TWS experience but unfortunately lack of time was the biggest obstacle. Another suggestion was to increase the amount of group meetings and workshops. It was suggested that during the group meetings it was important to include time for direct application, so that participants could start working on at least one of the rubrics during these meetings. Additionally, some participants suggested that through group discussions and peer-share they were able to make connections and see how the Teacher Work Sample would work for their future teaching.

Being paid for all the preparation and participation time was another crucial factor that was discussed. Working through the Teacher Work Sample methodology required high levels of reflection and intellectual growth from the participants. All research

participants suggested that this project helped their preparation for their current and future teaching. The experience presented to be a comprehensive and a thorough effort. It was stated by the participants that institutions must pay their instructors for participating in such professional activities, as this TWS study, because in the long run quality teaching is the mission of any institution of higher learning. Unfortunately since this research study took place during the time of a national economic crisis and massive reductions of budgets for the operation of public colleges, lack of funding remains the biggest obstacle in the way of professional development opportunities for college faculty.

The word "challenge" did not scare the participants of this study; in fact many admitted that pedagogical challenges were necessary ingredients of their teaching jobs. Many also suggested that they expected to be challenged by this project in order to grow professionally and the pedagogical challenges presented by the TWS framework were appreciated by the participants.

One of the challenges for some participants was to follow the format and address the rubrics in the exact way that the TWS had prompted them. Some instructors suggested that they realized that they sometimes tended to deviate from the pre-established goals for the sake of rigor of their teaching and thus it was a challenge for some to stay on track and address every aspect of each rubric. On some rubrics in their units the participants scored the rating of two (which was the middle rating on the TWS scoring rubric) that signaled that the indicator of the rubrics was only partially met. The specifics of the subjects taught by adjuncts also presented small challenges when the

participants were working through the TWS rubrics, this particularly connected to the Learning Goals and Assessment Plan rubrics.

The Assessment Plan rubric challenged adjunct participants about the multiple approaches to assessment and the big question whether it was possible to truly measure student learning. For example, for an adjunct teaching Spanish, one of the many possibilities to assess students' learning was to assign students to speak or visit with a native speaker (face-to-face or through computer mediated communication) and experience the real communication, however this type of experience was not always possible to formally assess due to the nature of the assignment. For an adjunct teaching college preparatory courses it was impossible to assess how her students were doing in the actual college credit classes, after they completed her class, since she never saw these students again in her preparatory classes.

Interestingly, all three adjunct participants who taught introductory courses mentioned that the Learning Goals rubric was the most challenging. The challenge was linking learning goals with learning outcomes in a way that would not only look good on paper but allow instructors to teach their introductory courses in a holistic view. It was a novelty for these participants to formulate and address the Learning Goals rubric in a way that would illustrate holistic teaching of all the fundamentals of the subject matter. For those three participants the goals were to educate students about the subject (general learning goals) and at the same time teach their courses in a way that would let the students see the global perspective of the field (learning outcomes) and at the same time

prompt students to be analytical and be able to see the whole spectrum of the subject matter rather than disjointed pieces of it.

Research Question 3: When community college adjunct faculty complete a Teacher Wok Sample, how does this process contribute to their reflective thinking about teaching and learning?

All of the study participants suggested the crucial role of reflection in the TWS methodology and that without continuous reflection and self-analysis the TWS method would fail. While the participants admitted that they have been constantly reflecting on their practices prior to this study, all adjuncts indicated that that their experience working on the TWS was unique and allowed them to gain a more comprehensive reflection about their teaching.

For all participants of this study, the organization and the rationale behind the Teacher Work Sample methodology presented a new view on reflection. The adjuncts defined their process of working with the method to be synthetic, analytical and comprehensive. Many also suggested that group discussions and the opportunity to peer-share helped to advance their understanding of the method and its connection with their daily teaching.

The unique design of this TWS study with emphasis not only on individual work, but also on group meetings and an instructional workshop, allowed the adjuncts to continuously engage in reflection about their teaching and student learning both in the action of their teaching and the TWS meetings as well on the action, when they were preparing for their classes or writing their Teacher Work Samples. The suggestion was

made not to stop on one TWS unit of instruction that was accomplished during the summer semester, but to work on new units and continue the TWS meetings on a yearly basis, inviting new adjuncts to join their efforts. The adjuncts suggested that this method implied a deeper and more comprehensive level of reflection that included taking into account new variables (or what the TWS calls "indicators") not all of which that they had considered before the study.

Many participants suggested that the TWS experience proposed a new way of reflection on their teaching which included teaching a class and afterwards analyzing and documenting everything that took place during that class. The novelty was to reflect and discuss if they had been able or not to meet all the pedagogical goals that they had proposed for that class in the work sample before they taught. At the same time the adjuncts were able to more specifically analyze their teaching progress and reflect on what parts of the lesson worked and what parts they could modify to address individual student needs. This experience also helped them to consistently document the evidence of their teaching and student learning.

Throughout the study adjunct participants demonstrated a commitment to reflection and continuous learning in their interviews and work samples that they had accomplished. The participants confirmed that reflection about teaching is never a static process and the more they engaged in it the more depth they were able to add to their Teacher Work Samples.

Research Question 4: How did the Teacher Work Sample affect the adjuncts' teaching and how did this process contribute to their reflective thinking about teaching and learning?

While all participants discussed that this study made them approach their teaching more comprehensively, one of the participants suggested that the method involved the four R's: Reflect, Reconsider, Restructure and Reorient. These four verbs summarized the entire process of this study, because all of the participants suggested that throughout this experience they have been reflecting, reconsidering, restructuring and reorienting.

All participants discussed that the TWS method was a new way of documenting and assessing their teaching successes and failures. Specifically the participants learned that this experience was a helpful tool to keep track of their progress and reflect on their teaching through the new variables that had been referred by the TWS method as indicators and rubrics.

Some participants stated that working through the rubrics and listening to their colleagues' during the group meetings made them realize the need to cut back some of their teaching material, and instead teach less content, but do it better. Others reconsidered some of their teaching activities or learning goals and came up with more creative solutions that were prompted through the discussion of the rubrics during the meetings.

The adjuncts agreed that the TWS method contributed to them not being static in their teaching, or what some named as the opposite of the "cookie-cutter teaching." While reflecting about the method in general, or addressing each rubric in specifics, the

participants of this study discussed the fact that there is no universal formula of teaching or learning, and one size does not fit all.

For all participants going through the TWS method presented a different look at their teaching. Some discovered new activities or approaches to teaching as a result of group discussions or individual work on the TWS unit; others were able to see how their thinking about teaching has changed as a result of the process.

However the biggest benefit of this study was that the TWS experience prompted the adjunct faculty to discover new potential for continuous reflection about their teaching. They discovered more creative potential in approaching the contextual factors that impact their teaching, their varied learning goals, their multiple assessment plans, their unique design for instruction and instructional decision-making, their accurate analysis of student learning and in-depth reflections and self-evaluations.

Whether it was strictly following the TWS rubrics in the original order or shuffling through the pieces, each participant mentioned that the goal was to not stop and continue analyzing, assessing, synthesizing and reflecting about what's happening in their classrooms. The participants also mentioned that their TWSs should not have an expiration date , and that it did not make sense to stop at what they had accomplished with their first unit, but carry on and complete more TWS units in order to grow as educators and build their teaching portfolios.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

Part-time and adjunct faculty members have been present in institutions of higher learning since the founding of this country. These groups of faculty provide a variety of unique professional experiences to their students; they offer financial savings and scheduling flexibility for their colleges and on many levels, adjuncts offer a range of other valuable contributions to their institutions. Today, adjunct faculty members constitute sixty percent of all faculty members in American postsecondary institutions.

Over the last fifteen years, research of the part-time faculty status in American system of higher education consistently points to poor working conditions, meager salaries, lack of professional development opportunities and an overall voiceless position of adjunct faculty within the academia (Berry, 1999; Jacoby, 2006b; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Nelson, 1997; Roueche et al., 1995; Wallin, 2004b).

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences that community college adjunct faculty had with college teaching and implementation of the Teacher Work Sample. Another objective was to see how the completion of Teacher Work Sample contributed to the adjuncts' reflective thinking about teaching and learning and whether the TWS experience prompted them to new ways to look at their teaching practices.

Teacher Work Sample methodology was chosen to be the foundation of this experience due to its growing popularity with education programs. Since its creation, the

TWS method has been only used with K-12 teacher candidates, but this study examined the applicability and impact of the TWS methodology teaching in a college setting.

This was a qualitative case study in which data were gathered through individual face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews, observation of the TWS training workshop and the overall ratings of adjunct TWS units (on a scale of 1 to 3) through the use of the TWS scoring rubrics. The study involved a total of six adjunct participants that were subject to the part-time provisional certification requirements of the Des Moines Area Community College, and who were currently teaching associate degree and technical diploma level courses at the community college.

The uniqueness of the study was that at the time of this research no other scholarly studies applied the TWS method on a college environment in general, or part-time college teaching faculty members in specifics. In order to further the research on Teacher Work Sample and its applicability for community college faculty as a professional development tool, this study answered the following questions:

1. Was the Teacher Work Sample perceived to be an effective professional development tool when introduced to the adjunct faculty?

2. How did the Teacher Work Sample practice build on the adjunct previous experiences with professional development?

3. When community college adjunct faculty completed a TWS what obstacles and challenges did they experience?

4. How did the Teacher Work Sample affect the adjuncts' teaching and how did this process contribute to their reflective thinking about teaching and learning?

Conclusions

Based on this qualitative research project, the study contributed to the understanding of how Teacher Work Sample methodology could be used as one of the venues for professional development for community colleges' adjunct faculty.

This study indicated that the Teacher Work Sample methodology was perceived to be an effective tool to assist in the professional growth of adjunct faculty members. This study is consistent in its findings with other studies (e.g. Devlin-Scherer et al., 2007; Schalock, Schalock & Girod, 1997; Stufflebeam, 1997) that suggest that the TWS is an assessment method that is a valid tool to assist in the training of modern teachers. This study is also consistent with Stronge and Tucker's (2000) conclusion that the TWS method works to assess the level of preparedness of a teacher.

Previously Teacher Work Sample methodology has only been used to demonstrate teaching preparedness of the teacher candidates. This research presented adjunct community college faculty members to be a new target audience of the TWS method. The researcher strongly believes that part-time faculty should be considered the primary audience for the TWS training on college campuses. As Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggested currently college part-time faculty members frequently teach a heavier load than their full-time colleagues which in turn minimizes time available on campus to meet with students, prepare for class, engage in any professional development opportunities, or simply become part of the college community.

This study examined the experiences of adjunct faculty working the Teacher Work Sample. This research effort also demonstrated that the TWS method can be considered to be one of the measures of teaching accountability for college faculty.

This study found that there is a need for more professional development opportunities for part-time faculty and that Teacher Work Sample methodology could be considered an effective tool to assist in the professional growth of adjuncts not only because it allowed them to grow professionally, but also personally, the participants felt included in the academic community and benefited from their socialization with their colleagues. Following John Dewey's (1933) vision that reflection must happen not just individually but also in a community of interaction, future studies similar to this one with part-time community college faculty as the primary research participants could be designed with an interactive and group communication focus in mind.

The study demonstrated that the TWS method is effective for college level educators and not just the K-12 educators. The adjunct faculty members were able to demonstrate that the TWS method is effective in its potential to stimulate reflective thinking about teaching and learning. All six research participants showed that the TWS is a valid model for thinking about teaching and learning that is not limited to a particular level of instruction, be it teaching in secondary or postsecondary context.

Based on the data gathered, the results of this study support the reports of earlier studies (McConney et al., 1998) who note that completing the TWS unit is a comprehensive multi-facet process. The study was also consistent with observations by Stronge and Tucker (2000) who discussed that completing TWS is a comprehensive,

complex project that requires "instructional design, development, delivery and assessment; using TWSM requires a significant time commitment." (p. 39) The participants defined their experience to be synthetic, analytical and comprehensive.

This study supported the findings that the TWS method is both a product and a process (Henning, Trent, Engelbrecht, Robinson & Reed, 2004). As a product, the current study showed that all participants' level of competency was at the highest score possible (which is the score of 3) on the TWS rubric. As a process, the participants have clearly demonstrated their reflective potential, continuously reflecting on and in action of their teaching, connecting their teaching performance with student achievement.

The study participants also demonstrated advancing their understanding of the TWS method and its connection with their daily teaching. Here the researcher once again would like to quote one of the participants of the study who summarized his experience with the TWS method in two significant sentences:

> Take one part of it, write out any rubric, and then see how your thinking changes as a result of this and the way you think about it. And how even doing it for this one bit is making me change how I think about everything else that I would do. [Brett]

The Teacher Work Sample helped the adjunct faculty members of the Des Moines Area Community College to engage in continuous reflection about teaching and address some of the challenges that college educators face today. This study proved that the TWS training is an enriching professional development tool that should be used on community colleges' campuses to improve teacher practice and to help ensure that more college students are taught by the highly qualified instructors.

The results of this study suggest that Teacher Work Sample training at the community college helped the part time faculty to feel included in what Schuller (1990) defined as the "academic community." Schuller (1990) stated that growing numbers of adjunct faculty signified the disappearing notion of 'academic community' in which the adjuncts were included in professional development and decision-making initiatives on college campuses. All of the participants discussed the need for more professional development events like the TWS training that would allow the participants to socialize with their colleagues across all six campuses of DMACC and gain a sense of inclusion in the college community. This was also consistent with Dewey's (1933) view that reflection demands attitudes that value intellectual growth of oneself and others, and that reflection needs to happen in community of interaction with others.

Another conclusion of this study had to do with the fact that completing the TWS study added to the participants' sense of self-esteem and belief in them as professionals. Earning the highest scores on their TWS units and receiving the TWS certificate was a vote of confidence in their role as educators. Needless to say, how much the part-time status of their jobs and often times invisible or voiceless positions on campus adds to the educator's lack of faith in his or her professional career and self-worth. Successful completion of this project without doubt gave every adjunct participant another boost of confidence and once again validated their status as not just instructors but Educators.

This study means the beginning of the process of discovering the endless pedagogical potential that adjunct faculty bring with them to their colleges of employment. Through the exploration of the professional needs of adjunct faculty it is

hoped that this project will move higher education institutions towards more inclusive practices with part-time faculty.

It is hoped that higher education institutions will start assisting much more their part-time faculty members with opportunities for professional growth. It is hoped that all colleges would be able to always pay their part-time faculty members for their professional development.

It is hoped that all colleges will continue to fully benefit from and encourage the vast talents, creativity and reflective thinking abilities of their adjunct faculty. By improving teacher practices the colleges ensure their reputation and the ability to offer highly qualified learning to its students.

The researcher would like to point out that this qualitative study yielded rich data that could be perceived and interpreted in various ways. Specifically the researcher sees lots of opportunities to link the four themes with the four research questions differently than how it had been linked in the data analysis chapter of this paper. In other words, the correlations of these themes and the research questions are certainly in the eye of the principal investigator.

For example, the second theme "importance of professional development and continuous growth for adjunct faculty" could be grouped with the first research question of this study: "Was the TWS perceived to be an effective professional development tool when introduced to the adjunct faculty?" Similarly, the fourth theme of this study "applicability of the TWS method for a community college adjunct faculty" could also be

linked with the first research question of this study: "Was the TWS perceived to be an

effective professional development tool when introduced to the adjunct faculty?"

<div align="center">Recommendations for Future Research</div>

This study should be viewed as one of the solutions to the problem of lack of

inclusion of part-time faculty members in professional development on community

colleges' campuses. More studies incorporating Teacher Work Sample methodology in a

college setting should be carried out. The study revealed that part-time faculty engaged in

professional growth but also gained a sense of belonging to the academic community.

It was apparent that the adjunct faculty members in this study viewed their

Teacher Work Samples to be continuously evolving and continuously changing. Based on

this study, this TWS experience marked a start of continuous reflection about their

teaching and learning that according to the participants did not have an "expiration date."

The study revealed that Teacher Work Sample methodology is a valid and unique

professional development tool that aids in professional growth of college instructors.

Below is a list of recommendations that emerged as a result of this study that was

conducted with six part time faculty members at the Des Moines Area Community

College during the summer of 2009:

1. The part-time faculty group needs more opportunities for engagement with

    campus activities and opportunities for professional development. This research

    established that adjuncts at DMACC would like to see more events that involve

    part-time faculty members. According to the participants of this study, the

    Teacher Work Sample methodology training was perceived to be a valid and

effective tool to assist in the professional growth of adjunct faculty members. Based on the findings of this study the TWS training should be happening on a continuous yearly basis without an expiration date. The continuity of the training will also help participants to create more than one unit of teaching, subsequently improving their teaching of the entire course and not just some of its parts. All the participants should be paid for their TWS training, participation and preparation (that also includes the hours spent writing the TWS unit). Special effort should be made to recruit new DMACC adjuncts to participate in the TWS training before the beginning of each semester.

2. Another recommendation was that the TWS training should not be limited to part-time faculty only, full-time faculty could benefit just as much from their participation. The research participants indicated that the organization of the study design could be revised; some rubrics could be merged and modified according to the DMACC's requirements (for example the Learning Goal's rubric is an equivalent to the DMACC's course competencies that are specified for each subject area). It was suggested by the participants that the format of the training should include the group component. Group discussion and peer-share events should be part of the study's design. Following the suggestions of adjunct participants, the TWS workshops should be each at least three hours and thirty minutes in length to allow interactive groups focus and time for direct application of the material and activities to help drafts the unit. According to this research, at least one month is necessary to allow in between the meetings so that the

participants have sufficient time to teach their units before the end of the training. Based on this study adjunct faculty who have been through the TWS training in the past and have written at least one unit could serve as mentors (who will be paid) to support and coach the new TWS participants. This study demonstrated that the TWS experience also expanded the socialization level of adjuncts with their colleagues and promoted a culture of inclusion to the academic community. Further TWS trainings will allow creating new opportunities for them to meet their colleagues and together engage in professional growth.

3. As a result of this research, a suggestion was made that the TWS methodology could serve as mandatory training for everyone on campus, be it full-time or part-time instructors. According to the participants of this research, the TWS methodology could be fully encouraged and supported by the college administration as a necessary vehicle for professional development for the faculty group. Completing the TWS training allows adjunct faculty members to gain more confidence in their professionalism and self-worth. Based on this study, the TWS training should be happening primarily on community colleges' campuses where the use of part-time faculty is greater than in any other types of institutions of higher learning.

4. This research study could be replicated with a larger sample of adjunct faculty members. Another possibility is to conduct this study with adjunct faculty teaching in different types of institutions of higher learning (for example a public four year university and a private four year college) and compare the findings.

The results may shed new light on the professional preparedness and effectiveness of the TWS methodology with part-time faculty teaching in different types of institutions of higher learning. Another possibility is conducting this research study with both full-time and part-time community college faculty members as the target audience. Through a comparative analysis study the investigator could compare the scores and assess the professional preparedness and effectiveness of the TWS methodology with both groups. Finally, Teacher Work Samples completed by college instructors (full or part-time, or both) could be examined and analyzed in detail with special emphasis being placed on the analysis of the rubrics. The results may shed new light on how the TWS method may be modified to best meet the learning needs of college faculty.

This study has been a pleasant journey for the researcher. Having been an adjunct myself, it was very important to research this valuable group of instructors and explore their professional needs. This study has also incited the researcher's desire to not stop and continue creating new initiatives for professional growth for part-time faculty at community colleges.

Additionally the study has helped the researcher consider the prospect of applying for college positions that entail leadership in the field of professional development in order to pursue her passion for improving professional development for community college faculty members.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FIRST ROUND

1. Before we begin the questions, could you please provide some basic background about your teaching? For example what is your teaching discipline and how many years have you been teaching? Do you have teaching experience besides your community college experience?

2. When did you decide to become an educator and what were some of the influences that encouraged you to enter this profession?

3. What led you to decide that you want to teach in a college setting?

4. Do you have a philosophy of teaching? What about a philosophy of learning?

5. How do you understand reflection about teaching and learning?

6. How do you incorporate reflection into your courses?

7. How do you measure student learning?

8. How do you evaluate/asses your own teaching?

9. What have been your joys as a teacher?

10. What have been your greatest challenges to overcome as a teacher?

11. Looking back on your teaching career, what have you changed or how have you improved? What areas of teaching would like to improve?

12. What keeps you in the classroom?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SECOND ROUND

1. Could you please discuss if you have any previous experience dealing with designing, assessing and reflecting upon a unit of your instruction?

2. In what ways did you use reflection about your teaching and student learning before working on a TWS unit?

3. I know you have taught and now are completing your TWS unit, so far what have you found to be the challenges and obstacles of this work?

4. Could you share with me some of your specific thoughts as you were working through:
    - o Contextual factors (using information about the learning-teaching context and student individual differences to set learning goals and plan instruction and assessment)

    - o Learning Goals (Setting significant, challenging, varied and appropriate learning goals)

    - o Assessment Plan (using multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during, and after instruction)

    - o Design for Instruction (designing instruction for specific learning goals, student characteristics and needs, and learning contexts)

    - o Instructional Decision-Making (using ongoing analysis of student learning to make instructional decisions)

    - o Analysis of Student Learning (using assessment data to profile student learning and communicate information about student progress)

    - o Reflection and Self-Evaluation (reflecting on instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice)

5. Which of the seven teaching process has been most challenging? Why?

6. Would you say that this instrument allows a richer understanding of your own teaching and your students? Why or why not?

7. Having completed your unit and applied it to your teaching, has there been any change in your teaching and approach to student learning?

8. Would you say that this instrument is for every community college instructor? Why or why not?

9. Would you say that being an adjunct instructor and possibly teaching part-time in more than one type of educational institution calls for a greater need for this group of instructors to work with reflection instruments, such as the TWS? Why or why not?

10. Would you encourage other faculty to become involved with the TWS method? Why or why not?

11. What suggestions do you have for the TWS instrument and unit completion? Would you do anything differently, add or subtract any components?