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Authorship & Agency: Exploring Coaching as a Tool for Student Success

Allison Rebecca Lake
University of Kentucky, alli.lake91@gmail.com
Author ORCID Identifier:
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8961-7167
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AUTHORSHIP AND AGENCY: EXPLORING COACHING AS A TOOL FOR
STUDENT SUCCESS

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DISSERTATION

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By
Allison Rebecca Lake
Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Jane McEldowney Jensen, Professor of Education Policy & Evaluation
Lexington, Kentucky
2022

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

AUTHORSHIP AND AGENCY: EXPLORING COACHING AS A TOOL FOR
STUDENT SUCCESS

Coaching has emerged as a new, innovative practice within higher education. However, we have only begun to understand the true impact of coaching for college students. Research from individual coaching programs has shown that students who participate in coaching sessions are more likely to be retained, have higher GPAs, and engage in self-regulated learning. However, little research has been done to explore coaching from the student perspective. We do not yet understand how students utilize coaching as a tool to optimize their student experience. The goal of this project was to explore how coaching impacts the student experience and to illuminate ways in which coaching might help students develop self-authorship and agency. Using a phenomenological approach, data was generated through semi-structured interviews with 19 students at one university in the southeastern United States. Data analysis illuminated several major themes, including academic success strategies, decision-making, and independence, all of which help students optimize their college experience. Additionally, a perceived increased self-authorship and agency was demonstrated for most students, with first- and second-year students focused primarily on academic development, and junior and senior students focused on future planning and adulthood. Additional demographic features such as gender, major, and race/ethnicity were explored, but did not reveal any significant distinctions in the data.

KEYWORDS: Coaching, Student Success, Agency, Adulthood, Self-Authorship,
Student Perceptions

Allison Rebecca Lake

(Name of Student)

12/6/2022

Date

AUTHORSHIP AND AGENCY: EXPLORING COACHING AS A TOOL FOR
STUDENT SUCCESS

By

Allison Rebecca Lake

Dr. Jane McEldowney Jensen
Director of Dissertation

Dr. Jane McEldowney Jensen
Director of Graduate Studies

12/6/2022
Date

DEDICATION

To my family and friends, who have supported me, challenged me, and been my biggest
cheerleaders along this journey. Especially to my mom, the first Dr. Lake, who inspired
my love for learning and has always reminded me to "be brilliant."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

others who engaged my mind and spirit in discussion, and who are incredible scholars, practitioners, and the future of education.

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We did it!

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Studies show that college graduates contribute more tax dollars, rely less on public financial assistance, are less likely to engage in criminal activity, and are more likely to participate in philanthropy (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2013). To achieve these outcomes, students must first graduate from college. It has long been recognized that many students struggle with transitioning to the college environment, ultimately leading to challenges with retention, persistence, and graduation. Whether it be academic barriers, challenges with belonging, financial strain, or difficulty connecting academics and career, students come to college with a multiplicity of needs that must be addressed for them to be successful. To address these issues, colleges and universities have adopted a variety of approaches to increase retention, including creating new support programs that assist students with transitions to college life and guide students toward graduation. These retention initiatives have been a focus area of higher education for several decades (Tinto, 1993; Shapiro et al., 2017). However, more recently universities have begun to look more holistically at retention efforts focused on student success rather than only college completion (as cited in Farruggia et al., 2018).

A holistic approach serves to de-emphasize standardized testing, GPA, and other academic measures as predictors of student success in college. Instead, metrics of noncognitive skills like academic mindset, perseverance and creativity have been proposed as alternative measures of predicting success (Farruggia et al. 2018). Farruggia et al. (2018) found that academic mindset was a significant predictor for academic achievement and first to second year retention. Further, they concluded that

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noncognitive factors likely play a significant role in college student success overall. A growing body of evidence supports that regardless of college success indicators, interventions focused on mindset, belonging, and academic self-efficacy result in increased performance and reductions of achievement gaps in college students, particularly underrepresented students (Farruggia et al., 2018).

The Coaching Approach

In 2009, Complete College America was created to address issues of college retention and completion in the United States (Complete College America, n.d.). Complete College America is a national nonprofit which works to "increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations" (Complete College America, n.d., p. 1). This organization sought to change the way higher education administrators work with students by focusing on educating all students through additional student support programs and measures. With a mission to increase college completion rates and close achievement gaps, Complete College America was a first step in rethinking holistic student success approaches on college campuses.

Subsequently, student success coaching has emerged as a new, innovative approach to support student success on college campuses. While services like academic advising, tutoring, and first year programming have existed on college campuses for many years, coaching provides a new approach to student support by shifting the dynamic between staff and student and using coaching methods to partner with students toward identifying resources, supports, and skills they need to be successful in college.

In an attempt to boost academic success and retention in a cost-effective, meaningful way, institutions of higher education have modified coaching models to increase student learning, productivity, and overall performance (Blankenship, 2017). Robinson (2015) provided the first known research on coaching on college campuses with an exploration of the landscape of college coaching through a systematic overview of coaching programs on college campuses. Blankenship (2017) and Warren (2019) furthered this study by exploring the experiences of coaching from the coach perspective. Multiple studies on retention impacts (Robinson, 2015; Capstick et al., 2019; Glenn, 2010) of coaching programs have emerged over the past decade, looking quantitatively at the effect coaching has on retention, GPA, and persistence toward graduation. Research from individual coaching programs has shown that students who participate in coaching sessions are more likely to be retained, have higher GPAs, and engage in self-regulated learning (Captstick et al., 2019; Glenn, 2010, Bettinger & Baker, 2013). Glenn (2010) found that "coaching students to think about their study processes and monitor their learning can pay large dividends…the idea is that by providing constant feedback, students can see their own strengths and weaknesses."

Very little qualitative data exists outside the coach experience, and no known research exists exploring the experience of students who participate in college coaching programs with professionally trained coaches. Symonds (2020) began the exploration of the student perspective on coaching through the exploration of a peer coaching model and its impact on community cultural wealth. Symonds (2020) found that students who participated in a peer coaching program also increased belonging and self-confidence. This focus on positive psychology and self-efficacy seems to help increase student

retention and success, ultimately leading to positive outcomes for the student and the institution. By participating in coaching programs during the college experience, research indicates that students are more likely to be retained, persist toward graduation, and have a positive impact on society.

However, we do not know *why* these programs are impacting students in such a significant way. We do not understand what students are getting out of this experience that they are then able to integrate into their daily lives. Is coaching the right approach? Why is coaching impactful? How do students learn throughout the process of coaching? As a former success coach at a university, and a credentialed coach, these questions have been at the forefront of my mind for a while. What is really going on here, and how can we begin to truly understand the student perspective on coaching?

Statement of the Problem

Success coaching programs were initially designed to provide students with important skills that help them be successful and persist toward graduation. In her 2014 study, Robinson was the first to do a comprehensive survey of coaching programs across the United States. She found that nearly 70% of college coaching programs were created with an aim to increase retention (Robinson, 2014, p. 89). Additional institutional influences included increased resources, providing academic resources, promotion of self-awareness, development of critical thinking skills, and increased student engagement. She also found little consistency across coaching programs, and lack of clarity about program outcomes and approaches. However, it began to become clear in her study, as well as others, that coaching had an impact on the student experience in college.

As I began narrowing down the research question for the study and reviewing the current literature, it became clear that there is much work to be done in exploring coaching on college campuses. As a former success coach at a university, a Professional Certified Coach (PCC), and current employee and member of the International Coaching Federation (ICF), I have seen first-hand the impact coaching can have for students. However, it is unclear how or if students internalize this experience and use it to be more successful as students and adults. While some studies explore retention and persistence of students who have participated in coaching (Bettinger & Baker, 2011, 2013), it became evident that the *how* of these results is missing in the literature. Previous studies have focused on retention, GPA, and self-efficacy impacts of the coaching experience, but have not yet explored the student perspective on this phenomenon, nor have they explored how students may use coaching as a tool for meaning making and self-authorship.

As I explored the existing literature, several questions emerged related to college success coaching. How do students make meaning of this experience? How does coaching help them throughout their college journey? This project also focuses on issues of agency: the ways in which students perceive their self-authorship development and how that affects their college experience and choices. Ultimately, what is the connection between coaching, self-authorship, and agency? This study aims to explore these major questions to begin to understand the student perspective of how success coaching impacts them and lay the foundation for further research in this area.

Research Question

Students who participate in coaching come from a variety of backgrounds with differing experiences and understanding of how to navigate college life. While coaching has existed for more than 20 years on college campuses, little empirical research has been done on student success coaching within the context of higher education. Even less research has been conducted to explore the student experience with coaching, with most existing studies focusing on institutional outcomes and "success" from the institutional perspective. This study aims to uncover how coaching helps students optimize their experience in college. Using theories of self-authorship and agency, as well as foundational concepts of student success, I sought to understand how coaching help students be more successful both in and out of the classroom, make meaning of their experiences in college, and better understand themselves to help them make decisions about their present and future. How does coaching help students move toward agency and self-authorship? How does coaching help students better understand themselves and strategize to achieve their goals?

To address these questions, I used a phenomenological approach. The Integrated Success Coaching (ISC) program is unique to the University of Kentucky and therefore the research is limited to this specific program. The central research question for this study is: In what ways does coaching help students optimize their college experience? To answer the research question, data was collected through one-on-one interviews with undergraduate students who had participated in at least three coaching appointments since the beginning of the Integrated Success Coaching program, which launched in Fall of 2020. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to better understand the

phenomenon of coaching on college campuses and its relationship to the concepts of self-authorship and agency. Data were then analyzed using the theoretical framework and a variety of demographic markers, including gender, major, number of coaching appointments, and class standing.

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

The concepts that frame this project stem largely from student development and sociological education literature. The research question originally stemmed from student development theories (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2008; Astin, 1970), as coaching is an experience which is believed to impact a student's development of self-authorship. However, students do not navigate college in a vacuum and therefore the concepts of agency (Archer, 2003, 2007) and reflexivity (Archer, 2007, 2010) help guide the study. The partnership of these fields of literature provide context for the central themes of this study. These themes are discussed further in Chapter Two.

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

There is little empirical research about coaching college students outside of academics, and even less that explore the student experience. There are currently only a handful of known studies exploring college student coaching programs, and no known research about the student experience with coaching, particularly in the United States. This research adds to the growing body of literature about coaching on college campuses and will provide a foundation for future research exploring the coaching role within a college context. This study is one of the first to illuminate the student perspective on the coaching experience and will lay the foundation for further research of coaching as a service on college campuses. The findings from this study will also help increase

understanding of the student experience within the Integrated Success model at the University of Kentucky and may provide insight that may impact the growth of the program at UK and on other college campuses. As a study which explores the growing phenomenon of coaching on college campuses, this study also illuminated areas for future exploration and research to better understand the student experience with coaching, and its connection to student development, retention, persistence, and overall wellbeing.

Context of Study

This study was conducted in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic did not have a significant impact on the number of participants in the study or the nature of the study's focus, it is important to understand the context which shaped the experiences of students who participated in the coaching program in the study. The coaching program being studied was launched in Fall 2020, in the first few months of the global pandemic, when there was still much disruption and uncertainty in the lives of faculty, staff, and students. This inevitably impacted students' ability to transition successfully to college, learn new educational technologies, adapt to online teaching methods, and adjust to a "new normal." This frame must be considered when analyzing the experiences of the student participants in the study, including their overall college experiences and ability to be successful in a college environment that was also adapting. This is explored further in chapter 5.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Academic Coaching/Success Coaching**: "the individualized practice of asking reflective, motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-

assessment, sharing effective strategies, and co-creating a tangible plan" (Robinson, 2015; p. 126).

- **Advising**: "connecting students' academic and career goals by providing individualized, accurate information on majors, courses, general education, degree requirements, beyond-the-classroom activities, institutional policies/procedures, and appropriate referral to academic and non-academic resources" (Robinson, 2015, p. 114).

- **Agency/Agent:** collectives sharing the same life chances though having common relations to a set of structural resources (Archer, 1995).

- **Appreciative Advising/Appreciative Coaching/Appreciative Inquiry:** the intentional collaborative practice of asking generative, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials (Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2008).

- **Client:** The individual who is working with a coach. For this study, the client, students, and coaches are all representative of the individual working with the coach.

- **Coaching:** "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (International Coaching Federation, 2022).

- **Counseling:** "a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals" (Kaplan, Tarvydas, & Gladding, 2014; p. 366)

- **GPA:** Grade point average.

- **Integrated Success Coaching:** A model of coaching created by the University of Kentucky which brings together six student support dimensions into one integrated model through the lens of Appreciative Inquiry.

- **ICF:** International Coaching Federation; the leading global organization for coaches and coaching.

- **Learning Partnership:** a suggested approach to helping students develop a sense of internal authorship or self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2014).

- **Mentoring:** "the sharing of your knowledge or professional experience with another person in order to advance their understanding or effectiveness" (Hicks & McCracken, 2010).

- **Reflexivity:** the manner in which we think about our thinking or have internal conversation, or "the generative ability for internal deliberation upon an external reality" (Archer, 2003, p. 20).

- **Retention:** The continued enrollment of students at a postsecondary institution

- **Self-Authorship:** "the capacity to internally define a coherent belief system and identity that coordinates engagement in mutual relations with the larger world" (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004, p. xxii).

- **Teaching:** "providing a framework for understanding based on an objective body of knowledge, not necessarily from one's own experience" (Hicks & McCracken, 2010).

- **Tutoring:** "a person employed to instruct another in some branch or branches of learning, especially a private instructor" (as cited in Blankenship, 2017).

Summary

This chapter provided a foundational perspective of student success and retention, as well as a brief history of coaching in higher education and its applicability to the college student experience. Coaching is a growing field in higher education, but there is little consistency across coaching approaches, and little research about the impact of coaching from the student perspective. We do not currently know what is happening in the coaching relationship from the student perspective. How is coaching helping students optimize their experience in college? What are students gaining from this relationship? This chapter continues with a statement of purpose, research questions, and concludes with study significance, context, and definitions of important terms. In the following chapter, I will explore the foundational literature which underlies this study, and the concepts and theories which framed the study's approach.

LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter two is a review of the literature for this study. This chapter provides an overview of some of the major buckets of literature, explores their connections, and considers how these theories frame the research approach. To provide additional context, I will also explore how coaching differs from other "helping" roles on campuses, including tutoring, counseling, mentoring, peer coaching, faculty relationships, and advising. The chapter concludes with an overview of the conceptual framework for this study, including a review of theories of self-authorship and agency.

What is Success Coaching?

When most people think of coaching, athletic coaches come to mind. The term "coaching" became mainstream through sports in the 1800s (Warren, 2019). In the 1940's a new form of coaching, which first began as a form of developmental counseling, emerged (Kappenberg, 2008), with influences from psychology, business, and counseling. Existing primarily in the business world, early forms of coaching focused on performance management and development of managerial skills (Brock, 2008). As coaching evolved, its definition, scope, and focus continued to change (Robinson, 2015). In its inception, coaching was defined as a verb meaning "to prepare someone" (Robinson, 2015). However, a true definition of coaching has proved elusive, and it wasn't until recently that coaching became more defined in the context of student development. Through iterations of coaching across various fields, this definition has evolved to the currently accepted definition of coaching from the International Coaching Federation (ICF), which defines coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-providing and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and

professional potential," (ICF, 2022). This definition is now widely adopted across coaching programs and models and has been expanded upon and adapted to fit multiple contexts of coaching.

Eventually, coaching found its way to college campuses in the form of academic coaching, an emerging profession which helped students focus on skill development and persist toward graduation. While coaching existed outside of the realm of higher education long before the current trend, researchers believe that coaching first appeared in higher education settings around 2000 (Bettinger & Baker, 2011; Sepulveda, 2020). In these early coaching models, academic coaching was the primary focus, with an emphasis on helping students achieve within the context of the college classroom. According to Robinson and Gahagan (2010), "academic coaching focuses on three steps: self-assessment, reflection, and goal setting" (p. 27). Academic coaches would work with students to assess their skills, reflect on their previous experiences, and set goals to overcome obstacles.

As this field continued to grow, universities concerned with low graduation rates began to turn to coaching as a strategy to increase college persistence and retention. Early coaching programs, therefore, focused primarily on academic success measures, which ultimately led to increased retention among undergraduate students (Bettinger & Baker, 2011; Robinson, 2015). However, as coaching programs continued to develop within higher education, these began to expand to include other areas of focus, including social and emotional wellbeing, and overall student success. When we think about optimizing the student experience,13iffer13t success, both inside and outside the classroom, is a major factor. Much research has been done on various student success approaches and

measures, including student retention, academic performance, student engagement, personal development, overall wellbeing, and mindset. Here, I will briefly provide an overview of research in these areas to provide additional context for the intervention of coaching and how it fits into the larger conversation regarding student success outcomes.

Student Success in College

Student success has long been a focus of institutions of higher education. Kuh et al. (2006) defined student success as "academic achievement, engagement in educationally purposeful activities, satisfaction, acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, and competencies, persistence, attainment of educational objectives and post college performance" (p. 7). For many institutions, student success is directly measured by retention, academic performance (e.g., GPA), and graduation rates (Sepulveda, 2020). However, additional measures like academic and social integration (Strayhorn, 2012), and personal development, including non-cognitive factors, self-awareness, goals, and wellbeing can be important as well (Schreiner, 2010, Blankenship, 2017). Further, a student's perspective on their success may differ from that of the institution. Habley, Bloom & Robbins (2012) described that "when coaching students, it is essential to assess what happiness, success, and achievement means to them as individuals, and to recognize that these individual meanings will vary by cultural background and other demographic variables" (p. 334). It is therefore imperative that coaching research also focus on the student perspective of how coaching impacts their experience and development throughout college to fully understand the impact and relevance of this intervention.

Retention

Coaching initially emerged as a practice to help increase retention on campus (Bettinger & Baker, 2011). To understand the broader significance and context of coaching, retention efforts in higher education must be explored. While retention measures vary by institution, many measure the fall-to-fall enrollment of first-time, full time traditional students (Sepulveda, 2020). Therefore, many institutions focus primarily on the retention of their first-year cohorts when considering retention efforts. We know that students who are retained at the institution after their first year are more likely to graduate, and that students who graduate from college tend to have greater outcomes than those who do not (Mayhew et al., 2016). However, graduation rates from institutions of higher education continue to remain low. In 2020, the six-year graduation rate for first time, full time undergraduate students at 4-year degree-granting institutions was 64%. At two-year institutions, the graduation rate was 34% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Institutions have continued developing strategies to help students be retained at the institution through academic supports and social-emotional support strategies (Robinson, 2015).

An15iffer15nnal motivator for institutions is the cost of attrition. When a student leaves an institution, their tuition dollars also leave the institution. To understand the true cost of attrition, the American Institute for Research developed a report to outline the cost of attrition to state and federal governments. They found that student attrition cost $6.8 billion in state subsidies, $1.4 billion in state grants, and $1.5 billion in federal grants between the years of 2003 and 2008 (Schneider, 2010). The sheer magnitude of these costs not only impacts the institution, but taxpayers, highlighting the need for institutions

to find ways to better support students to retain them and move them toward graduation. State funding for public institutions has continued to decrease year over year, forcing institutions to do more with fewer resources (Sepulveda, 2020). This has pushed university faculty and staff to determine new ways to support students and use creative strategies to increase retention and graduation rates amidst increasing pressure from the public and state and national governments.

Engagement and Belonging

In addition to academics, a students' sense of belonging and engagement on campus is directly linked to their desire to stay at an institution (Astin 1970, Strayhorn 2012). Alexander Astin is widely known as one of the original researchers on involvement and belonging on campus, citing that a highly involved student is more likely to be engaged on campus, and is therefore more likely to stay at the institution (Astin, 1999). By engaging students through involvement, faculty and staff interactions, and additional support programs, institutions can keep students on campus longer and help them stay engaged at the institution.

Strayhorn defined sense of belonging as "perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected by, valued by, and important to the group (e.g., campus community) or others on campus (e.g., faculty, peers)" (Strayhorn, 2012, p. 3). Campus social integration and connection to faculty and staff on campus is imperative for students' sense of belonging, with those who do not feel a sense of social integration or connection being more likely to leave the institution (Wilcox et al., 2005).

Recent research on the concept of thriving (Schreiner, 2010) shows that students want to be "fully engaged intellectually, socially, and emotionally" (p. 4). Schreiner developed an instrument to help measure student thriving in college, identifying five measures or sub-scales, which include engaged learning, academic determination, positive perspective, social connectedness, and diverse citizenship (Schreiner, 2010). Each of these scales come together to determine a student's ability to thrive in their college environment, which may look different for each student. Schreiner states that because of students' varying backgrounds, there is no one way to support students. However, support across all these domains is critical to overall student thriving, and student success (Schreiner, 2010). This suggests that more holistic interventions may be necessary to support student success and help students develop a sense of belonging at their institution.

Mindset & Self-Efficacy

Perhaps the most well-known research on self-efficacy stems from the work of Albert Bandura (1977, 1982). Self-efficacy refers to "an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments" (Bandura, 1977). In his research, he described that self-efficacy influences one's choice of activities and environmental settings, and that people avoid activities that they believe exceed their coping abilities. This directly relates to many decisions college students make, including their choice in academic major, their assessment of their ability to be successful, and their ability to transition to college effectively.

Lent et al. (1986) found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic success for college students in STEM majors. Chemers et al. (2001) studied the

academic self-efficacy and academic performance of first-generation college students, finding that increased self-efficacy was directly related to academic success. In their 2007 dissertation, Ramos-Sanchez explored how self-efficacy mediated the relationship between generational status and academic outcome indicators, finding that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of college adjustment for first-year students, but that there was no significant difference for first-generation students (Ramoz-Sanchez, 2007). They concluded that this could increase students' retention and persistence toward graduation.

Many studies have been done on growth mindset; a term made popular by Carol Dweck (2006), but which has been often misunderstood as a personality trait rather than a strategy for learning. However, two recent studies are particularly relevant to the current college student mindset and speak to the importance of additional research which supports growth mindset as a construct. Kim et al. (2022) studied the long-term effects of a psychological intervention using growth mindset on academic outcomes and degree completion of college students. They randomized first-year students into one of three groups, growth mindset, belonging, or control groups, and tracked their outcomes, including GPA, credits earned, major choice, and degree completion. While there was no evidence of academic treatment in the full sample, the mindset treatment improved GPA and major selection in Latinx and Pell-eligible students. A 2021 study explored the effects of growth mindset on learning engagement due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Zhao et al., 2021). A total of 1094 college students completed online questionnaires related to growth mindset. They found that growth mindset was positively related to learning engagement and negatively associated with perceived stress and perceived COVID-19 event strength. These results indicate that growth mindset could contribute to college

students' learning engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has implications for promoting learning engagement post-pandemic for college student populations.

Wellbeing

Recently, institutions have started looking more holistically at the student experience by focusing on a student's overall wellbeing. Mental health resources, wellness campaigns, and wellness coaching have all emerged as strategies to increase overall wellbeing. However, evidence suggests that despite the importance of these issues, universities have been unsuccessful in addressing them (Swaner, 2007). Most institutions utilize counseling centers as the primary source of mental health and wellbeing resources, with occasional support from other sources. In a 2018 study, Udhayakumar & Illango found that students demonstrated a high level of anxiety and depression, which had overall adverse effects on their general well-being, development, educational attainment, and quality of life. They suggested that "undergraduate students need extra measures from their college to deal with the anxiety and depression that they experience" (p. 86). Further, they suggested that additional supports such as peers and additional staff members could help support the students overall mental health and wellbeing, including workshops on wellbeing, academic stress, stress management, and programs designed to increase self-efficacy and wellbeing overall (Udhavakumar & Illango, 2018). While many wellness supports have increased on campuses in recent years, more work needs to be done to continue to support students' mental health and overall wellbeing.

Student Success Support Roles on College Campuses

We know that personal connections between students and faculty or staff on college campuses help provide individualized support which helps students complete tasks and be more successful (Bettinger & Baker, 2011). Gallup research shows that students who meet one-on-one with faculty and staff who care about them were more likely to report engagement and wellbeing during college (Matson & Clark, 2020). There are numerous opportunities for students to engage with faculty and staff in order to develop meaningful relationships, engage in one-on-one interactions, and obtain resources that will help guide students toward successful degree completion. To facilitate these relationships, colleges have established various programs on campus to help support students' holistic needs and assist with progression toward graduation.

Today, there are many forms of support a student can receive while on campus. This may take the form of meeting a professor during their office hours, attending tutoring for assistance with academic work, connecting with an academic advisor to discuss current and future academic plans, or working with a counselor for greater overall wellbeing. Whatever the role, we know that "personalized support and advising bridge students' informational gaps and help students' complete tasks they might not otherwise complete" (Bettinger & Baker, 2011, p. 2). It is important to differentiate between these in order to understand the boundaries of coaching, and when a referral is needed to another area of campus support. Various definitions of these components help illuminate their differences, and describe them in different ways, including identifying advising as a process, counseling, and mentoring as a relationship, and tutoring as a method (Robinson, 2015). These services all exist separately from coaching, which has emerged as a newer

support service on college campuses. In order to better understand the relationship between coaching and already existing services, we must explore the nuances that differentiate coaching as a unique intervention. These distinctions help us understand what sets coaching apart, and why it needs to studied further.

Coaching and Academic Advising

One of the closest support disciplines to success coaching is Academic Advising. Academic Advising was believed to have begun at Kenyon College in the 1820's (Cook, 1999). The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) defines academic advising as a

> Developmental processes which assist students in the clarification of their
> life/career goals and in the development of educational plans for the
> realization of these goals. It is a decision-making process by which students
> realize their maximum educational potential through communication and
> information exchanges with an advisor; it is ongoing, multifaceted, and the
> responsibility of both student and advisor. The advisor serves as a facilitator
> of communication, a coordinator of learning experiences through course and
> career planning and academic progress review, and an agent of referral to
> other campus agencies as necessary. (NACADA Clearinghouse, n.d.).

Academic advising includes a series of intentional interactions, student learning outcomes, and curriculum which contextualizes the educational experiences of students. On most college campuses, the role of the academic advisor is to ensure that students are enrolled in the correct courses that will lead them toward graduation in a timely manner

(Blankenship, 2017). While some academic advisors may also see to the developmental needs of students, the advising model is not always standardized across or within institutions but serves the primary function of managing the students' academic coursework and experience. In a 2013 study, Young-Jones et al. found that academic advising impacted several student success factors, including student self-efficacy, study skills, and overall success. However, differences emerged for populations of demographically diverse students, indicating the need for additional supports for first-generation students, minority students, and other underserved populations (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Many of these student success outcomes align with those seen in coaching programs (Brock, 2008).

Although there are many similarities between academic advising and coaching, the primary difference lies in the approach to one-on-one interactions. In her 2008 dissertation, Brock (2008) sought to differentiate coaching from advising through the lens of the International Coaching Federation (ICF), arguing that "coaches do not advise clients…the client has the answers" (p. 2). Advisors might offer suggestions or advice to students during interaction based on their expertise, but coaching is a mutually constructed experience which puts the control in the hands of the client, or student, in order to steer the conversation. Further, coaches do not manage the academic lives of their students through course registration or degree plan management and focus rather on academic skill building and success strategies.

An added complication in this relationship appears through the Appreciative Advising approach (Bloom, 2013). In this approach, practitioners utilize a positive psychology approach to move students through six stages: Disarm, Discover, Dream,

Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle, described in more detail later in this chapter. This process can be easily adapted for a coaching approach, allowing academic advisors to provide similar resources and support as success coaches.

Coaching and Mentoring

An additional support service on college campuses comes in the role of mentoring. Mentoring takes place both formally through faculty, staff, and peer mentor programs, and informally through relationships between students and faculty or staff members.

Campbell and Campbell (2000) define mentoring as

A situation in which a more experienced member of an organization maintains a relationship with a less experienced, often new member to the organization and provides information, support, and guidance so as to enhance the less-experienced member's chances of success in the organization and beyond…When the mentor is a faculty or staff employee of the university and the mentee is a student, the goal of the mentoring relationship is to enhance the student's academic success and to facilitate the progression to post-graduate plans – either graduate study or a career in the workplace. [para. 3].

Characteristics of this relationship include expectation sharing and guidance provided from mentor to mentee. On college campuses, mentoring relationships often exist between faculty and student, or staff and student. In their 2007 study, Kim & Sax studied the mentoring relationship between students and faculty in teacher education

programs, determining that these experiences enhanced students' self-efficacy, sense of purpose, and emotional well-being (Kim & Sax, 2007). They concluded that mentor relationships with faculty and staff are often developed organically, based on relationships in the classroom, research interests, or participation in student organizations and other programs.

Additionally, many studies have shown the effectiveness of peer mentoring on college student transitions. A 2003 study by Rodger & Tremblay examined the effects of first-year student participation in a year-long peer mentoring program. They used an experimental protocol to assign 537 students to an intervention group and determined that those who participated in the mentoring program had significantly higher GPA's mid-year than those in the control group. They also found a relationship between the academic achievement and anxiety of those who participated in the group, showing that those with high anxiety benefitted from a peer-mentoring relationship. In a 2022 article, Collier discussed the benefits of peer mentoring for students in a post-pandemic college environment, stating that peer-mentoring programs assist students with establishing social networks of support, dealing with the information overload of the modern college environment, deal with unexpected changes and challenges, distinguish relevant resources and how to use them appropriately and help students learn to navigate the unfamiliar environment of college (Collier, 2022).

These informal types of relationships are not often present in coaching, which presents a challenge of building rapport and trust. Students are often assigned to coaching or seek out coaching due to a referral or self-identified need. Because these relationships don't necessarily develop organically, coaches must take specific care to disarm students

and cultivate a relationship of trust (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021). The coaching

relationship is vitally important, as the student is put in charge of the conversation. While

the mentoring relationship is often mutually beneficial, there is a clear hierarchical

distinction between mentor and mentee, with this structure and power playing a key role

in the relationship. This hierarchy clearly distinguishes mentoring from coaching, as

coaching attempts to create a mutually constructed relationship free from the power

dynamics, seniority, and interest-specific instructional components of the mentoring

relationship.

Coaching and Counseling

Counseling services are simpler to differentiate from coaching. Like coaching, no

universal definition of counseling exists. However, a consensus definition was adopted

by 29 major counseling organizations which defines counseling as "a professional

relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish

mental health, wellness, education, and career goals" (as cited in Robinson, 2015, p. 26).

Counseling centers have existed on college campuses for many years to meet the mental

health needs of students, including psychological stressors, managing anxiety,

depression, and other mental health disorders. Counselors require significant training,

certification, and licensure in order to provide psychological support to students

(Robinson, 2015). Further, counselors often have a specific focus on managing the

mental health needs of students explicitly, with academic success and personal and

academic performance as a secondary focus. Counseling has been shown to have impacts

on students' academic performance and retention (Lee et al., 2009). In a sample of 10,009

college first year students, they found that students who attended counseling were more

likely to be enrolled in school but was not related to academic performance when controlling for pre-college enrollment factors. However, in counseling settings, problems are viewed in the context of how they might assist or detract the client from reaching their goals (Jaska & Ratey, 1999). Swartz, Prevatt, & Proctor (2005) made the distinction between coaching and counseling by stating, "Although coaching is similar to counseling in its therapeutic relationship and confidentiality, coaches do not explore serious emotional, cognitive, or behavioral problems" (p. 648).

The boundaries between coaching and counseling are clearly outlined by coaching programs and coaching organizations (ICF, The Gold Standard in Coaching, n.d.). In 2021, ICF released a white paper outlining guidelines for coaches on when and how to refer a client to mental health resources, arguing that mental health issues are outside the scope of coaching, and stating that "the role of the coach is to co-create with the client opportunities for seeking professional help when appropriate" (Hullinger & DiGirolamo, 2018, p. 2). In the college content, counseling and coaching can work in tandem, providing psychological support through counseling, and developing strategies for success in academics through coaching. Hullinger & DiGirolamo go on to state that "what is important is that a coach does not diagnose nor does a coach offer treatment" (p. 6) and cites the ethical responsibilities of a coach to work with their client to determine the best interventions.

Coaching and Tutoring

An additional existing academic service provided on many college campuses is academic tutoring. Tutoring services are offered on many college campuses and are aimed to provide supplemental education and support for students struggling with

specific academic needs. The primary goals of tutoring are to provide academic gain for students to foster independent learning (Robinson, 2015). Most college tutoring models are peer-peer tutoring, which utilizes students who have previously successfully completed a course, and focuses on specific areas of learning, including homework assignments and test preparation (Pugh, 2005), who states that "tutoring complements and supplements classroom teaching, reaching the struggling student in ways that classroom teaching cannot (p. 11). Blankenship (2017) states that "in this context, the "bottom-line" role of a tutor is to provide instruction and improve understanding about a specific topic or subject relevant to the student and his or her coursework" (p. 26). Conversely, coaching establishes greater structure, with meetings being scheduled in advance, and not being as flexible to the informal meeting needs of the student (Wallace & Gravells, 2006).

While there is overlap in the support for student academics, tutoring and success coaching differ primarily on the approach and method of interaction. While tutors focus on specific courses and supplement understanding of course content, coaches focus on general academic skills, study strategies, and methods for student success (Warren, 2019). Tutors are often other students, while coaches are trained professional staff members. Further, tutors and tutoring services are often limited in the support they can provide, helping with specific courses rather than broad sweeping academic strategies and holistic student support. For these reasons, tutoring and coaching often exist simultaneously, and have little overlap outside of referrals for specific needs each service cannot provide.

Coaching and Faculty Roles

Faculty provide an interesting comparison to success coaches in the context of student support. In addition to teaching, faculty serve in many support roles outside the classroom. Faculty often serve as mentors, advisors, supplemental instructors, and provide general support for student success both inside and outside the classroom. Because of this, faculty may employ some similar strategies to coaching, developing meaningful relationships with students, providing guidance and support through academic and personal challenges, and working with the student to set and achieve goals. Some studies have shown that faculty are a "central determinant of students' academic success" (Ingraham, Davidson & Younge, 2018) throughout their college experience. Further, studies have shown that faculty relationships are key to student success, increasing student retention (Matson & Clark, 2020), leading to intellectual growth (Volkwein, King, & Terenzini, 1986), and providing additional support for students of minoritized identities (Mawhinney, 2011). Tinto (1975) argued that "interaction with faculty not only increases social integration and therefore institutional commitment but also increases the individual's academic integration" (p. 109).

It is clear that faculty-student relationships play a significant role in the student experience, ultimately leading to student success. A 1995 study examined the relationship between faculty mentoring and student success, finding that there was a positive relationship between faculty mentoring and academic success, but that this relationship varied across gender and ethnic groups. While honest feedback about one's skills and abilities was a positive predictor for white women, it was not for white men or non-white individuals (Anderson et al., 1995). Campbell & Campbell (1997) used an experimental

design to investigate the impact of faculty mentoring on minority students, finding that those who received faculty mentoring had significantly higher GPAs, and were twice as likely to graduate as non-mentored students.

However, mentoring students takes significant time, and studies have shown that the more time spent with a student, the higher these effects will be (Swanson, 2006). While faculty relationships are critical to the student experience, coaches can provide more holistic, intentional, wrap-around supports, working with students to explore their academic and personal identities in a way that most faculty do not have the time for. Lastly, there would need to be additional training for faculty to be able to address a multitude of student needs and identity challenges that would ultimately detract from their three primary focus areas of scholarship, teaching, and research (Swanson, 2006).

Peer Coaching

Lastly, peer coaching has emerged as another approach to coaching on college campuses. This type of coaching utilizes a peer-peer model rather than a staff-student model. While there is no consensus as to what a peer coaching model looks like, there are several components that are consistent across models (Hooker, 2013). These characteristics include dialogue between peers, non-evaluative conversations, trust, and reflection. In order to be successful in these categories, training of peer coaches must occur, and selection of students with these skillsets is important. Further, the use of technology and social networking sites must be considered as a component of a peer coaching model (Hooker, 2013).

While peer coaches can be beneficial in some settings, overall, staff coaches are likely more effective in being able to assist students with the complex, intersecting challenges of being a college student. Peer coaches may be able to quickly build rapport with other students but lack the training and expertise to be able to support students through developmental processes. Further, they lack the institutional and administrative connections and access to resources that staff coaches would inevitably have. The ability to have intensive training and less turnover makes staff success coaching a more appealing model for many institutions, as they have shown greater efficacy for student outcomes (Bettinger & Baker, 2011).

So, what, then, sets success coaching apart? Robinson (2015) defined success coaching as "the individualized practice of asking reflective, motivation-based questions, providing opportunities for formal self-assessment, sharing effective strategies, and co-creating a tangible plan," (p. 126). When considered in the context of the university setting, success coaching helps students reflect on their previous experiences and partner with coaches to move toward their goals (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021). While coaching methods and approaches vary across programs, the emphasis on a partnership is critical to understanding the coaching relationship, as is the use of powerful questions and continued support that will help lead to student success outcomes.

Benefits of Coaching in Higher Education

Colleges and Universities with coaching programs have claimed great benefits and outcomes of their coaching programs (Sepulveda, 2020). From increases in retention (Bettinger & Baker, 2013; Robinson & Gahagan, 2010; Bruner, 2017) to increased non-

cognitive factors LaRocca, 2015; Field & Hoffman, 1994; and Ryan & Deci, 2000), early studies have shown great benefits to coaching programs for college student populations.

Robinson (2015) was one of the first to do a comprehensive survey of college success coaching. She proposed that the coaching process should offer students an opportunity to practice new skills in order to improve performance and increase persistence and retention (Robinson, 2015). In her study, she provided an overview of coaching programs in the U.S. higher education system. Her findings showed that there were a variety of types of coaching programs across the country, and variation in defining features, assessment, and functions of coaching programs. She used a quantitative survey methodology, and included results from over 160 institutions, including both public, private, and community colleges. Robinson (2015) found little consistency of coaching approaches, names, theories, and outcomes at institutions surveyed. The majority of coaching programs included (83%) were created after 2005, and 70% of these were established after 2010. This supports the idea that coaching is a very new field within higher education. She hypothesized that many of these coaching programs were founded as a result of a shifted focus on institutional retention in response to the Complete College America initiative.

Robinson also found little clarity in the definition of coaching. Many programs surveyed failed to differentiate between coaching, counseling, advising, tutoring, and mentoring. She also found a variety of names in the coaching programs, ranging from coaching to academic coaching, success coaching, life coaching, and more. The structure of programs also varied, with some institutions requiring coaching for all first-year students, and others offering coaching on an as-needed basis. Robinson found that the

majority of coaches on college were full-time employees whose primary role was coaching, or full-time employees who also served as coaches at their institution. Lastly, she found a variety of assessments used to determine efficacy of coaching programs, with the primary focus being to increase retention, provide academic assistance, promote self-awareness, and provide institutional resources. The majority of programs used surveys to gauge students' satisfaction or experience with coaching programs.

Coaching and Retention

The largest and most commonly known comprehensive study of coaching in higher education was of the InsideTrack coaching program. InsideTrack is an independent vendor who purports to use coaching as a tool to increase retention (Bettinger & Baker, 2013). They are an independent company that provides students access to experts who work one-on-one to address both academic and non-academic issues. Founded in 2000, InsideTrack has coached more than 250,000 students from various universities across the United States. They use a proprietary coaching model, and coach via video conferencing platforms, telephone, and e-mail. The goal of InsideTrack's program is "to encourage persistence and completion by helping students find ways to overcome both academic and "real-life" barriers and to identify strategies for success by helping students use resources and advocate for themselves" (p. 4). Students who opt-in to the program must participate for at least two semesters.

The population for this study included students from private, public, and proprietary institutions, and included student seeking both two year and four-year degrees. The purpose of the study was to measure retention at the 6-, 12-, 18- and 24-month marks for students who participated in coaching. They measured these against a

control group of students from each institution who did not participate in coaching. Bettinger and Baker (2013) found that there was a 9-12% increase in retention for students who participated in coaching in their first year. This number rose to 15% for students who continued coaching for two years. They also found increased four-year graduation rates of approximately 4% for those who participated in coaching versus those who did not. Their study was the first to link the value of coaching in higher education to increased retention and graduation.

Sepulveda et al., 2020 conducted an experimental study comparing coached and non-coached students to determine the effect of coaching on retention. The treatment group participated in three coaching sessions over a year. No significant differences were found between students who participated in coaching versus those who did not, but they determined that within the treatment group, students with no meetings were retained at a lower rate than students who participated in all three meetings. In another study, Capstick et al., 2019) used a logistic regression model to compare the retention of coached and non-coached students with a 2.0 GPA or lower. Students who participated in coaching demonstrated higher GPAs and retention rates than those who did not participate in coaching. In both of these studies, "at risk of leaving" student populations were studied, and more research is needed to determine the impact of coaching on retention for students who are not considering leaving the university.

Additional studies have found impacts on retention and attrition. Hossler, Ziskin, and Gross (2009) determined that students who were undecided in their major benefitted from coaching, reporting that their coaches helped them make decisions related to their major and career choice, which ultimately helped them choose to stay at the university.

Abowitz (2006) found that helping students focus on themselves and questions like "who am I?" and "Who do I wish to become?" can help students better understand their purpose. Griffiths (2005) found that life coaching provided students with skills that can help students both inside the classroom but that can also be applied to their lifelong learning. However, the structure of these programs varies, and it cannot be assumed that all coaching helps lead students to these impacts. Further, more research needs to be done to help increase awareness of coaching programs and the impact they can have on the student experience.

Coaching and Non-Cognitive Skills

As coaching in higher education evolved, positive psychology soon emerged as another important component that led to student success, both inside and outside the classroom. Yehuda (2015) describes positive psychology as a "[focus] on building a person's positive qualities, looking forward in order to develop" (p. 325). Within the context of coaching, positive psychology approaches, coupled with academic strategies, emphasized the students' ability to "utilize their strengths and virtues to foster happiness and emotional well-being" (Warren, 2019, p. 16).

Proponents of positive psychology approaches in coaching suggest that academic and success coaches should develop relationships with students and leverage pre-and post-coaching sessions to create a collaborative partnership which is designed to help set goals and enhance success as a student. To accomplish this, students may meet with a coach to build "skills related to effective studying, note-taking, time management, and test-taking strategies, as well as utilizing resources and finding life balance" (Bradley & Reynolds, n.d., p. 2). Further, students may work to set goals for their personal, financial,

academic, leadership, and professional careers. By establishing rapport with the student, it is hypothesized that a success coach is able to guide students toward a more holistic understanding of themselves, including their strengths and challenges, and how to leverage them to accomplish future academic and professional goals ("What is Academic Coaching," n.d.). This focus on strengths allows students to build a relationship with their coach while working on developing skills and leveraging their previous experiences to help them, be more successful as students (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021).

Further, self-efficacy plays an important role in positive psychology-based coaching, emphasizing the belief in one's own ability to complete a task (Bandura, 1977). In his 2019 study, Minglin sought to determine the impact of coaching on students' development of self-efficacy. Using a quasi-experimental approach, he administered a pre- posttest to students in a first-year seminar course, with one section receiving coaching and the other receiving the curriculum as usual. He utilized Bandura's construct of self-efficacy, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) to determine if participation in coaching resulted in an increase in students' self-efficacy. The results of this study indicated that students who participated in the coaching intervention increased self-efficacy, had higher GPA's, and persisted at higher rates than students without coaching. However, the results of this study were not significant, and more research needs to be conducted to understand the relationship between coaching and self-efficacy. In Yehuda's (2015) study, 24 lecturers at a college were trained as academic coaches to coach 40 students on topics of self-management, learning, management, time management, stress management, and academic learning. Self-efficacy

was reinforced using positive thinking tools to help students become more effective in their personal and professional development.

Related to self-efficacy, academic mindset plays a role in the coaching experience. Han et al. (2017) explored the effects of academic mindset in college students, defining academic mindset as "perceived academic self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and academic motivation" (Han et al., 2017, p. 1119). They surveyed 1400 college students to understand their perceptions of self-efficacy, belonging, and motivation. They found that students who scored high across all three outcomes, or those who scored highly in self-efficacy were more likely to be retained than those who scored lower. Those who scored high in all three categories demonstrated higher GPA's and persistence (Han et al. 2017). The combination of academic coaching, positive psychology, and an emphasis on self-efficacy "has developed a model for goal-oriented, reflective, and controlled learning" (Warren, 2019, p. 17) that is unique to higher education. The fusion of academic success and life coaching strategies has created a unique service that sets students up for greater future success.

An36iffer36nnal study by Lefdahl-Davis et al. revealed increases in self-confidence, satisfaction with major, awareness of values, and alignment with decision making for students who participated in life coaching. They conducted a mixed-methods study of students at a small liberal-arts school in the Midwest who were coached by staff who had some form of coach training, either through the Center for Credentialing Excellence (CCE), Board Certified Coaches (BCC), or the International Coaching Federation (ICF). Students engaged in a minimum of three positive psychology based coaching sessions between the years of 2013 and 2016 and completed a pre-post survey.

They determined that coaching can be an effective intervention for students in need of additional support, and that self-confidence was the area most impacted by coaching (Lefdahl-Davis et al., 2018). However, the demographics of students who participated in the study were limited, as the study was conducted at a small liberal arts university, making the results difficult to replicate. Because the study took place over several years, some outcomes could be due to the natural progression of students advancing through their university experience. More research is needed to fully understand how coaching might impact students' self-confidence and decision-making skills.

Coaching and Wellbeing

Only recently have coaching programs begun to expand beyond academic outcomes. In a 2013 study, Field et al. studied the effects of ADHD coaching on learning, study skills, self-regulation, and wellbeing of students. Coaching took place via weekly phone calls between students and coach. Academic skills were measured using the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI), and the College Well-Being Scale was used to measure students' well-being. They found that the coaching group had a higher total LASSI score, and also had significantly higher Well-Being scores than their comparison group. They concluded that coaching was highly effective for helping students in both learning and overall functioning.

Gibbs & Larcus (2015) utilized strengths, goal setting, and continued conversation related to wellness coaching to help students thrive. Their coaching process was described, sharing that during the first coaching session students work with their coach on setting goals related to their wellness, with subsequent sessions focused on progress toward these goals and "supporting students' capacity to create the life they

would prefer to be living" (p. 28). They presented assessment data that indicates students were focused primarily on social, career, and intellectual wellness (as opposed to other areas of wellness, including creative, environmental, financial, physical, and spiritual), and that students described the experience as transformative.

Larcus et al. (2016) conducted a case study of an institution that integrated wellness into their coaching approach, using positive psychology, strengths, and student development through self-authorship. While not an empirical study, the program is aligned with the ICF core competencies described later, and demonstrates outcomes including "self-discovery, navigating transitions in college, and self-acceptance" (Larcus et al., 2016, p. 55) based on results from an exit survey. They explore both thriving and positive psychology literature as important characteristics of their coaching program, stating that "coaching initiatives which critically evaluate their philosophical bias and thrive in college and beyond by empowering them to become change agents for their own lives and the organizations and communities to which they belong" (Larcus et al., 2016, p. 57).

Mixed Results of Coaching Studies

Many studies have shown coaching as a beneficial service, but not all have had such promising results. Bosworth (2006) found that students could utilize academic advising services to get help with issues they were having. Many students in this study found coaching to be redundant and time consuming. However, the process of coaching in this study was more transactional and process-oriented, with coaches focusing on course registration and financial aid, which typically would fall under the role of an advisor. An additional study by Valora (2017) showed no significant differences between

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students who participated in coaching and those who did not. In this study, students at a community college were required to meet with a coach if they did not meet academic standards. Little is known about what occurred during the coaching sessions, but sessions were focused on non-cognitive skills. A study by Richman et al. focused on coaching's impact on executive functioning and self-determination skills for students with learning disabilities. They utilized a quasi-experimental design and the Self-Determination Student Scale to measure the impacts of coaching. Coaches met with students at least 12 times during the course of a year. While the treatment group did show some improvement in both of these areas, the results were not significant. Coaches in this study were not ICF credentialed, and it is unclear what training they received (Richman et al., 2014).

These studies highlight the importance of training and consistent standards in coaching programs. In these studies, there was little information about what was taking place in a coaching session. To ensure the high quality of coaching on campuses, we must begin with effective training of coaches to best support students through these programs (Sepulveda, 2020). This also demonstrates the need for additional research to determine how coaching is different from other interventions, and how and if institutions can utilize this approach to more effectively support students. This is imperative as coaching programs continue to grow across the United States, not only to provide high-quality services to students, but to bring together the profession in a more collaborative and standardized way.

The Coaches' Perspective

Blankenship's (2017) study was one of the first to explore a coaching program within higher education that was using the International Coaching Federation standards.

His primary question was to determine the role of an ICF trained coach on a university campus, and to compare ICF coaches to other "success coaching" approaches found in Robinson's (2015) study. Blankenship's study utilized a qualitative case study methodology, consisting of four interview subjects from a private, four-year university. All participants in the study had completed an ICF approved coach training and had worked in their position for longer than one year. Blankenship found several important themes related to the experience coaching students. These include the types of students coaches work with, student resistance to coaching, the importance of additional training for coaches, coaching philosophies, and institutional support. He found that while coaching does show a boost in retention for many students, it is not a "fix-all" for retention (Blankenship, 2017, p. 125). Importantly, he found several student factors that may impact the student experience from the perspective of the coaches, including student identities, immunity to change, andragogical learning approaches, and issues beyond the university's scope of control. This study is the only known qualitative study that focuses on a college success coaching program connected to the ICF standards.

Warren (2019) also explored the experiences of academic coaches in higher education. His study sought to determine how the relationship between coach and student, or coach and supervisor affected the academic coaching experience, and how academic coaches and graduate assistants experience the coaching session. In his qualitative study, he conducted interviews with six academic coaches. Presented through a series of vignettes, the data revealed three themes: limited power, powerful relationships, and empowering preparation (Warren, 2019). In addition to increased outcomes for students, he found that academic coaches identified positive aspects of the

coaching experience, such as impacting student success, relationships, and skill building, but also some negative aspects such as limited training and lack of privacy. These implications show there is not a "one-size-fits-all approach" to creating and administering academic coaching programs, but that each institution must determine what their students and staff need to be most effective (Warren, 2019, p. 190). By focusing on student and staff needs, as well as intended outcomes from coaching, colleges and universities can adapt coaching to fit the context of their campus and identify what works well for their institution.

Similarly, Sepulveda (2020) explored how trained success coaches perceived their coaching practice with college students. Using a narrative approach, she interviewed 18 coaches in higher education from various institutions to learn more about how coaches approach their meetings and what coaching skills were important for them. She found that a coach's beliefs, skills, and framework, as well as their training were important to the perceived success of coaches. Further, it was the combination of these practices that made coaching a unique student support service. She argued that coaching skills, coaching tools, coaching beliefs, and continuing development were critical to understanding how staff can be effective coaches.

<div align="center">Limitations and Gaps in Success Coaching Literature</div>

A major limitation of all coaching studies is the great variety of coaching program structures and approaches. InsideTrack uses a proprietary coaching model, and therefore little is known about what actually occurs during a coaching session, and specifically what interventions lead to the success of the program overall. No information is available about the training provided to coaches and the characteristics of coaches who work with

students. Further, no information is shared about the student populations who participated in the program versus those who opted out of the program. Overall, there are few details about the actual characteristics of what happens during a coaching appointment to make the intervention successful.

While quantitative studies can provide a good overview of data across populations, Robinson (2015) noted that the sample population in her study might not have been fully representative of all coaching programs across the United States. She also did not fully capture research on coaching outside of higher education or from third-party programs. Lastly, Robinson did not fully explore the elements related to effective implementation of coaching programs, how university buy-in was achieved, or specifics about how coaches approach their roles. Her recommendations were to explore connections between other types of coaching and coaching within higher education, and to further explore individual coaching programs through case study analysis.

However, this limits the analysis of coaching programs to individual or institutional levels. Many studies had small sample sizes or specific parameters which limit the scope of the research's relevancy. Blankenship's (2017) study utilized a case study methodology, and therefore is limited in scope and scale. His research only looked at ICF trained coaches and was limited to a specific institution and their model. Further research is needed to understand the applicability of these findings across other institutional coaching models. He also acknowledged the need for future research exploring this approach to coaching, and how coaching could be used in other postsecondary educational areas. Lastly, he recommended research to determine what

happens in a coaching conversation between a student and a coach; what are the specific factors that make this relationship meaningful?

Overall, there are significant gaps in the literature related to coaching on college campuses, and little empirical research on the impact of coaching on students from the student perspective. The great variety in coaching models and approaches makes it difficult for generalizability of any study of coaching. However, this study will provide additional research and data to the growing body of literature on integrated coaching models, which are rapidly increasing across the United States, and will fill a gap in the literature for studies from the student experience, exploring self-authorship and agency through coaching.

"Integrated" Coaching Models and Coaching Approaches

While academic coaching programs have become fairly common at universities across the United States, a new approach to coaching, "integrated coaching" has begun to emerge. These programs bring together multiple "types" of coaching into one program, providing a more holistic intervention for students who participate. As with academic and success coaching, there is no consistent integrated coaching approach. For the purposes of this overview, integrated coaching programs are considered as those who combine at least five areas of coaching into one program. There are currently three known comprehensive "integrated" coaching programs that exist on college campuses: University of Oklahoma's Academic Life Coaching model, the InsideTrack coaching model (implementation explored through George Mason University's model), and the University of Kentucky's Integrated Success Coaching model. While these three models

all focus on multiple areas of student support, each program has distinct features and utilize different approaches to engaging students.

University of Oklahoma-Academic Life Coaching Model

The coaching program at the University of Oklahoma is one of the first coaching programs to begin to bridge the gap between academic coaching and life coaching. The Oklahoma program is based on a model of coaching called Academic Life Coaching, which brings together multiple areas of coaching into a comprehensive model. They define their program as "an innovative mentoring approach designed to provide individualized student support" (Oklahoma Academic Life Coaching, 2021). They identify eight "persistence themes," identified as the top challenges that impact student success, called their "coach to complete" model (Figure 1). These persistence themes are study systems, major to career design, identity and inclusion, health and resiliency, financial confidence, support networks, competing responsibilities, and motivation and achievement. During a coaching appointment, students work with their assigned coach through these eight themes to "identify stressors and establish goals that lead to academic success and degree completion" (Oklahoma Academic Life Coaching, 2021). Coaches then work with students through several learning outcomes for each persistence theme depending on the student's individual needs.

Figure 1: University of Oklahoma "Coaching to Complete" Model

Oklahoma's model engages numerous faculty and staff across campus as coaches. In total, Oklahoma has around 50 Academic Life coaches for students to engage with (personal communication, 2020). The majority of these coaches are full-time academic advisors who participate in a six-month training to learn the Academic Life Coaching model. This model of coaching is accredited through the International Coaching Federation (ICF), but coaches are not required to complete ICF coach certification. Students are assigned a coach based on their academic standing, with specific first-year coaches, coaches for sophomore-senior year, and graduate student coaches. Students may request a coach or may be referred to coaching via an online form. The Oklahoma website indicates that students typically meet with their coach every two to three weeks, and coaching appointments last between 30 and 60 minutes. Sessions typically take place in the coach's office, which can be anywhere on campus.

At the time of this publication, there was not any publicly available assessment or data on the efficacy of this coaching model or student outcomes related to the program. However, the University of Oklahoma has posted quotes from students on their public-

facing website which note that students find the coaching program to be impactful for their academic choices and self-confidence. They also discussed working with their coach to set goals, manage their time, and utilize resources on campus (Oklahoma Academic Life Coaching, 2021).

InsideTrack Model and George Mason University

George Mason University utilizes a version of the InsideTrack coaching model through their Mason Care Network. InsideTrack is credited as one of the first college coaching programs, providing multiple coaching programs aimed at improving institutional outcomes (InsideTrack, 2021). Many campuses utilize the InsideTrack model, including George Mason University, Old Dominion University, Penn State University, Ivy Tech, Florida State University, and more. Little information about the implementation of this model is available on the InsideTrack website, but George Mason University provides some additional insight into the structure of how this model functions on a college campus.

At George Mason University full-time professional Success Coaches "encourage growth and development of each student's knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs about their ability to succeed in higher education as well as within their chosen field" (George Mason University, 2021). They identify eight areas of focus within their coaching model: school community, effectiveness, commitment to graduation, career, managing commitments, finances, health & support, and academics (Figure 2). Their success coaches meet with students at least once per semester, but often 2-3 times per semester (George Mason University, 2021). All incoming freshmen students, those with majors listed as exploratory, those who are considering changing their major, and undergraduate

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non-degree seeking students are encouraged to meet with a coach. While they identify

numerous areas of focus as part of their coaching program, the primary focus seems to be

on academics, with their website stating that "coaches are well versed in the many majors

and minors that Mason has to offer as well as academic policies and procedures that can

impact a student's success" (George Mason University, 2021).

Figure 2: George Mason University Success Coaching Focus Wheel

At George Mason University, students are assigned coaches based on last name

unless they are part of a specialized program. In total, GMU has between 20-25 full time

coaches (George Mason University, 2021). It is unclear how coaches are trained, or if

there is any formal training required to be a Success Coach. Further, there is no indication

that George Mason or InsideTrack follow the International Coaching Federation

guidelines. When meeting with their coach, students work through a coaching partnership

agreement, identify areas of growth through the coaching focus wheel, and discuss major-

fit. Students may also engage in exploratory advising to assist with choosing a major. As

with the Oklahoma University model, there is a clear emphasis on academic success as part of the coaching program, with persistence to graduation as a main driver of coaching success. It can be assumed that the model is implemented in similar ways on other campuses using this framework.

InsideTrack purports significant student outcomes from coaching, including increased sense of purpose (72%), increased motivation (86%), and improved academic skills (78%). Additionally, many universities that use this model show an increase in retention and graduation rates (InsideTrack, 2021.), with Penn State World Campus showing a 28% increase in in yield, and Loyola University New Orleans demonstrating an 85% retention rate for first year students. At Ivy Tech community College, students who received coaching showed higher retention and completion rates than their peers who did not receive coaching, particularly low-income and first-generation students (InsideTrack, 2021, p. 40). In the last five years of their coaching partnerships, InsideTrack has communicated with students through 15.9 emails, 3.3 million one-on-one meetings, 1.6 million phone calls, and 1.3 million text messages (InsideTrack, 2021, p. 19), demonstrating significant influence across college campuses in the United States.

Appreciative Coaching Model

While not an integrated model, the Appreciative Advising, or Appreciative Coaching approach which frames the Integrated Success Coaching model at the University of Kentucky is based on the idea that "knowledge is constructed through collaboration" (as cited in Bradley & Reynolds, n.d., p. 3). It is a process which focuses on students' strengths and embraces learning, change, and improvement (Bradley & Reynolds, n.d.). Integrated Success Coaches work through a framework of 6 phases, known as the 6 D's:

Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle (Figure 3). Rooted in

positive psychology, these guiding principles (Bloom et al., 2013), guide the coach and

student through the process in order to achieve mutually constructed goals. While the six

phases of Appreciative Coaching may happen in sequential order, they do not necessarily

have to. The disarming phase is likely occurring throughout the coaching relationship,

with feedback loops interspersed between the six stages as new information is uncovered

and new goals are constructed.

Figure 3: Appreciative Advising/Appreciative Coaching Model

The Disarm phase is meant to break down power differentials between coach and

student in order to foster a relationship where each is able to voice their opinions and feel

heard (Bradley & Reynolds, n.d.). Coaches use this phase to "set the stage" for the

coaching relationship, and work to ensure that the student feels welcome and included in

the environment. This phase also includes attention to the space and modality of

coaching, the waiting room, office spaces, or digital means of communication. Coaches

should greet the student by name, walk them from the lobby to their appointment, use

inclusive pronouns, and demonstrate investment and caring toward the student (Mehrabian, 1971).

Discover

The Discover phase of Appreciative Advising is intended to cultivate a relationship between coach and student through identifying students' strengths and interests. The coach works to identify the students' current skill sets, how they are valued, and asks non-judgmental, open-ended questions. It is important in this phase for the coach to relay to the student that *they matter* and set the foundation for future conversations (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021).

Dream

In the Dream phase, the coach engages the student in exploring personal goals and visions for their future. Coaches work with the student to identify and unpack goals through asking curious, open-ended questions and assists the student with gaining clarity of their long-term goals. The coach may also work with the student to break their goals down into smaller, short-term goals in order to develop an action plan in future phases. Generally, the Dream phase is focused on illuminating the larger picture of a student's goals, understandings, and motivations (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021).

Design

The Design phase allows the coach and student to work together to establish an agenda to work on the student's action plan in order to achieve their goals. Coaches may utilize outside tools to assist the student in moving through their plans in order to achieve success, and work with the student to mutually construct understanding and meaning

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around the goals being set. Some components of an action plan could include time management strategies, addressing motivation, using a planner, creating a budget, note-taking skills, involvement exploration, building support systems, and setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound) goals (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021).

Deliver

The following phase, Deliver, likely takes place outside the coaching session, and involves the student working toward their action plan. Coaches may check in with the student throughout this process via text, email, phone call, or other means of communication in order to encourage student's academic success and progress. Coaches may also utilize strategies such as growth mindset (Dweck, 2016), and academic hope (Snyder et al., 2002), to encourage the student and reframe failure as an opportunity to learn.

Don't Settle

The last phase of the framework is Don't Settle. This step allows the coach to encourage the student to reflect on their experience thus far and set steps for moving forward. The coach works to frame setbacks as learning experiences and holds the student accountable for their action plans and goals. Further, students are coached toward becoming self-regulated learners in order to maintain success beyond the coaching experience. Coaches may focus on resiliency skills, continuous improvement, and empowering students to reach for their goals.

Throughout these six phases, coaches may also work with students to identify additional campus resources to build their support system within the network of the university. As students work to transition to college life, they may struggle with feelings of isolation or belonging (Reynolds, 2013). Developing these support systems through campus involvement, academic support, and emotional regulation can help students with their overall success and progress toward degree completion. Additional resources may include the Counseling Center, Office of Student Organizations and Activities, Peer Tutoring, Career Centers, Financial Aid, and Academic Advising. While cross-trained in these areas, coaches must be aware of their limitations and work to develop relationships in order to provide referrals as necessary to continue providing holistic student support.

Further, coaches may work with students to identify and create their own support plan utilizing the 3:1 support model (Figure 5). This framework is a tool developed at Kentucky State University to assist students with creating a support plan to help their current and future success through college. While coaches assist students with identifying resources, students are eventually able to identify their own resource needs and begin seeking them out. Lastly, students who have created an effective 3:1 support plan are encouraged to "pay it forward" by being a resource in another student's 3:1 support plan (Bradley & Reynolds, 2021).

Figure 4: 3:1 Support Systems Mode

3:1 SUPPORT SYSTEMS MODEL

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

STUDENT

ACADEMIC

WELLNESS
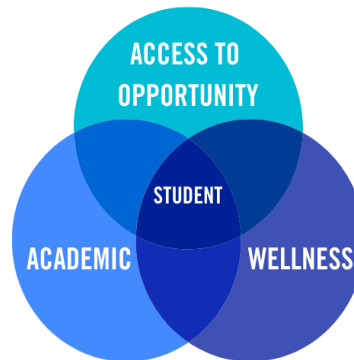
PAY IT FORWARD: WHEN A STUDENT BECOMES A SUPPORTER IN ANOTHER STUDENTS 3:1 SUPPORT SYSTEM

These models of coaching use a more holistic approach to coaching that is designed to meet the complex, intersecting needs of students. Rather than focusing only on academic success, integrated models allow for coaches to see the student as a "whole person" and work with them to develop skills across all areas of life. The model of coaching in this study is discussed more in chapter 3. It follows a similar integrated structure which combines multiple areas of coaching into one program and includes intensive training of staff in all areas of the framework and in the International Coaching Federation (ICF)'s standards for coaching.

International Coaching Federation

An important feature of UK's Integrated Success Coaching program is the connection to the International Coaching Federation (ICF). Not only is the coach training program accredited through ICF, but coaches are all required to work toward completing ICF certification following completion of their training, with the goal of having all Integrated Success Coaches certified through ICF. As shared previously, the ICF defines

coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (ICF website, 2020). ICF is the "gold standard" in the coaching profession and is the world's largest organization of professionally trained coaches. ICF believes that "coaching is an integral part of a thriving society" (ICF website, 2020), and has developed a set of competencies, values, and coaching ethics adopted by many in the coaching community. Not only does ICF provide certification to coaches meeting certain specified standards, but they also accredit programs that deliver coach-specific training. Importantly, the Integrated Success Coach Training program at the University of Kentucky is currently accredited through ICF.

Requirements for Membership

In order to be a member of the International Coaching Federation, one must be a current ICF credential holder, or be enrolled in an ICF approved coach training program which includes at least 60 coach-specific training hours that meet ICF standards (ICF website, 2020). Membership in ICF is paid on a yearly basis. Credentials are administered for three years at a time, with renewal requirements required to continue to remain in good standing.

Requirements for Credentialing

ICF offers three levels of coaching credentials depending on the amount of training and number of coaching hours an individual has completed. These three levels include an Associate Certified Coach (ACC), Professional Certified Coach (PCC), and Master Certified Coach (MCC). The ACC credential level requires at least 60 hours of

coach-specific training, 10 hours of mentor coaching with a PCC or higher credentialed

coach, and at least 100 hours of coaching with eight distinct clients (75 of these hours

must be paid). Additionally, individuals must pass an online knowledge assessment

which measures knowledge of coaching practice, values, and ethics (ICF website, 2020).

An individual may apply for any level of credential, but typically begin with the ACC

level of coaching, due to the high number of coaching hours required for PCC (500+) and

MCC (2500+) hours of coaching experience.

Coaching Education

Several studies emphasize the importance of coaching education and training for

all coaches on college campuses. Sepulveda (2020) highlighted the importance of this

training in her dissertation on coaching for college student thriving. She stated that,

"without coach training, participants believed they would still support students. However,

they did not believe students would experience as much growth, insight, and development

they strive for, or in the same ways as other support services on campus. (p. 187). Diller

et al. (2020) also explored the importance of coach training, finding that more coach

training leads to not only a better self-perceived coaching quality, but a better other-

perceived coaching quality. They argue that coach training is an essential part of selecting

coaches and has more positive effects than coaching experience.

ICF does not provide coaching education or training directly. Instead, they accredit

coach-specific trainings which meet the criteria for preparing coaches for ICF credentials.

The Integrated Success Coach Training program at UK is designed to meet the

requirements for PCC level accreditation, and includes 125 hours of training, 10 hours of

mentor coaching, and enough time for the trainee to achieve 500 hours of coaching

experience. The Integrated Success Coach Training program at UK is currently accredited through ICF as a Level 2 program, and all coaches within the program have completed training and obtained a credential (ACC or PCC) from the International Coaching Federation. ICF accredited coaching education programs typically include training on the ICF Core Competencies, Code of Ethics, and coaching skills, including powerful questioning, rapport-building, and active listening. Kee et al. (2010) defines powerful questions as "a reflection of committed listening and understanding of the other person's perspective that is confirmed through paraphrasing. This suggests a progression from listening, paraphrasing for understanding, and then asking powerful questions that yield clarity or mediation of thinking" (p. 62). Powerful questions and active listening are imperative skills for coaching to ensure that the coach is asking open-ended questions with no hidden agenda and are working alongside the client to evoke awareness and challenge current assumptions while gaining clarity and learning. Training on these skills and the core competencies are important for successful coaching ability, as they are a shift from a typical way of approaching learning.

Core Competencies

ICF has defined eight core competencies for effective coaching practice. In order to achieve coach certification through ICF, prospective coaches must complete an assessment which measures proficiency in each of the eight competencies (Updated ICF Core Competency Model, 2020). The competencies serve as a foundation for the process of coaching and provide important context for how coaching appointments with Integrated Success coaches work. These competencies are:

1. Demonstrates Ethical Practice: Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards of coaching

2. Embodies a Coaching Mindset: Develop and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible, and client-centered

3. Establishes and Maintains Agreements: Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as those for each coaching session

4. Cultivates Trust and Safety: Partners with the client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

5. Maintains Presence: Is fully conscious and present with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded, and confident

6. Listens Actively: Focuses on what the client is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression

7. Evokes Awareness: Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor, or analogy

8. Facilitates Client Growth: Partners with the client to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process

These competencies, in addition to the Code of Ethics, are meant to guide coaches toward effective coaching practice. Further, they provide a foundation for UK's Success Coach Training Program and are woven throughout the coach training experience.

Coaches must pass an exam based on these eight competencies in order to obtain a credential. Therefore, they are an important consideration in the coaching program at UK, as all coaches utilize these competencies as a foundation for coaching.

While this version of competencies was only released in early 2020, there has been some research conducted to determine their efficacy and impact on the coaching profession. In a 2021 study, Mosteo et al. explored the value of coaching using the ICF core competencies to determine the value of coaching. They determined that trust & connection with coaches was the most important component of the coaching relationship. They identified multiple elements of the coach-coachee relationship that led to more effective coaching, including trust, coaching guidance, reliability, and willingness to be coached. They observed that the relationship established during the first session appears to be the key to a good working relationship between coach and coachee, and that setting meaningful goals and objectives together influenced perception of the coaching process (Mosteo et al., 2021). The coachee's level of self-awareness was also important in the process, as was their willingness to commit and reflect on their experiences.

<div align="center">Summary of Literature</div>

While the body of literature related to success coaching on college campuses is in its infancy, it is a growing area of interest for many institutions and researchers. This literature review presented brief overviews of student success measures, explored the differences between coaching and other support services on campuses, and reviewed recent studies of coaching on college campuses. The first section provided a brief overview of student success as an area of research, shared a history of the development of coaching interventions in higher education, and explored academic advising, mentoring,

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tutoring, counseling, faculty advising/mentoring and peer mentoring and the differences in coaching. While many of these supports overlap with coaching, none provide the holistic wrap-around support that success coaching does. Additionally, many of these supports also have other purposes, leaving little time for additional services and support that coaching can offer. The second section discussed some foundational studies of coaching on college campuses. The third section of this literature review compared various integrated coaching models on college campuses. Additionally, information was provided about the International Coaching Federation (ICF), which is the accrediting body for many of the coaching programs and is considered the "gold standard" for coaching worldwide.

This chapter will conclude with an overview of the conceptual framework used for this study, which places coaching within the realms of sociology and student development.

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

The central research question for this study is: How does coaching help students optimize their college experience? When considering the research question, we must first understand what it means to "optimize" the experience. Traditional definitions of optimize define the term as making the most of resources, situations, and opportunities. In the context of college, this could include understanding how students identify which resources are useful, using these resources to make decisions, and how they grow in their understanding of who they are to be able to move toward new opportunities. Resources may include tangible resources on campus, such as tutoring, counseling, and other student services, but could also include access to peer and family networks, soft skills,

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and previous experiences that can be applied to current situations. Resources may look different for each student, as each student will face different structural obstacles and have access to different networks to navigate these obstacles.

For the purposes of this study, when we consider how coaching helps students "optimize" their experience, we follow a coaching philosophy of privileging the student perspective. How do they define success and movement toward success? While institutions have goals, outcomes, and definitions for success for students, these may not always align with a student's individual goals and needs. A partner-based approach to coaching is predicated on the notion that the goals and outcomes that lead to "success" must be considered from the perspective of the student. We use this perspective in asking how students "optimize" their college experience toward what they consider to be success.

Success coaching is one intervention which can help lead students through a reflective process to accomplish their goals. For students, resources and opportunities could include access to and use of services on campus, including coaching, but also additional campus resources like counseling, tutoring, or research. Students must have the ability and internal capacity to choose to use these resources and opportunities; and as they continue to develop, they must have agency (Archer, 2010) to be able to determine the best use of their skills, abilities, and time. By engaging in reflection on past experiences, identities, habits, and challenges, students ultimately move toward self-authorship (Magolda, 2014). In this conceptual framework, theories of self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001) and agency (Archer, 2007) provide a frame for understanding how coaching helps students move toward these concepts.

Self-Authorship

Part of understanding themselves occurs through guided reflection as part of the coaching process. In addition to working through the 6 Ds of Appreciative Coaching (Hutson & Bloom, 2007), coaches partner with students in a learning partnership, balancing challenge and support to validate learners' capacity to know and mutually construct meaning from an experience (Magolda & King, 2004). Baxter Magolda defines self-authorship as the "internal capacity to construct one's beliefs, identity, and social relations" (Magolda, 2014, p. 1). Three dimensions outline questions which an individual explores during their journey toward self-authorship: "who am I?," "how do I know", and "how do I want to construct relationships with others". The theory outlines a developmental path of four phases: following formulas, crossroads, becoming the author of one's life, and creating internal foundations. These four developmental stages are typically experienced in this order, although the phases are not necessarily linear; most individuals develop internal foundation in their early 20's and 30's. According to Baxter Magolda (2001), students may not develop self-authorship until after college due to the many directives, formulas, and policies provided for them during their four years at the institution. Because of this, students may not feel the need to think about their values, goals, beliefs, and how to work toward developing their own autonomy outside the supports of the institution. Self-authorship begins to evolve when significant challenge is present and is accompanied by support.

In the first phase of the framework, individuals follow plans designed by others in order to meet expectations. They are often seeking approval, and learn from societal expectations, other adults, and peers. Individuals in this phase are following formulas

designated for them; this phase often takes place up until the teenage years and even into the early twenties. In the second phase, crossroads, individuals begin to discover the need to create their own sense of self, identifying paths more suited to their individual needs and interests. In this phase, individuals have a clearer sense of direction and more authentic relationships. After moving through the crossroads, individuals begin to become the author of their own life, establishing their own beliefs and attempting to live out their beliefs and values. They also recognize that beliefs are contextual and engage in self-reflection and greater understanding of self. Lastly, individuals move into the internal foundation phase in which they have a "solidified and comprehensive system of belief" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 155). They are accepting of ambiguity and change and seek new pathways to attain their goals. Throughout this process, individuals must learn to trust their internal voice, build a foundation or framework for their actions, and move to integrate their internal and external worlds (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Self-authorship forms by creating environments in which an individual can be challenged and appropriately supported through the meaning making process (Baxter Magolda, 2001).

Many previous studies on self-authorship for college students have focused on student success, engagement, and transitions. However, there are several which have begun to apply this theory to the coaching relationship. Pizzolato (2003) conducted a study in which they interviewed 35 at-risk college students to determine the degree of self-authorship present, and the experiences which contributed to these ways of knowing. They discovered that high-risk college students often developed these skills prior to college and continued to develop their self-authorship and ways of knowing through interpersonal experiences and relationship development. In her 2015 article in the New

Directions for Adult and Continuing Education publication, Coughlin explored coaching as a developmental tool for moving toward self-authorship, utilizing theories of adult cognitive development and developmental coaching approaches to discuss the ways in which a coach-student relationship might contribute to their movement toward a self-authored mind. Further, Eng (2022) utilized self-authorship as a theory to understand the impact graduate assistantships in success coaching had on their professional practice, finding that graduate student coaches developed in their self-authorship through the process of learning to coach others. As coaching literature continues to develop, it is clear that self-authorship has a place in helping us understand this relationship and how students and coaches are able to optimize their experiences as a result.

Agency & Reflexivity

This leads to the question- how does coaching help facilitate the process of internal conversations and agency? While there are many theories of agency, Margaret Archer (2007) provides a comprehensive overview of structure, agency, and reflexivity which fits well with the concepts in this study. Archer argues that agents, from the morphogenetic perspective, are agents of the socio-cultural systems into which they are born (Archer, 2004, p. 262). One of the important things to consider is the ability for individuals to reflect on their environment to make decisions based on these reflections, and to transform oneself in the process of pursuing social change and social mobility (Archer, 2004). Archer describes this process as the transition from Agents to Actors. Agents start out with little choice; their context is largely due to parentage and social influence, which has a significant impact on what sort of Actor they can choose to become. Through internal conversations, Agents can reflect on these experiences and

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develop their personal identity, social identity, and work toward making choices about their lives (Archer, 2004). Margaret Archer (2010) describes agency in terms of reflexivity and projects, stating that "reflexivity mediates between the objective structural and cultural contexts confronting agents, who activate their properties as constraints and enablements as they pursue reflexively defined 'projects' based on their concerns" (Archer 2010). These 'projects' may be complex or simple depending on an individuals' goals, reflexive experience, or social environment.

The interplay between our internal concerns and social environmental contexts is what Margaret Archer (2010) describes as "modes of reflexivity", which define the manner in which we think about our thinking or have internal conversation, or "the generative ability for internal deliberation upon an external reality" (Archer, 2003, p. 20). These internal conversations often allow individuals to reflect on their social situation in light of current concerns, mediating between structure and agency. Archer described reflexivity as a process which allows individuals to "project their actions based on the articulation of personal concerns and the conditions that make it possible to accomplish them" (Caetano, 2016). The use of internal conversations and reflexive thinking ultimately leads students to consider their experiences, their relationships with others, and make choices based on these considerations. Central to Archer's concept of reflexivity is the idea that these internal conversations are socialized behavior and are expressed by different people in different contexts; they are influenced by our previous and current social realities. Through her work, Archer (2003, 2007, 2010) identifies three main modes of reflexivity: communicative reflexivity, autonomous reflexivity, and meta-reflexivity. Communicative reflexivity can be thought of as internal conversations which

are discussed with others, and often require a dialogue with another individual. Autonomous reflexivity is a process that takes place in one's own head, relying on past experiences and knowledge. Lastly, meta-reflexivity involves a second loop of being reflexive about one's reflexivity. Archer later identifies a fourth mode of reflexivity, fractured reflexivity, which describes individuals who are more passive in their agency and reflexivity (Rainford, 2016). Archer postulates that social origins do not prepare new generations for the contexts and changes in current society, and that "contextual incongruity," or the dissonance between socialization and an individual's "projects" can occur and cause challenges for the reproduction of a family's aspirations. These conflicts can cause individuals to take on different social trajectories than anticipated. Additionally, the influence of others' values, norms, and ways of being can cause individuals to rethink and redefine their own personal projects, using modes of reflexivity to consider their previous modes of acting and moving toward their individual agency (Archer, 2010).

Archer's approach to reflexivity and agency emphasizes both sociology and critical analysis, using synthesis and dialogue to argue that structure and agency operate on different timescales. When considering agency in the context of college success coaching, there is little research. A 2018 study by Andrews & Munro discussed coaching as a means to develop agency in teachers, concluding that coaching provided a "safe space for self-reflection and examination" that helped teachers grow in their agency and make more impactful decisions in their professional lives and in their classrooms. Taylor (2022) explored students' feelings of agency related to their campus involvement, finding that increased sense of agency and development toward adulthood took place throughout

a students' experience in college, but that the initial engagements on campus played a major role in this growth and future goals. Although focused on coaching athletes, Jones, Armour, and Potrac (2002) suggested a framework for undertaking a social analysis of coaching that introduced concepts of agency. They concluded that recognizing and understanding the social nature of coaching is imperative for research on coaching moving forward, and that concepts of agency and social development need to be interrogated further in relation to coaching. These studies demonstrate the importance of agency in student development and coaching, but we do not yet have studies which demonstrate the process of reflexivity or agency that helps to explain the coaching experience for college students.

How, then, do modes of reflexivity and self-authorship connect? Both describe a student's capacity to reflect on past experiences and challenges, consider identities, and ultimately make choices based on these reflections. Both also focus on both the internal conversations and capacities, and the social environment surrounding the individual, and how the student may use these factors to move them toward decision making. Both theories have a relationship with reflection and uncertainty; they discuss how individuals begin by following patterns or formulas (actors), move through challenges, and ultimately become more aware of their own needs, feelings, and ability to make decisions (agents). Additionally, both focus on a reflective process that leads individuals toward making meaning of their experiences and integrating this meaning into their understanding of themselves. Meaning making refers to an individual's process of constructing, understanding, or making sense of their life events, and thus themselves (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Research shows that students often graduate from college

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without developing effective meaning-making strategies, perhaps due to the lack of independent problem-solving experience (Baxter Magolda, 2001). As an intervention, coaching can help speed this process up by encouraging students to engage in reflexivity and move toward living more agentic lives, ultimately gaining control over their decisions and experiences. By working with their coach on "projects", or goals, and reflecting on their previous experiences, students are working to make meaning of themselves and make decisions based on this new understanding.

In a 2017 study, Silva & Macias conducted a study to determine how self-authorship and agency were connected, using a narrative inquiry approach with sophomore psychology students. They found that a central theme of identity was important for the integration of both theories, with students reflecting on their own identities and relationship with others to move through challenges. They also found that reflexivity is more complex in students located in "advanced self-authorship positions" as they have more resources to deal with uncertainty and challenges in their lives (p. 155). This issue of conflicts or crossroads as the space for development is important and relevant in this study, as many students who initially come to coaching are in a phase of challenge or difficulty. As students move toward building self-authorship, they appear to be better prepared to make decisions and approach complex situations in a more autonomous way.

As theoretical concepts, Archer's concepts of reflexivity, projects, and agency (Archer, 2010), and Baxter Magolda's idea of self-authorship (Baxter-Magolda, 2001, 2004) come together to help us better understand how coaching might help students better understand themselves, their thought processes, and ultimately move toward more

engaged decision-making processes that increases opportunity and helps to "optimize" their college experience. While we can theorize these relationships, we do not know the true interplay of these concepts and how they appear in coaching. There are still several questions remaining: In what ways are students engaging in reflexivity and meaning making through coaching? How might students move toward agency and self-authorship through this experience? This study will build upon and integrate these bodies of literature to better understand the success coaching phenomenon and contribute to a growing body of literature about student success coaching.

Conclusion and Study Significance

In the review of the literature, I provided an overview of success coaching in higher education, compered success coaching to other student service disciplines, explored various methodologies for previous studies on coaching on college campuses, and outlined a conceptual framework which includes theoretical perspectives from self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2009, 2014), reflexivity, and agency (Archer, 2010). These provide theoretical foundation through which to view student development through coaching and were used as a lens to analyze data collected through interviews. This literature provides further context to understand the experience of coaching on college campuses and provides a foundation through which to explore the research question.

When considering the current literature on college success coaching, most studies thus far have focused on retention and persistence, or on the coach's perspective on the coaching process and relationship. Because my background is in student development, I have particular interest in the student experience with coaching and how they understand themselves and grow as people throughout the coaching process. When beginning to

gather literature for this literature review, I gathered anything I could find related to coaching on college campuses. I then began looking deeper into current programs on college campuses, utilizing my network and previous coaching experience to identify integrated coaching programs in the United States. As I continued to gather information, I began diving deeper into the theoretical underpinnings of the program being studied and started to identify theories and frameworks that might help explain the phenomenon in question. I knew from the beginning that self-authorship would be a central component of the study, as the program being studied is rooted in self-authorship development, and my own anecdotal experiences with coaching students gave me insight into how these processes might connect. I later discovered Archer's (2010) theory of agency and reflexivity, which connected well to self-authorship and provided an additional layer of sociological foundation that was missing in the study. After grappling with these two theories and investigating further, it became clear that they would become the foundation for this study.

The review of literature shows that coaching on college campuses is a growing service, yet there is little empirical research showing its impact on the student experience. While there is a growing body of research on the impact of coaching on student retention and college completion, there remains a need for further investigation into the students' perspective on their development through coaching, particularly related to their development of self-authorship and agency. This study will add to this growing body of literature and will provide the foundation for future studies related to coaching, self-authorship, and agency. It will also introduce "integrated" coaching models, something that has not yet been explored in the literature.

Chapter Three, which follows, includes the methodology of this study, including the type of research conducted, population characteristics, data collection procedures, and a discussion of validity and bias-prevention methods. In the hopes of strengthening the body of literature related to coaching on college campuses, I will share a qualitative analysis study utilizing semi-structured interviews to explore the impact of an integrated success coaching intervention on college student development of self-authorship and agency.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the way students make meaning of their development in college, guided by the question: In what ways does coaching help students optimize their college experience? This chapter describes the methods and procedures used in this study, including the epistemological approach, research design, site and population, data collection procedures, and data analysis. Ethical considerations, researcher positionality and study limitations are also explored.

Epistemology

This study uses a constructivist approach, which argues that humans make meaning of their lives through the interaction between their experiences and their ideas (Magashoa, 2014). Theories of self-authorship often utilize a constructivist developmental approach. Baxter-Magolda describes this paradigm as [an approach which] "describes realities as multiple, socially constructed, context-bound, and mutually shaped by the interaction of the researcher and participant (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), is consistent with basic tenets of an integrated view of development toward self-authorship" (Magolda & King, 2007). This epistemological stance is based on the idea that people approach and interpret their experiences using meaning-making structures to make sense of their experiences (Magashoa, 2014, p. 495).

Each learner individually and socially creates meaning out of their experiences as they learn. As they create these understandings, they continue to acquire knowledge, which builds and solidifies their understanding of the world. Learning in constructivist settings "are characterized by active engagement, inquiry, problem solving, and collaboration with others," (p. 52). Knowledge, therefore, is not in the content learned,

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but in the struggling of the learner with the process of learning, which takes time, and is an active process. Further, this approach postulates that learning is contextual; we learn in relationship to what we know, are taught, and our social interactions. It is through the learner's engagement with the world, social interactions, and previous understandings that meaning is made from experiences.

Research Design

This study was designed to understand how participation in success coaching helps students make meaning of their experiences in college, with the goal of making changes in their life to move toward greater self-authorship and agency. To accomplish this, a qualitative phenomenological research approach was used. Phenomenology seeks to understand a phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of people who have experienced it, with a goal of describing both the *what* and *how* of the human experience (Neubauer et al., 2019). This method was selected because of its focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of the behaviors, experiences, and interpretations by the coaching participants. Mertens & Wilson (2019) state that "phenomenology attempts to understand the meaning of people's experience within [a] complex context, thus revealing aspects of the experience that individuals may not be aware of themselves," (p. 321). Because students may not recognize the development that occurred through their experience in coaching, this method is well suited to meet the goals of this study by allowing the researcher and student to mutually create meaning. Phenomenology can be particularly helpful in understanding participants' meaning making and experiences of belonging and identity (Wersig & Wilson-Smith, 2021).

Site and Participant Selection

Site Description

The Integrated Success Coaching (ISC) program is unique to the University of Kentucky and therefore the research will be limited to this specific case. The University of Kentucky is a large, public, research 1 institution with more than 31,000 students (University of Kentucky Enrollment & Demographics, 2021), 21,000 of which are undergraduate students. The institution offers 105 undergraduate degrees within 24 fields of study and 16 colleges. 57.8% of the student population identify as female, 86.6% attend full-time, and 4.2% are international students. 21.6% of the student population are first-generation students, and 66.1% of the study body is from the state of Kentucky. In total, 73% of the student population is white, while15.9% of UK students are identified as underrepresented minorities, with 6.9% Black or African American, 5.3% Hispanic of Latino, 4% Asian, and are 3.5% multiracial (University of Kentucky Enrollment & Demographics, 2022).

The ISC program is an initiative out of the Office of Transformative Learning at the University of Kentucky. The program launched in Fall 2020 and was conceptualized as an expansion of an existing campus academic coaching program. Integrated Success Coaching is a holistic approach to student development which brings together multiple areas of coaching practice into an integrated model. This coaching approach includes six Student Support Dimensions: Academic Coaching, Financial Coaching, Leadership Coaching, Wellness Coaching, Career Coaching, and Identity Based Coaching.

The University of Kentucky embraces the definition of coaching as defined by the International Coach Federation (ICF): "Coaching is partnering with clients [students] in a

thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential," (International Coaching Federation, 2021). ISC utilizes a framework of Appreciative Advising (Bloom, 2013), along with the International Coaching Federation Core Competencies and Code of Ethics (ICF, 2021) to guide all coaching interactions. Integrated Success Coaches also use the 3:1 Support Systems Model (Bradley & Reynolds, n.d.) to empower students to help students identify people, places, and resources which can offer support, whether on or off campus. Coaches work together to share disciplinary knowledge to best coach/partner with each student in real-time, to establish cohesiveness of service and to build trust. Rather than students finding and working with numerous offices/coaches on campus, Integrated Success Coaches are trained to take a holistic approach to support and develop students.

University of Kentucky- Integrated Success Coaching Model

At the University of Kentucky, Integrated Success Coaching, is a holistic approach to student development which brings together multiple areas of coaching practice into an integrated model. This coaching approach includes six Student Success Dimensions: Academic Coaching, Financial Coaching, Leadership Coaching, Wellness Coaching, Career Coaching, and Identity Based Coaching (Figure 5). These areas all exist in various offices across campus but were not directly connected. The Integrated Coaching approach brings these areas of coaching together and provides cross-disciplinary training to develop a more comprehensive coaching model. The coaching model and training program were developed by a team of Transformative Learning staff at the University of Kentucky and is based on the Appreciative Coaching Model and the International Coaching Federation (ICF) standards (Figure 3). This coaching program is

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meant to provide a standardized training experience for all Integrated Success Coaches and is intended to streamline the process of coaching across departments to create a simplified and consistent experience for students.

There are two types of coaches in the University of Kentucky's model. First, full-time professional coaches have a primary responsibility of coaching one-on-one and in groups. There are currently five full time coaches employed by UK, with plans to expand this number to 8 within the next academic year. Second, staff from the six student support dimensions are trained as coaches, and coach students approximately 5-10 hours per week in addition to their regular job responsibilities. There are currently six coaches trained as ISC's whose primary work responsibility is not that of a coach. Both types of coaches are trained in an ICF certified program and work toward certification as an ICF coach. Students can meet with coaches in person or virtually depending on student and coach preference. There is no minimum number of coaching appointments required; students determine how often they would like to meet with their coach. Additionally, coaches are not assigned to students based on name or grade level. Instead, students self-select the coach they would like to work with when making an appointment. Coach profiles are provided to students to indicate areas of expertise, if relevant.

Figure 5. University of Kentucky Integrated Success Coaching Model
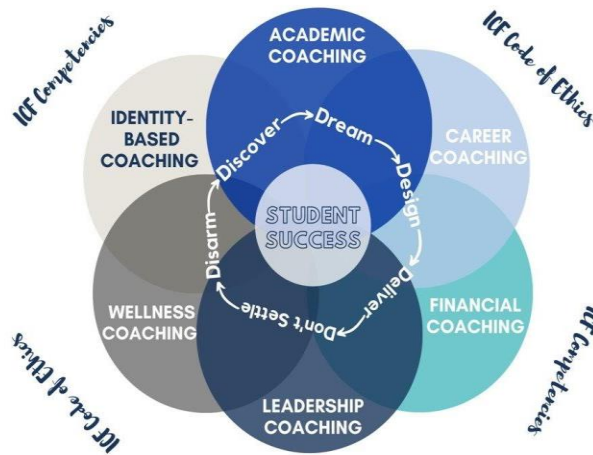
Distinguishing Features of UK's Integrated Success Coaching Program

There are several distinguishing features of the University of Kentucky's coaching program. First, all coaches go through an intensive 60-120-hour training program that is certified through the International Coaching Federation (ICF). This training program not only covers the six Student Support Dimensions but teaches an approach to coaching called Appreciative Coaching that provides an additional structure to the program. In addition, coaches are required to work toward certification as either an Associated Certified Coach (ACC), or Professional Certified Coach (PCC), depending on the number of hours of coaching completed. Additionally, UK takes a division-wide approach to coaching, offering a 3-hour training for any staff or faculty who wishes to become an "Integrated Success Coach Advocate (ISCA)". This divisional component is unique to UK's coaching program and is meant to create a coaching culture on campus.

UK's Integrated Success Coach Training Program Structure

The training structure follows an adapted version of the Appreciative Advising model and includes cross-training in the areas of Academic Coaching, Leadership Coaching, Financial Coaching, Career Coaching, Identity-Based Coaching, and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. As coaches move through the curriculum, they are engaged in learning, practice, and reflective activities. The coaching curriculum is accompanied by course materials in Canvas, an online course management system used by the University of Kentucky. The training was developed and is conducted by an ICF trained Professional Certified Coach (PCC) and is supervised by the Director of Transformative Learning.

In addition to weekly training meetings, participants meet once a week to discuss and review coaching appointments and provide feedback and suggestions to one another. Participants can also get feedback on recorded coaching sessions from the trainer and other coaches during this meeting. This meeting is intended to help achieve the 10 hours of mentor coaching required by ICF, and also to supplement the coach training experience. Further, it allows coaches to troubleshoot, engage with one another, and get feedback on their coaching practice in a non-threatening way.

Lastly, there is a divisional component to the training. Coach training participants are all located within the division of Student Success. An important part of this initiative is to develop a divisional culture around coaching, which will be accomplished through several three-hour trainings offered to division staff. These trainings are optional but are intended to provide an overview of the coaching process and model, as well as demonstrate basic coaching skills for integration into individuals' daily work. The goal of

these trainings is to help staff within the division utilize coaching practice and understand when it is appropriate to refer students to Integrated Success Coaching for more intensive coaching needs.

UK's Integrated Success Program Outcomes

There are several established outcomes for the University of Kentucky Integrated Success Coaching program. In addition to the ICF certification of coaches and the outcomes provided by ICF, UK has created a set of student learning outcomes (Appendix A) for all coaching participants. These learning outcomes are both general for all coaching appointments, and specific for each of the Student Support Dimensions. They are measured through coach 78iffer78ntion and reflection, and student feedback on coaching appointments. Further, UK utilizes a tracking system through Salesforce that monitors student attendance and participation in coaching appointments. In the 2020-2021 academic year more than 600 coaching appointments took place, with a fall-to-fall retention rate of over 90% (personal communication, 2021), compared to an institutional retention rate of approximately 85%. These preliminary numbers indicate that coaching has a significant impact on student retention. Lastly, UK is implementing a measure of self-efficacy to better understand how the coaching program is impacting student success. By utilizing a pre-post self-efficacy scale for all coaching appointments in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Integrated Success Coaching team hopes to better measure the impacts of coaching for students' belief in their abilities to persist toward graduation and be academically successful.

Participant Selection

Students who had participated in at least 3 Integrated Success Coaching appointments between Fall 2020 and Spring 2022 were eligible to participate in this research study. I chose the criteria of three coaching appointments because of the need for students to have engaged in significant reflection alongside their coach. While reflection occurs at all stages of coaching, students who have completed three coaching appointments or more are likely be more invested in the coaching process and have had a high enough "dose" of coaching to be able to reflect on the impacts coaching has had on their experience. The Office of Transformative Learning at the University of Kentucky keeps robust records of student coaching appointments in a database through Salesforce and Tableau. I worked with the Director of Transformative Learning, Dr. Molly Reynolds, to identify eligible participants. Eligibility criteria included students who (a) were currently enrolled at the University of Kentucky during Spring 2022, (b) had not been coached by me, and (c) had participated in at least three coaching appointments since Fall 2020. These criteria were selected due to the ability to access students contact information (a), the desire to eliminate conflicts of interest (b), and the desire to interview students with a significant enough experience with coaching to see developmental results.

Dr. Reynolds contacted the eligible students via email to provide information about the study, including a Qualtrics survey for students to opt-in to participate (Appendix B). Two rounds of e-mails were sent out: one in February, and an additional email to the same group of participants in March (Appendix C). In total, 214 students were contacted via email. After the first round of emails, 28 students had completed the survey, and 14 had signed up for interviews. After the second email was sent, a total of

55 students had completed the survey, which included informed consent information and allowed them to "opt in" to participate (Appendix D). I used this survey to identify candidates for an interview, with special attention given to creating a balanced sample using the additional eligibility criteria for students who (d) had variation in class standing and I variation in race, ethnicity, and gender. I kept an interview participant chart (Table 1) to keep track of each student's age, gender, class standing, major, and number of coaching appointments. Keeping these records allowed me to select a diverse sample of students from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and identities. More female students completed the survey than male students, and a larger number of first- and second-year students participated. This could be due to the relative infancy of the coaching program on campus, giving greater access and awareness to first- and second-year students. By monitoring the demographics of participants before inviting them to interview, I was able to obtain a mostly balanced sample of first year, sophomore, junior, and senior students from a variety of backgrounds, majors, and residencies (in/out of state, international). One student interviewed was not seeking a degree but had completed an undergraduate degree at 80ifferrent institution and was taking courses in preparation for a master's program. Additionally, I considered the total number of coaching appointments when selecting students to participate to see if students who attended more coaching appointments had a different experience than those who had attended only three appointments.

Students selected for an interview were sent an additional email from me with a link to sign up for an interview via Calendly. Once an interview time was selected, they were sent a Zoom link and instructions for logging in at their interview time. Thirty

students were invited to interview, 24 students signed up for an interview time, and 19 interviews were completed. On average, interviews lasted one hour and were recorded for transcription using the transcription software Otter.ai. Recordings and transcripts were stored on a password and firewall protected computer. Participants were asked to identify a pseudonym during their Interview for later use in data analysis. At the conclusion of the interview, students were sent compensation of twenty dollars via Venmo or gift card to thank them for their participation. Funding for this research project was provided through the University of Kentucky College of Education department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation.

Table 1. Interview Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	Class Standing	Ethnicity	Age	Residency	Major	Apts
Jason	Male	Freshman	Asian	18	In-State	Pre-Computer Science	5
Grace	Female	Freshman	White	19	Out of State	Pre-Marketing	5
Valerie	Female	Freshman	African American	19	Out of State	Pre-Social Work	8
Muneen	Female	Freshman	Asian	19	In-State	Chemistry	>10
Elizabeth	Female	Sophomore	White	19	Out of State	Elementary Education	3
Stephanie	Female	Sophomore	African	19	International	Public Health	10
Reggie	Male	Sophomore	White	23	In State	Electrical Engineering	3
Liu	Male	Sophomore	Asian	19	In State	Psychology	>10
Demarcus	Male	Sophomore	African American	20	In State	Neuroscience	5
Rudy	Male	Junior	White	20	In State	Political Science, Communication	3
Francesco	Male	Junior	White	21	In State	Mechanical Engineering	5
Hayden	Male	Junior	Hispanic/Latino	22	In State	Information Communication Technology	6

Table 1. Interview Participant Demographics (continued)

Name	Gender	Year	Race	Age	Residency	Major	Coaching
Alexis	Female	Junior	White	20	In State	International Studies	9
Carrie	Female	Junior	Multi-Racial	21	In State	Public Health	>10
Joy	Female	Senior	White	22	Out of State	Psychology, Sociology	3
Emily	Female	Senior	African American	22	Out of State	Communication Sciences and Disorders	5
Natalie	Female	Senior	White	22	Out of State	Management	8
Aracelis	Female	Senior	Hispanic/Latino	22	International	Kinesiology, Writing, Rhetoric & Digital Studies, Spanish	3
Amber	Female	Non-Degree	White	36	In State	Non-Degree	3

Data Generation

Interviews with undergraduate students who had participated in at least three coaching appointments with an Integrated Success Coach were the primary foundation of the research study. Interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom and were recorded for further review. Interviews were semi-structured and lasted approximately one hour with each participant. During the interviews, I also took note of important themes that arose during the conversation. Lareau and Rao (2016) allude to the importance of these additional observations by stating as "as part of the creation of a high-quality data set, it is crucial to collect information on facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice so as to better understand the social interactions being studied" (Lareau & Rao, 2016).

To create the interview protocol, I started by brainstorming potential questions based on the central research question: In what ways does coaching help students

optimize their college experience? Questions from the conceptual framework that illuminated some additional context about how students can "optimize" their experience were also considered. Once an initial list of questions was identified, they were sequenced in a way that would allow for me to not only build rapport with those being interviewed, but that would allow them to continually reflect on their experience in increasingly complex ways. Once an initial draft of questions was solidified, feedback was solicited from colleagues and advisors to further refine the questions. This led to the draft of questions and interview protocol which was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix E).

Questions focused on concepts related to self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2014), and agency (Archer, 2010). I expected that students might struggle with these terms, so I was sure to word questions in a way that would relate to them and their experiences, such as "what goals are you working toward with your coach?" (projects), and "how do you think coaching has impacted your understanding of who you are?" (Identity development and self-authorship). I was also mindful of the power dynamics in an interview and wanted to approach the conversation with a sense of curiosity and trust. To build rapport, I started the interview by reviewing the informed consent information, and then discussed the student's journey to college and their experiences up to that point. After this rapport had been built, I transitioned to talking about coaching, and then to the student's personal experiences and development. Most students seemed comfortable answering questions from the beginning of the conversations and were able to reflect on their experiences in high school and college related to their success both inside and outside the classroom. Their initial responses about why they came to coaching and what

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their relationship with their coach was like matched what I anticipated, having been a former coach in this context. However, I found that some students seemed to have a more impactful experience than others; some were incredibly passionate about their experience, while others needed more time to consider their opinion and reflect.

After the first four interviews, I chose to change the order of the interview questions to better flow with students' thought processes. As I conducted the first several interviews, I noticed the order of the questions did not flow with how students were describing their experiences, and therefore moved some of the final questions earlier in the conversation to allow the conversation to flow more naturally. Additionally, I found that I was asking similar probing questions, and integrated these into the protocol for consistency. An example of this is the addition of the question "what tools or skills have you incorporated into your routine" to help understand how coaching has influenced a student's actions and thinking about their ability to be successful. I found that the questions were generally worded in a way that students understood and related to, but some students required restructuring based on their own experiences with coaching or needed further clarification about which coaching program we were talking about, as they had participated in coaching before the integrated model was created in 2020. There were some questions that did not elicit a significant response from all students, specifically when asking about specific conversations they may have had with their coach related to topics of reflexivity and agency. Many students had not discussed their social relationships with their coach, focusing instead on their academic and future planning. For these students, I redirected them to their main goals or projects identified in an earlier

question to reflect on their experiences rather than focusing on things they had not discussed with their coach.

Because of the semi-structured nature of the interview protocol, there was flexibility to ask follow up questions and probe for further information as the interviews occurred, which allowed me to clarify responses and gain maximum relevant information during the interviews. If I noticed that a student was struggling with a particular question, I asked it in a different way or provided some clarification. For most students, they were able to describe their experience in detail, and shared freely with me. A few of the students struggled with this reflection and required more probing to elicit a response.

All interview data was recorded and uploaded to the Otter.ai transcription software. Transcripts were then downloaded to Microsoft Word documents and saved on a password protected computer under the student's pseudonym. All transcripts were later downloaded for data analysis using only the pseudonym to eliminate bias and preserve anonymity during analysis. The themes identified were also further consolidated at this point to better explain the findings and to 1further integrate the theoretical framework into the discussion.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method as described by Tracy (2020). I began by reading through the interview transcripts and assigning open codes to the data using a color-coding system to organize and identify different important pieces of data as recommended by Tracy (2020). A second document was used to organize these codes into a matrix and refine as each interview was read. Additional context from notes taken during interviews was integrated into the themes to provide additional information

or clarify any of the points from the interview that might not have come through clearly in the transcript. Interviews were read several times to ensure the codes identified were comprehensive and best represent the interview data gathered. Once I was confident that the codes reflected a good representation of the data, the next phase, axial coding, began.

In the axial coding phase, themes within the open codes were identified to reconstruct pieces of the data (Gallicano, 2013) and to make sense of the significant meanings of the phenomenon. The open coding framework was used throughout this stage to ensure that the parameters of the initial codes were still being met by the second phase of coding. Rather than focusing solely on the descriptions and phrases provided by the participants, I sought deeper meaning to better understand the implications and underlying tones of the data. I organized and reorganized the data into groups to determine what themes arose most frequently, see if any themes from my notes were missing in the data and sought to understand what students meant by their descriptions provided. This process took a significant amount of time, as I wanted to ensure that all student voices were represented in the themes, and that each theme selected truly represented what the student was describing. Once this framework was completed, selective coding was started.

In the selective coding process, the axial codes were used as a starting point to search for deeper meaning of the coaching experience (Tracy, 2020). These codes were used to build a theory which is representative of all participants' perceptions. During this phase, I also noted outliers and discrepancies in the data, which were few. The findings were then further contextualized by previous research of coaching as described in the conceptual framework and literature review for the study. Throughout the process, I

continually referred to the research questions to grapple with and understand the data, moving toward an understanding of the data related to self-authorship and agency. This back and forth between the data and the literature allowed me to consider the data both independently and within the context of existing literature to determine if the themes aligned or did not align with existing bodies of literature, and how this data could further compliment the theoretical bodies used in the study. Continuing to return to the research question, literature, and transcripts allowed me to stay grounded in the direction of the study and feel confident that the themes identified truly represent the perspective of the students interviewed.

After getting an initial analysis of the data, I was asked to consider how a student's demographics might influence their experience. I revisited the major themes and added this into my analysis, which helped identify some additional trends related to a students' class standing and the number of coaching appointments attended. These trends were then integrated into the themes in the data analysis and discussion and provide additional directions for future research.

<div align="center">Validity and Credibility</div>

Qualitative research does not provide generalizable findings as can be obtained through quantitative research. Rather, qualitative research provides context and rich detail of lived experience and meaning which can allow the reader to determine the transferability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Descriptions of the data and information about the research participants will be explored in Chapter 4, which will allow the reader to determine if reader generalizability (Merriam, 1998) allows for transferability of the results to other contexts.

With any data collection method there are threats to credibility. For qualitative studies which use interview methodologies, the main threats to validity are incorrect interpretation of events, the time needed to interview, scheduling difficulties with participants, and difficulty obtaining materials for review. To enhance the credibility and quality of the data, I followed Maxwell's (2013) suggestions of triangulation, feedback, and "rich data". To accomplish this, all interviews were recorded and saved. Reflective notes were taken after each interview to check for assumptions and biases, and transcripts were collected for analysis as part of the study findings. Potential biases that emerged in the notes included gender roles, assumptions related to co-curricular involvement, and those related to non-traditional enrollment. I was careful to consider these biases thoroughly when conducting interviews and analyzing the data.

Because of my intimate relationship with the coaching program being studied, it was also important to separate my experience and look at the data as objectively as possible while continually checking for potential biases that might arise as a result of my own coaching experience. The site used for this research was my former place of employment. At the time of the study, I was not employed at the research site, however, to avoid any conflict of interest, students who had any coaching appointments with me were eliminated from the list of eligible participants. Two participants were known to me prior to the study, but were not coached by me, and I did not have a supervisory relationship with them.

Ethical Considerations

Qualitative research often involves probing into the personal lives of the research subjects, which is then shared through the research findings. This information can be

potentially damaging or uncomfortable for some participants. While the nature of this research topic did not have high-level risk, several strategies were used to limit the risk of participants through this study. All participants completed a Statement of Informed Consent as part of the Qualtrics survey, and participation in the study was completely voluntary. Participants were reminded the informed consent process at the beginning of the interview and were reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time at the beginning and end of the interview. Additionally, all identifying data was removed from the transcripts before analysis and publication, and each participant selected a pseudonym. There were no participants included who had specific identifying information that might breach confidentiality, such as high-level leadership positions on campus, reliance on service animals, or use of specific campus resources which might lead to the identification of the student. Where necessary, stories or experiences that might pose risk to confidentiality were omitted or minimized and shared with little to no context to protect the identity of the participants.

<div align="center">Positionality</div>

My interest in success coaching stemmed from an invitation to participate in a pilot program for Integrated Success Coaching at the University of Kentucky as a Leadership coaching specialist. Prior to this, I had a basic understanding of the various types of coaching that existed on UK's campus, but did not have in-depth knowledge about the benefits, structure, or process of Integrated coaching for college students.

As part of the pilot project at the University of Kentucky, I had the opportunity to participate in the creation of the Integrated Success Coaching model at UK, as well as undergo training to become a certified Integrated Success Coach through the

International Coaching Federation. I also worked as part of the leadership team to develop training for all staff interested in learning basic coaching skills to support the work of ISC's outside of the coaching realm. My intimate connection to the ISC program at UK is an important consideration in this project.

Further, my former position as a University of Kentucky employee is an important consideration, as this program is unique to UK. The relationships created as a former employee at UK and as a participant in the initial coaching pilot were crucial to my ability to understand the inner workings of the coaching program and to have access to the student populations needed for this study.

<center>Limitations</center>

Qualitative research, by nature, is not generalizable outside of the study population. In this type of research, the researcher serves as the study instrument, and therefore findings are considered subjective. While the findings may be transferred to other populations under some circumstances, claims of generalizability cannot be made. Rich descriptions were used to provide as much detail and information as possible, aiding in the transferability of the findings, however, only one hour to 90 minutes was spent with each student, which limits the depth of what could be explored. Further, because of the high level of variability in success coaching programs on college campuses, a single research site was used. This meant that all participants in the study should have had similar coaching experiences. However, because students were coached by several different coaches, there was slight variability in their experiences. Further, the use of a single research site leads to findings which may not be representative of students at different types of institutions or different institution sizes. Lastly, participation in the

study was voluntary. Students were required to "opt in" to the study via a Qualtrics survey. Those who chose to participate may represent students with "extreme" experiences, either positive or negative, with coaching. Because of these limitations, the study should be considered exploratory in nature.

Summary

This study is a qualitative phenomenological analysis of the ways in which coaching impacts student development. In total, 19 students from a large, public, research 1 institution participated in semi-structured interviews, sharing their experiences, perspectives, and insights on their development as a result of participating in three or more coaching appointments since Fall 2020. In this chapter, I described the research approach, population being studied, research design, means for analysis, and threats to validity. I shared changes that were made in the protocol during the study, and my expectations from student interviews. The chapter concluded with a discussion of ethical considerations, researcher positionality, and study limitations. In Chapter Four, I will present the research findings from this study, including excerpts from interviews and general themes, and a discussion of the results.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

"My parents sent me all the way over here and just hope that I don't fail out of school," said Grace nervously. As an out-of-state freshman student, she had chosen to attend college far from home. Grace, like all participants in this study, turned to Integrated Success Coaching to help her transition to college life. What started as help with academic skills for an upcoming exam turned into a year-long relationship with a coach. Since attending coaching, Grace has changed her major, made new relationships, learned new skills, and is no longer worried about failing her freshman year. Grace's story mirrors that of most study participants- coaching not only provided them with academic strategies but changed how they described the way they function in college, how they build their support systems, and ultimately helped them move from surviving to thriving. In this chapter, I will explore some major themes from the interview data collected, including academic success strategies, decision making, and independence, along with several sub-themes, including redefining success, accountability, and family relationships

Academic Success Strategies

A primary reason many students attended coaching was to develop skills that would help them be more successful in the classroom. Many of the students interviewed described not having the necessary skills or strategies to keep up with the rigor of the college curriculum, and not having the confidence in their abilities or self-efficacy to be successful. The strategies brought with them from high school proved to be inadequate, and many had also experienced significant disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

which forced students into virtual learning during their last several years of secondary education. Stephanie, a sophomore international student, spoke of this transition, stating,

> I think my freshman year, I was trying to figure out kind of what worked for me. In the fall semester, I was taking classes online from home because of COVID. So, it was everything was new to me, like college classes and things like that. And I was trying to find the best way to navigate that." Muneen, a first-year student, shared "The whole thing from high school to college was definitely a big transition, which you don't really realize until it hit[s] you.

As is the case with many college students, those experiencing struggles often turn to what they know in their transition from high school to college. Stephanie spoke of this realization stating,

> I think in high school I was just saying okay, this is how I study. I'm just gonna stick with it…Like, I don't explore other options of like, hey, maybe I need to do this different, or I need to do that different. It was just like, this is what I knew, I'm gonna stick with it. So, coming to [college] I didn't know I had this option. So, I went to coaching. I didn't know that I could study this way or that way. After going to coaching and, like, learning that there are different ways to study, kind of give me that platform to like explore these different options when I was in college.

Muneen, described a similar experience, stating,

> I had a good plan. I was like, okay, I'm gonna get all A's in college. I'm going to try to get into medical school…and then I feel like the first few rounds of exams I was like, okay, this is not as easy, like, getting all A's,

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and I was like, I was definitely scared because I was thinking at least have medical schools are like, hey, I gotta get all A's gotta get good grades, and I was like, that does not help. And I guess with coaching, I definitely learned to kind of take things a little bit slow, like one step at a time. I don't focus yet on all A', just focus on like, okay, don't fail.

Both Stephanie and Muneen described the expectations they had for their academic success coming into college, and their challenges in meeting those expectations. They experienced what Baxter Magolda would describe as the transition between "following formulas" and "crossroads." When faced with an obstacle, they turned to what they knew. But when that didn't work for them anymore, they had to determine new ways to move forward. Through coaching, they, and other students, were able to develop specific strategies that helped them be more successful in the classroom. They also showed shifts in what they considered optimal. While they came into college with a goal of getting all A's, they found their definition of success had to shift in order to better meet their needs and abilities. Liu, a second-year student, shared some of these academic strategies, specifically with studying, stating that,

Now I feel like I'm smarter, like, I knew, I can see the flaws in my own passive methods of studying. And now I can actually like, pay attention. Just, for example, like I wasn't, I was more like generally focusing on studying during high school, just the general concepts instead of the specific concepts that were troubling me, in general. But now I feel like I'm more focused on more pinpoint accuracy on what I should be studying, what I should focus on, specifically, in my

classes that I have issues with. I just have more insight into what I'm struggling on.

Another student, Reggie, described how his coach helped him try new techniques of studying, like writing on a white board:

And so [my coach] brought up, have I tried writing on a whiteboard or chalkboard, and I hadn't. So, I gave those a try. And that's really what kind of like helped me start clicking. So, every time I go study, if I'm trying to learn it, I'll go to like a whiteboard or a chalkboard. And I'll just be like practicing it on it, because then I can see the entire image. And like, it just feels very familiar when I write it down. And it's just my brains easier. It makes it easier in my brain to remember what's going on.

This ability to have an outside perspective who is an expert in study skills and academic transitions helped many of the students experiment with new strategies for in-classroom success. The continued process of trial-and-error, as well as working with a coach to reflect on what's worked for them in the past and what might work for them in the future, connects with Archer's concept of communicative reflexivity. The process of "thinking out loud" and brainstorming with their coach proved to be helpful for many students. Additionally, being able to find solutions that worked for them helped reframe many students' thinking about their ability to be academically successful. The shift from a negative view toward their ability and skills toward a reframed perception of their abilities is apparent in the skill development and ability to integrate these strategies into their routine seen by many students in this study.

Academic strategies were not the only skills students worked on in coaching. Balance was a major topic of conversation for many of the study participants. Many students came to coaching with difficulty balancing their academic, social, personal, and work lives. Jason described this challenge stating,

Since right now I'm working. Like, the max I can work is like 20 hours. So, I try to get around there every week, and also just focusing on school, and keeping, like, good grades, and also staying ahead and studying for exams and stuff. And also, just having like a good social life and networking with others, is like, also a big part of just being in college.

Elizabeth shared similar sentiments, stating that coaching "help[ed] me figure out how to develop those relationships while being a student at the same time." Going a step further, Aracelis spoke of learning to create boundaries as part of learning to balance priorities, sharing how she planned to apply her learning when she graduates:

I think developing boundaries, with myself with others, even in the workplace, like what I want in a workplace, but I don't want in a workplace, but I want in a graduate program, what I don't want in a graduate program. Those are very essential to me and to everyone else because that I think that setting boundaries will help you succeed and not set you back.

An additional skill many students described was dealing with procrastination. Reggie described his experience with procrastination as:

I still procrastinate sometimes, but not nowhere as bad as I did. And I'm always doing my homework the last day at the last two hours that it was

due. And I always told myself yeah, you know, having that two-hour

pressure before it closes really helps me learn. And that was definitely

really hard. And once going to that couch coaching and everything really

helped me out and like this semester, one of the things I've changed it for

the procrastination goes was I get down with all my homework, about two

days. before it's even due, so I can really spend time studying, learning it.

And it's just more relaxing, knowing I have it done, and I actually

understand it, because I like it when it's on the day it's due, I'm just

rushing to get it over with, rather than learning how to do it.

Emily echoed this sentiment, sharing that her coach helped her:

Get better study habits, maybe helping me make a schedule of like, when

to do my homework and when to study….and being practical about the

study thing, towards like, I feel like a lot of people think like studying for

longer, it's like, oh, you should do it, where it's like, well, I have like, four

hours between [classes]…and like now and just being like, okay, well, but

practically, you're not going to use all the time studying. And if you try,

it's not going to be as beneficial to you.

This concept of time negotiation and procrastination was an important

factor to many students as they learned to better apply their academic strategies,

balance their lives, and transition to new environments

It wasn't just these strategies that helped them. They described that the process of

coaching allowed them to reflect on their experience using different methods and

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techniques, engaging in both learning and reflexive thinking (Archer, 2010). Emily described this a typical coaching conversation as including questions like,

> Is that working for you? Do you think that would work for you? Like, oh, let's try it and come back and see, like, were you successful?... And being like, I don't think that one will [work] or like, I'll try it and see.

Not only did coaching teach students these specific strategies, but it helped students think critically about what worked for them, reflecting on their skills and behaviors, past successes, and future goals to create a personalized approach to academics and reframing their thinking toward academic self-efficacy. Alexis described realizing that "you're not having to expert all this effort into doing studying that's not working for you." Reflecting on and developing these skills had a significant impact on many of the students interviewed. "I don't feel overwhelmed with school anymore," said Grace.

> Now that I'm here, I'm like, wow, I'm actually doing the things that younger me was excited to achieve…I'm challenged, but I'm not sinking, like, literally struggling so much. And I really just think that change was like, really like forcing myself to get on top of it. Like, I think that's what made me do it. I mean, I think coaching really helped me like, believe that, like, I can get on top of it and like give me like materials, and like study strategies is a lot of things I've learned from [success] coaching that have really helped me. So, they kind of give you what you need and it's like, okay, now you do it, you're the one in charge.

For Grace, the help of a coach to move through this crossroads situation- one in which she was questioning her ability to pass her classes and stay in college- was immensely beneficial. She described not only the partnership between she and her coach, but also the conversations and new way of thinking (reflexivity) that helped her move toward a more successful outlook. Additionally, she described being more confident in her ability to do things successfully, connecting with literature on coaching and self-efficacy.

This new feeling of autonomy and skill development was echoed by Stephanie, who said,

> I think another thing that I've learned is that I don't pick things up quite as quickly as other people might. Like, I have to actually sit down and marinate the information and reflect on it before I get it. But the moment I get it, I've gotten [it] and I can move on…It's given me relief that I can actually succeed if I know how to use that to my advantage.

Liu furthered this idea by sharing, "I don't know everything that I could be able to do. So, it's just another mind that could give me advice or give me some idea of how I could improve." It was this process of questioning, asking the student questions and having them think about prior experiences and times they've been successful, that ultimately led to their discovery and integration of new strategies for success. Once students are able to do this on their own, their need for coaching decreases, ultimately leading to them being able to succeed on their own with less coaching intervention.

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It's more like, coaching, like gave me the tools and the mechanic. So, if you have

a good working car, like your future, you should maintain it. And like, you know,

use those tools to definitely help it run better. But keep that car guy, shared

Hayden.

By modeling this reflexive process through communicative reflexivity, coaches

helped students learn to engage in autonomous reflexive practices, thus reducing the need

for a coach to guide them through the process and helping them move from actor to agent

in their lives (Archer, 2010). Further, the developmental practice of moving from

following formulas to becoming more self-authored provided them with the confidence to

approach obstacles moving forward, and the knowledge and skill to be able to do these

things on their own.

The skills and strategies students wanted to focus on differed based on academic

standing. Because the Integrated Success Coaching program at the University of

Kentucky officially launched in 2020 as an integrated model, first- and second-year

students only experienced this model of coaching. These students also arrived to campus

having experienced significant disruption of their high school education due to the global

pandemic, and therefore presented unique challenges in their transition to college and

their success both inside and outside the classroom. When discussing their experiences,

these students described significant anxiety, reliance on family members, and general

lack of skill development not seen by their junior and senior counterparts. While this may

be due to their age and level of experience with the academic rigor of a university setting,

the implications of COVID cannot be ignored. First and second year students described

greater challenges with their academic skills, which is what brought most of them to

coaching in the first place. Their struggles in the classroom were causing significant distress, and many of them were unable to keep up with the pace of learning and study skills required to be successful or felt that they didn't have the intelligence to be successful. However, through coaching, students were able to find strategies that worked for them and were able to develop new academic strategies while also reframing their personal definitions of success toward a more positive outlook on their skills and ability to be successful.

First year students Muneen, Valerie and Grace described their anxiety about falling behind in the classroom, and their feelings of failure when they weren't able to keep the same grades or excel in the same ways in college. For them, coaching was a way to develop strategies to be more successful in their academics, to re-examine their major choice, and to become more independent from their parents' influence on their academic decisions. Similarly, most of the sophomore students described academics as their primary influencing factor in seeking out coaching or being referred to coaching. Interestingly, Stephanie and Liu both elected to attend coaching before arriving on campus. Both sophomore students, they came to college in the early phases of the global pandemic and used coaching as a preventative measure to not fall behind. Both described how coaching had helped them adjust to the rigor of college, transition to being a college student, and make connections on campus that they might not have otherwise. While both sought out coaching to aid in this transition, both had also continued to participate in coaching after arriving on campus and into their second year of college.

The coaching conversations for Junior and Senior students focused slightly less on academic skills and more on preparing for the future. While some Junior and Senior

students were struggling in the classroom with upper-level courses, many were looking toward their future and thinking about their next steps post-graduation. Most of the students had determined their major at this point and felt more confident than the first- and second-year students in their choices. While some had struggled academically during their first and second year in college, they seemed more confident in their ability to be successful overall. Conversations with their coaches focused more on wellbeing, stress management, time management, extracurricular activities, and life beyond their undergraduate education. Students like Aracelis were considering graduate school, while others like Natalie were still undecided on their future career path. They discussed internships and potential career moves with their coach rather than only focusing on their skills within the classroom. Some of these students began attending coaching prior to their junior or senior year, and these students seemed to be further along in their self-awareness and decision-making skills than those students who started attending later. It is interesting to note that those who only started attending coaching in their senior year were struggling with some of the same issues of identity and self-awareness that the first- and second- year students were struggling with.

The one non-degree seeking student interviewed for this study was an interesting case. Amber had already completed her undergraduate degree and had a career prior to deciding to transition career paths and return to school. While she described doing well in her undergraduate studies, she started attending coaching because of the gap in her academic experience and her anxiety about being able to perform well in the classroom. The shift in her academic focus from music to accounting was also part of the decision to

begin attending coaching. When asked about what led her to this career transition, she shared,

> I've tried many things in the 15 years since I came out of school, including working for myself, which I didn't like very much, and working for other people, which was kind of mixed. And I just asked a lot of people about their jobs. Anytime I had a chance to interview someone about the work they do, I'm always interested to hear that…so eventually one of the people I interviewed turned out to be an accountant. And it sounded really different than what I thought accounting was. And it sounded a little bit more like it lined up with things that I like, and things that I'm good at, which I never would have guessed, because I heard accounting and I thought math. And I always thought, I don't do math. That's not for me. But it's really a lot more about logic than it is about math, and I can do logic.

Amber did not have any form of coaching during her undergraduate experience, and only attended coaching for the first time as a post-baccalaureate student. Additionally, she shared that she was homeschooled growing up, and did not have a lot of experience with assessments or exams. She described her experience with coaching as overall positive but expressed some frustration with the process of coaching that other students did not describe. There were times she described wanting her coach to give her the answers to her questions rather than urging her to process through a situation, and she expressed her general frustration with the questioning and probing process of coaching. She shared,

I think I probably like to see options as black and white. And there's only these two options. And a coach helps me to see there are some options between that…But if I bring a problem to my coach and say, I'm struggling to do this, and my coach says, Well, what do you want to do about that? Or how do you think you can fix that? That's not always very helpful to me, because I'm coming with the problem, because I don't know how to fix it. And for myself, I would appreciate coaches, being more willing to just offer ideas and solutions without the whole process of you need to figure it out for yourself.

If we consider cognitive development as the capacity to move beyond dichotomous thinking, Amber's experience with coaching and her development of self-authorship and agency seemed behind that of other students interviewed. By wanting to be given the answers and not buying into the process of coaching, Amber did not describe the same level of critical thinking as other students. She spoke of wanting additional support inside the classroom, but it seems the support she was looking for might be more closely aligned with tutoring rather than coaching. While she did share that her coach helped to challenge her black and white thinking patterns, and helped her access resources on campus, she found the process of coaching challenging. Amber shared,

But it can feel frustrating to think I brought this problem, and I don't know how to solve it. So, I always want to skip over that part of I don't have any brain cells left to put into thinking about how to solve it. I need somebody perspective who's been through it before or does this a lot to know. So maybe on my side, I can ask, but my coach always seemed hesitant to offer a specific, either solution or feedback or something. And then sometimes would ask for permission to do that.

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And my thinking is, I'm here in this room talking to you, because I'm giving you

permission to give me feedback. And I'd like the feedback, and just save the time

asking and just give me your thoughts.

It seems that Amber was not a knowing actor in her college experience and did

not have significant periods of reflection or reflexivity prior to attending coaching where

she could determine how to solve these problems on her own. While outside the scope of

this study, the point at which students begin coaching and their development thereafter

could be an area for future exploration.

Reframing Success

A subset of this theme that emerged in the data was that of reframing their

personal definitions of success. Generally, students reported increased motivation after

attending coaching, largely due to their confidence in their ability to be successful, and

the accountability that their coach provided. This change in students thinking was clear

for all students who participated in the study, whether they attended three coaching

sessions or twelve. Many students reported feeling lost or "stuck" prior to coming to

coaching, indicating a potential crossroads in their lives (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2008).

For some of the students interviewed, this shift had a significant impact on their college

experience. In the case of Reggie, this change shifted his perspective on college. He

shared,

I was so ready to just quit on engineering, I was on the verge of just being like,

yeah, I need something easier this is this is really kind of killing me. And then

going into [coaching], and chatting with him, just really kind of, and setting the

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goals that we had, and seeing how everything was changing. For me, it just really kind of brought back that passion because it was like I can actually do this now. I can live up to what I enjoy. And I know how I can achieve it. And it was just exciting again.

For Reggie, coaching not only increased his motivation, but his entire way of thinking about his college experience shifted for the better. He was able to move from a thought pattern, where he felt like he wasn't smart enough to be an engineer, to a space where he was able to identify new strategies like studying and time management, which helped him be more successful. Amber shared a similar thought, noting that her coach helped her realize that she wasn't good at math "yet", but that she could be "in the same room as math" now. Jason shared this sentiment, stating that,

Just noticing that I can do anything I really wanted to. Just like I have the potential to do like, anything that's complicated. And beyond reach. I have access to so much (sic) materials. And there's like, no reason I shouldn't not (sic) succeed, if I'm utilizing it, and just working hard towards like, certain goals.

For both Reggie and Jason, the use of a coach during a time of crossroads and uncertainty helped them move through their challenges rather than giving up on college altogether. They described setting goals, or what Archer would describe as "projects" to keep them motivated, which ultimately helped them rediscover their passion for what they were studying. Additionally, having another person who believed in them helped both Reggie and Jason identify new goals to work toward, and helped them start to be able to identify these goals on their own.

Nearly every student shared that their confidence had shifted in some way since attending coaching, and credited coaching as the thing that helped them feel more confident as students and as people. Valerie shared,

> It made me realize it just made me realize how like, intelligent I am, in a good way like not to be cocky or nothing, but, um, it just made me feel like okay, like, if I set this up, and if I can see it, and if I try to obtain it, like, I'm probably gonna get it. So just do it that way and just, just be helpful. Just work hard for it and like it's going to eventually happen.

Grace discussed a similar reframing of her thinking, sharing that,

> I'm really like, actually succeeding for one of the first times in my entire life. I mean, I've always had good grades and stuff. But I really mean like, achieving. I actually think that the major I found is what I want to do…and I think the classes align with something I'm good at.

With increased clarity on their goals, both Valerie and Grace were able to grow their confidence in their ability to be successful in college, whether in the classroom or in other areas of their life. Much of this shift in confidence came with repetition. Stephanie said,

> I realized that as I started to use the resources more, I didn't have as many questions, or like, I didn't have as many reservations…I was able to do it by myself without having to go back and ask questions and things like that. And I think it got to a point where I think if kind of mastered the things [I was working on] …I was able to get to a point where I could do it by myself. And that gave me the confidence to keep going.

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The repeated process of using resources like coaching, trying out new things, and making adjustments helped students realize that they could do things on their own. "I started doing it on my own. Because I was able to see the impact on myself over time…I don't feel as overwhelmed," said Grace. This ultimately led many students to start attending coaching less frequently; they had developed the skills that helped them feel more confident in their ability to be successful. Stephanie shared,

> I think I can do this, to the point where I will not need to go back as frequently…I can like take it on from here myself. So, like, I was able to do it, and it felt great because I was like, okay, now I'm achieving my goals like this is where I kind of want to be.

While all students who participated in the study had been to at least three coaching sessions, many shared that it had been several weeks or even months since they felt the need to see their coach. When asked how they were able to use the skills they had learned without going to coaching, Emily shared,

> I am definitely a lot more like confident. I feel like in some of the ways it's challenged my thoughts and like, helps me be able to organize kind of those messy things that are harder to organize. I feel confident about navigating a new space and new environment and new schedule, and that I'll be able to do it. And, even past those things that make a lot of sense in my mind. I can easily organize on my Google Calendar. Having those skills where I feel confident that, like, okay, so it's like, messier things to organize. I can take, sit down and really think through it and like, okay, like, how are we going to figure that out.

Because they were able to move through the "crossroads" in their life, develop new strategies, adjust their definitions of success, and increase their confidence and self-efficacy, students needed their coach less and less. They were able to do it on their own, make their own decisions about how to spend their time, and use the strategies they developed to approach new barriers they might face. This is consistent with previous literature on coaching impact, including studies done by Bettinger & Baker (2011), Chunn (2019), and Han et al. (2017). They were also able to use these newfound strategies to help them make decisions about their life in general, increasing their confidence in their ability to make decisions on their own.

Decision Making

Making decisions is an important part of the college experience. For many students, being independent from family for the first time opens a world of new decisions that must be made. Whether large decisions like remaining in college or choosing a major, to small decisions like how you spend your time, students are grappling with constantly needing to make decisions, and learning to decide what's best for them on their own. Archer describes decision making in terms of "projects." These projects can be big things like where to go to college or what major to choose, or small projects like whether to attend an event or stay in and work on homework. Whatever the scope of the project, these decisions require thought and consideration. As we grow older and move toward being more self-authored or agentic, these projects should become easier (Archer, 2010, Baxter Magolda, 2008). For many college students, struggling with identifying or moving toward achieving these projects are a reason to seek out help.

Natalie shared that this challenge with decision making was a major reason she started attending coaching sessions,

> Another reason I reached out is because I've always known what to do, I've always been very proactive. I'm very self-aware of what I need to do. It's the fact of actually doing it… I felt that I was pretty indecisive before. I'm just not just because I did. I felt that big, life changing decisions needed to be made and I didn't want to mess up and I still don't but that's my, um, but I think I'm, I'm putting less pressure on myself to those decisions because I can always go back and change them.

Students in the study struggled with not only the ability to make decisions, but the motivation to make the right ones. Making decisions is a large part of the college experience, and this struggle can impact students' overall ability to be successful.

Choice in major was a common issue for many students. Students in this study came from a variety of majors and disciplines, spanning many colleges across University of Kentucky's campus. Although there were difficulties discussed related to specific courses, major did not seem to be a factor in why students attended coaching, what brought them to coaching, or their experience with coaching. Regardless of their major, most students described struggling more with chemistry, biology, engineering, and math courses, and many cited these as a main reason for attending coaching. These are courses are general education requirements that many students report struggling with when attending college for the first time. Due to the intensive "weeding out" nature of these courses, many students in this study reported difficulty with the rigor of material, understanding how to study for these types of courses, and determining if their current

major was a fit based on these introductory classes. Students described these math and science courses as well as other academic skills like time management and study skills as the primary reasons for attending coaching, and as the primary things they discussed with their coach, regardless of major. Several students described feeling like they weren't smart enough to be in these courses, or that they didn't feel they were up to the challenge of the academic rigor these courses required. By working with their coach, some students ultimately chose to change their major, and started immediately feeling more confident in their ability to be successful. For others who stuck with their same major, learning new skills and working with their coach to shift their thinking about the difficulty of their courses helped them stay motivated to get through these "weed out" courses.

Many students cited the process of coaching; the back-and-forth conversations and questions their coaches asked, the reflexive discussions, as leading them toward more effective decision-making practices, especially with their major choice. Elizabeth shared,

> I try and look at it in like a more brutally honest way now, like, before, I would, in my mind, like I would even try and like paint a pretty picture or something that probably isn't that great. But now I'm able to kind of look at it and like see it for all of its issues, I guess. Because before, like, if I had something set in my mind as like, I think this, like I want to do it, I would tend to ignore all of the bad things about it as well. So, I feel like I have the ability now to look at it more in a bigger picture, I guess.

This reframing of success allowed her to see things in a more holistic way rather than just focusing on one aspect of a situation and ignoring the rest. Carrie echoed this idea, stating,

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But now I feel like I sit through and really think about things and the
consequences about, you know, just multiple different things that can happen if I
make this decision. I feel like I've grown a lot in that way. Because now I think
about what I'm going to do in who will affect how it will affect me. But before it
was just like, do it and figure it out later.

She continued by sharing,

I feel like before time really wasn't an important factor for me. And but I feel like
after time is very important like it, especially if it's a big decision, like, it's going
to take time to realize what is right, and what is the right thing to do with what to
go with. And so, I felt like, before coaching, and like back in high school, like I
said, I was making a decision on the fly that expense, even if it was like a big
decision. But now, I feel like I value time. And I'm like, okay, I don't have to
make this decision today. Like, I can come back to it in a few days and sleep on it.
And so, I really value that more now.

The shift in decision making skills from high school to college, and the ability to
grow in one's decision making, was a key piece echoed by most participants interviewed,
and was a key factor in how coaching helped them optimize their experience. Their
ability to not only make big decisions that impacted their future, but small decisions like
how they were spending their time, helped them make the most of their time in college
and feel more confident in the decisions they were making and the path they were on.

However, for some students, this is still an ongoing learning process. Aracelis
shared that,

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With my decision making, like I, I really have to ask for constant reassurance, and I made the right choice. Sometimes I did make the right choice. Sometimes I didn't, and like kind of, like having a hard time accepting that I messed up or accepting that I did the right thing and not like doubt myself, a lot of the times.

Although she has made a lot of significant decisions since attending coaching, her confidence in her decision-making ability is still growing. However, she thinks that her ability to take ownership of her decisions increased. The ability to seek advice and ask for help was also important for Elizabeth, who shared that,

I don't always need to go to somebody to figure out something now like; I have the skills to stop and think through things by myself. And while sometimes it is great to go get, like, help and that's from other people. Like, it's not a needed thing anymore.

These students saw their coach as that person to ask for help; someone they could go to if they were struggling with a decision or if they needed someone to process their thoughts with. When asked if they felt they could now make decisions on their own, the sentiment was an overwhelming "yes."

This shift from reliance on others to help make decisions to being able to make decisions on their own is a key indicator of moving toward both self-authorship and agency. Baxter Magolda (2008) describes the shift from "following formulas" set forth by others in your life toward "self-authorship" in which one can take control of their decisions. Additionally, Archer describes decisions in terms of "projects," or things someone is working toward. Students worked with their coach to identify projects, but

eventually many were able to identify these projects and work on them on their own. Rather than being actors in their lives, or relying on what others told them to do, students were able to move toward being agents, with increased reliance on themselves and their ability to make these choices on their own.

As students learned how to make decisions, both large and small, they shared the importance of having someone they could rely on to help them through the process. This accountability partner helped them increase their confidence in decision making and provided them with a sounding board for sharing ideas, challenges, and wins.

Accountability

A large part of what increased students' confidence, decision making skills, and ways of thinking about themselves and their abilities was the accountability that coaching provided them. Hayden said, "if you have someone personally checking in on you, it's a lot easier. And like, you don't want to disappoint them." The additional accountability provided by coaches to their coachee allowed them to not only be more motivated to achieve the goals they set for themselves, but also the emotional connection to another person on campus. Grace shared her realization after her first coaching appointment:

> Oh, this is a real person that I'm sharing my goals with. And like, I kind of have to
> go back to them and be like, oh, I either did what I said I was going to do, or I did.
> And so, after the first appointment, we kind of talked a little bit about, like
> studying strategies and stuff. And then I tried to do some of those, and then come
> back to him."

Having this partnership with a coach allowed students like Grace to think more critically about how they were spending their time and what was important to them. She continued, sharing that,

> I'm, like, a kind of like, people pleasing person. And like, I did feel I liked
> making the appointments because I knew, like, if I went to this
> appointment, [my coach] wouldn't be mad at me. But he'd be like, okay,
> why did we not like do the things that we implemented? And this would
> be like, embarrassing, but also, like, I definitely by doing them, I
> definitely saw change. And that's why I kept doing them because I realized
> that like, staying on top of my stuff, like, I'm not freaking out about school
> all the time. I'm not missing assignments. I'm not like, not going to my
> classes, like as long as I stay with my schedule things like I actually have
> noticed, like significant change from last semester to semester.

Several students also noted that they started holding themselves accountable as well, and that this was a major factor in their success. Francesco shared that he would visit his coach,

> I knew that I was going to be seeing this person again. And then I should keep up
> on what I said I was going to do. So that was good. Which is it's important every
> once in a while, to just look over things that you're doing life and make sure that
> you're, you know, on track wavering from where you want to go?

He knew his coach would ask, "have you done the things that we said that we're going to do? And I said, yes, because I did, because I saw that question coming." Natalie

also experienced this approach to accountability, sharing that "I think that's also why because I just, I was hoping she was holding me accountable, but then I was also holding myself accountable."

The relationship with their coach, having an accountability partner, and their increased skills and confidence helped them feel like they could be successful. The concept of accountability, increased skills, and confidence aligns with the previous literature on the coaching relationship from the coach's perspective explored in Chapter 2Having a person on campus whose entire job is to help students be successful provided some excitement to many of the students like Hayden, who said, "and then after, it's like, I'm kind of excited to go back to the meetings and like, you know, get those goals recognized or whatever and stuff like that." The increased excitement and reframing of thinking toward achieving goals was an important turning point for many students in this study.

The key to this accountability for many students was the relationship they were able to develop with their coach from the beginning.

> [My coach was] really easy to talk to, she was really open, and I really liked her advice. And so, I just felt like her personality and just who she was really helped me, and you know, like me to be comfortable and open with her. So that really helps me to keep coming back, you know, I wanted to see her and talk to her, shared Carrie, "and so now I feel like that I'm strong enough now that I can pursue without her, but still have a relationship with her, of course. Yeah, she set me up to be strong, independent, definitely.

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The importance of this relationship was echoed by Reggie, who shared, "we spent a lot of time just chatting and getting to know each other. And it was just really nice to be able to kind of develop a friendship relationship and get that kind of counseling at the same time."

Overall, the accountability provided through coaching helped students be more successful in achieving their goals by providing them with a person who cared about them and who they could expect would be there for them to help them achieve their goals. This balance in the coaching relationship was an important factor in their success, according to Jason, who said,

> I guess just someone to just sit down to talk to that would understand, in a way. Just from another point of view, how they view the situation is really like, you can find like you can I can find like a peer to say that it's just, I guess, awkward, but like in a private close conversation with [my coach is] just like, like he would know, it's actually going on in like, like the people I'm talking about. So, like he would, I guess have a different point of view, which I would like to hear… It's a sense of security, just having someone there. But also, I know that I have other people that are also there for me, like families and stuff. Like they're, they're, like, all very supportive.

Not only did Jason's coach hold him accountable toward reaching his goals but was a person he could come to for a different perspective, for resources, and to provide an additional layer of support on campus.

Aracelis, and others, described coaching as a partnership, and an environment in which they felt supported, were held accountable, and were able to work alongside their coach in a partnership (Magolda & King, 2004). Coaches worked with their students to first understand who they are and how they operate. By getting to know them first as people, coached were able to better connect with students on an individual basis, and also integrate a student's identity and needs into the learning process. Coaches also did not approach the relationship with students as an expert in coaching, academics, or college life. Instead, students stated that the coached asked them questions to help them reach their own conclusions about what would work for them and how to make changes in their lives, in line with the ICF coaching competencies and standards explored in the literature review (ICF 2022).

Overall, having this person to help them make decisions on their own, hold them accountable, and help them identify new academic strategies for success led to many students feeling more independent; they felt they could start to operate on their own, making better use of their time, resources, and energy to be successful in college and beyond.

<div align="center">Independence</div>

A third theme that emerged from the research was that of independence, including better understanding themselves and shifting family dynamics. As students continued to grapple with their relationships with their parents, many started to learn more about themselves, their needs, and how to be their own independent person. For several, coaching was a way to safely start to explore these identities and challenges. Aracelis shared how she felt at the beginning of her experience in college, stating that "I was just

so lost, and I would put so much pressure on myself and like I would idealize what my future would look like, but I had no steps as to how to get to that future." This idea of feeling "lost" was also felt by Natalie, who described her struggle when asked what she wanted to do after college, and how that has shifted through coaching. She shared that people would ask, "so what are you going to be doing? And I didn't have an answer. And, and I still don't, but the difference is, I now have the confidence to say that that's okay."

As students started developing a relationship with their coach, they started to feel more comfortable sharing their experiences and discussing challenges they were facing. Aracelis revealed,

> [Coaching] just, it provided me the safe space to try out different things. Like the internship or my current job or taking this many classes one semester or engaging my social life. It's just, it allowed me to explore and have someone to encourage me to explore different aspects of my life, and be there for me and like, find opportunities in the state, like find safe opportunities for me to explore different aspects of my life.

This idea of a "safe place" was important to students like Aracelis, as they were starting to discover themselves in a non-threatening and comfortable environment where they could explore, fail, try new things, and become the best version of themselves. Baxter Magolda would describe this as the development of their sense of self and interests that comes with the end of the crossroads phase (Evans, et. al, 2010), noting "a clearer sense of direction and more-self-confidence marked the end of the crossroads" (p. 185).

For Elizabeth, Alexis, and Stephanie, coaching also helped them better understand themselves. Alexis shared how coaching helped her get to know herself better:

I felt like I didn't understand myself or really felt like I had a personality. Because I was kind of just there and like, again, did what other people told me do. And so, like I didn't, I hadn't developed myself. And I think it's definitely helped me understand my own brain and how it functions. Because I remember like at the beginning of coaching, she would ask me questions, and I just, I wouldn't know the answer. I wouldn't be able to, you know, figure out like, what I wanted or what I was doing, like, I couldn't like reflect on myself that much, because I just had never thought about it. And it definitely helped me develop as a person and understand myself. And that was super helpful.

Elizabeth also shared, "it's helped me have a more clear (sic) picture of myself. I can look at myself in a more honest way." "I [realized] there's more sides to me than I thought" shared Stephanie. When asked what it was that led them to this better understanding of themselves, the answer was ultimately coaching, not only their relationship with their coach, but also their ability to ask important questions that led to reflection and ultimately self-understanding. By thinking about their previous experiences and putting them in context with their current experiences, students were able to start to curate their identities and think more clearly about what they wanted in college and beyond, moving through the crossroads phase and toward becoming the author of their own lives, with established beliefs and self-concept (Baxter Magolda, 2008).

In addition to helping develop their self-understanding and identity, coaching also helped students think about their future differently. "When I would plan my future before

coaching, I it I felt like it just wasn't I couldn't see myself doing it. Even though I told myself I'd be doing it. And I really can see myself doing the work getting taught to do and eventually going into that field," shared Rudy. As students worked with their coaches to dream about their future and set goals for themselves, many of their perspectives changed. Alexis shared,

> And just like, even if it's not a perfect plan, even if that's not what happens, even if it's not practical one, like it's like what I want, and it's what would make me happy. So, it's just like a nice feeling to be able to picture what you want later in life, and even just being able to picture tomorrow. Like that's, yeah, it's better than nothing. And like, I know what it's like to have nothing and so, like, it's so much nicer to be able to see, like, and it makes things not feel so bad in the moment. Like, you can get caught up really badly. And being like to the it's just today, like tomorrow will be a different day and it can be better.

She continued on to state,

> I don't have to have the same goals as everybody else. Like, you get told, like, oh, everybody should want this timeline of their life. But that's just not how that is. And so, it was really helpful to kind of just realize what I wanted and who I was and like, what I wanted in life, like what I thought and how I experienced it.

These realizations helped students not only feel more confident in themselves, but also in their futures. Through coaching, students were able to identify goals (projects), set expectations for themselves and others, and dream bigger about what is possible in their

lives. They were also able to process complex experiences and relationships with perfectionism and failure, and have a more optimistic outlook on themselves, their abilities, and ultimately their future. The ideas of confidence, optimism, and self-efficacy are consistent with literature on self-efficacy and mindset in coaching explored by Ramoz-Sanchez (2007) and Zhao et al. (2021). Ultimately, students demonstrated movement toward self-authorship and agency, as they became less reliant on their parents and family for support, and more reliant on their own intuition, skills, and experiences. This shift away from "following formulas" (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004) and "acting" (Archer, 2003, 2004) allowed students to separate themselves and their identity from that of their family and begin to identify their own goals and aspirations.

Role of Family

A student's relationship with their family is an important factor in their college experience. Many students rely on their families to provide emotional support, guidance, and advice as they navigate a new environment. With new technology, students are more connected to their families than ever; a video call with a parent or sibling is just a click away. For many of the students in this study, the entered college feeling the pressure from their families, namely their parents, to be successful in college. For several students, like Alexis, their parents even chose their major and future career trajectory: "Like when I first went to college, like my parents had picked what major I was gonna be and stuff like that. And clearly that did not work." Grace also shared this sentiment, sharing that,

> I think also my dad really wanted to like, be a pharmacist and like, he
> never ended up doing that. And like my mom is like, oh, pharmacy, like,
> that's a good career. Like, you're gonna make a lot of money and like,

whatever. So, I think like also, that's probably one of the reasons why I

felt like going in that direction was the right path is because of the

support from those people. But yeah, when I like told them that I wasn't

loving it. I mean, they could tell from like, when I came back for that

break, they were like, you seem burned out, like everyone told me that.

And then like, I was kind of like, Yeah, I think I want to change my

major. And they were like, kind of frustrated. But I also think, because

they saw how upset I was, they were kind of like, yeah, this makes sense.

She probably needs to like switch to something else…Switching my

major, I think has made me feel a lot more control…And I think that like

the classes like really align with the things that I'm good at. So, I'm

challenged, but I'm not like sinking, like, literally, like struggling so

much.

This "following formulas" did not work for either Alexis or Grace. They

struggled with these choices, ultimately making the decision to make a change. Coaching

helped Grace realize that she didn't have to struggle through a major she wasn't

passionate about; she could change her major to something that was a better fit for her

without disappointing her family. Through conversations with her coach, she was able to

come to the realization that her family wanted her to be happy and successful, even if that

wasn't as a pharmacist. Grace is a clear demonstration of a student in crossroads, working

to identify career paths more suited to their needs and interests and become more

autonomous in their choices (Baxter Magolda, 2008). Her coach helped her through this

process by partnering with her through coaching, and by providing the support as a

learning partner to help Grace come to these realizations on her own through communication and reflexive thinking.

These expectations placed on students by their parents weren't just related to majors, but to overall success in and out of the classroom. The expectations to achieve in the same ways as high school often had to be tempered as students went through their college-level courses. Muneen shared,

> And even my parents, I remember, at first like in high school, they're a little fixated on the whole straight A's thing. But then they realized how hard college was. And they know how hard I'm working. So, they're like, hey, that's good. A 77 is good.

This reframing of success is something that her coach helped her realize. The dissonance between what her parents felt should be her goal, and what she felt should be her goal caused friction at first. But by distancing herself from those expectations, she was able to help her parents understand that her goal grades might be different now that she is in college. Several other students also talked about working with their coach to reframe success and how this helped them to push back on the expectations from their parents to have straight A's or pick a specific career path. Natalie shared,

> My mom has always been super successful in her career. My brother is younger than me, and at the time was in the MLB. Draft. So, he was 18. And he just wasn't taking the typical route of what I was doing. And just I've always had, I always felt that pressure to succeed and do well, like as much as anyone does. And I just, I don't know, I felt like I need to pick

something that I could, I just wanted that one thing to do extremely well

at. Like, the rest of my family had their identity, their one thing, and I

was like, I don't know what the heck I'm doing…I would say we're still

working on it. I feel like because I've taken off some of that pressure,

though, I feel a lot better about it. And that I know, something's out there.

I'm getting a lot, a lot closer to figuring that out and feeling better about

it.

What was optimal for her parents and brother (a clear career path from the

beginning of college) was not optimal for Natalie and caused her a lot of stress in the

beginning. As students reflected on their experiences and expectations from their

families, many realized this sentiment of reframing their definition of success and their

family's ideas about what success looks like in college. Joy shared her experience with

her struggle with perfectionism in academics as stemming from her parents, and how this

has shifted since coming to college:

At least with the academic focus, I think a lot of it came from like the motivation

that my parents had and expectations they had to me when I was younger, and

then internalizing that myself and thinking that the standard is perfection, I

definitely struggle with perfectionism. So that is something that I work on [in

coaching]. But that's where that inner dialogue really is rooted in that desire to be

the best at all times. And sometimes I need to recognize that 30% one day is

[actually] 100%, it just might look different.

As students started experiencing college for themselves, facing barriers, and

attending coaching, they started to develop their independence. Alexis shared that now,

she feels more independent in making choices that affect her future, stating, "and I'm not just like, sitting there just doing what I'm told. And so, I feel a lot more independent. In that I have a little bit more control over like, what happens and what I want to do."

This shift in the relationship between parent and student was apparent for many students. For some, this came with the realization that they were "on their own" for the first time in their lives. Valerie shared,

> I really wanted to go to UK and apply for UK one of the last things that really hit my mind was oh, like I'm gonna be like away from home like this is like my first time away from home. So, it was just something that really didn't I hit until I kind of got into the school and I was like, you know, there by myself and I was like, wow, like, I'm really like at UK by myself.

Stephanie had a similar experience with moving halfway around the world for college. "Since I got into college, both of [my parents] were like, Yeah, you're on your own. Not, like, on your own on your own, but they kind of gave me that space to make those decisions by myself." This newfound freedom is something many college students struggle with at first as they adjust to life as a more independent version of themselves (Coughlin, 2015; Reynolds, 2013; Wersig & Wilson-Smith, 2021).

For some students, like Stephanie, this transition came naturally.

> In high school, [my parents] had a lot more than like a say, like go to bed at this time, because you know, you have to get up early or make sure you're going to get your homework done and things like that. So, when I got to college and was like, you know, like this is this is you we're giving you that control, obviously they are

the sidelines in case like I need help, or somebody talked to or things like that. They always make themselves available for that. But they gave me that space and that kind of freedoms, like just make my decisions and grow in that in that aspect. But then they also like made themselves available in case like it'll come crashing down or and you know, I made a mistake or something like that at least I have them to talk to it's not like I'm completely like, left alone to cater for myself or something like that.

For others, has been both a blessing and a challenge. They found themselves needing to make decisions on their own, while still wanting to respect the boundaries and relationship with their family. Grace shared,

I want my family members to approve, like, I'd be proud of me and approve everything I do. But same time, I want to be happy and selfish in that way. So, it's, it's kind of that, like, give and take balance. I'm still trying to figure out, I guess.

For Elizabeth, it improved her relationship with her family members.

It's actually helped me grow in my relationship with my mom. Like it's not necessarily like a, um, well, I still need her as my mom, but like not a I need you to, like lead me through life type of thing. And I'm able to have more of a, like friendship with her as well. Now, instead of it being a, like, I'm telling you what to do with your life type of thing.

Joy echoed this, sharing that

They've definitely become more lax as I've gotten older, because they see that like, oh, they're like, oh, this little monster we created. So, like, we're proud of you no matter what, like, they don't have insanely high expectations for me anymore, at least, I don't feel like they have high expectations of myself, or a lot higher expectations of me.

Like most college students, most of the participants in this study came to college with significant reliance on their parents for guidance, support, and advice, following their lead and not necessarily challenging these beliefs, what Baxter Magolda would describe as "following formulas" (Baxter Magolda (2008), and Archer would describe as being "actors" (Archer, 2007). Nearly every participant described a relationship with their parents both before and after their first year of college where they relied heavily on their parents' opinions on college selection, major choice, and other significant decisions. For the younger students in the study, like Muneen and Grace, many were still following these formulas, seeking their parents' advice and guidance on challenges they were facing in college. These students described close relationships with their families and stated that their parents were their largest support system; that they would go to them for assistance with nearly every setback, seeking their advice and problem-solving abilities. Some students were even encouraged to attend coaching by their parents, either as a preventative measure to help them transition to college life, or as a resource on campus that parents thought would be beneficial.

Students interviewed demonstrated clear examples of movement toward self-authorship and agency through the development of skills, increased ability to make decisions, and becoming more independent. Students and coaches engaged in reflection

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in alignment with Archer's concept of reflexivity (Archer, 2010), and movement from actor to agent in their lives. Additionally, students demonstrated signs of moving toward self-authorship as described by Baxter Magolda (2001, 2008), by shifting from following formulas through crossroads, and toward becoming the author of their lives. Their experiences helped them make meaning of their desires and develop more effective relationships, beliefs, and self-concept. Each student was at a different place in this developmental process and worked with their coach to identify projects and move toward solutions that made them more successful as students and as people.

Discussion

The central themes resulting from this study align well with the conceptual framework explored in Chapter 2. Students who participated in coaching developed academic success strategies, decision making skills, and gained independence that helped them be more successful in their college experience. They were able to use their relationship with their coach to engage in reflexive thinking (Archer, 2003, 2004, 2007) while developing their own ideas, opinions, identity, and behaviors that allowed them to move toward self-authored behavior (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004, 2008). Using theories of self-authorship (Baxter-Magolda, 2001, 2008, 2009), and agency (Archer, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2010), and foundational student success research, we can better understand how success coaching can help students optimize their college experience. Through the process of coaching, students were able to tap into their skills, recognize strategies that were not working for them, and identify resources that would help them be more successful in college. By asking questions about their past, helping students to dream about their futures, and exploring values, coaches not only helped students recognize the

skills and resources they already had available to them, but helped them understand how to use them more effectively.

Self-Authorship

The coaching program in this study was designed to help students think critically about their experiences and help them move toward self-authorship. Throughout the interviews, students described several stages of self-authorship before, during, and after their coaching experience. Baxter Magolda (2001, 2009) described these phases as a non-linear path between four developmental phases: following formulas, crossroads, self-authorship, and internal formulas. While most individuals do not achieve self-authorship or internal formulas during college, students in this study displayed characteristics of the first three stages: following formulas, crossroads, and moving toward self-authorship.

Students who found coaching on their own, and those who did not have as significant reliance on their parents when beginning college, all displayed signs of a "crossroads" in their lives that led them to coaching. Those who followed formulas also sometimes displayed this "crossroads," leading to them beginning to make their own decisions based on their personal values and desires, and engage in greater self-understanding (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Some students were led to this crossroads through failure, which led them to start questioning their methods, skills, and previous academic practices. Many described this experience as being a highly stressful time where they were searching for something that would help them be more successful in college. Through coaching, they were able to reflect on these experiences and pressures and begin to have a clearer sense of direction in their lives. Several students changed their majors from those their parents selected for them to one that better suited them. Others

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began identifying strategies and processes that worked well for them rather than relying on those that worked for other people around them. Through coaching, students were able to get the support they needed to be more successful both inside and outside the classroom. They were able to reflect on what worked for them and identify paths that were better suited to their needs and interests. Many described this as a pivotal time for them in college. By making these adjustments and starting to decide things for themselves, they were able to feel more confident in their decisions and abilities, and ultimately were more successful overall.

One student in the study, Aracelis, described her understanding of self, beliefs, and foundations in a way that is certainly a transition into the internal foundation phase. She discussed how through coaching she was able to better understand herself and those around her, make her own decisions, and begin to trust her internal voice (Baxter Magolda, 2001). Participating in coaching allowed her to open herself up to new opportunities, persevere through challenges, and engage in self-reflection in a meaningful and intentional way. As a Senior, Aracelis felt ready for the next phase of her life and felt confident that she would be successful in this next step. She described her experience with coaching as being the most important thing that helped her be successful and discussed how her coach helped guide her along this path toward her own self-authorship and self-understanding in a way that not only changed her college experience, but also her life.

Agency

The process of coaching related most closely to the concept of reflexivity described by Archer (2010). Archer described reflexivity as internal conversations which

allow individuals to reflect on their situation in light of current concerns (Archer, 2003). In this study, all participants described this reflective process as a central component of coaching. During their coaching sessions, students were asked to reflect on their previous experiences, current challenges, and resources with their coach, demonstrating communicative reflexivity. They shared their internal conversations with their coach and discussed the influence of these thoughts and conversations on their experience in college. By communicating these thought processes with their coach, students were able to begin to identify thought patterns and begin to apply previous knowledge to current and future experiences. Several students also described an autonomous reflexive process, largely taking place between coaching sessions. By experiencing communicative reflexivity in their coaching sessions, students began to feel more confident in their ability to reflect on their own. Some described their thought processes between coaching sessions as applying what they had learned in coaching to other situations or challenges they were facing, especially related to decision making. As they attended more coaching sessions, students were able to engage in autonomous reflexivity more effectively, and even start to spot patterns of thought that were not productive. Some students reached this stage of meta reflexivity or thinking about their thinking. However, some students were less engaged in this reflective thinking, and only did so within the coaching session. These students seemed more reliant on their coach for the communicative process and were not able to translate this outside of coaching as effectively.

Similar to the shift from following formulas toward self-authorship, students in the study demonstrated shifts from Actor to Agent as described by Archer (2004). By following formulas and not challenging their thought processes and behavioral patterns,

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students are behaving as actors in their lives, and are not as able to reflect on their environment and make decisions based on their own desires and beliefs. Archer argues that this limits the social mobility of the student, and certainly impacts their success in college and after. As students had conversations with their coach over time, however, they were able to develop a better sense of identity and start to make their own decisions about their lives. Students worked with their coach to identify "projects" or goals to work toward and engaged in reflexivity to help them move toward achieving these goals. As students started to better understand themselves, their experiences, and their goals, they were able to become agents of their own decisions. It is important to note that not every student became fully agentic through the coaching process. Many, especially those students earlier in their college experience, were still working through these processes with their coach and working to develop and understand their internal voice. Those who were more developed in their sense of self were able to rely more heavily on their internal voice and were able to engage in reflexivity and agency in a more meaningful way.

Part of self-authorship and agency is feeling more like an adult; someone who can make their own decisions and feel confident in themselves and their future. When asked about the concept of "adulting," most students described feeling "more like an adult" after working with a coach. Students described their "adulting" skills as the ability to make their own decisions, feel confident in themselves and what they can accomplish, think more clearly about their futures, and ask for help when needed. While some students still felt like they were still navigating their independence as an adult, they remarked that others had noticed these changes, even if they didn't fully see them themselves.

Conclusion

      The purpose of this study was to determine how coaching impacts college students, and how students are able to make meaning of coaching to optimize their college experience. Three main themes emerged from the study: academic success strategies, decision making, and independence. Through in-depth interviews, students described their experience with coaching and how it helped them optimize their experience as college students. Most students in the study had an overwhelmingly positive experience with coaching. They described the relationship with their coach as pivotal to their success as a college student and demonstrated how their coach helped them be more successful in the classroom, socially, and as people. For some students, this change was more profound than others. Some saw their coach as instrumental in their success, while others utilized their coach as a guide to help them fine-tune their skills and experience as a student. Overall, their experiences with coaching aligned well with the framework of coaching described in Chapter 2, as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework selected for this study.

      The conceptual framework helps situate the coaching experience in bodies of literature related to self-authorship, and agency. Students demonstrated components these theoretical lenses, all of which helped them better understand themselves, their abilities, their goals, and ultimately helped them to be more successful as students and adults. Through coaching, they were able to "optimize" their college experience, and experience college in a more productive and meaningful way. Students who attended coaching all emerged with increased strategies, a reframing of success, a better sense of their identities, and less reliance on their parents for guidance and decision making. Because of

coaching, they are now able to deal with challenges on their own, and many described not needing coaching to be successful anymore; they felt they had the skills, abilities, relationships, and attitudes to "do it on their own" but knew that their coach would be there should they ever need additional guidance and support.

An additional consideration while analyzing the data was the race and gender of the participants. A student's identity is an important part of their development and experience throughout college. As such, I would be remiss without exploring race and ethnicity as a contributing factor to a students' experience with coaching. When selecting students for this study, I was careful to extend interview invitations to students from diverse backgrounds. Nearly half the participants in the study identify as a racial minority. This far exceeds the demographic breakdown at the University of Kentucky, in which the majority of students identify as white or Caucasian. A larger number of female-identified students participated in both the survey and the interview process for this study. Twelve of the 19 participants selected for an interview identified as female, while seven of the participants identified as male, which exceeds the nearly 50-50 breakdown of male-to female students at UK.

When considering students experiences from the perspective of racial identity and gender, there were not significant differences noted in the data. For some students, race played a factor in the involvement experiences they selected on campus, opting for affinity groups with those of similar racial identities and backgrounds. But for other students, race did not present as a factor in the conversation around their experience with coaching. Additionally, there did not seem to be a difference between male and female identified students in their overall experience and subsequent insights from coaching.

While slightly more female perspectives were available based on those who completed the survey and participated in the interviews, there was no discernible distinction to be made between the self-perceived development of female versus male students. Both seemed to have similar experiences and challenges with the transition from high school to college and seemed to have overall similar experiences with participating in coaching.

Although not within the scope of this study, gender, race, and ethnicity would be an interesting area for further investigation in future studies. Do students of varying backgrounds experience coaching differently? How does race and ethnicity impact a student's participation in coaching and their ability to access capital? Is there a significant difference in the outcomes of coaching for male and female students when considering GPA and retention? These, and other areas for future exploration are discussed in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the college student experience with success coaching to determine in what ways success coaching helps students optimize their college experience. Success coaching is a relatively new intervention approach on college campuses and is an emerging area of study. To date, very little research has been conducted related to success coaching, and even less research explores the student experience with coaching. This study attempted to better understand success coaching from the perspective of the student to determine how students integrate coaching into their daily lives. To accomplish this, this study was created and conducted at a large research 1 institution in the southeastern United States which has a college success coaching program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 19 students discussing their experiences with coaching and how they have used these experiences in their lives outside of coaching sessions. Interviews lasted between one and two hours and took place via Zoom. The results revealed three major themes related to the research question, including academic success strategies, decision-making, and independence. These themes were then explored through the lens of the conceptual framework, which included theories from Baxter Magolda (2001, 2008, 2009), and Archer (2003, 2010).

The three themes begin to shed light on how coaching impacts the student experience. As students navigate college, whether for the first time, or are trying to re-learn how to be a college student during a global pandemic, it is important to continue to provide resources and support to help them become the best they can be. As an intervention and support resource, success coaching is a strategy designed to help students be more successful, and to optimize their experience as a student. Throughout

this study, students described how their coach helped them develop strategies which ultimately led to greater success in the classroom, thus increasing their confidence in their ability to be successful. While many of these students were successful in high school, they struggled with transitioning to courses at the college level. Further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic, success coaching helped students deal with challenges academically, socially, and with overall wellbeing by teaching them important skills and helping them discovery how to apply previously developed skills in new ways. Similar changes were seen in the study conducted by Lefdahl-Davis et al. (2018), who found that coaching increased self-confidence, satisfaction with major, and alignment with decision making. In alignment with these findings, students in this study demonstrated that coaching helped them reframe their thinking about their ability to be successful, but also helped them learn to make decisions on their own, separated from the influence of their parents, family, and friends. For many students, coaching provided a space to explore themselves and better understand their own identities, needs, and patterns of behavior while setting goals for themselves and their futures.

The data was also analyzed by student demographics. Student's major, class standing, gender identity, and number of coaching appointments were considered as potential contributing factors in how students understood, internalized, and optimized their coaching relationship. Academic major and gender identity did not appear to be a significant factor in how students described their experience with coaching. However, class standing, and the number of coaching appointments attended might play a role in the student's experience with coaching and their ability to move toward self-authorship and agency. This is an area that warrants further exploration in future studies.

Exploring the number of coaching appointments needed to achieve some of these outcomes could be a great next step in coaching research. Should institutions with coaching programs require a minimum number of appointments? Or should it remain up to the student to decide whether and when they have gotten what they need from coaching? For this study, a minimum of three coaching appointments was selected as eligibility criteria to ensure that students had enough time with their coach to practice skills, have significant conversations, and eliminate those who only attended coaching as a requirement. Because some courses and programs on campus require that students attend at least two coaching sessions, having three sessions as a minimum requirement ensured that students, even if required to attend initially, returned to coaching of their own volition. Students in this study showed similar trends in their coaching focus based on the number of appointments attended, with some students feeling that three appointments was enough for them to feel confident in their abilities, and others wanting a more extensive relationship with their coach. These trends are explored below.

Eleven of the participants in the study attended between three and five coaching sessions. Many of the students in this category attended the sessions over the course of a semester or a year, with several of the sessions being in close succession, only a few weeks apart. For some of these students, like Rudy and Joy, attending three sessions allowed them to develop strategies with their coach that they could then practice on their own without needing their coach's' support. Many of the coaching sessions focused on academically related topics like time management, stress management, and study skills that were easy for students to learn and integrate into their routines. When asked what they would do if they encountered an issue in the future, all of them said they felt they

could return to coaching at any time for help, or that they had the skills and confidence to find resources on their own. These results support the findings of Minglin (2019), who found that students who received coaching increased self-efficacy, and Yehuda's (2015) study that demonstrated the impact of positive thinking schools on self-efficacy and personal development.

Four students attended six to eight sessions. These students seemed to follow a pattern similar to those who had attended three to five sessions, with the sessions being in close succession, and often an additional session or two in subsequent semesters to check in as new classes began. These students seemed to have more complex challenges than those who only attended three times, and may have struggled with transitioning to college, selecting a major, or social integration. While academics were certainly a factor for many of these students, they were not the only factor; they needed additional resources and support outside the classroom that additional coaching sessions were able to provide. Early research into coaching and overall wellbeing shows that coaching provided students with significantly higher wellbeing scores (Field et al., 2013) and thriving (Gibbs & Larcus, 2015). In support of these concepts, several students in this study alluded to their overall wellbeing as a focus of their coaching sessions, with others explicitly stating that their perception of their wellbeing had improved. Similar to those students who attended five or fewer sessions, many of these students had not seen their coach in a while but felt they could return if they faced additional challenges or had plans to check in at the beginning of the subsequent semester.

Four students attended nine or more sessions. These students developed a deep relationship with their coach, and many described attending sessions with their coach just

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to check in, or to have a regular appointment on their calendar in case they needed additional support. These students, especially Liu, described the sense of security and stability that coaching provided them in their schedule. Liu meets with his coach each week and has since he came to college. He has a regular appointment on his calendar with his coach and likes that he can check in as part of his normal routine. Even if they felt they did not need their coach all the time, they found it helpful to meet regularly to discuss their goals, academic progress, and life outside the classroom. These students discussed all aspects of their life with their coach, from academic to social to goal setting to life after college. They seemed to have more regular meetings with their coach, and all had upcoming appointments planned for the remainder of the semester to ensure they were prepared for final examinations and projects. These students were committed to the process of coaching, and demonstrated a significant relationship with their coach, but not necessarily a reliance on them. When asked, they felt they could do many of the things they've learned in coaching on their own without consulting their coach. However, they felt the stability of having someone they can count on and be accountable to contributes to their success as students. Further exploration into the concept of accountability in coaching college students could provide additional insight into why some students prefer more regular coaching appointments.

The major themes (academic success strategies, decision making and independence) were further analyzed using the conceptual framework of self-authorship and agency. As coaches helped students identify and develop strategies, they often had students reflect on their previous experiences and connections. Many students described not realizing the skills and resources they already had available to them, and that their

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coach helped them better understand these resources and also develop new skills to help them use them more effectively. The students interviewed also demonstrated a shift toward self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2008, 2009), moving from following formulas and expectations set forth by their parents, through crossroads where many dealt with failure, toward feeling more confident in their ability to do things on their own and make their own decisions. Coaching was also shown to be a learning partnership between the coach and the student, where the coach played the role of the educator, working to empower the student through the learning process to mutually create meaning, while challenging them to grow and explore. Lastly, students interviewed engaged in the process of reflexivity and reflective thinking that helped them move from actor to agent (Archer, 2010). Through communicative reflexivity with their coach, to autonomous reflexivity between and after coaching sessions, students were able to grow from their previous experiences, recognize their thoughts and behaviors, and develop a greater sense of agency as developing adults, which in turn helped them become more successful college students.

Overall, students shared that coaching had a positive impact on their college experience, providing them with the skills, relationships, and experiences which helped them be more successful inside the classroom and in their everyday lives. This change is consistent with previous coaching research, where students were able to increase their academic self-efficacy (Minglin, 2019), academic mindset (Han et al., 2017), and overall wellbeing (Field et al., 2013; Gibbs & Larcus, 2015). Their relationship with their coach provided accountability, increased their strategies toward their academics, wellness, and "adulting," and allowed them to learn more about themselves and their abilities,

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providing motivation to continue toward graduation. For most students, coaching helped

them become more independent from their parents, and allowed them to start making

decisions about their future on their own. Most students described how coaching played a

major role in their college experience, and while some have stopped meeting with their

coach regularly, they felt that they could return to coaching at any time or utilize the

strategies they learned in coaching to help them find resources that would help them if

they were struggling.

These findings indicate that coaching helps students "optimize" their experience

by helping them develop new academic strategies, become more confident in their

decision-making, and become more independent, ultimately moving toward increased

self-authorship and agency in their lives. Additionally, the sub-themes of reframing

success, desire for accountability, and shifting family relationships provide additional

space for exploration of this phenomenon. Previous research has shown the impact that

having a connection on campus, both for accountability and support, has on students

(Matson & Clark, 2020). Further, literature on self-authorship and agency show us how

students often move from their family influence as they develop their individual identities

(Baxter Magolda, 2001; Archer, 2003). However, the subtheme of reframing success is

interesting to explore further, as coaching provides a divergent approach to the concept of

"success."

A central tenant to coaching is the shift in dynamics from a hierarchical

relationship to one of partnership (ICF, 2022). As discussed in the conceptual framework

in Chapter 2, this leads to the student ultimately deciding what is "optimal" for them.

While the institutional perspective of "success" may be getting a certain GPA or

checking off certain benchmarks, the student's perspective on what they consider to be "successful" or "optimal" may be different. We see this reframing in several student cases as students started thinking differently about their goals, aspirations, and future plans. The change from "I have to get an 'A'" to "a 'B' is good enough," shows us a critical difference in coaching, and also in a students' thoughts around their own self-efficacy and ability to be successful in and beyond college. However, this shift in approach and thinking may cause dissonance between the institution and the process of coaching, as students' concept of success may not be in alignment with the institution. Further, how can we define "success" in coaching when the student's perception of what is optimal for them is not in alignment with traditional concepts of success? If a coach's role is to listen to the student and help them through a reflexive and developmental process to identify their own goals, but those goals do not fit within the scope of the institutional requirements, is coaching still helpful? How can educators and coaches balance this tension while still keeping the student at the center of the decision-making process? Further inquiry is needed to better understand the balance that coaches on college campuses must navigate as institutional employees and as coaches.

While this was an exploratory study, it seems that there are connections to be made between a student's experience with coaching and their overall success in college. When considering how students might "optimize" their college experience, coaching emerges as a potentially significant factor for the students in this study. Many described feeling lost, frustrated, or like a "failure" before attending coaching. Through the process of coaching and their relationship with their coach, they were able to get back on track and move toward more positive outcomes both within and outside the classroom. More

research needs to be done to fully understand the relationship between coaching and student success, and how students utilize this relationship and their newfound skills to optimize their college experience and how this partnership helps increase student outcomes like GPA, retention, and persistence toward graduation.

Study Limitations

The limitations of this study, which were introduced in the introductory chapter, are important considerations for this study. Because of the variation in coaching programs, the study sample was limited to one location and one success coaching program. This means that not every coaching program may have the same impact on the student experience, and the results cannot be generalizable to other student experiences. Further, the students selected for the study were chosen because of their participation in coaching. Those who participated in at least three coaching sessions and were willing to volunteer for the study likely recognized some impact of coaching on their experience, either positive or negative. The students who participated in the study seemed to have an overwhelmingly positive experience with coaching, and most started attending coaching due to academic challenges during their college experience. More research needs to be done to understand the experience of those who are required to attend coaching for an academic program or academic probation, or who choose not to attend more than one session. This may provide valuable insight into the student characteristics that lead to continued participation in coaching, and the impact of coaching on students with varied experiences with college success.

As a student at the university, and a former staff member, access to the data needed and students was easier than if I had selected a different coaching program.

However, understanding the intricate details of this particular coaching program allowed me to have an in-depth perspective of what a coaching appointment looks like, as well as the typical experience of students on the campus. Additionally, as a former coach in the program being studied, it was important to me to exclude students who I had coached. However, there were still two students who participated in the study that I had met previously due to my work at the institution. These students were included based on their experience in coaching with a coach other than me, and special care was taken to keep the conversation related to their relationship with their coach. I made sure to disclose my role in the study at the beginning of the interview and made it clear that students could withdraw from the study at any time. At the time of the interviews, I had left my position at the institution, so there was a reduced impact on students who may have interacted with me in my previous role, as I was no longer working with them in any other capacity.

My familiarity with the coaching program being studied and the institution did allow me to come into the conversation with institutional and programmatic knowledge that made the conversation more familiar for the student participants. I was able to understand the context of student experiences and was able to see each interview participant within the context of their specific coach. However, having such an intimate connection to the institution and the coaching program could have prevented some students from opting into the study based on name recognition. Overall, care was taken to mitigate this limitation of the study as much as possible by excluding students who had been coached by me during my employment at the university and taking care to ask students clarifying questions about their experiences.

Lastly, the students in this study were directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which began in early 2020. The Integrated Success Coaching Program at the University of Kentucky, which was the main focus of this study, implemented this model of coaching in August 2020. Therefore, all students who participated came to coaching after COVID-19 had caused significant disruptions to their high school and/or college experiences. For some students, COVID-19 was a clear motivator for seeking out coaching. For others, it impacted their lives in various ways, by postponing internships, milestone experiences, and forcing students into a new form of online learning. It is impossible to know if COVID has an impact on their transition to college or how it truly affected their success as students and must be considered as additional context when looking at the results of this study.

Implications and Future Research

This study was exploratory in nature and provided initial data of one coaching program on one campus in the southeastern United States. As a qualitative study, one cannot conclude that coaching has any significant impact on student development of self-authorship and agency. However, the data suggest there may be a relationship between coaching, self-authorship, and agency that help students be more successful in college overall. Based on student responses, it seems clear that coaching makes a difference in the lives of students who participated. However, we are only in the beginning stages of understanding what is truly going on here, and more research is needed to support this idea.

As this study was being conducted, several additional questions arose that were outside the scope of the research question but warrant further exploration. When sifting

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through the data, patterns began to emerge based on a student's academic standing. Further exploration of this area could help identify when a student should begin coaching to have the greatest impact on their experience, and if coaching interventions in the first two years of an undergraduate's education has any impact on retention and graduation, or post-graduation success through graduate school attendance or employment. Further, the ideal number of coaching appointments is still unclear. Students in this study were required to have attended at least three coaching sessions, but several had attended far beyond this minimum. It would be interesting to dig deeper into the number of coaching appointments necessary to see any sort of impact on student success, both related to self-authorship and agency, but also related to retention and self-efficacy measures. How many coaching appointments are necessary to help a student feel that they have "optimized" their experience? It is likely that this will vary by student, but are there specific indicators that might help coaches and students identify when a coaching relationship has helped, or when the relationship is no longer progressing or beneficial?

Lastly, while there were not significant differences noted in the data based on gender identity or major, these areas should be further investigated to determine if these factors play any sort of role in a student's experience with coaching and their development during and post coaching. Additional areas of exploration could include first-generation status, socioeconomic status, and other demographic factors to determine how coaching is used differently by these unique populations, and if there are additional considerations based on identity that could help improve coaching programs, coaching education, and the coaching profession overall.

Coaching is a relatively new area of focus within higher education. Therefore, this study has significant implications for the future of this area and for future research. This study provides one example of how a college success coaching program can have an impact on the student experience while in college. Students who participated in this study shared the positive ways coaching has impacted them, and many recommended that more students should participate in the program. Because the program being studied is relatively new, marketing to students across campus has been challenging. Increasing marketing efforts and engaging in partnerships across campus to promote coaching as a way to boost success could lead more students to participate. Sharing student stories like the ones explored in this study would make a compelling argument for increasing the impact of the program at this campus.

As institutions continue to find new ways to support students, coaching should certainly be considered as an option to provide holistic support to students in a meaningful way. While training and programmatic funds would need to be made available to support this as a new initiative on many campuses, the impact that it had on students in this study show the value students place on the coaching relationship and the numerous ways it helped them be more successful in college. When working to find new and innovative ways to support students, institutional faculty and staff should gather information about coaching programs and determine if this might be a good fit for their campus and students. Whether developing their own coaching model, or adopting one from an existing program, institutions can customize the program to meet the unique needs of their student population.

Not every institution has the funds to implement a full-scale coaching program. An easy and low-cost way to implement a coaching approach on campus would be to provide additional training to academic advisors and other support staff on campus to teach them how to integrate a coaching approach into their daily work. These individuals work intimately with students and develop relationships with them over the span of their academic careers and can provide an additional layer of support with the correct training and skills. This would be a low-cost, low-stakes way to try out coaching approaches on a campus that could be assessed to show the impact on student success. Programs like that at the University of Kentucky which are based in appreciative advising utilize approaches already familiar to academic advisors and many other staff and would be an easy transition for most staff and institutions.

There is currently no standard approach to coaching within higher education. The Coaching in Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) was created to start the conversation about coaching on college campuses and to bring college coaching programs together to share leading practices, thought leadership, and provide professional development. However, CHEC is in the beginning stages of development, and have not conducted any research or provided any guidelines that would help standardize coaching across campuses. In the future, this is an area that college coaching programs, and CHEC should work together on to create standards and guidelines for successful coaching programs. Additionally, following the guidelines of the International Coaching Federation (ICF) would be another consideration to ensure quality in coaching programs and that those being trained are achieving the highest caliber of coaching credentials. Having

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credentialed coaches working with students not only ensures quality of coaching, but also ensures that the program holds credibility both within and outside the institution.

As coaching programs continue to expand, there is a need for more research to determine the impact of this intervention on the student experience. Future research exploring other coaching programs on a variety of campus sizes, types, and student populations is important to get a clear picture of how coaching can affect students understanding of themselves, their self-authorship development, and their individual agency. Additionally, research which compares and contrasts coaching programs on campuses to determine leading practices for student success and maximum impact are important. While Robinson (2015) laid the foundation for a survey of coaching programs, they are growing and changing at a rapid pace. An updated survey might provide some insight into commonalities across programs and begin to set the foundation for standardized practices that could create a model for coaching on college campuses. Lastly, more needs to be explored to fully understand the self-authorship development of students as they continue through coaching. A longitudinal study which follows students throughout their collegiate experience, with structured coaching interventions each year, could provide interesting insight into how coaching impacts the student experience.

Additionally, coaching may not be the ideal intervention for every student. There are certainly cases, although not explored in this study, where a student has the appropriate resources and connections to be successful without meeting with a coach. Identifying student populations that can most benefit from coaching, as well as exploring issues of access to coaching for populations that may need additional support, is imperative for colleges and universities as they work to create and fund coaching

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programs. Further, a better understanding of the balance between the institutional responsibility of coaches and the coaching approach where students determine their own goals and outcomes is highly relevant as coaching programs continue to expand on college campuses. How do we know that coaching programs are "successful" from the student perspective, and what happens if this "success" is not in alignment with the institution's goals for student outcomes?

This study has provided information which will hopefully begin the conversation about the student experience with coaching on college campuses, and how institutions can support students through difficult transitions while providing them with the skills needed to be successful. Overall, I believe the students who participated in this study provided truthful and important insight into their personal growth through coaching that demonstrated how coaching impacted their overall college experience. The framework of self-authorship, and agency helped show how student development might be occurring through this process. While a relatively new practice, coaching could easily be the future of higher education support interventions. I look forward to seeing how this body of research continues to grow and develop as programs shift with the ever-changing needs of college students, and how coaching continues to impact student development as it grows within higher education.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. INTEGRATED SUCCESS COACHING PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Programmatic Outcomes and Goals:

1. Students who attend at least two Integrated Success Coaching appointments will be retained at a higher rate than their counterparts.
2. Students who attend at least two Integrated Success Coaching appointments will have a higher graduation rate than their counterparts.
3. Students who attend at least two Integrated Success Coaching appointments will demonstrate higher levels of self-efficacy than their counterparts.
4. Implement an Integrated Success Coaching Advocate training group to oversee implementation of staff training efforts, certification support, and outreach efforts.

Student Learning Outcomes and Goals:

Overall Integrated Success Coaching:

Integrated Success Coaching
1. Students will be able to name their 3:1 Supports as relevant to their goals.   2. Students will identify their strengths and values and align their goals accordingly.   3. Students will apply actionable strategies to improve self-efficacy.

Student Support Dimensions:

Academic Life Skills
1. Students will identify their **active learning** preferences and integrate them into their overall learning experiences and habits.   2. Students will identify their individual motivational strategies.   3. Students will develop strategies to manage their time.

Career
1. Students will articulate their career goals.   2. Students will utilize the Handshake platform as a resource for career exploration.   3. Students will identify action steps towards achieving current career goals.

Financial Wellness
1. Students will identify the action steps to meet their college financial goals. 2. Students will articulate the action steps to meet their financial goals beyond college.

Identity and Social Justice
1. Students will articulate their own identities, how they intersect, and how they impact their daily lives. 2. Students will describe their values and how their values align with and respect other student's values.

Leadership
1. Students will participate in communities and involvement opportunities that meet their interests. 2. Students will be able to describe their strengths and values and how to leverage them to develop and translate their leadership skills.

Wellness
1. Students will develop patterns that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being. 2. Students will develop health enhancing modalities and tools to reduce stress, practice self-care, and build harm reduction habits and resilience behaviors.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

KEY INFORMATION FOR OPTIMIZING THE EXPERIENCE: EXPLORING THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE OF COLLEGE SUCCESS COACHING

We are asking you to choose whether or not to volunteer for a research study about Integrated Success Coaching at the University of Kentucky (UK). This study will explore the experience of students who have participated in Integrated Success Coaching. We are asking you because you have been identified as a past or current participant in Integrated Success Coaching at UK who has attended at least three coaching sessions.

This page is to give you key information to help you decide whether to participate. We have included detailed information after this page. If you have questions later, the contact information for the research investigator in charge of the study is below.

If you choose to participate in the study, you will be asked to answer some brief demographic questions which will provide the researcher with additional information about you. It is possible that not all participants who opt into the study will be asked to participate. The researcher will contact you via e-mail if you are selected to participate.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU WOULD NOT QUALIFY FOR THIS STUDY?

Only students who have participated in at least three coaching sessions with an Integrated Success Coach at the University of Kentucky can qualify for this study. Participants must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

WHERE WILL THE STUDY TAKE PLACE AND WHAT IS THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF TIME INVOLVED?

The research procedures will be conducted via Zoom. You will need to come 1-2 times during the study. These visits will take about 1-2 hours. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 2 hours over the next semester.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

Participants in this study will engage in a semi-structured interview via Zoom, which will be recorded. Interviews will take place over the spring and summer 2022. Interview questions will be determined by the researcher.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

There are no anticipated risks associated with this study. Participants can choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

We do not know if you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. However, if you take part in this study, information learned may help others.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in this study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

When we write about or share the results from the study, we will write about the combined information. We will keep your name and other identifying information private. We will make every effort to safeguard your data, prevent anyone that who is not on the research team from knowing

that you gave us information, but as with anything online, we cannot guarantee the security of data obtained via the Internet.

All survey and interview answers will be deidentified and kept behind a firewall-protected computer with both password and physical protection for a period of 3 years. We will keep confidential all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law.

However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require us to show your information to a court or to tell authorities if you report information about a child being abused or if you pose a danger to yourself or someone else. Also, we may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as the University of Kentucky.

CAN YOU CHOOSE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY EARLY?

You can choose to leave the study at any time. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. If you choose to leave the study early, data collected until that point will remain in the study database and may not be removed.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

If selected to participate, you will receive $20 in payment via Venmo or gift certificate for taking part in this study. Payment will be provided after you complete the interview. It is possible that not all who opt in to participate will be selected. Only those selected to participate in the interview portion of the research project will receive compensation.

WHAT IF NEW INFORMATION IS LEARNED DURING THE STUDY THAT MIGHT AFFECT YOUR DECISION TO PARTICIPATE?

The research staff will contact you if we learn new information that could change your mind about staying in the study. We may ask you to sign a new consent form if the information is provided to you after you have joined the study.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

The principal investigator is being guided in this research by Dr. Jane Jensen. There may be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

WILL YOUR INFORMATION BE USED FOR FUTURE RESEARCH?

If selected for the study, all identifiable information (e.g., your name) will be removed from the information collected in this study. After we remove all identifiers, the information may be used for future research or shared with other researchers without your additional informed consent. If not selected for the study, your data will be deleted from the Qualtrics survey and will not be used for further research.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have questions, suggestions, or concerns regarding this study or you want to withdraw from the study contact Alli Lake of the University of Kentucky, PhD candidate in Educational Policy and Evaluation, at _____ or faculty advisor, Dr. Jane Jensen at _____. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact staff in the University of Kentucky (UK) Office of Research Integrity (ORI) between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Monday-Friday at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428.

Do you opt-in to participate in this research project?

I am interested in participating (opt in)

No, I'm not interested in participating (opt out)

Page 2:

Thank you for opting-in to participate in this research study. Please provide the following information. The researcher will contact you via e-mail to schedule a 1-2 hour zoom interview. Interview participants will receive compensation of $20 via Venmo or gift certificate at the conclusion of the interview. Please reach out to Alli Lake with any questions. As a reminder, you can opt-out of participating at any time.

Name:

Email:

Student ID:

Classification:

     First Year (Freshman)

     Sophomore

     Junior

     Senior

     Graduate Student

     Non-Degree Seeking

Race/Ethnicity:

     White/Caucasian

     Black/African American

     American Indian/Alaska Native

     Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

     Two or more races

     Hispanic/Latino (of any race)

     Other

How many Integrated Success Coaching appointments have you attended?

     0-1

     1-2

     3 or more

Page 3:

Thank you for your response. You indicated that you are not interested in participating in this research study, and therefore will not be contacted for an interview. If you would like to change your response, please re-submit the survey, or contact the researcher at

APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT EMAILS

Subject: Interview Opportunity about Integrated Success Coaching (paid)

Hello,

My name is Alli Lake, and I am a PhD Candidate in Higher Education at the University of Kentucky. I am studying the experiences of students who have participated in Integrated Success Coaching for research toward my dissertation. You have been identified as a student who has participated in three or more coaching appointments, and I would love to meet with you to discuss your experience. Interviews will take place via Zoom and should take about one hour.

Details:

Interviews are paid ($20 via Venmo or gift certificate) and are completely confidential.

Participants often enjoy the opportunity to share and reflect on their experiences, especially because coaching is a reflective activity. Interviews will focus on your experience with coaching, how it has impacted you as a student, and how you have used coaching to help you develop new skills and grow as a person.

If you're interested in participating, please complete this brief survey. On the first page of the survey, you will be provided with additional details about the research and asked whether or not you'd like to participate in the study. If you choose to opt-in, you will be asked some brief demographic questions which will help me get to know more about you. It is possible that not all participants who opt-in will be selected. You will receive an e-mail from me if you have been chosen to participate.

If you have any questions before you choose a time, or would like more information about the study, please feel free to contact me. Your participation will not only help me with my research but will help future students who participate in UK's coaching program. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Alli Lake

PhD Candidate

Education Policy and Evaluation- Higher Education

College of Education

University of Kentucky

Link to survey: https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2ozkRhC5ju6pGCy

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

KEY INFORMATION FOR OPTIMIZING THE EXPERIENCE: EXPLORING THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE OF COLLEGE SUCCESS COACHING

We are asking you to choose whether or not to volunteer for a research study about Integrated Success Coaching at the University of Kentucky (UK). This study will explore the experience of students who have participated in Integrated Success Coaching. We are asking you because you have been identified as a past or current participant in Integrated Success Coaching at UK who has attended at least three coaching sessions. This page is to give you key information to help you decide whether to participate. We have included detailed information after this page. Ask the research team questions. If you have questions later, the contact information for the research investigator in charge of the study is below.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ABOUT AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The topic for this study will be to understand the experience of students who participate in Integrated Success Coaching. The ISC model at UK is unique in that it combines six areas of coaching into a holistic student services model. Because the program is new, there is no existing research about the experience of students participating in the program. Further, little to no research exists examining the student experience with any type of success coaching. This study will help us better understand the student experience with coaching interventions on college campuses.

By doing this study, we hope to learn about the experience of students who have participated in Integrated Success Coaching. Your participation in this research will last between 1-2 hours. Additional follow up may be requested.

WHAT ARE KEY REASONS YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS STUDY?

This study will help provide insight into the experience of students who have participated in Integrated Success Coaching. While this study may not change your own experience with coaching, it may change or improve the experience for future students. For a complete description of benefits and/or rewards, refer to the Detailed Consent.

WHAT ARE KEY REASONS YOU MIGHT CHOOSE NOT TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS STUDY?

There are no known risks to participation in this study beyond what you might undertake on a day-to-day basis. However, interviews may include reflective questions that encourage you to think about your past experiences and challenges in college.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any services, benefits, or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. As a student, if you decide not to take part in this study, your choice will have no effect on your academic status or class grade(s).

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have questions, suggestions, or concerns regarding this study or you want to withdraw from the study contact Alli Lake of the University of Kentucky, PhD candidate in Educational Policy and Evaluation, at   or faculty advisor, Dr. Jane Jensen, at

If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact staff in the University of Kentucky (UK) Office of Research Integrity (ORI) between the business hours of 8am and 5pm EST, Monday-Friday at 859-257-9428 or toll free at 1-866-400-9428.

DETAILED CONSENT:

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU WOULD NOT QUALIFY FOR THIS STUDY?

Only students who have participated in at least three coaching sessions with an Integrated Success Coach at the University of Kentucky can qualify for this study. Participants must be over the age of 18 to participate in the study.

WHERE WILL THE STUDY TAKE PLACE AND WHAT IS THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF TIME INVOLVED?

The research procedures will be conducted via Zoom. You will need to come 1-2 times during the study. These visits will take about 1-2 hours. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 2 hours over the next semester.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

Participants in this study will engage in a semi-structured interview via Zoom, which will be recorded. Interviews will take place over the spring and summer 2022. Interview questions will be determined by the researcher.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

There are no anticipated risks associated with this study. Participants can choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

We do not know if you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. However, if you take part in this study, information learned may help others.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except not to take part in the study.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in this study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

When we write about or share the results from the study, we will write about the combined information. We will keep your name and other identifying information private.

We will make every effort to safeguard your data, prevent anyone that who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, but as with anything online, we cannot guarantee the security of data obtained via the Internet. All survey and interview answers will be deidentified and kept behind a firewall-protected computer with both password and physical protection for a period of 3 years. We will keep confidential all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law.

However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require us to show your information to a court or to tell authorities if you report information about a child being abused or if you pose a danger to yourself or someone else. Also, we may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as the University of Kentucky.

CAN YOU CHOOSE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY EARLY?

You can choose to leave the study at any time. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

If you choose to leave the study early, data collected until that point will remain in the study database and may not be removed.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

If selected to participate, you will receive $20 in payment via Venmo or gift certificate for taking part in this study. Payment will be provided after you complete the interview.

It is possible that not all who opt in to participate will be selected. Only those selected to participate in the interview portion of the research project will receive compensation.

WHAT IF NEW INFORMATION IS LEARNED DURING THE STUDY THAT MIGHT AFFECT YOUR DECISION TO PARTICIPATE?

The research staff will contact you if we learn new information that could change your mind about staying in the study. We may ask you to sign a new consent form if the information is provided to you after you have joined the study.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

The principal investigator is being guided in this research by Dr. Jane Jensen. There may be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

WILL YOUR INFORMATION BE USED FOR FUTURE RESEARCH?

If selected for the study, all identifiable information (e.g., your name) will be removed from the information collected in this study. After we remove all identifiers, the information may be used for future research or shared with other researchers without your additional informed consent. If not selected for the study, your data will be deleted from the Qualtrics survey and will not be used for further research.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

Welcome the student to the interview. Remind the student of the following:
      a. Informed Consent process
      b. Opt in, can withdraw at any time
      c. Zoom recording will be on
      d. Interview time (1-2 hours)
      e. Privacy of conversation and responses

To begin the interview, I'd like to learn a little more about you. I would be interested in hearing about your journey to UK and your experience at UK so far.
      a. What brought you to UK?
      b. What has your experience been like so far?
      c. What was it that initially brought you to coaching?
      d. What made you come back to coaching?

1. What would you say are the three most important areas of your life as a student right now? These could be related to academics or not.

2. We sometimes refer to these important areas as "projects", which can be simplified as goals or things you're focusing on. What projects are you working on/have you worked on with your coach?
      a. What specific things have you and your coach talked about?
      b. What did those conversations look like? Feel like?

3. Before you attended coaching, how much autonomy did you feel you had to make and achieve your goals? How, if at all, has that changed?
      a. What is different about how you approach these things now?
      b. How did coaching help you get there?

4. Before you attended coaching, how confident did you feel about making decisions on your own?
      a. What did your decision-making process look like?
b. How do you approach this differently now (if at all)?
c. How did coaching impact your decision making?
d. Do you feel like you can make big decisions on your own?

5. Before coaching, how did you decide what your education and career path(s) would be? Your choice in involvement?
      a. How has that changed since attending coaching?

6. Before coaching, how often did you do the following? What about now that you've attended coaching?

- plan your own future;
- rehearse what you would say in an important conversation;
- imagine the best and worst consequences of a major decision;
- review a conversation that ended badly; and
- clarify thoughts about some issue, person, or problem

7. How do you think coaching has influenced your everyday actions and thinking?

     a. How do you use what you learned in coaching in your everyday life?
          i. What things were easy to integrate? What was difficult?
     b. What tools or skills have you incorporated into your routine?
          i. What things were easy to integrate? What was difficult?
     c. What do you do differently now than before you started being coached?
     d. Are there any other ways this has impacted you?

8. How do you think you could use what you've learned in coaching when you're no longer a student at UK (in your career, graduate school, personal life, etc.).

9. After attending coaching, do you feel more like an "adult"? If so, what led you to feel that way?

     a. Has it impacted your understanding of who you are? How?
     b. Has it impacted your thinking about the future? How?

10. Is there anything you would like to add about your experience with coaching?

11. What is your Venmo information?

12. Selection of pseudonym

Thank you, follow up, and any questions

APPENDIX F: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Letter from Dr. Kirsten Turner, Vice President for Student Success

University of Kentucky
Office for Student Success

Miller Hall 109
Lexington, KY 40506
P: 859-257-1911
www.uky.edu

Dear IRB Colleagues,

Please accept this letter of support for Alli Lake's dissertation research project focused on identifying unique impacts of integrated success coaching on students' experiences. Building on her solid work as a team member on our Transformative Learning staff, Ms. Lake's inquiry poses questions that could both enrich the literature in her academic field of study while also offering new insights into the importance of coaching interventions in everyday applied ways. Moreover, this research project is in line with some of our most important priorities in the Office for Student Success and will help us determine new ways to utilize our resources to put students first as coaches.

Our central Student Success staff join Ms. Lake's colleagues in Transformative Learning to support her efforts and help advance this project. Please reach out if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

J. Kirsten Turner, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Success

Letter from Dr. Molly Reynolds: Executive Director, Transformative Learning

Dear IRB Reviewer,

To assist Alli Lake with her dissertation research, I am willing to send recruitment emails to students who have attended three or more Integrated Success Coaching Appointments. As the Director of Transformative Learning I oversee multiple programs, including Integrated Success Coaching, but I do not serve as a coach or work directly with any students. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Molly Reynolds

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APPENDIX G: BUDGET

This research was supported by a grant through the College of Education Educational Policy and Evaluation Department Dissertation Enhancement Grant. Funds were received to cover the cost of student participation stipends and transcription software.

	Rationale	**Cost**
Gift Cards/ Payment	Compensation for those who participate in interviews to assist with recruitment and participation numbers	$20/person Participants: 19 interviews Total cost: $380
Transcription	Transcription of interviews using Otter Ai	Otter AI: $99 for 1 year
		Total Cost: $479

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<div align="center">VITA</div>

EDUCATION
Graduate Certificate, Research Methods in Education, University of Kentucky   May 2021

Master of Education, University of Louisville   May 2017
College Student Personnel

Bachelor of Science, Centre College   May 2013
Biology and Spanish

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENECE
Community Engagement Manager, Coaching Education, International Coaching Federation, January 2022-Present

Integrated Success Coach, Transformative Learning Navigator Program, University of Kentucky, January 2022-May 2022

Assistant Director for Leadership Education, Office of Student Organizations and Activities, University of Kentucky, April 2017-January 2022

Graduate Assistant for Leadership and Service, Office of Student Involvement, University of Louisville, July 2015-March 2017

College and Career Readiness Advisor, AmeriCorps, Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, August 2013-July 2015

HONORS & AWARDS
Outstanding New Professional, College Personnel Association of Kentucky, 2018
Outstanding Graduating Graduate/Professional Student, University of Louisville, 2017
Outstanding Graduate Student in College Student Personnel, University of Louisville, 2017
Outstanding Graduate Student of the Year, Southern Association for College Student Affairs, 2016

ALLISON REBECCA LAKE, M.Ed.