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NATURAL HISTORY OF DISCOURSE OF MISSOURI HOUSE BILL 1042: BRINGING A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE TO POLICY ENGAGEMENT IN TWO-YEAR CONTEXTS

by

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Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

NATURAL HISTORY OF DISCOURSE OF MISSOURI HOUSE BILL 1042:
BRINGING A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE TO POLICY ENGAGEMENT
IN TWO-YEAR CONTEXTS

Mary Casey Reid
Old Dominion University, 2022
Co-Directors: Dr. Louise Wetherbee Phelps
Dr. Julia Romberger

In this autoethnographically-infused natural history of discourse (NHD) (Silverstein and Urban, 1996; Slembrouck, 2001), I use methods from critical discourse studies (CDS) to trace 10 years of changes in "remediation" discourses within a corpus of texts associated with Missouri HB 1042, a piece of legislation passed in 2012 that requires higher education institutions to "replicate best practices in remediation" (CBHE, 2013). After providing national and state context related to HB 1042 and the discourses circulating within the HB 1042 corpus of texts, I describe what I call the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, focusing on three discourse features that I surmise provoked affective responses on the part of the two-year faculty and program administrators who participated in the early HB 1042 policy creation and implementation process. Then, I document the near disappearance of the three features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse and describe the shift to a student deficit discourse in the finalized "remedial" education policy that resulted from HB 1042, paying particular attention to what is known as a placement floor or threshold. After describing faculty and program administrator beliefs and rationales for supporting the threshold, I describe how the "remediation" discourses began to intermingle. Next, I discuss how the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse has been circulated and taken up in recent years in a new form: the "higher

ed's remediation equity problem" discourse. Drawing upon my experiences engaging with HB 1042 and reflecting on the critical discourse study, I conclude with a justification for using a critical engagement lens in policy contexts and begin to sketch out frameworks and principles that might be useful for applying this lens in two-year contexts.

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To the grandmothers who carry me still: Grandma Dot (Dorothy Mae Ferguson Reid), Grandma Casey (Evelyn Frances Casey), Ruby Haney, and Irma Evans

To the family who chose me and vice versa

To everyone who has thought about attending or attended a community or two-year college and all the first-generation and/or low-income students navigating your journeys

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In 2017, the Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness reported that 25 states introduced legislation impacting classes and programs for students who are assessed as needing additional support in reading, writing, and/or math–programs often labeled "remedial," "developmental," or "basic" (Whinnery, 2017). Of this legislation, "56 bills were filed, 15 bills were enacted, seven bills failed, and one bill was vetoed by the governor" addressing three areas of programs: "delivery and governance, accountability and reporting, and financing and affordability" (Whinnery, 2017). By 2021, Whinnery and Odeker of the Education Commission of the States report that "[t]wenty-six states or systems have authorized the use of innovative developmental education instructional methods and interventions," and "[t]wenty-one states have created statutory developmental education reporting requirements," among other legislatively- or statewide system policy-mandated facets of these programs. Scholars like Mutnick (2015) explain this legislative push as part of the intertwining interests of "policymakers, corporations, and neoliberal think tanks" that "have aggressively and transparently pushed an agenda to transform US education by creating a 'crisis'...[and] forcing educators at all levels to take increasingly defensive positions in order to survive" (p. 41).

Although scholarship is emerging to support faculty and writing program administrators (WPAs) as they engage with these policies and policy makers (Cambridge, 2011; Estrem, Shepherd, & Duman, 2014; McClure & Goldstein, 2012; Miller, Wender, & Finer, 2017), less scholarly attention has been directed specifically at exploring the engagement of two-year faculty and program administrators with state-level policy work (Calhoun-Dillahunt, 2011; Holmstein, 2002; Taylor, 2009). As recent issues of and calls for proposals for major publications in rhetoric

and composition/writing studies (RCWS) suggest (see the *Journal of Writing Assessment* and *Writing Program Administration*, for instance), Taylor's (2009) call to bring visibility to the "ghosts in the machine" of two-year writing program administration work continues to be relevant and, given the proliferation of state legislation impacting what is happening in classes and programs, these less visible faculty and program administrators would benefit from strategies for creating, engaging with, and responding to these policies. This scholarly attention is especially needed for understudied areas of the country, like the Midwest, where differently situated historical, social, cultural, and political forces may result in different "entextualizations of discourse-in-context" (Slembrouck, 2001, p. 33) that (may) necessitate different strategies for engaging in and with policy work.

This dissertation begins to respond to these scholarly gaps. As a native of Missouri who has been engaged in program administration labor for much of my 20-year career in higher education–mostly in two-year contexts–I have researched and written an autoethnographically-infused natural history of discourse (NHD) (Silverstein and Urban, 1996; Slembrouck, 2001). For this NHD, I use methods from critical discourse studies (CDS) to trace 10 years of changes in "remediation" discourses within a corpus of texts associated with Missouri HB 1042, a piece of legislation passed in 2012 that requires higher education institutions to "replicate best practices in remediation" (CBHE, 2013). As I describe in more detail below, the majority of the dissertation focuses on how these "remediation" discourses become entextualized, recontextualized, and reconstituted over time with different pressures and participants. The CDS of "remediation" discourses was a productive way for me to reconsider how I thought about the discourses and HB 1042 policy processes; these methods were so productive, in fact, that they

factor into my recommendations for two-year faculty and program administrator professional development.

The dissertation's autoethnographic infusions of information subtly influence my critical study of discourses in Chapters 3 through 7, and while I use my experiences as a participant in some parts of the HB 1042 policy creation and implementation process to contextualize my discourse interpretations, this dissertation is not an attempt to document my own experience per se. Rather, the autoethnographic elements are more of a way to declare my positionality and act as an analytical tool, especially in chapter 8 where I lean into the reflexivity called for within an NHD to transition from my more objective analysis of discourses to an autoethnographic perspective to discuss frameworks and principles for using a critical engagement lens within two-year faculty and program administrator policy work. This autoethnographic perspective combined with the reflexivity of the NHD approach helped mediate some of the limitations of CDS methods in ways I detail more below and in Chapter 2.

Research Statement and Questions

For my dissertation, I conducted what Silverstein and Urban (1996) might label a natural history of discourse (NHD) of texts I collected that were associated with the passage of Missouri HB 1042 (see also Slembrouck, 2001). Understood through what I call a critical engagement lens, this NHD incorporates autoethnographic elements into its critical discourse study (CDS) of the HB 1042 corpus of texts. Although I draw upon a range of CDS-informed discourse analysis tools, in the CDS-oriented middle chapters, I primarily draw upon elements of Reisigl and Wodak's (2016) discourse-historical approach (DHA) to undertaking CDS. Throughout the study, I center my perspective as a two-year college practitioner and draw upon my experiences (hence the autoethnographic element), as well as concepts from what I call critically-oriented

basic writing scholarship and critical policy analysis. This work is an extension of a pilot critical discourse analysis of two key texts associated with Missouri HB 1042 that I completed in the spring of 2018 for a graduate discourse analysis class.

As I worked on my prospectus after the original pilot study, my motivation for this project evolved to include a new objective of addressing Taylor's (2009) call to bring visibility to the "ghosts in the machine" of two-year writing program administration: faculty and program administrators involved in WPA labor in two-year contexts. By looking at the "remediation" discourses within legislative response and implementation processes–and how those discourses shift as they are recontextualized by/under different pressures and participants–I investigated the following questions:

- What individual and institutional responses emerge on the part of two-year faculty and two-year institutions during state legislative response and implementation processes? What contextual factors might influence these responses?
- How do and what discourses emerge and shift throughout various cycles of entextualization and recontextualization associated with the HB 1042 corpus of texts over a five-year time frame?
- What are the implications of these responses and discourses for two-year writing program administration labor in an era where all layers and levels of work are ever-more heavily shaped by policy making?

Chapter Overview

In Chapter 1, I discuss the dissertation's initial guiding research questions and conceptual framework, as well as linguistic and rhetoric and composition/writing studies (RCWS) concepts that are important to understand. In Chapter 2, I describe the methods for critical discourse study

of "remediation" discourses that I trace in the HB 1042 corpus of texts. Chapters 3 through 7 unpack different contextual layers and features of the remediation discourses I trace in the HB 1042 corpus of texts.

The first discourse I trace and analyze--a discourse I call the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse--shows up within the guiding principle in the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remediation* draft remediation policy outline, a two-page document that mostly consists of passages taken directly from two 2012 Complete College America[1] reports. In an attempt to demonstrate how divisive the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse is for faculty and program administrators whose disciplinary identities are tied with developmental education and basic writing, I use Chapter 3 to trace a few of the more salient, recent origins of the discourse on the national and federal government level, highlighting the increasingly influential role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in all stages and facets of higher education policy processes. As part of this macro-level context, I discuss the "best practices" discourse that surfaces throughout the HB 1042 corpus of texts, including all versions of the 2013 Missouri remediation policy that emanated from the passage of HB 1042. Using Druery et al. (2013) and Johnson and Cox's (2013) analysis of the phrase "best practices," I briefly discuss how the term "best practices" is used within the HB 1042 corpus.

Then, in Chapter 4, I provide state-level context for HB 1042 and the discourse changes that happened throughout the drafting process of the 2013 Missouri remediation policy that emanated from the passage of HB 1042, the Coordinating Board of Higher Education's (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remediation*. Chapter 4 includes relevant historical and social

[1] Complete College America (CCA) is a major higher education policy advocacy organization that I will discuss in more detail in chapters 3 and 4 when discussing the influence of non-governmental organizations on two-year colleges.

background to understanding Missouri as the setting for the HB 1042 response and implementation process, an overview of Missouri's higher education coordination and legislative bodies, a description of the professional identities and organizations most associated with the HB 1042 response and implementation process, and a timeline of key contextualizing events that help with understanding the remediation discourse changes that I discuss in chapters 5 and 6.

In Chapter 5, I describe three features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that elicited responses from two-year faculty and program administrators, highlighting the key features that appear to be most related to the changes in discourses that happen between the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) (2012) policy draft and the Coordinating Board of Higher Education (CBHE) (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* final policy document. I start the chapter by discussing a few limitations of my analysis, including differences in how salient the discourse is in different genres. Then, I describe the three focal features that contribute to a highly-circulated perception that "remediation" is a problematic system that is impairing higher education: the nominalization and abstraction of "remediation" into a system that hurts students, the use of pejorative metaphors and adjectives to describe "remediation," and–in longer documents–the reliance on what Goudas (2017, 2020, 2021) describes as a "remediation is the barrier or ineffective" narrative.

For Chapter 6, I focus on the final version of the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remediation* policy to suggest that the two-year faculty and program administrator responses to the short MDHE (2013) policy draft led to a marked difference in the remediation discourses within the final policy document: the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that saturated the MDHE (2013) policy draft largely disappears. By the time Missouri's Coordinating Board of Higher Education (CBHE) approved the final version of the new

remediation policy, the 2013 *Principles of Best Practices in Remediation,* the remediation-as-a-problematic-system discourse is mostly replaced by discourses of student deficit and exclusion most markedly represented by the inclusion of a threshold into the policy's section 10. A threshold, also known as a placement floor, refers to minimum college entrance requirements determined by a placement assessment of some time, often a standardized test like Accuplacer or COMPASS in the early 2010s. At the end of the chapter, I describe four intertwined beliefs and rationales that faculty and program administrators provide for their support for the threshold and then describe how both the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse and the student deficit and exclusion discourse appear to be intertwined in a subsequent MDHE (2017) report that looks at the first five years of HB 1042 implementation.

In Chapter 7, I discuss how a number of scholars and groups have circulated and taken up the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse but in a new form that I label the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse. Then, I contrast the HB 1042 response with the faculty response to a similar piece of legislation passed in Connecticut in 2012, PA 12-40, and use the contrasting responses to explore the range of potential responses available to two-year faculty and program administrators engaged in policy work.

For Chapter 8, I revisit and expand my original research questions to better reflect what I studied and found. After summarizing key findings from Chapters 3 through 7, I use my autoethnographic perspective and Anderson (1998) to reposition my lens from one of critical reform (Warnke and Higgins, 2018) to one of critical engagement, a repositioning that I suggest works better within policy-related contexts where the reform discourses Anderson (1998) describes are at play. From there, I use the work of Anderson (1998) and IHEP (2022, January)

in an attempt to begin to sketch out frameworks and principles that might be useful for two-year faculty and program administrators applying a critical engagement lens to policy processes.

Basic Writing, Developmental Education, and Remediation/Remedial Education

For this dissertation, it's important to understand the different scholarly and disciplinary influences at play in deciding how to label and conceptualize supporting the development of students deemed "underprepared" or "not college ready." In Chapter 4, I will provide additional detail and context for these conceptual distinctions when I discuss professional identities and organizations associated with the HB 1042 response and implementation process, but I offer a brief explanation of concepts here.

Basic Writing

I use "basic writing" to signal when I am referring specifically to writing and integrated reading and writing courses and programs as they are conceptualized within rhetoric and composition/writing studies (RCWS), a discipline associated with what some universities and scholars refer to as English studies. RCWS designates the discipline comprising a range of research and teaching specializations concerned with written language, muiltiliteracies and their technologies, and rhetoric (Phelps and Ackerman, 2010). Among these specializations and related scholarly identities are basic writing (BW), writing centers (WC), and writing program administration (WPA), which are specifically concerned with the design, implementation, and administration of programs alternatively labeled "composition" or "writing."

Mina Shaughnessy tends to be credited as a major founding figure of/within BW. Informing scholarly groups include the Council of Basic Writing (CBW), the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA)--a National Council of Teachers of English association--and the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA); and associated publications include the

Journal of Basic Writing, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC)*, *College English*, and *Writing Program Administration*.

Within basic writing (BW) publications, it has become taboo to use student deficit discourses like those I describe in Chapter 6, and at least in my experience taking graduate courses in BW in the early 2000s, it has long been considered problematic to use words like "remedial" to describe students and "remediation" to describe what happens in BW literacy development experiences (be they classes, tutoring, or other contexts) (Stanley, 2010). That said, it is difficult to pinpoint how BW defines itself as a discipline and the scope of its work with students because, as Otte and Mlynarczyk (2010) point out,

> BW derives its conceptual existence by being distinguished from related kinds of instruction. First-year composition is the most obvious point of comparison and contrast: basic writing has to be more "basic" somehow, situated underneath or before what is nevertheless conceived as introductory. It is also, by its nature, associated with remediation, developmental education, "precollege instruction," ESL (English as a Second Language), ELL (English Language Learning), and other related fields. (p. 41)

Another way BW has attempted to distinguish itself is through the student populations it serves, which has had a different set of consequences that Otte and Mlynarczyk (2010) outline:

> Leaders in the field were often critical of the assessments that defined their constituency. They were understandably loath to insist on hard and fast distinctions where none existed, at least none they found defensible. Finally, it turned out that the crucial distinction of basic writing, the difference and disadvantage it had in mirroring the development of first-year composition, is that, though first-year comp never had something like first-year comp to disappear into, BW did. When it seemed a budgetary or political liability, its

> opponents could argue it away because its advocates had brought it (and its students) ever closer to the point where their rightful place seemed to be first-year composition. The students either ought to find their way into mainstream composition courses, the logic went, or disappear altogether. Ultimately, they did both, in droves. (p. 42)

Given the issues noted above, which have been parsed in a number of publications, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to attempt to rehash BW's history or to attempt to single out any specific definition to position as a BW-wide definition for the specialization, its scope, and its students. Even the Council of Basic Writing has not yet provided any definitions for this work or for the students who may be engaged in BW classes, services, and/or programs. What is useful to know for this dissertation is that I identify as a writing and literacy studies scholar with significant influences within RCWS, especially writing centers and BW. Although I have been more involved in professional organizations associated with the disciplinary identity of developmental education, my thinking and scholarly practices are more influenced by RCWS and literacy studies scholarship. I provide my working definition of how I have come to define my work with college students in contexts (classes, writing centers, student success programs, etc.) that may have once been described as BW contexts: basic writing is a historical movement within RCWS aimed at maximizing access to and support for literacy development in college. Ideally, BW relies on an anti-racist, asset-based, strengths-based, culturally-responsive, and universal design-informed approach and philosophy to/for collaborating with people in developing a range of literacies. Ideally, people should be given guided, supported, and/or mentored ways to decide whether they want to participate in basic writing services and programs–be they classes, writing center spaces, or other literacy-related spaces and activities. In large part because of my background with college student development theories and programs

and development education, I believe BW programs should take into account the whole person, meaning they should be intricately interconnected with other classes and services to provide all forms of support that people may need to meet their goals for attending a college, whatever those goals may be.

Developmental Education

I use the term "developmental education" when discussing a cluster of reading, writing, and/or math courses as these classes and programs are conceptualized within developmental education studies, which is informed by education, psychology, and student development theory as it is most associated with college student personnel and higher education administration programs. Informing scholarly groups include the National Organization for Student Success (NOSS)--formerly the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE)--and the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), which includes college reading, developmental education, tutoring, learning assistance, and mentoring programs. Their associated publications include the *Journal of Developmental Education* and the *Journal of College Reading and Learning*.

One of the most influential scholars in developmental education, Hunter Boylan, defines developmental education as "the integration of academic courses and support services guided by the principles of adult learning and development (Boylan & Bonham, 2014)" (Levine-Brown and Anthony, 2017, p. 18). In regards to the principles that Boylan references, Higbee (1993) explains the learning process orientation of developmental education classes and programs, noting "[l]ike remedial courses, developmental courses in English, reading, and mathematics ameliorate academic deficiencies in these subjects. In addition, developmental instructors teach students how to learn; they promote the development of critical thinking and problem solving

skills" (p. 99). Boylan distinguishes developmental education from remedial education as follows:

> Remediation is typically a make-up course with high school level material taught without any connection with the rest of the curriculum or the rest of the support system. If the only thing that you are offering your students is a course in pre-algebra, then it is probably a remedial course. If you are offering a course in pre-algebra that is supported by counseling, tutoring, and advising, where the course is taught according to principles of how adults learn and develop then that is a developmental course. (Levine-Brown and Anthony, 2017, p. 18)

Remedial and Remediation

Within the context of this dissertation's focus on "remediation" discourses, Higbee (1993) provides an instructive basic introduction to how "remedial education" has been defined and understood within higher education:

> Remedial programs "remedy" academic deficiencies, thus implying a medical model; the student has a weakness that must be cured. Remedial programs focus primarily on basic skills: reading, writing, and mathematics. Remedial education is content orientated; the function is to assist college students in mastering material they should have learned in high school. As a result, students enrolled in remedial programs may feel they have failed, regardless of passing grades in high school. These students may also perceive themselves as less capable of succeeding in college level work than other students. Low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence and minimal self-expectations may serve as critical barriers to academic success for this population. (p. 99)

In this dissertation, I use and reference the terms “remedial” and “remediation” only when the people, organizations, or documents being referenced use that term, as most basic writing and developmental education scholars and practitioners would note that the term “remedial” was largely supplanted by the term “developmental” (Boylan, 1995)--a change that Shaughnessy (1977) further refined for RCWS by using the term “basic writing” (Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010).

Even my parsing of terminology is fraught within RCWS, as the use of terminology tends to be associated with different audiences, higher education sectors, and publications. For instance, publications for two-year college audiences like *Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC)* often use the term “developmental education,” a term still in use by the National Organization for Student Success (NOSS) and associated publications that were historically situated in education departments and academic support (tutoring, for example), whereas *College Composition and Communication* and the *Journal of Basic Writing*, which are more closely associated with RCWS, use the term “basic writing.” To add further complexity, some scholars also argue that what is now called “basic writing” once was what is now called first-year composition, historical background that Melzer (2015) and many others address but which will not be addressed in this dissertation for brevity’s sake.

Conceptual Framework

With the above distinctions between terms in mind, I move into a description of my conceptual framework. I start with a discussion of my pilot study for two reasons: first, because one of my recommendations is for two-year faculty and program administrators to be educated in critical discourse studies, I am attempting to make my methods more transparent for future two-year scholars; and second, the pilot study acted as the “[q]ualitative pilot analysis” that initially informed my dissertation analysis (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 34). For scholars interested in

using the type of approach to critical discourse study that I primarily draw from, discourse-historical analysis (DHA), a qualitative pilot analysis is one step within this approach.

Pilot Study Description

As mentioned earlier, in the spring of 2018, I conducted an exploratory critical discourse analysis of three texts associated with the passage of Missouri House Bill 1042: the text of the bill itself, a policy document that I now call CBHE (2013), and a 2017 follow-up report about the first five years of the bill's implementation. While reading and re-reading basic writing scholarship and considering scholarship from technical writing that might relate to or apply to my reading and analysis of these texts, I was struck by the fact that I had the lenses I needed for analysis: a mix of critically-oriented basic writing scholarship from the likes of Adler-Kassner and Harrington (2002), Bartholomae (1993), Horner (1996), Shor (1997), Lamos (2000), Melzer (2015), Rose (1985), Shor (1997), Soliday (2002), Troyka (2000), Vidali (2007), and Villanueva (2013) that provided a basis for my belief that the concept of "remediation" had become an ideology within composition. Moving from this belief, I used concepts from critically-oriented basic writing scholarship to identify, explain, and analyze the potential situated meanings of lexical items and phrases from the texts, as well as what Fairclough (2006) refers to as the "social matrix of the discourse" (p. 238) and the possible "ideological and political effects of the discourse" (p. 238).

After an initial pass over the text with ideas from critically-oriented basic writing scholarship in mind, I applied concepts from Katz's (1992) ethics of expediency to the texts as a way of explaining the kinds of actions suggested by the texts—sorting students, avoiding remediation, enforcing mainstreaming efforts, and engaging faculty participation in and reinforcement of what I called a new remediation ideology whose primary ethics is one of

expediency—and possible impacts of these actions on different social actors and groups. Positioned as an extension of Melzer's (2015) critical discourse analysis of basic writing policies in the California State University system, which drew upon a range of CDA approaches, I argued that there is a single ideology of remediation that has morphed over time to meet the needs of the people, institutions, and systems that rely on it in a manner similar to Soliday (2002). See Appendix C to read the pilot study.

As I have read different conceptions of ideology and discourse, the goal of arguing that there is a single ideology of remediation informing the beliefs of RCWS scholar-practitioners no longer seems as necessary or useful as considering the various discourses at work within the Missouri HB 1042 corpus of texts and what might be gained from exploring how those discourses change over time with different entextualization agents and influences: discourses that are part of the *habitus* of RCWS, state policy makers, and the public (Bourdieu, 1991). These discourses index a range of beliefs that, when articulated in such a way that the beliefs resonate, may become what Crowley (2006) describes as a "densely articulated ideologic" (p. 78). These ideologics tend to be complex configurations that result from socio-historical conditions and contain beliefs that are often contradictory and not always compatible with one another–and have significant implications for framing policies and engaging in policy work.

Natural History of Discourse: Informing Scholarship

The study I completed departs from the traditional framework of critical discourse studies in that, rather than clearly delineating "between researcher and researched" (Slembrouck, 2001, p. 40), this study merges the two: I was an actual participant in some of the production and interpretation of the texts (the entextualization processes) that I am analyzing. As I describe in more detail in Chapters 3 and 7, this policy engagement was required of me first due to my

volunteer participation with the Midwest Regional Association for Developmental Education (MRADE, a regional affiliate of what was then called the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE), and then due to a job as Director of Developmental Education Programs that explicitly called for me to coordinate responses to policy and legislation related to developmental education. Like many two-year college personnel engaged in writing program administration work in two-year contexts, my relationship with the HB 1042 corpus of texts vacillated over time, and since living in a different part of the country for five years throughout the majority of my dissertation work, I have been engaging with this corpus in a different role: that of the researcher.

With this context in mind, I call the entirety of this dissertation a natural history of discourse (NHD) that relies primarily on Reisegl and Wodak's (2016) discourse-historical approach (DHA) to critical discourse studies (CDS) to describe and trace changes to "remediation" discourses over time and uses autoethnography as one of my analytical tools. Silverstein and Urban (1996) use NHD to describe scholarship that seeks "to focus attention on contextually contingent semiotic processes involved in achieving text—and culture. These are recoverable in some measure only by analytically engaging in textual sedimentations" which they define as layers of time—"certain analytic moments"—"in the entextualizing/co(n)textualizing process" (p. 2-3). This NHD extends my previous study using methods and theoretical tools outlined by major scholars working with the CDS tradition, primarily Reisigl and Wodak (2016) with the notable distinction that my analysis is informed by my emic experience of being involved in the entextualization of various sedimentations of HB 1042's corpus of texts. This distinction—drawn from linguistic anthropology—is important as it allows me to focus not only on the possible interpretations of the discourses within the text but

also the means of textual production (entextualization and recontextualization); it allows me to ground my analysis in the perspective of a two-year college practitioner involved in WPA labor who has encountered HB 1042 and its corpus of texts in multiple contexts where they "enter into new differential orderings between textual artefacts and…changed conditions of replication, response, update, commentary and explanation which may enhance, absorb, maintain or create difference" (Slembrouck, 2001, p. 45).

As Slembrouck (2001) notes, the production angle of NHDs is significant because it allows researchers to consider "the specific ways in which such performative operations are constitutive of social processes," like those involved when two-year college faculty first find out about the passage of a bill and when two-year college faculty move between institutions where texts like HB 1042 are accorded more influence over program administration decisions than in others—the layers of sedimentation that I trace as part of this dissertation (p. 45). Within these layers, "the context of the entextualization affects one's orientation to the source discourse and also the shape of the text produced," and by bringing to bear my historical embeddiness within the entextualization of one of the key documents that will be analyzed in this dissertation—the Coordinating Board for Higher Education's (CBHE) 2013 policy that set out principles for how higher education institutions were to interpret HB 1042—I am able to provide "metadiscursive understanding of the discourse process of entextualization [that] involves assessments of participants' power and authority" (Silverstein and Urban, 1996, p. 4).

This metadiscursive understanding allows me to provide a lens on the lived experiences of two-year college writing faculty and program administrators, including the changing positionalities and pressures, material realities, and conflicting discourses that permeate experiences associated with state-level policy engagement. As Hancock points out, "the material

conditions in two-year colleges matter a great deal" (qtd. in Gilman, et al., 2019). She further highlights specific ways the messy material realities of two-year college faculty are often not accounted for in RCWS scholarship, especially when it comes to the feasibility of acting upon disciplinary position statements and policy briefs, including those related to statewide policy. In addition to the material realities that go unaccounted for in many scholarly publications about two-year college contexts, deeper issues remain less visible and/or go unaccounted for, issues that an autoethnographically-informed analysis is particularly well-situated to surface because the researcher is also the subject and has on-the-ground, daily, embedded experiences that might not otherwise surface. As I attempt to demonstrate in Chapter 8, these experiences are important to consider in the context of scholarly discussions related to policy engagement if the field is to offer feasible, actionable, realistic recommendations, guidelines, and frameworks for two-year faculty and program administrator engagement.

Analytical Lens

Over the course of my work on this dissertation, I moved from using a critical reform(er) lens to a critical engagement lens. Originally labeling myself what Warnke and Higgins (2018) call a "critical reformer," I used a critical reform lens for Chapters 3 through 7 of this natural history of discourse. This scholarly lens and associated positionality rely upon epistemological assumptions, theoretical threads, and associated concepts and positions from recent publications about faculty and WPA labor in two-year college contexts that center these contexts as unique semiotic domains that have been understudied, especially using the methods and procedures I used for this dissertation.

Warnke and Higgins (2018) remark that the position of "critical reformer" is the ultimate way of enacting Sullivan's (2015) teacher-scholar-activist identity, an identity that I reference

throughout the dissertation. Aligning well with the discourse-historical approach to critical discourse studies that I use, Sullivan (2015) imbues this identity with an activist agenda that includes "1. Change the dominant narrative about two-year colleges" and "5. Following Holly Hassel and Joanne Baird Giordano, advocate for greater professional attention to work being done at two-year colleges" (p. 340, 341). This dissertation responds to these calls, as well as Taylor's (2009) call for more attention to the "ghosts in the machine" of WPA labor in two-year contexts.

Within their conception of critical reform, Warnke and Higgins (2018) acknowledge the competing discourses, interests, values, and beliefs that various stakeholders bring to decision-making, staking out the position of critical reformer as one where "we are tasked with linking what we know empirically with our values and vision for the community college" (p. 368). Warnke and Higgins (2018) build upon Sullivan's (2015) teacher-scholar-activist identity by specifically positioning "critical reformers between forces for reform—often administrators and corporate-funded nonprofits such as the Gates Foundation—and reform resisters—often faculty who see themselves as doing inherently good work beyond reproach, the 'good intentions' model" (p. 365). This positioning worked well for the critical discourse studies of "remediation" discourses precisely because it helped me consider the perspectives, positionalities, motivations, beliefs, and attitudes of the stakeholders Warnke and Higgins (2018) reference, students, and many others across the policy creation, interpretation, and implementation process.

Once it came time to consider policy engagement implications in chapter 8, though, I leaned into the type of reflexive analysis that an NHD–and, especially, an NHD that uses autoethnography as an analytical tool–supports and shifted to what I call a critical engagement lens. This shift from Warnke and Higgins' (2018) critical reformer positionality emanated in

large part from realizing some of the limitations of assuming a reform-oriented position in the context of policy engagement, given Anderson's (1998, 2008) research about the salience and inauthenticity of reform discourses in education policy work. Even though I reconsidered my scholarly lens throughout my journey of tracing and analyzing discourses for the dissertation, my scholarly framework maintains its integrity through its reliance upon epistemological assumptions, theoretical threads, and associated concepts and positions from recent publications about faculty and WPA labor in two-year college contexts that center these contexts as unique semiotic domains.

As Bernstein (2015) writes in her narrative exploration of the impact of austerity on basic writing, "Basic Writing needs a revised epistemology, ways and means of knowing based on material realities and embodied events of everyday life in the wake of austerity" (p. 104). In response to her call for a revised epistemology, I take up the standpoint theory-influenced approach to epistemology in Larson (2018): "Acknowledging Alternative Knowledge" (p. 128). Extending North's (1987) concept of lore to various semiotic modes and contexts of two-year college faculty and WPAs, Larson (2018) relies on Harkin's reframing of lore as the intersection of "'theory and practice,'" defining it as "shared knowledge acted upon and directly applied to introduce positive change" (p. 130). Larson (2018) makes this argument as part of her call to RCWS to help grant epistemic authority to the two-year college faculty whose work and experiences continue to be under acknowledged within the larger field despite the fact that these faculty teach half of first-year composition students in the United States. Phelps (1991) provides what I consider a more evocative, nuanced approach to granting epistemic authority to two-year college faculty through her emphasis on "plac[ing] composition theory and the activity of teaching into a reciprocally critical relationship" that expands the possibilities of what teaching--

and, by extension, writing program administration--can be in two-year contexts, not solely what it is sans theory (p. 864-65).

This epistemological undergirding works well for the autoethnographic infusions of information that I bring to the dissertation because it grants some degree of (at least potential) epistemic authority to my accounts, however subjective they may/will be, and gives space to use the dissertation to enact the type of reflective, theoretically-informed practice that Phelps (1991) describes where "experience...is understood as a complementary form of knowledge" (p. 869). Having relied upon my two-year college perspective throughout my analysis of the layers of sedimentation of HB 1042 and its associated texts, I work from the idea that autoethnography "is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graph) personal experiences (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)…This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others (SPRY, 2001) and treats research as a political, socially-just and socially-conscious act (ADAMS & HOLMAN JONES, 2008)" (qtd. in Ellis, et al, 2010). Using autoethnography as an analytic tool for my critical discourse study has allowed me to enact the standpoint theory-informed approach to knowledge-making that Larson (2018) recommends because it requires researchers to "retrospectively and selectively write about epiphanies that stem from, or are made possible by, being part of a culture and/or by possessing a particular cultural identity"—in my case, that of a two-year college teacher-scholar-activist (Sullivan, 2015). It has also allowed me to use my experiences stemming from that identity to "make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders," namely those who may be less familiar with the complexities of two-year college contexts and policy engagement in these contexts (Ellis, et al., 2010).

My autoethnographically-informed conceptual framework also helps address concerns raised by a growing group of scholars about critical discourse studies (see Bucholtz, 2001, and Slembrouck, 2001, for examples) and ideological critique like that generated through CDS, namely the thorny ethical relationship between researchers and researched, the analytical power (or lack thereof) of assuming theory is a key factor in how one's understands discourse, and the limitations of ideological critique in and of itself, especially as it relates to the emancipatory goals of CDS. As Gunner (2015) notes, "Ideological critique is a critically necessary theoretical tool, and an often materially effective one, but we cannot expect or demand that it serve as the ur-text for the multitude" (p. 159-160). Instead, in her discussion of the shortcomings of the type of ideological critique that stems from research approaches like CDS, Gunner (2015) suggests that "[i]deology fatigue is the beginning of a search for a third way" (p. 160). The third way I am proposing melds ideological critique via the critically-informed discourse analyses in the middle chapters of my dissertation laced with the autoethnographic infusions, as well as an activist-oriented implications chapter. This melding of methods within an activist framework aligns with Gunner's (2015) suggestion that "[i]deological critique, in sum, should supplement activism; it need not totalize it" (p. 160).

Whether working from a critical reformer positionality or a critical engagement lens, I attempt to enact Sullivan's (2015) teacher-scholar-activist identity, an identity and positionality that I embrace and will reference throughout the dissertation. Sullivan (2015) imbues this identity and positionality with an activist agenda that includes "1. Change the dominant narrative about two-year colleges" and "5. Following Holly Hassel and Joanne Baird Giordano, advocate for greater professional attention to work being done at two-year colleges" (p. 340, 341). This dissertation responds to these calls, as well as Taylor's (2009) call for more attention to the

"ghosts in the machine" of WPA labor in two-year contexts. The activist orientation of my conceptual framework and positionality lends what Gunner (2015) calls "[a] utopian impulse" to this dissertation project that, with its CDS approach for multiple chapters, might otherwise err in the more typical CDS orientation of dystopia (p. 161). As Gunner (2015) highlights, and I believe, "A utopian impulse—a believing game—can help free us from boundaries and enclosures, which form centers and margins" (p. 161). With this utopian impulse and conceptual framework in mind, I move into chapter 2 and a closer description of my methods and procedures.

CHAPTER II

METHODS AND SCHOLARLY PRECEDENTS

In this chapter, I provide a more detailed discussion of how I conducted this natural history of discourse (NHD) of the HB 1042 corpus of texts using critical discourse studies (CDS) methods and procedures, including using autoethnography as an analytical tool. As part of this discussion, I attempt to clarify why I chose to use an NHD for the overall methodological framework for the dissertation before detailing my procedures in a manner that may be useful for other two-year faculty and program administrators. I also provide a brief overview of critical policy analysis to give some larger context for scholarship that I draw up throughout the dissertation but especially in Chapter 8, where I rely upon Anderson's (1998, 2008) work extensively. Because Chapters 3 and 4 provide much of the contextualized background and scholarly precedents for my study, this chapter's limited literature review focuses mostly on my methods and their uptake (or lack thereof) within RCWS.

Having connections with a number of disciplines including rhetoric (Wodak and Meyer, 2016), Rogers, et al. (2016) document "a sixfold increase" in articles using CDA in education research in their literature review of education research published between 2004 and 2012 (p. 1192). CDS appears to be gaining traction in rhetoric and composition/writing studies (RCWS), given the recent mention of it (using the term "critical discourse analysis" that is often used interchangeably with CDS) in the 2023 Call for Proposal for the the largest RCWS conference, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (known as Cs or CCCCs among RCWS scholars and practitioners). Connecting with the work of scholars like Barton, Bazerman, and Huckin who have argued for using CDS as a methodology in RCWS, Huckin, Andrus, and Clary-Lemon (2012) provide a useful introduction to and literature review of CDA as it has been

and may be used within RCWS, especially as it relates to considering the consequentiality of processes like recontextualization, given that people may uptake and use discourses in ways that may not have been intended.

Yet, despite Barton's (2002) article that is explicitly titled and provides "Resources for Discourse Analysis in Composition Studies" and a spate of publications in the early 2000s that highlight critical discourse analysis to greater and lesser degrees (such as Barton and Stygall's 2002 *Discourse Studies in Composition*, Bazerman and Prior's 2005 *What Writing Does and How It Does It,* and Griffin's 2005 *Research Methods for English Studies*), CDS approaches and methods have not been taught as part of any core disciplinary research methods classes I have taken in RCWS programs. Seemingly either disregarded for a time (or possibly overlooked in favor of mixed methods approaches with different disciplinary and theoretical influences on how to look at and analyze data like what can be found in Geisler and Swarts' 2019 *Coding Streams of Language*[2]), CDS approaches and methods are not included into some of the more widely used RCWS research methods texts. These texts include Nickolson and Sheridan's (2012) *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies* and Kinkead's (2016) *Researching Writing: An Introduction to Research Methods*, which includes methods Kinkead selected based on a 2014 survey of RCWS programs across the U.S.

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[2] When I was deciding how to collect and code the HB 1042 corpus, I read Geisler and Swarts' (2019) book and went so far as to research, purchase, and attempt to start using two different qualitative data collection and analysis tools to see if one might be useful for my project. After trying both out and talking with one of my dissertation committee members, I decided to stick with the tables and charts I was creating: it was easier to create my own systems that worked for the documents and categories I analyzed, especially given how much I changed and reshaped the categories and discourse features. If I were trying to do more quantitative analysis, using some kind of software may have been useful, but even Geisler and Swarts (2019) note that Microsoft Excel is as good of a tool as more expensive software in many cases.

In my experience and cursory literature review, RCWS methods courses and texts have tended[3] to prioritize rhetorical analysis, which makes sense for the discipline, especially when concepts like circulation help approach the concept of recontextualization from a more rhetorically-focused lens (Gries and Brooke, 2018). When I was exposed to CDS as part of a linguistics class that focused on discourse analysis, I and many of my fellow RCWS students spent quite a bit of time trying to understand and articulate differences between discourse and rhetorical analysis. More explicit instruction in CDS approaches and methods would help clarify these differences and give RCWS scholars a more robust toolkit of literacy research methods and practices that would be useful in the context of the kind of critical engagement with policy I advocate for.

Given that one of the main recommendations I make in Chapter 8 is for faculty and program administrators to have professional development in CDS, I am attempting to make my procedures more transparent in this chapter to demystify CDS and perhaps make it more approachable as a regular scholarly practice for two-year faculty and program administrators. Given the way I use autoethnography to analyze, contextualize, and discuss the discourses I trace, I make no claims about how replicable my procedures or findings are, which is a major limitation of my choice to use autoethnography as an analytical tool. I have kept these limitations in mind as I conducted my analysis, and to help offset these limitations, I sought feedback from readers throughout my analysis process about how well the examples of discourse I provide seem to demonstrate the discourse features I describe and revised my analysis in response. In this

[3] Linguistics and linguistic methods more heavily influenced RCWS in the 1920s through the mid-1970s before waning until the 1990s when linguistics re-emerged as a subject of interest, especially as it relates to contributions from discourse analysis (Barton and Stygall, 2002; Crowley, 1989; Devitt, 1999; Faigley, 1989; Parker and Campbell, 1993). From the 2000s to the present, linguistics continues to reinfuse into parts of RCWS with the uptake in attention to critical language awareness and use of critical discourse studies.

chapter, I attempt to be transparent and provide what Rogers, et al. (2016) describe as a more "thick description of analytic procedures," something that less than 50% of higher education-related articles using CDS do in their literature review (p. 1200).

NHD and CDS Background

As I note in Chapter 1, a natural history of discourse looks at how meaning changes in specific contexts over time throughout "the entextualizing/co(n)textualizing process" of the various types of texts being analyzed (Silverstein and Urban, 1996, p. 2-3). Maybin (2017) classifies NHDs within the realm of "sociolinguistics, linguistic ethnography, discourse and literacy studies" scholarship about "textual trajectories in institutional contexts" (pp. 415-416). In other words, in an NHD, yes, texts (be they written, spoken, or multimodal) are analyzed, but so, too, are changes, connections, and relationships across texts as they "are employed to instantiate and construct highly consequently social practices" within a given time frame and place (p. 416).

Entextualization refers to "the encoding of some aspect of human experience and the cultural marking of this representation as a *text* (spoken, written, multimodal) which emerges dialogically, acquires a life of its own and can be taken up and *recontextualized* in other settings (Bauman and Briggs 1990, Barber 2007)" (Maybin, 2017, p. 416). To give an example relevant to the HB 1042 corpus of texts, the MoDEC meeting notes I analyze are an example of the end result of entextualization–the process of creating a text and thereby creating meaning from an event. In the case of meeting notes, the note taker (referred to as an entextualization agent) is the person who decides what words are used and not used and how those words are recorded and presented to represent what happened and what people said. As anyone who has taken meeting notes knows, a note taker has quite a bit of influence over how notes are constructed–what goes

in, what stays out, etc.--and thus what information and messages will be recorded. As for recontextualization, it refers to the process of a text being “resemiotised and often becom[ing] increasingly abstracted as they move along trajectories across time and space” (p. 416). In Chapter 5, I give examples of recontextualization when I trace the origins of much of the language of the first draft of Missouri’s then-emerging “remedial” education policy, MDHE (2013), to language in publications by Complete College America and the Charles A. Dana Center, demonstrating the process of recontextualization as taking words out of their original context (de-contextualizing them) and then putting them “into a new context” (Reisigl and Wodak, 206, p. 28).

Entextualization and recontextualization are textual production-oriented processes that CDS researchers have taken up to a larger degree in recent years (Maybin, 2017). Key distinctions for my dissertation between an NHD study that uses CDS methods and a study that relies solely on a CDS-framed or -oriented methodology is in the positionality of the researcher, the heightened emphasis on reflexivity, and on the “different directions” these perspectives might lead researchers in their analysis (Slembrouck, 2001, p. 54). Slembrouck (2001) explains,

> Whereas in CDA[4], the concept of ‘orders of discourse’ invites attention to the ‘flow of power’ along channels of procedurally related activities, via segregated sites of talk and/or domain-based distributions, for NHD the notion of recontextualization has tended to highlight epistemological caution in relation to authority in the case of competing entextualizations (e.g. Haviland, 1996; Urban, 1996), a stress on dialogicity preserved in a textual artefacts (e.g. Silverstein, 1996) and, in some cases, it has also brought with it

[4] Prior to the mid 2010s, CDS was primarily labeled critical discourse analysis (CDA), and some scholars still use the term CDA. CDS is meant to be a broader category that encapsulates the wider range of disciplines, perspectives, research practices, and objects of study that have unfolded under what used to be considered the CDA umbrella (Wodak and Meyers, 2016).

> an explicit focus on institutionalized transformations of identity through in situ practices of de/recontextualization foregrounding institutionalized power and 'ideologies' of text (e.g. Collins, 1996; Mertz, 1996). Thus, while CDA can usefully elaborate on the theme of contextualization by developing a greater sensitivity towards context as a problem of (re)creation and contextualization as interpretative practice, one can see linguistic anthropological enquiries into the natural histories of discourse proceed along the lines of developing a more explicit socio-political perspective on what constitutes occasions of recontextualization within and across particular institutional sites as well as the role which these play in power-based 'expressive economies' (Collins, 1996, and Mertz, 1996, serve as examples here). (p. 54)

I bring this "more explicit socio-political perspective" with my autoethnographic perspective, which is part of why I became intrigued with the concept of a natural history of discourse that spans macro-, meso-, and (to a lesser degree) micro-level contexts (Slembrouck, 2011, p. 54). In part because of Slembrouck and NHD's linguistic anthropology associations and influences, he tends to contrast NHD with the more sociolinguistically-influenced critical discourse analysis (now CDS). In the case of this dissertation, because I did not find many studies after Slembrouck's 2001 article that rely on NHD exclusively or that expand upon NHD-specific methods, I chose to lean into NHD as an overall approach to the entire dissertation, especially given my reliance on autoethnography as an analytic tool, and to use CDS methods to analyze documents and describe discourses across the different layers of time related to the response and implementation of HB 1042.

Emanating from "rhetoric, text linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, social psychology, cognitive science, literary studies, and sociolinguistics, as well as applied linguistics and

pragmatics," critical discourse studies (CDS) is a term for a collection of scholarly approaches to discourse analysis that focuses on "*analyzing, understanding, and explaining social phenomena that are necessarily complex and thus require a multidisciplinary and multi-methodological approach* (Wodak 2012c; van Dijk 2013)" (Wodak and Meyer, 2016, p. 2). Rogers, et al. (2016) provide a useful short history of critical discourse analysis (CDA), alternatively known as critical discourse studies (CDS), specifically within education-related research:

> CDA includes a set of theories and methods for the examination of discourse and social life. It grew out of critical linguistics in the 1970s. Two books, in particular, deeply influenced the development of the field: *Language and Control* by Fowler, Hodge, Kress, and Trew (1979) and *Language and Ideology* by Hodge and Kress (1979). The University of East Anglia was the original epicenter for CDA work, led by Fairclough, who coined the term CDA in his 1989 book, *Language and Power.* Merging systemic functional linguistics with critical social theory and historical analysis became the defining characteristic of European-style CDA. Central concepts, such as power, ideology, and discourse, predate the development of CDA and can be found in the work of language philosophers and social theorists such as Adorno and Horkheimer, Bakhtin, Foucault, and Kristeva. (p. 1193)

I chose CDS rather than discourse studies more generally because its historically-, contextually-, and advocacy-oriented framework and its "constitutive problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach" aligns well with my conceptual framework (Wodak and Meyer, 2016, p. 2). Powell (2004) advocates for the use of CDS methods within RCWS studies like mine because of the emphasis on power dynamics, arguing that these methods help "articulate explicitly the relationship between language practices and policies" (p. 439). Within the

discourse-historical approach (DHA) to critical discourse studies is my primary methodological influence, Reisigl and Wodak (2016) provide a DHA-specific understanding of what a researcher should do throughout the research process. They point out that "[a]dhering to a 'critical' stance should be understood as getting closer to the data" and "embedding the data in a social context" as I do throughout the dissertation but especially in chapters 3 (about national context and discourses) and 4 (about state-level contextual factors) (p. 24). Throughout the dissertation, I attempt to clarify "the positioning of the discourse participants" while "engaging in continuous self-reflection while undertaking research," something I did by writing reflective notes and talking about what I was finding with others throughout the four years I studied the HB 1042 corpus (p. 24). Furthermore, "the results of research should be applied, be it in practical seminar for teachers, doctors and bureaucrats" or through other means (p. 24) and "should make the object under investigation and the analyst's own position transparent," something I attempted to enact by presenting about my research and CDS methods at conferences and in classrooms (p. 25). For this dissertation, my critical stance specifically emanates from my positionality as a teacher-scholar-activist with seven years of professional distance from the HB 1042 implementation process and texts though I use the autoethnographic portions of the dissertation to make my position transparent, especially as it relates to my direct experiences with the texts and policy-related work. Consistent with other facets of my conceptual framework, "CDS researchers also attempt to make their own positionings and interests explicit while retaining their respective scientific methodologies and remaining self-reflective of their own research process" (p. 4).

I chose Reisigl and Wodak's (2016) DHA as the primary influence on how I approached my analysis because even though "all [CDS] approaches proceed *abductively*," DHA tends to be

more inductive, allowing researchers to "select problems they are 'curious' about and where they attempt to discover new insights through in-depth case studies and ample data collection," which I attempted to do by creating a large corpus of texts that I returned to, iteratively, throughout my four years of research and analysis (Wodak and Meyer, 2016, p. 18). My curiosity is what drove the questions and directions I followed, including the texts I sought to analyze, the people and themes I traced, and the discourses I describe. Often, my curiosity followed lines of influence and financial resources, as I asked who might be associated with the organizations publishing the texts I found, what their backgrounds are and relationship to the texts and other people are, and where they might be obtaining funding or government support for their work. Huckin, Andrus, and Clary-Lemon (2012) catalog the increased usage of CDS (formerly and also known as critical discourse analysis or CDA) in RCWS in part due to its emphasis on issues of power within "spoken and written discourse, in particular the ways in which language can be used to persuade audiences about important public issues" (p. 109).

As Huckin, Andrus, and Clary-Lemon (2012) point out, CDS "matches writing studies' scholarly goal to understand the impacts of writing as a cultural practice and to examine the contexts of such practices historically, materially, and politically" (p. 110). Additionally, CDS "provides a lens with which the researcher can coordinate the analysis of larger (macro) political/rhetorical purposes with the (micro) details of language" (p. 111). Reisigl and Wodak (2016) list several key "strengths of the discourse-historical approach" (DHA) to CDS that align well with my conceptual framework, including "its interdisciplinary orientation," seen in my dissertation as I draw upon scholarship from anthropology, education, linguistics, and various RCWS disciplines, among others; its reliance on triangulation, taking a "quasi-kaleidoscopic approach to the research object…[that] enables grasping many different facets of the object

under investigation"; "its historical analysis" to help explain "discursive change"; and its emphasis on "practical application of the results for emancipatory and democratic purposes" in keeping with the goals of Sullivan-influenced (2015) teacher-scholar-activists in two-year contexts (p. 57). Other features of DHA that are consistent with this dissertation are its study of the "intertextual and interdiscursive relationships" of "[n]umerous genres and public spaces," its incorporation of "fieldwork and ethnography" addressed in this study through autoethnography, and its tendency to go back and forth "between theory and empirical data" (p. 32).

Before I begin a more detailed explanation of my research process and procedures, I turn to providing a few of Reisigl and Wodak's (2016) DHA-based definitions of common terms within critical discourse studies, definitions grounded in the approach's "socio-philosophical orientation of Critical Theory[5]" that convey my understanding of these terms when I use them in the dissertation (p. 24):

- Reisigl and Wodak (2016) define "critique" as "the examination, assessment and evaluation, from a normative perspective, of persons, objects, actions, social institutions and so forth," as well as assessment of "the political and social status quo from the point of view of an ideal standard or alternative, in order to diagnose shortcomings and contradictions" following Kant's conception of critique (p. 24). They also invoke Foucault in pointing out how "critique can merge with resistance" (p. 24) though it does not have to do so.
- The DHA approaches ideology "as a perspective (often one-sided), i.e. a worthview and a system composed of related mental representations, convictions, opinions, attitudes, values, and evaluations, which is shared by members of a specific social group" (Reisigl

[5] Reisigl and Wodak (2016) cite Horkheimer and Adorno (1991 [1969; 1974]) and Habernas (1996) as their influencing theorists here.

and Wodak, 2016, p. 25). They point to the ways ideologies "serve as important means of creating shared social identities and of establishing and maintaining unequal power relations through discourse" and "also function as a means of transforming power relations" (p. 25).

- Power is defined within DHA as "an asymmetric relationship among social actors who have different social positions or who belong to different social groups" and "can be defined as the possibility of enforcing one's own will within a social relationship against the will or interests of others" in line with Weber's (1980) conception of power (p. 26).
- Reisigl and Wodak (2016) clarify the relationship between discourses and texts as follows:
  - Discourse is a collection of context-dependent meaning-making ("semiotic") practices "situated within specific fields of social action; socially constituted and socially constitutive; related to a macro-topic; [and] linked to argumentation about validity claims" (p. 27).
  - "[T]exts are parts of discourses," "objectify linguistic actions (Ehlich 1983)," and "can be assigned to genres," which I discuss more in chapter 5 where I rely on Devitt's (1993) understanding of genre (p. 27).

Procedures: Creating the HB 1042 Corpus of Texts and Tracing Discourses

With DHA's aims, processes, methods, and definitions in mind, I proceed into describing the procedures I used to conduct this NHD's critical discourse study. When I began working on the dissertation prospectus, I originally thought that I might follow in a more typical DHA manner, use ideas from my pilot study to set up hypotheses about the rest of the HB 1042 corpus of texts, and then use my dissertation to test these hypotheses and deepen my analysis about the

way CBHE (2013) policy seemed to rely on a Katz-esque (1992) ethic of expediency for sorting students, avoiding remediation, enforcing mainstreaming efforts, and engaging faculty participation in and reinforcement of what I called a new remediation ideology whose primary ethics is one of expediency. From there, I thought I would be presenting a theorization of this new remediation ideology and its implications for two-year faculty and program administration policy work. Knowing that I planned to spend more time with three texts that I associated most with different stages in the policy creation and implementation process, I marked my NHD analytic layers around/by three texts:

- MDHE (2013), an initial two-page draft outline of a "remedial" education policy that the Missouri Department of Higher Education created after HB 1042 passed;
- CBHE (2013), the final, over 12-page version of the "remedial" education policy after faculty, program administrators, and institutional administrators across the state responded to MDHE (2013) and the Taskforce on College and Career Readiness (TCCR) substantially rewrote MDHE (2013); and
- MDHE (2017), a report that discusses the first five years of the implementation of HB 1042 and recommendations for moving forward.

For the pilot study, I had already begun creating the HB 1042 corpus of texts, mostly by looking for and at publicly available texts on the Missouri Department of Higher Education (and, now, Workforce Development) website. Throughout the prospectus and dissertation research process, I continued adding to that corpus to gain more evidence and examples of discourses, revise discourse features as new information was found, and add contextualizing information to create a more nuanced understanding of the policy response, creation, and implementation process. My copy of the corpus includes emails that I used to help refresh my memory of what

was happening, especially in late 2012 when Missouri faculty and program administrators first found out HB 1042 passed, but I do not quote from or otherwise use information from those emails. For a CCCCs presentation I gave about my research, I created a list of major organizations referenced in this dissertation and a shareable HB 1042 timeline with document links that I continued to add to and may be a useful reference for the dissertation. The organizations list is provided in Appendix A; the timeline is provided in Appendix B.

To expand the corpus, I searched the Internet for publicly available documents related to HB 1042 and searched through my file collections and old emails, looking specifically for documents shared out over the Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (MoDEC) listserv from 2012-2017. As I compiled and read documents, I uncovered my first unexpected finding: MoDEC members—the faculty and program administrators I had worked closely with as an MRADE board member and a faculty member—were the people who brought up the idea of and eventually insisted upon the placement floor/threshold. I had missed this development in 2012-2013 because after MoDEC's new structure and membership details were put into place and HB 1042 implementation changed hands from MRADE to MoDEC in fall of 2012, I stepped away from much of what was happening in the policy realm to focus on the new first-year experience class I was in charge of running for over 4,000 students with over 100 part-time faculty instructors and 45 student leaders at five campuses. I was not my then-institution's MoDEC representative and had very few interactions with HB 1042 from mid-fall of 2012 until August 2014 when I took a new job as Director of Developmental Education Programs at a small community college in eastern Missouri. During those two years, I missed the response process for MDHE (2013) and the drafting process that led to CBHE (2013), the state's new Best Practices in Remediation Education policy that included section 10 about the threshold.

When undertaking my pilot study of MDHE (2013) and CBHE (2013), I applied Katz's ethic of expediency to the documents to discuss the way students are described, emphasizing how efficiency in time and resource usage is prioritized over people as students with different goals and needs are described in different ways that sort them, prescribe different remedies, and may exclude them entirely them from attending college. In his article where he first describes the ethic of expediency and the problems that emanate from relying on this type of ethical framework in technical writing documents, Katz applied the ethic of expediency to describe how bodies are treated in documents emanating from the Holocaust. Having recognized this same ethic of expediency being applied to students in CBHE (2013), I became curious: what may have influenced my former colleagues (and, in some cases, friends) to help create and/or support the creation of a policy that applies this type of thinking to students?

Working from that question, I began reading and taking notes about MoDEC documents from the time period and re-read MDHE (2013) and CBHE (2013) multiple times. Another question surfaced: what contextual factors may have influenced or factored into faculty responses to MDHE (2013), the initial two-page draft that became CBHE (2013)? In response, I began researching and reconstructing what had been happening at the state and then national/federal levels as it related to "remedial" and "developmental" education, especially in two-year college settings. As it became clear that faculty and program administrator responses emanated partly from the language in MDHE (2013), I asked: where did the language in MDHE (2013) come from? What other texts may have influenced the words, phrasing, assumptions, and discourses in MDHE (2013)? To trace textual influences, I did what I do when I am looking for potential plagiarism in student papers: I Googled sentences from MDHE (2013) and quickly discovered the two main source texts that provided the exact phrasing for most of MDHE (2013).

I created a table to document what parts of MDHE (2013) came from which texts. In the process of tracing MDHE's (2013) language, I found other texts using similar phrasing, and I began tracing the connections between the people, organizations, and other texts associated with the MDHE (2013) informing texts. (Incidentally, it was not until I traced the language from MDHE (2013) that I read one MoDEC members' partly correct assessment of the source language for MDHE, 2013.)

While tracing people, organizations, and texts, I came across Alexander Goudas' site *Community College Data* and his publications discussing the origins of what he calls the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative in policy briefs, working papers, and other publications put out by Community College Research Center. The examples he provided of this narrative reminded me of some of the phrasing in MDHE (2013), so I began creating tables and analyzing MDHE (2013), CBHE (2013), Thomas (2008), Thomas (2009), and other publications to look for evidence of the narrative as Goudas describes it and to see if I thought I could come up with consistent features of the narrative. While doing that, I began to recognize that it was going to be difficult to articulate consistent features of the narrative across the documents I was analyzing in large part due to differences in genre conventions. I also began to realize that, given the research questions I articulated in my prospectus, I did not need to keep following this thread: I needed to focus on the narrative features in MDHE (2013) that caused faculty to have the reaction they did to it, reactions that led them to suggest significant changes to the policy. I also realized that, while I had a felt sense about the differences in the underlying beliefs and messages of MDHE (2013) and CBHE (2013), I would need to analyze the texts to see if I could tease out the differences and discuss the implications of any differences I found. As I was doing these initial analysis tasks and having these realizations, I had been reading and re-reading

MDHE (2017) and seeing language from both MDHE (2013) and CBHE (2013) that led me to begin to think of MDHE (2013), CBHE (2013), and MDHE (2017) as three representative texts showcasing the micro-changes in "remediation" discourses, where MDHE (2017) represented a mingling of the previous two texts' discourses.

In the tables I created to analyze CCA (2012), MDHE (2013), CBHE (2013), Thomas (2008), Thomas (2009), and other publications, I looked for metaphors and issues of transitivity (voice), theme, modality, situated word meaning, and mechanisms for creating intertextual cohesion and coherence. In keeping with the "four dimensions of context" that DHA prioritizes (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016), context for the analysis comes from other documents from the corpus of texts, publicly available meeting minutes from state-level higher education committees associated with the bill, meeting minutes and public listserv communication from MoDEC and MRADE, news stories about trends within higher education, and Davenport's (2016) dissertation where she interviewed two-year college faculty about their perceptions about the legislative process associated with HB 1042, always layering in my experiences as a participant in the entextualization and recontextualization processes of HB 1042-associated texts. I draw upon ideas from scholarship with critical orientations to various facets of developmental education and basic writing (such as Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2002, 2006; Bartholomae, 1993; Horner, 1996; Lamos, 2000; Melzer, 2015; Rose, 1985; Ritter, 2009; Shore, 1997; Stanley, 2010; and Villanueva, 2013) to identify and contextualize lexical and syntactic items (definitions, terms, and phrases) that communicate beliefs, values, and assumptions about students and what is interchangeably called "remedial" or "developmental" education within the documents. I also draw upon these sources in an attempt to provide some support for my findings when my findings coincide with what these and other scholars have suggested.

Appendix D contains examples of the kinds of tables I was creating that helped me with my analysis for Chapter 5. Over time, I came up with several analytical categories that I kept revising, and I added documents as I found more reports and working papers with similar language. The first table's analytical categories included metaphors and descriptions of remediation, anti-threshold language, "It's not you, educators–it's the system" language, discourses of access and education as a social mobility tool, and an entire section devoted just to comparing the language between two texts. As I began to accumulate more categories and documents, I became overwhelmed and started to think I might never finish this research. At that point, I began a practice that I continued throughout the remaining year-and-a-half of my dissertation research and writing process: I shared my tables and early chapter drafts with one of my dissertation committee members and a linguistic anthropologist who taught me when I was an undergraduate, and they were helpful in giving me feedback about how they might interpret the language I was pulling out for the tables and reminding me to look back at my research questions. Given that I did not seek out other people to try to apply my analytical categories to the same documents to see if they would have similar results and come to similar conclusions, these meetings served as a useful way to gain another perspective on my analysis and refine my analytical categories in a DHA-like manner.

Because my research questions include describing individual responses and contextual factors that might influence those responses, I paused on filling out more tables and returned to the MoDEC meeting notes, the Davenport (2016) dissertation, and my emails to reread them for information that might help me identify what facets of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative might have provoked a response from faculty. I focused especially on the February 2013 MoDEC meeting notes and response document and began to piece together

connections between specific parts of MDHE (2013), the analytical categories I had, and the faculty and program administrator responses. At that point, I stopped analyzing the most recently added documents (which is visible in the first table in Appendix D where I type messages to myself to fill out certain blank sections) that did not seem as relevant or important. I began to narrow my focus to four or so analytical categories and realized that some of them, such as the pejorative descriptions and metaphors of remediation, were present independent/outside of textual examples that aligned with how Goudas (2021) describes and identifies the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative. At that time, I had been trying to pin down features of that narrative across texts and genres and started to argue that the narrative was actually a discourse. That approach did not feel like it was working, though, especially as I looked at genres that did not necessarily follow the narrative outline that I started to sketch out.

I was also getting caught up on Goudas's (2021) phrasing of "remediation is a barrier or ineffective." As Dr. Margaret Buckner, the linguistic anthropologist with whom I met regularly, noted, remediation being labeled a barrier has a different set of potential connotations than remediation being labeled ineffective. Additionally, it was becoming clear that I was reading more documents that did not necessarily make extended use of a narrative, yet I would still categorize them as discussing remediation in a pejorative way and using the nominalized form of "remediation" in a way that struck me being indicative of a system. At that point, I refined my analytical categories again and began to rename the discourse I was piecing together until I finally settled on "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Rather than try to take Goudas's (2021) identification of this narrative out of context (my own recontextualization) and make it work as a discourse, I decided to label "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" as one feature within the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse.

From there, I pieced together examples of the three discourse features discussed in Chapter 5 and connected these textual examples to faculty and program administrator responses in Scherer (2013) and MoDEC's February 2013 meeting notes in an effort to make as direct a connection as possible between the language in MDHE (2013) and the responses. In other words, I try to show discourse as it impacts social responses, where a given set of specific individuals react to a discourse ("higher ed's remediation problem")—or, seen differently, the discourse and especially the features of the discourse that I describe provokes a social response (Wodak and Meyers, 2016). When piecing together these three discourse features, the nominalization of remediation feature proved to be trickier. My discourse analysis class is where I was made aware of discourse analyses of the way nominalization can hide agents (Billig, 2008; Fowler at al., 1979), and in large part because of my own biases about the terms "remedial" and "remediation"—what Stanley (2010) calls "the 'r' word" because of the pejorative connotations—I felt confident that the nominalization of remediation was an important feature contributing to faculty and program administrator responses to MDHE (2013). I started doubting myself when I began looking at older scholarship within RCWS, some of which was seminal in my thinking about this dissertation, like Soliday's (2002) *Politics of Remediation: Institutional and Student Needs in Higher Education*, and realized how often the term "remediation" has been used within RCWS. With the Soliday (2002) book in mind, I had to work to more clearly articulate what it was about NGOs' usage of the term "remediation" that may have provoked faculty response, which led me to discussing the way the nominalization "remediation" was referring not just to a system but a system that harms students, a distinction that is part of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse though the harming of students may not be as

directly implied in documents that do not rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse.

At that point, the remaining analysis and chapter structure began to fall into place, as I realized that I had several analytical tasks to accomplish for Chapter 6 to show how "remediation" discourses shifted from MDHE (2013), the policy draft, to CBHE (2013), the final version of the policy. In many ways, Chapter 6 is my attempt to show what Wodak and Meyers (2016) call the "ideological effects" of discourse when discursive practices "help produce and reproduce unequal power relations" between people who wish to be college students, the people who work at colleges, and others through usage of student deficit discourses that include the threshold (or placement floor/entrance requirement) that I describe more later (p. 6). I already had information from my pilot study to show the student deficit discourses of CBHE (2013), so I started that chapter by pulling in that information. As I looked back at the pilot study, I realized that I had not been analyzing for the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse features in the pilot, so I would need to document any remnants of that discourse. To do that, I created the table in Chapter 6 and adjusted it to include my explanation for my assessment of the degree to which the textual samples seemed to be more oriented towards blaming the "remediation system" or students. Admittedly–and this may be one of the most significant limitations of my analysis–my explanation is affected by my ideologies and experiences as a two-year RCWS faculty member and program administrator, so I anticipate that other people may read and interpret my decontextualized samples differently. Then, because I wanted to better understand the faculty and program administrator responses, I spent more time in Davenport's (2016) dissertation and the MoDEC 2013 documents to come up with the categorization of faculty and program administrator beliefs and reasons for the threshold, using my 20 years of experiences being in

meetings with and trying to understand faculty to help guide my reading and thinking. The section about the intertwining of discourses within MDHE (2017) was a product of content from my pilot study and additional analysis for the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse.

Over the four years I have traced discourses, I felt like a journalist as often as a discourse analyst, as I became interested in and searched out connections across time, places, people, and texts in my attempts to deepen my understanding of the context and provide a more nuanced interpretation in a manner consistent with DHA (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016). Two years in, one of the more productive ways I traced connections came through tracing funding and supporting organizations for the documents and initiatives highlighted in the texts, which led me to return to research and writing from my comprehensive exams about the influence of what Adler-Kassner calls the “Educational Industrial Complex” or EIC of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) influencing higher education and related policies. Tracing these connections led me to much of the information documented in Chapter 3 of the dissertation and helped me see connections between federal higher education policy and state policies like HB 1042.

In the process of recursively returning to websites like that of the formerly named Missouri Department of Higher Education to access documents over my four years of study, I watched the site change as new government officials and representatives were elected or appointed, the department changed its name, the bureaucrats changed, documents disappeared, and language changed, all as the direction of higher education policy changed. As I saw this process in action and looked for information to help with the context for Chapters 3 and 4, I realized that I was watching not only educational policy direction change but discourse change in action, changes that were especially evident when I could no longer find an initiative about “remedial education” or “developmental education” but now saw a new “Equity in Missouri

Higher Education" initiative listed. As I combed the MDHE/MDHEWD site for MDHE (2017), I discovered that the five-year report was actually one of several, as the department was now publishing annual reports that shifted in emphasis from reporting on "best practices in remedial education" (MDHE, 2017) to reporting on "the condition of college and career readiness" (MDHE, 2018) to reporting on "Equity in Missouri Higher Education" (MDHE, 2019). These documents, combined with my immersion in equity-focused scholarship, led me to trace how the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse may have changed after 2017 as a way of seeing what was happening with the discourse in the five to ten years after HB 1042 passed.

Critical Policy Analysis

With my methods and procedures in mind, I turn to providing a short discussion of scholarly precedents for the sort of critical policy analysis that I conduct in this dissertation. Although I do not specifically position the dissertation as a critical policy analysis per se, I do want to recognize the influence of this scholarship on my thinking, especially when I was conducting the pilot study. As Doherty (2007) notes,

> A feature of education policy in late modernity is its relentless predisposition to fix the boundaries and horizons of national projects of education at all levels. Such policy production now takes place in an atmosphere infused by the economic, political, social and cultural affects of globalization. As a consequence, education policy is now cast in moulds that reflect this 'new complexity' in the policymaking climate, a complexity comprised of the interrelation between the supranational, the nation state and the regional. (p. 193)

In response to "this 'new complexity'" (p. 193), critical policy analysis has emerged with the purpose of unpacking "the ideological dimensions, values and assumptions of public policy" (p.

193). Unlike work in traditional policy analysis with its positivist and "theoretically narrow" focus on policy implementation, impact, and reform, critical policy analysis scholarship works "to capture the full complexity of policy contexts, those involved, and the evolution of policy over time" (Young and Diem, 2017, p. 5). Much as I try to do in this dissertation, critical policy analysis scholars assume that a scholar or researcher's positionality impacts their analysis and thus "take great care in delineating the perspectives they bring" that inform their analyses (p. 5). Critical policy analysis scholars tend to be concerned with such topics as policy origins and development; "distribution of power, resources, and knowledge"; and "social stratification and the broader effect a given policy has on relationships of inequality and privilege" (p. 4).

As Suspitsyna (2012) highlights, critical policy analyses of higher education-related "government discourses…are few (e.g. Ayers, 2005; George-Jackson, 2008; Jones, 2009; Shaw & Rab, 2003) and often based on the non-U.S. context (e.g., Davies & Bansel, 2007; Grundy, 1994; Nairn & Higgins, 2007)" (p. 50). Discourse analyses of the ideologies of federal-level education policies (see Suspitsyna, 2012) and of media coverage of state-level education policies (see Piazza, 2014, for instance) exist, as do critical discourse analyses of the way statewide educational systems impact writing programs (see Melzer, 2015).

Conclusion

After describing DHA, detailing my analytic procedures, and discussing critical policy analysis briefly, I want to reiterate: I know that my methodology is not replicable because my positionality, experiences, and hunches influenced it so much–that is a significant influence of deciding to lean into autoethnography as an analytical tool. While other researchers may not be able to replicate exactly what I did, the idea of using an NHD-shaped methodology that provides some distance with CDS methods while also bringing the lived experience of a two-year faculty

member and program administrator as an autoethnographic lens proved useful for bringing the material realities of two-year practitioners to bear on my findings, associated implications, and recommendations. NHD's insistence on what I have come to think of as radical reflexivity was especially useful in chapter 8 in justifying my use of an autoethnographic perspective to reposition myself from critical reform to critical engagement. In that sense, my methodology allowed me to be rigorous in terms of being able to constantly reconsider my ideas and positioning. In the next chapter, I provide more national and scholarly context for the 2010s "remedial education" reform movement that included legislation like HB 1042 and discuss the influence of "best practices" discourses on the HB 1042 corpus.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL CONTEXT AND SCHOLARSHIP REVIEW

In this chapter, I discuss key national contextual factors related to HB 1042 and the discourses circulating within the HB 1042 corpus of texts, including the early Obama-era federal policies and documents that likely informed policies like HB 1042, as well as the expansive number of state-level higher education policies and legislative initiatives since the end of open admissions at CUNY. I also provide an overview of the impact of these policies and initiatives on basic writing programs in such aspects as placing students, program forms, curricular delivery models, and pedagogies. Included in this chapter is a review of relevant scholarship within rhetoric and composition and writing studies (RCWS).

Schmidt et al.'s (1999) An Institution Adrift: Centering "Remediation" in Discourses about Higher Education's Problems

In the 2000s and early 2010s, changed discourses around remediation began circulating more broadly, set off in part due to the emphasis on remediation as a core problem within *The City University of New York: An Institution Adrift* (Schmidt, et al, 1999). Rather than focus explicitly on students, educators/faculty, and/or institutions (see Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2002; Melzer, 2015; Rose, 1985; Soliday, 2002; and Stanley, 2010 for a few examples of "remediation" discourses), "remediation" became the focus of discourses about the failures of higher education institutions (Goudas, 2021). Couched within an educational standards discourse with a goal to "transition to higher standards" (pg. 7), the Schmidt, et al. (1999) report includes key features of a discourse I describe in more detail in Chapter 5, a discourse I label "higher ed's remediation problem." This discourse includes positioning "remediation" as a system--what Schmidt, et al. (1999) call "the remediation enterprise" (p. 21)—that is to blame for higher

education's supposed shortcomings of poor outcomes and high costs. Commissioned by then-mayor Rudy Guliani, the Schmidt, et al. (1999) report contains remnants of other remediation discourses, including Stanley's (2010) "embrace and disgrace" discourse, but I choose it as one of the recent, influential progenitors of the "remediation is the problem" discourse because of the reverberations and significant impacts of this report within developmental education and basic writing and the report's hyper focus on remediation instead of students or faculty: it purports to be a study of the entire City University of New York (CUNY) system and all of its programs, yet the entire first major section of the report (roughly one-fifth of the document) focuses exclusively on "Rethinking Open Admissions and Remediation," including its costs.

The Schmidt, et al. (1999) report in combination with James Traub's (1994) book about CUNY, *City on a Hill: Testing the American Dream at City College*, are credited as signaling and leading to what is known within RCWS and basic writing as the end of open admissions at CUNY--and the end of open admissions more broadly (Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010; Troyka, 2000). On January 25, 1999, in large part due to public and media responses to the Traub (1994) book and Schmidt, et al, (1999) report, the CUNY Board voted for a two-year phase out of programs labeled "remedial" at the system's four-year institutions. Since around the time of that decision, basic writing programs have been targeted for change or elimination by state and national educational reform movements that have proliferated from an increasingly diverse array of external influences, including state legislatures and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Early Obama Years: Complete College America and The Completion Agenda

In 2008-2009, a convergence of events altered the discourses surrounding "remediation" and "developmental education": namely, multiple NGOs and the newly elected President of the United States, Barack Obama, turned their attention to college completion (Kelderman, 2020). In

2008, the Lumina Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation both committed to support new goals related to college degree attainment: Lumina dedicated to increasing the attainment of postsecondary credentials to 60 percent, and the Gates Foundation committed to doubling the number of low-income recipients of college certificates or degrees (Kelderman, 2020; Hebel, 2009). Originally founded with money from the sale of a student loan company, the Lumina Foundation had a new President and CEO who set its 60-percent goal: James Merisotis, a higher education policy analyst who founded the non-partisan Institute for Higher Education Policy (Hebel, 2009). Merisotis wrote “a detailed memo to the Obama transition team” that led to the new president’s administration consulting Merisotis about education goals–and, ultimately, made the 60-percent goal a driving force for President Obama’s completion agenda (Hebel, 2009). Announced in 2009, Obama's proposed American Graduation Initiative promised to be one of the largest investments in community colleges in recent years, including pumping $12 billion into community colleges and adding 5 million new graduates by 2020 (Shear and de Vise, 2009).

Also in 2009, the Lumina and the Gates Foundations were some of the key funders for a new college completion-oriented organization, Complete College America (CCA) (Kelderman, 2020). Focused on increasing college completion rates, CCA worked with multiple organizations to create an alliance between states on completion initiatives and strategies–what it used to call “game changers” when I attended its Missouri Completion Academy in 2013 and the follow-up event in 2014. Kelderman (2020) reports that “Policy makers in 17 states signed up in the first year to meet the group’s policy objectives, such as setting an attainment goal, making it easier to transfer credits between public colleges, and reducing requirements for remedial education” (n.p.). After participating in a joint meeting with “Complete College America, the National

Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) to discuss a common core set of metrics in the area of college completion" in 2009, the National Governors Association adopted CCA's College Completion Metrics as part of its new Complete to Compete initiative in 2010 (NGA Center for Best Practices, 2010, p. 22). As I will discuss in more detail throughout this dissertation, CCA reports like its 2011 *Time is the Enemy* and its 2012 *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* provided much of the phrasing for documents in the HB 1042 corpus–and were influential texts that make use of the "remediation is the problem" discourse that I discuss in chapters 5 and 6.

The momentum for this federal- and national-level push for college completion was further hastened after the October 2010 White House Summit on Community Colleges, which helped place community colleges at the center of discourses related to credentialing, college completion, goal attainment, and student success (The White House, June 2011). This summit was followed by four regional summits and then an April 2011 virtual summit. Participants in these summits included representatives from a range of foundations and NGOs (including Community College Research Center, Complete College America, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, and the League for Innovation in Community Colleges), the Department of Education, corporations (including McDonald's and UPS), and community colleges across the country (see pages 27-30 of The White House, June 2011, *Summit Report*). In the White House's (June 2011) *Summit Report*, the unknown authors highlight new NGO-sponsored initiatives associated with President Obama's completion agenda, including the Gates Foundation's Completion by Design program and the Aspen Institute's new Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and Skills for America's Future initiative (p. 7).

The *Summit Report* (The White House, June 2011) also includes key take-aways and recommendations from the main summit breakout topics. Within the breakout topic about community college completion, the unidentified participants are reported as identifying the following “reasons for low completion”:

> About 60% of community college students are referred to at least one developmental course. Less than a quarter of community college students who enroll in developmental education complete a degree or certificate within eight years. Students may be unable to navigate the financial aid process or to select appropriate courses, or schools may not offer the academic or social support students need. The reasons for low completion are many, but the fact remains that completion rates at community colleges are far too low.
>
> This session focused on the need to increase completion and graduation rates at community colleges. Participants shared best practices and strategies for improving completion rates, particularly student support services, successful remedial education programs, accelerated time to degree, and credit for prior learning. (p. 18)

Unlike the CCA reports that I will discuss in more detail later, the White House (June 2011) *Summit Report* does not rely upon a “remediation is the problem” discourse; it uses the term “developmental education” and recommends that community colleges “[c]onsider how developmental education meets the needs of diverse learners” (p. 18), among long lists of other recommendations. That said, the *Summit Report* (The White House, June 2011) provides a federal-level example of the focus on “remedial” and “developmental” education within higher education policy discourses at the time.

Dismantling and Adapting: More Visible State Legislative Policies

With the influence of federal-level higher education policy in mind, this section provides background and a brief literature review of state legislative reforms related to basic writing that have been better documented within basic writing and composition scholarship. I start with the late 1990s around the time frame when open admissions was ended at CUNY and discourses started shifting in the direction of blaming “remediation” for perceived problems with higher education and student outcomes: as Otte and Mlynarczyk (2010) observe, “Since the 1990s, many states’ efforts have focused on eliminating the need for ‘remediation’ in higher education” (p. 179). During this time, legislatures and boards of public four-year institutions around the country began eliminating programs (McAlexander and Greene, 2008; Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010). Within the scholarship of the time, a number of prominent basic writing scholars began expressing concern about the forms, functions, roles, and place of basic writing (Adams, 1993; Bartholomae, 1993; Horner, 1996; Shor, 1997; McAlexander and Greene, 2008; Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010). Simultaneously, journalists, politicians, boards of state systems, and policy groups--in short, a range of external influences and forces with very different perspectives and rationales from scholars--began paying attention to basic writing and developmental education and expressing their own concerns. Writing during this time, Shaw (1997) noted, “A number of state and large urban public college systems are considering or have begun to implement policies that would locate all remediation within the community college sector (see, for example, Florida, California, Massachusetts, Georgia, Texas, Virginia, and the CUNY system in New York City)” (p. 284). Missouri was among the states that followed this trend: its 1990s-era statewide remediation policy states that “No public four-year institution which is highly selective or selective will offer formal remedial coursework” (MDHE, 2013).

Relocating basic writing to the two-year sector was one of only a few of the ways legislation was impacting basic writing and shifting discourses in states like Texas in the 1990s. At the same time as Rudy Giuliani was advocating for the end of open admissions in New York (1998-1999), then-Texas Governor George W. Bush was proposing the most recent piece of legislation in a historical chain of education-related legislation that became part of the template for *No Child Left Behind*: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) (Bernstein, 2004; Carter, 2008). The TAKS was the newest version of the state's mandated standardized skills test for reading and other "basic" skills, having replaced the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) and its predecessor, the TEAMS (Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills), after Texas retired its first skills assessment from 1984 as a result of House Bill 72, the TABS (Texas Assessment of Basic Skills) (Bernstein, 2004; Carter, 2008, p. 3). As Carter (2008) points out, "[e]ach incarnation of the test has violated the principles of good writing assessment…[and] has placed students of color, and especially, those from poorer neighborhoods at an even greater disadvantage" (p. 3).

Texas continues to be prolific in enacting legislation that impacts basic writing programs with the legislation mentioned in this paragraph being a few of the many pieces enacted[6]. In 2003 and 2005, two additional Texas legislative mandates impacted basic writing and college admissions: the legislature's decisions to stop regulating tuition, which opened the door to much higher tuition, and a mandate to use a second level of the TAKS as early as students' junior year to determine college readiness (Bernstein, 2004). As Bernstein (2004) documents, students identifying as Mexican-American and African-American are significantly more likely to fail

[6] As with most of the choices in this paper, I elected to highlight legislation that was explored in RCWS scholarship and/or seemed indicative of larger legislative trends. Because of the sheer volume of legislation being considered and passed, there is no way to provide an extensive overview of developmental education- and basic writing-related legislation, even for a single state.

these standardized tests, contributing to a "disaffiliation of Latino students with school" that impacts the number of students testing into basic writing classes and the affective responses and engagement of students (p. 6). For a more recent example, in 2015-16, Texas passed Rider 42 (of General Appropriations Act HB 1, Article III, Section 42), which requires scaling of alternative, newer developmental education course and academic support models that the state has deemed effective, and SB 1776, which legislates a form of multiple measures placement that extends in a similar direction as the 2005 test-based college readiness mandate: using college preparatory classes in high schools to guarantee college readiness (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2016).

By the 2000s, legislative pressure began to mount to "eliminate basic writing" and mainstream students into first-year classes with varying consequences (Ottze and Mlynarczyk, 2010, p. 39). In 2012, two states passed legislation that has been dramatically reshaping developmental education in these states: Connecticut PA 12-40 (Sullivan, 2015; Turk, Nellum, and Soares, 2015) and Missouri HB 1042 (TYCA Research Committee, 2015). As will be discussed in more detail throughout the remaining chapters of this dissertation, HB 1042 requires higher education institutions to replicate what it calls "best practices in developmental education," a phrase that has thus far resulted in six years of reform in everything from placement to curriculum, state reporting requirements, and funding (Higher Education, 2012). As a result of the 2013 framing document associated with HB 1042, it also shares a major impact with PA 12-40: the imposition of a placement floor/threshold, which essentially enforces an admissions requirement for two-year institutions that previously had none and eliminates open admissions in the two-year sector in these states (MDHE, 2017; Sullivan, 2015).

Unlike Missouri's HB 1042, which only included a placement floor after faculty and program administrators became involved in the policy implementation process, Connecticut's PA 12-40's original policy language included a floor that was originally set "at or below the 8th grade level" based on different institutions' placement mechanism, which at the time consisted of various standardized tests that the law also stipulated needed to be reconsidered in favor of a multiple measures placement system (Sullivan, 2015, p. 45). Students who tested below the floor were to be redirected to "regional remediation centers and adult education programs off campus," a position that has since shifted to allow institutions to "develop regional 'transitional strategies' for such students" with Sullivan's (2015) article focusing on the boot camp program developed at his institution (p. 46). Additional changes required by the law include limiting the developmental education sequence to one course and requiring institutions to offer accelerated, co-requisite courses like those emanating from Adams and the Community College of Baltimore County (Adams, 1993; Adams, et al., 2009).

In 2013, Florida passed what has become a lightning rod and litmus test for a different direction for basic writing and overall developmental education reform: SB 1720 (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017). Motivated by reports (including one by Complete College America) of the high number of students in developmental education classes, legislators passed this bill that allows students to bypass placement testing and developmental education coursework if they completed their entire high school experience (9-12th grade graduation) in Florida or are veterans or active military service members (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017). Within a year of the bill going into effect, the number of students taking developmental coursework decreased substantially in part because economically struggling students could not justify paying for additional, nonrequired coursework even if they had struggled with one or more developmental

education disciplines in the past and might benefit from the coursework. The enrollment decrease was used to justify $25 million in cuts to funding for developmental education (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017).

One Coordinating Board to Rule Them All–Or Not: Statewide Policy-making Entities

In some states, higher education coordinating boards and the boards for college or university systems enact policies that impact all institutions within their reporting structure in similar ways as state legislatures, making these boards a relevant, important topic to address briefly. This portion of the paper is especially relevant in the context of a historical discussion that is framed as beginning with the end of open admissions at CUNY, a policy mandate that came from the CUNY Board of Trustees (as informed by a report of a task force appointed by Mayor Rudy Giuliani), not the New York state legislature[7] (Otte, 2008).

In parsing through the complex, dynamic, state-specific relationships between these various statewide policy-making entities, I have found it useful to distinguish between a few terms related to governance structure, as well as a few types of governance structures with the help of the NCSL, the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL, 2018). The NCSL distinguishes between coordinating boards with varying authority for enacting policies, system boards that provide state-level coordination for all system member institutions, and institution boards that set policies for individual institutions (NCSL, 2018). The typical relationship between these three boards is for coordinating boards to set "broad statewide policy for all public institutions" while respecting system and institution boards and their interpretation of statewide policy (NCSL, 2018, Interactive database). The NCSL categorizes different states' relationships between coordinating boards, systems boards, and institution boards into three basic types:

[7] That said, it was a 1966 act of legislation that created the SEEK Program that resulted in open admissions at CUNY (Otte, 2008).

- Type 1: states with coordinating boards authorized to establish statewide policies for all public institutions, as well as to coordinate and implement legislative mandates, while also “respecting the authority of each public institution’s local board” (NCSL, 2018, Interactive database) (27 states, including New York, the Pacific Northwest, most of the lower Midwest, and large portions of the South);
- Type 2: states without a coordinating board that function with two or more system and/or institutional boards (14 states, including California, Connecticut, Georgia, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin--all states that have enacted state or systems-wide developmental education-focused policies in recent years); and
- Type 3: states with a single system board that governs all public institutions (9 less populated states that are all in the West except Rhode Island) (NCSL, 2018, Interactive database).

These simplistic definitions and understandings bely the lived complexities of policy enactment within each state setting, so while it is beyond the scope of this paper to fully explore more nuanced distinctions, I want to mention a few contextualized examples to demonstrate why it is important to briefly explore state policy-making boards as part of a discussion of state legislation and why this issue merits further exploration in my dissertation. Organized by the three broad categories of governance systems types, I will begin by discussing Type 1 states with a noticeable omission: in-depth exploration of New York, a decision made in large part because I provide contextualizing information for the CUNY decision elsewhere.

Type 1: Single Statewide Coordinating Board Examples

In Type 1 states like Missouri, major changes to higher education policies emanate exclusively from the state legislature with the state’s higher education board being responsible

for enacting this legislation largely through consensus building. Policy enactment looks different in these states due to a range of factors (different numbers of higher education institutions, economic interests, political orientations, beliefs about education and government influence in education, faculty policy-influencing groups, etc.) that result in widely different results when these states have enacted legislation related to basic writing[8]. In Type 1 states like Florida and Texas, where the legislation discussed earlier has had a significant influence on basic writing programs, institutions of higher education are volleyed between multiple state influences, including legislative mandates, policy mandates from state coordinating boards, and statewide systems mandates. To give some sense for the complexity of influences, Florida has a Higher Education Coordinating Council whose mission is "to make recommendations to the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the Board of Governors, State University System of Florida" and whose membership includes representatives of these groups, K-12, and industry, among others (Higher Education Coordinating Council, 2018, About).

Type 2: More than One Statewide System Each with its Own Board

California is home to the largest (and, arguably, most complex) higher education systems in the country (PPIC Higher Education Center, 2016). With 2.1 million students just in the community colleges, this system serves an incredible number of students, traversing through three separate higher education systems (University of California, California State University, California Community Colleges) and a large number of private and for-profit institutions institutions--all with no overarching guidance because California does not have a state

[8] Without going into too much detail, Oregon's recent legislation that targeted developmental education (HB 2681, for instance) has had a relatively small impact on programs, doing little except to enforce the use of a few multiple measures placement options for students, because of a lack of legislative enforcement and reporting mechanisms. On the other hand, Missouri HB 1042 is in its tenth year of gradually more intrusive implementation due to a stronger coordinating board, legislative reporting mandates, and performance-funding metrics that included completion of developmental education courses during the first several years after HB 1042 went into effect.

coordinating board (PPIC Higher Education Center, 2016, pp. 1-4 unmarked). The one guiding force is the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education which supersedes mandates from the statewide systems and their boards (Crouch and McKenny, 2000; Melzer, 2015; PPIC Higher Education Center, 2016).

As Crouch and McKenny (2000) document in their historical analysis of texts associated with basic writing policies in California, "The California State University system has documentation on remediation issues from as long ago as 1964 when its Board of Trustees began to question whether or not remedial activities should be part of the CSU curriculum" (p. 46). They then document a number of reports and CSU Board of Trustees systems policies leading into their 1996 Executive Order 665, which requires students to take the English Placement Test (EPT), a test that had been in use since the 1970s when White (1995) argued for it in lieu of a multiple choice test (Crouch and McKenny, 2000; Melzer, 2015). The use of the EPT allowed CSU campuses to offer basic writing (White, 1995), but taking the EPT had not been enforced until EO665 went into effect and required students to begin taking basic writing classes as soon as they were admitted (Crouch and McKenny, 2000). EO665 put a time limit of one year on students to complete the basic writing classes to remain admitted (Crouch and McKenny, 2000).

By 2010, the CSU Chancellor's Office sought to distance the system even farther from basic writing by mandating that students who tested below 147 on the EPT take a pre-semester "'remediation' activity" called Early Start (Melzer, 2015). Paid for by students, Early Start could take the form of "a summer course at a CSU campus, a community college basic writing course, or a brief online course" (Melzer, 2015, p. 82). In large part because CSU faculty at a few campuses followed some of the advice discussed later in this paper, they developed "the Advanced Writing Framework," which relies on Directed Self-Placement (DSP) to determine if

students will take what they now call their advanced writing course--"what was once considered the mainstream course--a one-semester option"--or "a two-semester cohorted stretch course that is considered mainstream" (Melzer, 2015, pp. 85-86).

The timing of this new curricular model is fortuitous, given two major state policies that were enacted in 2017. CSU Chancellor Timothy White's issued his 2017 executive order that eliminates placement exams in favor of multiple measures (including high school GPA and test scores) and requires placement into college-level coursework with supplemental support rather than separate coursework (Koseff, 2017). During the same time frame, the state legislature passed AB-705, which mandates multiple measures placement in California's community colleges and stipulates that, due to the disproportionate enrollment of underrepresented student populations in developmental education classes, colleges "shall not require students to enroll in remedial English or mathematics coursework that lengthens their time to complete a degree unless placement research that includes consideration of high school grade point average and coursework shows that those students are highly unlikely to succeed in transfer-level coursework" (AB-705, 2017, Sec. 2.2). The bill further stipulates a preference for "low or noncredit support options," including co-requisite and embedded support (Sec. 2.2).

Type 3: Single Statewide System Boards

In 1999, via Post-Secondary Education Policy III.Q Placement, Idaho's State Board of Education (SBOE) mandated a set of placement cut scores for first-year composition classes "at every college and university across the state, regardless of local context," scores that relied on standardized tests (Estrem, Shepherd, and Duman, 2014). This mandate set off a chain of responses from WPAs across the state that has resulted in the creation of several collaborative groups, including the "English Placement Task Force (EPTF), which established a relationship

with the SBOE and proved their ethos as an expert and collective voice" in 2007 (Miller, Ender, and Finer, 2017) and ENACT, Educators Networking About College-Composition Transitions, a group that led the response to 2015 legislation mandating the end of non-credit developmental education classes (First-Year Writing Across Idaho, 2016). This response included hosting workshops and collaborating with high school teachers and college faculty across the state to overhaul first-year writing courses and co-develop assignments and activities to use in high schools and colleges to support students' transition into college writing classes (First-Year Writing Across Idaho, 2016).

Reasons Cited for Legislative Reform and Faculty Responses

Acting with the support and often explicit influence and guidance of NGOs, as well as state coordinating boards and systems boards, state legislatures dramatically reshaped and/or reduced developmental education programs in recent decades in overt ways that require ever more attention and thoughtful, assertive, intentional engagement on the part of faculty and writing program administrators (WPAs). The Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness--a project associated with the NGO Community College Research Center--put out a report that gives some sense of the amount and scope of state-level legislation that was proposed in 2017, five years after HB 1042 had been in effect (Whinnery, 2017). California, Nevada, Minnesota, and Texas were among the 25 states that introduced legislation impacting what Shaughnessy (1977) refers to as basic writing programs (Whinnery, 2017). Of this legislation, "56 bills were filed, 15 bills were enacted, seven bills failed, and one bill was vetoed by the governor" addressing three areas of programs: "delivery and governance, accountability and reporting, and financing and affordability" (Whinnery, 2017). Of the legislation that impacts curricular models, "a growing number of states are considering legislative action that would

require changes in developmental education instructional delivery" including Texas, where HB 2223 requires "a corequisite course model" (Whinnery, 2017). Funding is also at stake: bills in Georgia (HB 648) and Oklahoma (SB 529) deny funding from certain aid types for developmental education classes, while Arkansas (SB 278) and Illinois (HB 243) legislation expanded funding for specific student populations. As for the "[a]ccountability and reporting measures" included into the bills, "11 bills in nine states address requirements for reporting about developmental education enrollment and completion, including Minnesota (SF 943), New Hampshire (HB 180), and Ohio (HB 49)" (Whinnery, 2017).

As Whinnery (2017) notes,

> While state-level approaches to reforming developmental education vary widely, legislative action across the states reveals that policymakers are invested in large-scale, data-driven reform. Policymakers are hard at work ensuring that the developmental education reforms tested and proved through small-scale initiatives and redesign efforts are now expanded to support more students, more efficiently.

The trend Whinnery (2017) catalogs is similar to what has been described in numerous accounts of state policy-making activities related to developmental education, including accounts from higher education news sources like *Inside Higher Ed* and sources like the TYCA (Two-Year College English Association): the number of states impacted and the degree of change is expansive, impacting everything from admissions, placement, and support structures to curriculum and program structures (TYCA Research Committee, 2015; Smith, 2015).

While most of these accounts cite a desire to increase student success (as defined primarily by grades and course completion data) and decrease costs as core reasons behind policy pushes for reform (Smith, 2015; TYCA Research Committee, 2015; Whinnery, 2017),

scholars have proposed a range of other underlying reasons for recent legislative zeal surrounding basic writing--and developmental education more generally-- that include

- individual and disciplinary lapses in attention to public perceptions and policy issues (Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2006; Cambridge, 2011; Goto, 2001; McClure and Goldstein, 2012; Troyka, 2000);
- increases in stratification between different sectors of higher education and associated competition for resources and shifts in institutional needs that scholars like Soliday (2002) argue basic writing programs have been used to adapt to meet;
- dramatic decreases in state funding that are putting significant strains on the students who are bearing the cost offset and the institutions that are re-prioritizing (and, in more extreme cases like Wisconsin, restructuring) (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017), leading to changed institutional needs like those Soliday (2002) documents;
- a combination of economic, political, and sociocultural changes associated with globalization and what education policy analysts and others call "neoliberalism" or "neoliberal economic policies" (Adler-Kassner, 2017; Doherty, 2007; Higgins and Warnke, 2020; Mutnick, 2015; Saarinen, 2008; Sullivan, 2017; Suspitsyna, 2012); and
- ideological issues related to the public's, institutions', faculty, and others' discourses surrounding literacy and literacy learning, including deeply entrenched attitudes, beliefs, and values surrounding literacy and populations labeled as "illiterate" or deficient who might be targeted for basic writing support—or outright exclusion from higher education (Horner, 1996; Melzer, 2015; Rose, 1985; Shor, 1997; Trimbur, 1991).

From a historical perspective, McAlexander and Greene (2008) and their sources point out that the recent, Shaughnessy (1977)-influenced basic writing programs came about in large part due

to enforcement of federal anti-discrimination, anti-segregation legislative efforts like the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title VI.[9] Given the historical relationship between basic writing programs and legislation, then, it is perhaps unsurprising that legislation continues to be a change agent in basic writing and composition programs, even if that change has taken a different pace and shape.

Interwoven within the above suggestions is the role of NGOs that figure prominently within the sociopolitical realm of critical policy analysis that I am using as part of the framework for my dissertation. As the last 20 years of state-level policy mandates related to basic writing have unfolded, NGOs of various types have played significant roles in creating momentum around these mandates and influencing the ways these mandates impact the forms and functions of basic writing programs, including how students are placed, assessed, and taught and how faculty are re-positioned in the process. I have felt their presence steering my work in increasingly intrusive ways as I have traversed my relatively short career of 20 years and as I traced people, documents, and discourses within this dissertation. Whether they are cited as directly putting pressure on policy-making entities or are cited within our references pages, thus exerting influence on academic scholarship, NGOs, their representatives, and the discourses they use to describe “remediation” have been a consistent presence.

NGOs: The Increasingly Noisy Interlopers

As critical education policy analysts note, at this juncture, discussions of state- and federal-level policies cannot be addressed without discussing the role of the NGOs that are intertwined with education policy enactment (Doherty, 2007; Saarinen, 2008; Suspitsyna, 2012).

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[9] Without adding additional sources or angles to this discussion, I want to mention briefly the range of scholars who make similar suggestions about the social and political conditions that created a receptive context for the growth of RCWS as a discipline, including Nystrand and Duffy, Parks, Phelps, and Zybroski.

Included as major actors within what Adler-Kassner (2017) calls the “Educational Industrial Complex,” NGOs have become major influencers and advocates of legislative reform efforts in part by providing the research reports and talking points documents that policy makers use to understand efforts and trends in basic writing and developmental education to enact legislation and then to understand the impact of that legislation (p. 320). The relationships between NGOs and their sponsoring corporations complicate the nature of their influences. Warnke and Higgins (2018) note,

> Nonprofit organizations such as the CCRC, MDRC, and Complete College America (CCA) often produce the research that empirically demonstrates what follows from much basic writing theory: developmental English can actually act as a barrier to students, many of whom are already marginalized within institutions of higher education. However, these nonprofits regularly receive funding from corporately underwritten sources, including the Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation. By “throwing open the gates” of access, as Peter Adams encourages us, some worry that we are conceding higher education to the “Gates” of private industry and the unfettered free market (Adams et al.). (p. 366)

Playing an active role in shaping policy discussions surrounding basic writing and developmental education is not the only impact NGOs are having on basic writing programs. Because RCWS scholars have not been incentivized to make public policy issues and public policy writing core to our agendas (Cambridge, 2011)[10] and the discipline’s representative

[10] As one antidote against the potential (over)influence of NGOs, Cambridge (2011) points out that the tenure processes at four-year institutions disincentivize this type of public policy research and work among RCWS faculty and suggests tenured faculty who value public policy become part of tenure processes to try to change them. That said, there’s much more to unpack about what and who is conducting the education-related legislative research briefs and policy analyses--an unpacking that merits attention in future papers. As the 2015 *TYCA white paper on developmental education reforms* suggests, RCWS graduate programs may want to consider incorporating more

organizations[11] are not conducting the amount and type of large-scale policy analysis and research that seems to draw the attention of legislators, research from NGOs often work their way into the field's scholarship because we have to turn to NGOs to find some of the types of information needed to understand the policies impacting us. For example, Miller, Ender, and Finer (2017) rely heavily on publications from a Florida State University-based NGO, the Center for Postsecondary Success, which appears to be conducting much of the policy analysis for SB 1720.

As the reference pages for this dissertation suggest[12], it is difficult to discuss legislation and conduct policy analysis and related research without referencing information from one or more of these groups, especially when discussing issues relevant to two-year/community college contexts where publishing is often not incentivized. It is often these NGOs and their affiliates who have the resources to produce not only the research but also the policy briefs for individuals, institutions, and policy makers interested in policy analysis. The Center for Postsecondary Research Analysis, for example, is a CCRC project that specializes in analysis of developmental

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emphasis on--or at least discussion of--large-scale quantitative research into research methods and policy issues in writing program administration classes, as the more I researched the research used in this paper, the more I found references to sources from NGOs directed by individuals with higher education administration and backgrounds. Right now, the preponderance of policy analysis seems to be emanating from schools of education, a situation that we might want to reconsider to gain more traction within public policy conversations.

[11] NCTE and CCCCs, for instance, have policy-making arms but do not make policy-making and policy analysis central to their mission the way other NGOs do. For reasons beyond the scope of this paper, TYCA represents somewhat of an exception in that it has been more prolific in recent years with its production of policy-related position statements, including its 2014 *TYCA white paper on developmental education reforms* and its 2016 *TYCA white paper on placement reform*. Largely because it saw the proverbial writing on the wall with the increase in legislation related to developmental education in recent years, the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE)/National Organization for Student Success (NOSS) has made policy analysis and advocacy more core to its work in recent years, going so far as to hold its national conference in Washington D.C. and to include meetings with legislators, but as legislation has pushed most developmental education work into the two-year realm, the four-year institutions that drive most publishing have few, if any, reasons to associate with NOSS. In the future, it would be interesting to look at the way CCRC has positioned itself as the representative NGO for community college research and policy analysis in large part due to the previous void in attention to two-year institutions.

[12] As I researched these NGOs and their sources, I found myself wondering about their different relationships with sponsoring entities, including ones sponsored primarily by universities with corporate underwriting and those sponsored primarily by corporate entities but with ties to academics--another area of future exploration.

education research and policy; see Ganga and Edgecombe (2018) for an example. When I go to do a scan for recent basic writing-related legislation, I go to sites like WICHE's State Higher Education Policy Database and the American Council on Education (ACE) because they provide up-to-date, easily accessible, comprehensive lists of legislation by state that I can parse by topic. The WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) database is co-sponsored by the Lumina Foundation and the National Conference of State Legislatures, while the ACE is one of the largest higher education policy advocacy organizations in the country that "convenes, organizes, mobilizes, and leads advocacy efforts that shape effective public policy and help colleges and universities best serve their students, their communities, and the wider public good" with its over 1,700-member institutions that "educate two out of every three students in all accredited, degree-granting U.S. institutions" ("About the American Council on Education," 2021). When I wanted to find out more about the relationship between state legislatures and higher education boards in different states to explain these issues for this paper, I could not rely exclusively on the many publications in basic writing and RCWS because they only provide some--but not all--of the necessary context to understand the markedly different relationships from state to state between legislatures and various boards; instead[13], I have had to conduct an additional layer of research that led me to higher education policy NGOs like the Public Policy

[13] As I have worked through more scholarship and started to unpack differences in legislative functioning on a state-by-state basis, I have become convinced, like Cambridge (2011), that composition scholars need to spend more time understanding the specific functioning of their state apparatuses and need to better consider their audiences when writing about these issues. Scholars need to include more information to suss out the situated complexities of how legislation impacts them in ways that make sense to readers working in different state legislative contexts. What is often missed is that even when a state's relationship between its legislature and higher education board(s) share similar features with another state, that relationship may function differently in ways that are important to how policies end up being enacted on the institutional level. Within the sources used in this dissertation and many of the sources those sources cite, Miller, Wender, and Finer (2017) are one of the few to provide significant specific context to understand important differences in statewide policy structures. This realization is one of many that are beyond the scope of this dissertation to address but that merit further exploration and consideration to inform scholarship that will help unpack these issues.

Institute of California, which specializes in public policy issues specific to California (Public Policy Institute of California, 2022).

Given the degree to which these NGOs are impacting policies related to our work and our scholarly work related to public policy, it is important for scholars and faculty to have a working understanding of the more significant NGO influences and their funding sources to be aware of the multiple layers of influence upon education policies.[14] It also behooves scholars, teachers, and WPAs to be aware of the assumptions and beliefs these different groups make regarding higher education. For instance, Adler-Kassner (2014) highlights that the organization behind the completion agenda that sponsors many of the people, organizations, and legislation associated with higher education reform since the 2010s, the Lumina Foundation, espouses a belief that higher education is broken. This epistemological belief informs how it creates and communicates information that shapes policy–and informs the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse I describe in Chapter 5.

Conceived as part of the Lumina Foundation, one of the key NGOs influencing basic writing and developmental education legislation and reform efforts is Achieving the Dream (ATD), which, along with Complete College America (CCA), plays a major role in driving large-scale reform projects specifically targeted at improving college completion and success rates for marginalized student populations (Achieving the Dream, 2022; Complete College America, 2022). Sharing a similar mission as ATD and CCA, the California Acceleration Project (CAP) is a major proponent of accelerated options for basic writing and is funded by the James Irvine Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (California Acceleration Project, “About us,” 2022; James Irvine Foundation, 2022; College

[14] Except when a source is cited, the information in this paragraph comes primarily from my experience with these NGOs, as I have attended events with many of them and/or used the information they produce.

Futures Foundation, 2022; Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2022). As a faculty-created and faculty-led group, CAP attempts to be more closely tied with community college faculty concerns, and CAP co-founder Hern's (2011, 2011, 2017) work has become increasingly influential in two-year circles. The Community College Research Center (CCRC) has become a core information source for scholars and policy makers alike, as it focuses on analyzing, publishing, and presenting about a range of community college-related reforms, primarily using quantitative methods (Community College Research Center, 2022). Started in 1996 when the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation invited CCRC's first director to apply for funding, CCRC is housed at the Teachers College of Columbia University (Community College Research Center, 2018). One other major NGO is Complete College America (CCA), which has been a major driver in statewide developmental education reform initiatives, including in Idaho (Estrem, Shepherd, and Duman, 2014), Florida (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017) and Missouri, where CCA is funding that state's implementation of accelerated developmental classes as part of the implementation of House Bill 1042 (MDHE, 2017).

Nationwide Impacts of Legislation on Students, Programs, Faculty, and WPAs

As was mentioned above, one of the more significant--and earliest--ways legislation and boards of higher education impacted basic writing programs was in the move away from open admissions, first in four-year contexts (Gleason, 2000, 2000; Lamos, 2000; McAlexander and Greene, 2008; Otte, 2008; Shaw, 1997; Soliday, 2002; Troyka, 2000). This move resulted in changes to the student populations in institutions and in classes/programs, first pushing students who test into basic writing classes from four-year institutions to two-year institutions (Shaw, 1997; Troyka, 2000). More recently, as in the cases of the 2012 legislation in Missouri and Connecticut, students are being pushed out of two-year institutions and out of higher education

altogether, a move that has a number of implications, not the least of which will likely be decreased enrollments unless programs like Sullivan's (2013) find funding and a secure location in the institution (Sullivan, 2013; MDHE, 2017). In instances like the mainstreaming push in the 2013 Florida and 2017 California legislation (AB 750), institutions are likely to see additional changes to their student populations, one of which is a wider range of students in first-year composition classes. In the first year of Florida's implementation of SB 1720, developmental course enrollment in the Florida College System plummeted by one-third from 21,000 to 14,000 (Miller, Wendy, and Finer, 2017). Working from Soliday's (2002) argument that basic writing programs exist and work primarily in support of changing institutional needs, the other ways these pieces of legislation impact enrollment patterns will likely manifest in ways that shift in concert with whatever institutional needs and issues arise, including changing admissions requirements to deal with the increase in students who are now deemed college ready, changing retention and enrollment trends, and the ever-changing budgets and resources for higher education. Whatever the changes, writing programs will have to adapt.

Placement Reform: Sorting and In/Exclusionary Functions of Legislation

Another key way state legislation, state boards, and systems mandates are changing criteria for inclusion and exclusion relates to the methods used to place students into courses, a.k.a. placement changes, a topic that merits its own dissertation but that will be addressed briefly here. In most instances, the legislation is moving in one or more of the following directions, directions that are not necessarily aligned with RCWS scholarship (TYCA Research Committee, 2015):

- Standardizing placement methods and scores across the system or state (Sullivan, 2013; Estrem, Shepherd, Duman, 2014; Miller, Ender, and Finer, 2017).

- Requiring the use of multiple measures, directed/guided self-placement, or another approach labeled "research-informed" (Sullivan, 2013; Miller, Ender, and Finer, 2017).
- Removing student populations from placement considerations by looking at high school-based measures and/or implementing what are known as "floors" or "thresholds" (Miller, Ender, and Finer, 2017; Sullivan, 2013).

In instances like Connecticut's PA 12-40 legislation, which the TYCA Research Committee (2015) notes is an example of legislation that does follow "from best practices outlined in the position statements and disciplinary best practices" (p. 234), all three directions were mandated, requiring institutions and faculty to find ways to overhaul placement in manner that would address all three mandated directions (Sullivan, 2013).

"Best Practices" Pushes

In terms of curricular ramifications of legislation and policy mandates, the key move is toward what legislation and mandates often refer to as "best practices" or "research-supported" curricular frameworks. Terms like "best practices," "research-supported," and "promising practices" have become so ubiquitous within education and other areas (like business and healthcare) that they might seem to be an unimportant discourse feature, yet these terms are often used rhetorically as a means for strengthening arguments for the practices being described even if the research basis for these practices is non-existent, scant, or–at best–emerging. In the case of the HB 1042 corpus of texts, the term "best practices" is used most notably within the title of Missouri's new "remedial" policy, CBHE's (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*, that was developed in the wake of HB 1042's passage. Understanding the usages of "best practices" is important for understanding the many ways the term "best practices" functions within the HB 1042 corpus of texts and within the context of legislation like HB 1042.

The term is used as a way to demarcate what practices should be considered acceptable and unacceptable, a goal that CBHE (2013) directly states in the "Policy purpose and objectives" section: "The purpose of this policy is to identify and implement best practices in the delivery of remedial education" (p. 2). The identified practices index the underlying epistemological, theoretical, and pedagogical beliefs of the writers. They also index underlying beliefs and assumptions associated with neoliberal education discourses.

While Smagorinsky (2009) and others have debated the merits of using the term "best practices" with other terms (such as "promising practices"), I rely on the work of scholars like Rumor-Voskuil (2010, 2010) in English studies and Johnson and Cox (2020) in linguistics who focus on the historical, linguistic, and rhetorical uses of the term "best practice[s]" in similar ways as I do in this study and suggest the term is an example of the types of neoliberal education discourses that are pervasive within education legislation like HB 1042. Both Johnson and Cox (2020) and Druery et al. (2013) found that "best practices" is used to describe author/authors' own practices or opinions, as well as their "assessment of previous literature" with only a small percentage of articles "having used a qualitative or quantitative method to determine *best practices*" (Sec. "Results"). Johnson and Cox (2020) further highlight that authors "rarely define the term….Practices are routinely labeled as 'best' based on the authors' own opinion, their own practices, anecdotal support, or a cursory literature review." Johnson and Cox (2020) call this type of usage of the phrase "best practices" a form of "linguistic deception": who makes the decisions about what is considered "best practices" or "research-supported" is often never discussed and is a subject of controversy (Johnson and Cox, 2020; Smith, 2015; TYCA Research Committee, 2015). In the case of the CBHE (2013) policy document, the term "best practices" serves as a rhetorical tool for delineating the practices that the state seeks to uphold as sanctioned

practices, ones “identified by the CBHE and two-year and four-year institutions as ‘best practices in remediation,’ based on research conducted and published by regional educational laboratories, higher education research organizations, and similar organizations with expertise in the subject” (p. 3). Yet, no sources are mentioned for the practices included in the policy, and as I will describe in more detail in chapters 5 and 6, many of the documents used to inform the policy, including the MDHE-sponsored Radford, et al. (2012), rely heavily on NGO-authored literature syntheses and policy reports rather than academic publications.

Rumor-Voskuil (2010, 2010) contrasts the labor management origins of “best practice” from Taylor (1911) with the term’s most recent progressive educational associations in the scholarship of Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1998) and Daniels, Bizar, and Zemelman (2001). While Taylor (1911) uses the term “best practice” to advocate for finding the most efficient way for humans to complete tasks to maximize productivity—and, by extension, a single best way of achieving a goal, such as educating people—Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1998) tie their best practice reform agenda to a progressive educational agenda that favors a teacher-as-coach or -facilitator role that values “the varied, individual nature of learning” (p. 27). Rumor-Voskuil (2010) points out how these seemingly conflicting goals impact perceptions of “best practice”: “Such belief in ‘teaching perfection,’ in ‘one best way,’ [as Taylor (1911) advocates for] are in opposition to the learner-centered sentiments of progressive education thought; it is this opposition that contributes to a collective confusion about the definition and applications of best practice” (p. 27). In short, “best practices” are positioned to work for an abstracted, statistically-modeled average student and classroom experience–people and places that are constructs that often fail to be reflected in reality.

In both cases, despite their seemingly different aims, Taylor (1911) and Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1998) rely on terms that index scientific discourses, terms that effectively intertwine scientific discourses with educational discourses. Rumor-Voskuil (2010) highlights the terms that Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1998) use to describe how they determined what practices were "best", terms like "neutral" and "mainstream" to describe the sources they used and "research-based" and "state-of-the-art" to describe instructional methods (p. 26). In the case of the CBHE (2013) policy that emanated from HB 1042, "best practices" are described in scientific terms as ones that institutions should "replicate" (p. 1). When discussing the rationale for the "Minimum Standards of Academic Competency" that serve as an enrollment gatekeeper, CBHE (2013) uses the adjective "cutting-edge" to describe "remedial coursework" (p. 8). In the "Funding" section, CBHE (2013) describes incentivizing "colleges for experimenting with innovative programs" (p. 11). By relying on and tapping into innovation discourses in particular to emphasize reform as a social imperative on the part of higher education institutions, CBHE (2013) is able to tie its "best practices" with funding and what it deems to be progress, namely "increasing the educational attainment of its citizens" by making sure "60 percent of the adult population hold[s] a high-qualify postsecondary credential" (Hausstein and Grunwald, 2015).

Acceleration and Mainstreaming Pushes

As Smith (2015) and the TYCA Research Committee (2015) note, in addition to pushing for changes in high school curriculum, one of the biggest single policy pushes is for accelerated curricular models like Peter Adams' mainstreaming accelerated-learning-program (ALP) and the integrated reading and writing model Katie Hern developed (Adams, 1993; Adams, et al., 2009; Hern, 2011, 2011, 2017). In the case of Adams' original ALP model, the majority of students in a first-year composition (FYC) class consists of students who placed directly into the class, and

the remaining seats (seven in the case of the original model) go to students who placed into the pre-FYC writing class; the latter students co-enroll into a support class (Adams, et al., 2009). Beginning in 1997, Adams developed this approach during his 36-year tenure as English faculty at the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) in Maryland (Adams, 2021). An English faculty member at Skyline College in California, Hern was faculty at Chabot College where faculty integrated reading into all of their classes and offered a one-term accelerated basic writing class that eventually became the dominant model over the former two-term sequence (Hern, 2011). Adams and Hern have intertwined themselves with NGOs that have successfully advocated for their programs. In the case of Adams, his co-requisite model is one of CCA's featured reforms (Smith, 2015), and when I attended Missouri's CCA-sponsored Completion Academy, he was one of the featured presenters. Hern is the co-founder and executive director of the California Acceleration Project (CAP), which advocates for accelerated curricular models and placement reform through legislation like AB 1750 (Hern, 2022, May).

Faculty and Program Administrator Responses to Legislative Reform

Whether they were included into policy-making conversations (as in Idaho), were excluded from those conversations (as was the case in Florida), or were proactive in anticipating potential policy mandates (as in the case of Wisconsin and Idaho), the faculty who want to be as inclusive as possible in regards to student access to higher education have adapted and found myriad ways to respond to the policy mandates imposed upon them (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017). For instance, in Wisconsin, where the state system has been so chronically underfunded for years that the system board is mandating massive institutional restructuring, faculty have used data and scholarship to inform basic writing overhauls at the curricular and programmatic levels to try to ensure course and/or program sustainability (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017). In

response to legislative mandates that dramatically reduce or eliminate basic writing courses, scholars like Sullivan (2013) and Melzer (2015) discuss the ways they developed new curricular and programmatic structures to try to maintain as much access to their institutions as possible.

In addition to the curricular changes that have resulted from basic writing policy mandates, faculty and WPAs have begun using their experience and scholarship to provide strategies for responding to policy mandates and to envision and enact new identities related to the stances, positions, and roles needed when responding to policy mandates, especially in more complicated settings like California. Cambridge (2011) identifies three key obstacles to informed policy-making that are important to consider: “adherence to ideology regardless of evidence, distorted loyalty to party rather than country, and inability to consider something rationally and passionately at the same time” (p. 136). With these obstacles in mind, she provides several tips for bringing scholarship to the attention of policy makers that tie to my interest in analyzing the discourse of public policy documents and their circulation within institutions, including becoming familiar with policy issues, policy makers, and their rhetorical situation and educating everyone from students to colleagues and administrators about “the potentially powerful functions of research in policy making” (p. 146). By doing so, teachers and administrators are able to “use our own positions as teachers and researchers to not only challenge systemic inequalities as they are written into education law, but to advocate for change as well” (Bernstein, 2004, p. 21). More specifically, we enable ourselves to “use state policy pressure points, such as writing placement, to institute change” (Estrem, Shepherd, and Duman, 2014, p. 89) and become more effective at mobilizing and collaborating to inform policy, especially in the face of the more significant changes legislation can bring (Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017).

Building upon Cambridge (2011) and McClure and Goldstein's (2012) work, Miller, Wender, and Finer (2017) caution that "[a]dapting strategies from other states is complicated by differences in student demographics and structures of statewide systems of higher education" (n.p.). Nevertheless, they provide several pieces of advice for faculty and WPAs to consider to help them maintain some sense of agency and autonomy within individual programs and program faculty while fulfilling policy mandates, including paying "attention to legislative efforts to define 'college-ready,'" working toward "coherence in first-year writing at the state level," building "relationships and compromise," using "effective rhetoric" to "create a strong ethos," and using "multiple measures assessment processes" (n.p.).

CHAPTER IV

MISSOURI STATE AND HB 1042 CONTEXT

In this chapter, I provide an in-depth discussion of Missouri state-level contextual factors related to the HB 1042 corpus of texts. For readers who may have little context for Missouri, I start by providing a broad overview of relevant information about the state's history and political landscape. Next, I describe how Missouri's higher education legislative and policy coordination functions before providing an overview of the groups most closely involved in shaping the HB 1042 implementation process and the texts I analyze in later chapters. As part of the overview of groups, I discuss why two groups played significant roles–and suggest reasons for why others did not in an attempt to acknowledge some of the missing perspectives and discourses within the HB 1042 corpus of texts. I then provide a timeline of events in three parts: part one sets the stage for the key state events that led up to the bill's passage, part two outlines key events in 2012-2013 from when the bill passed to when an associated new state-level remediation policy went into effect, and part three lists key initiatives during the first five years of HB 1042 implementation. Finally, I discuss my involvement with the policy response and implementation process, an overview I will build upon in more detail throughout the dissertation.

As I discuss the state-level context of HB 1042, I intersperse more autoethnography to explore my experience participating in the initial response to HB 1042. Autoethnography allows me to provide a lens on the lived experiences of two-year college writing faculty, including the changing positionalities and pressures, material realities, and conflicting discourses that permeate experiences associated with state-level policy engagement. As Hancock points out, "the material conditions in two-year colleges matter a great deal" (qtd. in Gilman, et al., 2019). She further highlights specific ways the messy material realities of two-year college faculty are often not

accounted for in RCWS scholarship, especially when it comes to the feasibility of acting upon disciplinary position statements and policy briefs, including those related to statewide policy.

Missouri Context: Broad Overview

Named after the Niutachi people who were called the Missouria by French, Spanish, and English settlers, the land now known as Missouri was part of the land included in the Louisiana Purchase (Otoe-Missouria Tribe, n.d.). Historically considered a gateway or launching off point for the west and originally admitted to the United States as a slave state in 1821 under the Missouri Compromise, Missouri is bordered on the east by the Mississippi River; dissected by the Missouri River in a midsection that was once home to the Little Dixie hemp belt and a 15-county area with higher Black populations due to slavery; punctured by the Ozark Mountains in the south; and tends to be categorized as being part of the Heartland, the Midwest, the South of the North, or the Upper South (*Rural and Small Town Schools in Missouri*, 2003). As of the 2010 U.S. Census right before HB 1042 passed, Missouri's population totalled just under six million people, making it the 21st most populous state in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). In 2010, over 80-percent (82.8%) of its residents identified as White with the next largest racial identity being Black (11.6%) followed by Hispanic or Latino (3.5%), which are percentages that have not shifted much in the last decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). During the time frame I cover in this dissertation, Missouri was perhaps most well-known for the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, a St. Louis County municipality–an act that set off protests across the country and brought national attention to the Black Lives Matter movement. I will return to this context more as I dissect the microchanges in discourses throughout the HB 1042 implementation process.

As someone who has lived close to 90 percent of my life in Missouri, I have experience with most regions of this place that has served as the crossroads of a range of ricocheting attitudes, beliefs, values, and associated discourses. Born in St. Louis, I attended a small rural school in the rolling hills of northern Missouri for K-12 before being the first person in my family to graduate with bachelors and then masters degrees in the Jewel of the Ozarks, Springfield, before living in Missouri's largest growing city, Kansas City, as well as a small town southwest of St. Louis. Although this choice breaks most conventional written academic discourse standards, I find this description of Missouri from *Britannica* to be one of the most concise descriptions of the tugging tensions within the state and one of its lingering discourse impulses:

> Missouri embodies a unique but dynamic balance between the urban and the rural and between the liberal and the conservative. The state ranks high in the United States in terms of urbanization and industrial activity, but it also maintains a vigorous and diversified agriculture. Numerous conservative characteristics of the rural life that predominated prior to the 1930s have been retained into the 21st century; indeed, Missouri's nickname, the Show-Me State, suggests a tradition of skepticism regarding change. ("Missouri," 2021)

In fact, like much of the U.S. now, Missouri's urban areas also tend to be liberal, while its rural areas tend to be conservative, a divide explained in part by differing economic factors and religious affiliations in rural and urban areas (Meili, et al, 2021).

For political context for the state, throughout the events most immediately associated with the origins (2010-2011), passage and initial response (2012-early 2013), and first five years of implementation of HB 1042 (2013-2017), Missouri's governor was moderate Democrat Jay

Nixon and its U.S. Senators were Republican Roy Blunt and Democrat Claire McCaskill, a close associate of then-President Barack Obama (Democrat). Republicans held a significant majority of state senate seats with 26 of 34 before the 2012 election before losing two seats to Democrats in November 2012 (Missouri State Senate Elections, n.d.). With over twice the number of seats, Republicans also held the majority of the 163 seats in Missouri's House of Representatives both before and after the 2012 election (Missouri House of Representatives Elections, n.d.). Historically considered a presidential bellwether state until the 2004 election, Missouri has increasingly seen Republican candidates win its state and national government positions (Meili, et al, 2021).

In terms of higher education institutions, the state includes the University of Missouri system's four campuses, four regional universities that once were teachers' colleges, two universities that were once community colleges, two historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), two art institutes, multiple other private institutions, and 12 community colleges ("Who We Are," n.d.; MDHE, 2019). Representing over half of the state's population in their metropolitan areas ("Missouri," 2021), St. Louis and Kansas City are Missouri's largest cities with perhaps its most diverse populations: just over 56% of St. Louis residents and approximately 45% of Kansas Citians identify as American Indian, Black, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or two or more races ("Quick Facts: St. Louis city, Missouri, Kansas City city, Missouri," 2021). These two cities are home to two of the four University of Missouri campuses, multiple private institutions (St. Louis University and Washington University being in St. Louis, for instance), one HBCU, the state's two art institutes, and large multi-campus community college systems that serve the majority of two-year students in the state: in 2012, St. Louis Community College's six campuses had a declining student

population of just over 26,000 (Barker, 2012), while Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City, where I worked full time from 2006 to 2014, had five campuses with 18,000-20,000 students. Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) system centered in Springfield, Missouri, the state's third largest city, had an enrollment of approximately 19,000 students across its multiple locations (*OTC 2012-13 Catalog,* 2012); and the remainder of Missouri's community colleges were small, mostly rural-serving institutions, including East Central College just southwest of St. Louis where I worked as Director of Developmental Education Programs from 2014-2015.

Missouri's Higher Education Legislative Implementation Process

To better understand the HB 1042 implementation process, it may be useful to review the Chapter 3 discussion of different relationships between state legislatures, higher education coordinating boards, and policy-making groups and discuss the relationship between these entities within Missouri. In some states, higher education coordinating boards and the boards for college or university systems enact legislatively-mandated policies and other policies that impact all institutions within their reporting structure. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) distinguishes between

- coordinating boards with varying authority for enacting policies,
- system boards that provide state-level coordination for all system member institutions,
- and institution boards that set policies for individual institutions (NCSL, 2018).

The typical relationship between these three boards is for coordinating boards to set "broad statewide policy for all public institutions" while respecting system and institution boards and their interpretation of statewide policy (NCSL, 2018, Interactive database).

In Missouri, major changes to higher education policies emanate from the state legislature working in conjunction with Missouri’s Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE). Originally given its authority in 1972 as part of a Missouri Constitution amendment “and established by statute in the Omnibus State Reorganization Act of 1974,” CBHE’s nine governor-appointed and Senate-approved board members (“one from each congressional district and a member at large”) serve six-year terms without pay (Coordinating Board for Higher Education, n.d.). Of the nine members, “[n]o more than five of the nine members may be affiliated with the same political party” (Coordinating Board for Higher Education, n.d.).

CBHE appoints a Commissioner to lead the body that acts as CBHE’s workhorse, the currently titled Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, an executive department of the State of Missouri that consists of six offices as of January 2022, including the Office of Postsecondary Policy (Organizational Structure, n.d.). Throughout the dissertation, I will refer to the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development as the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) because MDHE was the name for the department throughout the time period of the HB 1042 corpus of texts that I analyze and thus is the name that is used within the HB 1042 texts. MDHE’s staff is paid through taxpayer funds (and sometimes grants) and consists of state bureaucrats whose function is as follows:

> At the direction of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE), the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) strives to coordinate higher education policy that fosters a quality postsecondary system, as well as to increase participation in Missouri 's public institutions. The state system of higher education serves more than 450,000 students through 13 public four-year universities, 14 public two-year colleges,

> one public two-year technical college, 26 independent colleges and universities and more than 150 proprietary and private career schools. (About the Missouri Department of Higher Education, n.d.)

For the state's two-year colleges, the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) functions as one of the key bodies with which MDHE must collaborate. MCCA's website claims it is "Independent and locally focused":

> Unlike in some states, Missouri's community colleges are not a "system" with a centralized administration under one governing body. Instead, we are 12 separate and independent local colleges, with a history of working together to meet both state and local needs. As local entities, each college's academic and workforce training programs mirror the local economy by design. Our service regions cover the entire state, allowing us to serve every Missourian and every Missouri business. (MCCA, sec. "Who we are")

MCCA further distinguishes its role as follows:

> Through the Missouri Community College Association, the state's 12 community colleges come together to share ideas and advance common goals. Unlike states that have systems, Missouri's community colleges each have their own board of trustees who make decisions for the college. Still, there are times when statewide decisions need to be made, and that's where the association comes in. (MCCA, sec. "Who we are")

MCCA claims four areas where it advocates for the state's community college: as "Your voice in the state capitol," as well as a source of news, professional development, and networking (MCCA, sec. "Who we are"). As a former MCCA member who paid my dues that helped fund the organization, my best understanding of MCCA is a lobbying group that also provides

professional development at its annual conference, where I have presented about various student success initiatives. MCCA has five paid staff members, a Presidents and Chancellors Council made up of the top administrator from each Missouri community college, and an Advisory Board elected from MCCA's membership that includes an elected staff, faculty, administrator, and trustee member into an Executive Team (MCCA Leadership, n.d.).

Professional Identities and Organizations Associated with HB 1042 Implementation

One thing that may not be immediately obvious is the number and mix of disciplines and professional identities and organizations implicated by a piece of legislation like HB 1042; see Appendix A for a short list of the most significant organizations that will be introduced for the first time in this chapter and referenced frequently throughout the remainder of the dissertation. On the left-most vertical column of Table 1 on page 87, I include a table that provides a snapshot of the main two-year college professional identity categories of individuals associated with HB 1042. For the remainder of the table, I use an "X" to denote the main organizations that state they support or somehow include these professional identities within their mission: the Heartland College Reading and Learning Association (Heartland CRLA), Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (MoDEC or Mo-DEC), the Missouri Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (MOMATYC), the Midwest Regional Association of Developmental Education (MRADE), the Midwest Writing Centers Association (MWCA), and the Midwest chapter of the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA-Midwest). After the table, I provide more detail about the main professional organizations that participated in the HB 1042 response and implementation process.

Table 1

Faculty and Program Administrator Professional Identities

Professional Identities	Heartland CRLA	MoDEC	MOMATYC	MRADE	MWCA	TYCA-Midwest
Math	(X)	X	X	X		
Reading	X	X		X		
English and/or RCWS	(X)	X		X	X	X
Developmental Education	X	X		X	(X)	(X)
Learning Assistance and Tutoring Programs	X	X		X	X	
Student Development	X	X		X		

Note: The (X) denotes an organization that does not explicitly say that it supports the stated disciplinary or professional identity. Yet, the organization supports scholarship that can be interpreted as part of its umbrella of supported disciplines and professions, and I am aware of individuals who identify with the named disciplines and professional identities who attend and present at the organization's conferences. For instance, the Heartland CRLA states that it supports "post-secondary educators working in reading, learning assistance, developmental education, and tutorial services," and I have included math as an (X) because it is one of the two-year college disciplines that is primarily responsible for developmental education (Mission, Bylaws, and Operations Manual, n.d.).

Of the organizations listed above, MRADE and MoDEC were initially the most involved with the HB 1042 implementation process, and MOMATYC became heavily involved when math pathways reform[15] became a key direction for HB 1042-related developmental education reform. For two-year institution-focused RCWS scholars and practitioners, there is a notable lack

[15] Math pathways reform emanates from the University of Texas at Austin's Dana Center Mathematics Pathways work, which seeks to better align college math courses' math literacy requirements with degrees. The idea is that not all degrees necessitate a college algebraic foundation for math literacy; instead, students might take statistics and discipline-specific math courses.

of involvement on the part of the Midwest chapter of TYCA (Two-Year College English Association), the professional organization that represents the two-year college sector within the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). MWCA and Heartland CRLA were not involved in the implementation process, either.

MRADE: Midwest Regional Association for Developmental Education

Up until 2019, MRADE was the name of the Midwest regional affiliate chapter of the formerly named National Association for Developmental Education (NADE), a professional organization with an annual conference where individuals pay dues. MRADE was renamed NOSSMidwest when NADE changed its name in 2019 to the National Association for Student Success (NOSS), a name change that I will discuss later. With its stated goal of "providing quality professional development and important networking opportunities within the field of developmental education," MRADE supported Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, and the western portion of Illinois. Unlike the other regional organizations listed above, the leadership for the organization emanated mostly from Missouri two-year institutions during the late 2000s and mid-2010s (MRADE, n.d.).

In the late 2000s, the organization's main focus was organizing an annual conference that was typically held in early October. At the time, MRADE was struggling with low conference attendance and coffers until a small group of two-year faculty and tutoring program administrators in Missouri led by an individual I knew from graduate school decided to re-energize the organization. In 2009, my graduate school colleague reached out to see if I would be interested in a board position that was opening because the organization's President resigned. In an effort to find out more about the organization, I attended and presented at my first MRADE

Conference in 2009, and by the 2010 Conference, I was MRADE's President-Elect along with four other individuals from Missouri, one being the aforementioned graduate school colleague (an English faculty member) and three being directors of academic resource centers and learning centers. One of the directors was highly involved in state-level MDHE-associated task forces and committees. She is an important player in the HB 1042 response and implementation process, and as a professional courtesy, I will use the pseudonym Diane to refer to her throughout this dissertation even though her name can be found within many of the publicly-accessible documents I created as part of my HB 1042 corpus of texts.

Between 2009 and 2012, MRADE more than doubled its numbers, expanded the conference by bringing in nationally-recognized leaders in developmental education, yet continued to be a mostly Missouri-led and -focused organization. The resurgence of MRADE and Diane's on-going influence on and within both MRADE and MoDEC (an organization I will discuss in the next section) meant that by 2012 when HB 1042 passed, MRADE was poised as the most visible, organized presence for Missouri's two-year college faculty and program administrators associated with developmental education and learning assistance programs. MRADE's Missouri-centric executive board and specific focus on developmental education contributed to why it was the organization that was most involved with MDHE and its Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs, Rusty Monhollan, when HB 1042 passed. More importantly, though, is that, unlike MoDEC, MRADE had a formalized organizational structure with by-laws and an elected executive board. MoDEC had recently selected two individuals, one being Diane and the other being an MRADE board member, to be representatives of the group and liaison with MDHE. After the passage of HB 1042, Monhollan requested a meeting with

MoDEC's executive/governing group, but because it did not have one at the time, the MRADE executive board collaborated with Diane to meet with him about HB 1042 and next steps.

I cannot overstate the importance of Diane's connections and the interconnectedness between MRADE and MoDEC as catalysts for these organizations' role in the early HB 1042 implementation process–despite the many other organizations that could have provided input and direction, as well as different discourses. Diane was a math faculty member and academic resource center director, a background that is typical of the eclectic professional backgrounds of individuals in the two-year sector who include(d) "developmental education" as part of their professional identities. Because of its focus on "remediation" and "remedial education," language that scholars and practitioners had updated to "developmental education," HB 1042 would impact reading, English/writing, and math classes, as well as learning assistance programs (like tutoring) and other services that work closely and/or exclusively with students who might end up engaged in courses and/or co-curricular experiences described as "developmental" for their focus on college readiness. Consequently, people associated with all of these curricular and co-curricular areas should have been involved in the legislative response process.

MRADE was also better positioned as MDHE's go-to organization than MWCA, TYCA-Midwest, and MOMATYC (a math-centric organization that is an affiliated of a national math group for two-year colleges) because of its more diverse, inclusive, eclectic mix of disciplines and professional identities: it includes individuals who might attend the other organizations' conferences in addition to its own. Two-year faculty and program administrators like myself are accustomed to mixing and shifting between these organizations, depending upon our focus, interests, and ever-shifting professional needs–especially given the lack of attention, space, and importance that our disciplinary associations may provide. Throughout my career, even as

scholars like Hassel and Toth have attempted to bring more attention to two-year contexts within Rhetoric and Composition/Writing Studies (RCWS), I have often found more scholarly community with mixed disciplinary groups like MRADE because they cater more to two-year contexts in part due to legislative influences on our work. As legislation in the 90s shifted developmental education out of the four-year sector and into two-year institutions, the organizations most associated with developmental education (such as NADE, MRADE, and Heartland CRLA) also tended to skew more to two-year scholars and practitioners (Otte and Malynowsky, 2010).

That said, a rather significant constraint of working with and across so many disciplinary and professional identities is that some organizations–and their associated scholarship, values, beliefs, and the discourses that index these values and beliefs–might not be represented within or have influence within the legislative response process, something I will discuss briefly here and then again more in Chapter 7. In the case of HB 1042, organizations like Heartland CRLA, MWCA, and TYCA-Midwest were not consulted or included into the response at all in part because key individuals in the policy implementation process like Monhollan and Diane had no associations with–or even knowledge of–these groups to make sure they worked with and across professional identities and organizations. At the time that HB 1042 passed, Heartland CRLA was a much smaller, more dispersed organization with a broader mission that included but was not exclusive to developmental education. MWCA and TYCA-Midwest also had more dispersed board representation across their multistate regions and did not make what NADE and MRADE call “developmental education” a core focus of their mission. Individuals participating in these organizations have different ways of framing and naming the work they do with students who might be labeled “developmental” by organizations like NADE and MRADE because of

different disciplinary histories. In short, MWCA and TYCA-Midwest are associated with the disciplines of English, English studies, and RCWS with basic writing and writing center studies in the mix. As organizations associated with RCWS, MWCA[16] and TYCA-Midwest were (and are) more likely to discuss "basic writing" as it is framed by the Council of Basic Writing (CBW) than "developmental education" as it is framed by NADE, MRADE, and Heartland CRLA, which are informed by the disciplines of education, higher education administration, psychology, and college student development.

MoDEC: The Missouri Developmental Education Consortium

Prior to the passage of HB 1042, MoDEC (as I will refer to it because that was the abbreviation during the early 2010s) was the "grassroots" organization that it still describes itself to be: it was an informal collection of professionals across the state who identified as developmental education practitioners of one kind or another. There were no membership fees, requirements, or obligations. Anyone across the state with interest in developmental education could attend the meetings on their own without institutional support, and often, MoDEC functioned as a sort of Missouri-centric offshoot of MRADE. In contrast to the professional development focus of MRADE, MoDEC

> was formed to assist in developing a framework for consistent approaches to developmental education in Missouri two-year colleges. Mo-DEC has brought together developmental education professionals, including faculty, department chairs, institutional researchers, and administrators, from across the state's thirteen public two-year colleges and the Missouri Department of Higher Education. (Mo-DEC, n.d.)

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[16] In RCWS, writing centers have their own professional/disciplinary identity with major scholars, organizations, and publications although in many ways, they act as co-curricular extensions of basic writing.

In contrast with the MoDEC description above, MRADE's membership tends to be a more faculty- and director-level-centered group with no explicit connection with MDHE or other government entities although MRADE welcomes everyone at its conferences. In 2012, MoDEC had no formalized structure or elected leadership, was meeting infrequently with fewer and fewer participants, and was less clearly distinguished in purpose from MRADE–information I know because I was one of the people who helped reshape MoDEC in the wake of HB 1042's passage. At that time, MoDEC's few active participants also tended to be MRADE executive board members and conference attendees, and MoDEC meetings provided space to discuss anything associated with developmental education on the state–not regional–level, including the work of specific individuals and institutions, as well as state policy and professional development.

In the early stages of the HB 1042 response and implementation process, MoDEC supplanted MRADE as MDHE's primary liaison when MoDEC became a formalized, recognized group specifically in response to the passage of HB 1042. I will discuss MoDEC's formalization and shift in focus in more detail below, but for this introductory section, it is important to understand MoDEC's stated purpose and focus as it has been shaped from 2012 until now:

> Mo-DEC provides a statewide forum for the study and discussion of issues in developmental education and serves as a liaison between Missouri two-year colleges and the Missouri Department of Higher Education in issues related to developmental education. Additionally, Mo-DEC collaborates with other professional organizations to further improve practices and policies in developmental education. (Mo-DEC, n.d.)

As part of its formalization, MoDEC now has bylaws with a mission and purpose, as well as a General Assembly and Council with voting guidelines and ad hoc committees (Bylaws, n.d.).

This formalization and associated descriptions are of interest in light of the fact that MoDEC was shaped specifically in response to HB 1042. Eschewing a professional development-focused mission in an effort to better distinguish its focus from organizations like MRADE, MoDEC's mission is to "[t]o advocate for policies and procedures that enhance and improve the educational outcomes of Missouri developmental education students" (Bylaws, n.d.). As of the writing of this dissertation, MoDEC states that its purpose is as follows:

> Mo-DEC will work towards achieving its mission by:
>
> - Sharing knowledge of best practices and how to implement them
> - Providing a forum for the discussion of current issues in developmental education
> - Serving as a liaison between developmental education stakeholders (Bylaws, n.d.)

In short, MoDEC developed in tandem with HB 1042, morphing into a hybrid policy and implementation group with professional development aims tied specifically with the "best practices" focus of HB 1042.

MoDEC's organizational structure was set up in 2012 in tiers, where anyone who is interested may participate in the listserv and General Membership meetings and may become a voting member through regular meeting attendance. MoDEC's Council consists of one individual representative from each of Missouri's two-year colleges, each of whom is selected in different ways at different institutions (Bylaws, n.d.). Every institution determines its way of appointing their representatives. In my experience, these representatives may be appointed due to position (as I was at one college where I was Director of Developmental Education Programs), administrator preference, or a nomination and election process, but MoDEC allows for an application process for institutions that do not select a representative. MoDEC's Executive Board was meant to provide overall leadership for the Council and a pool of liaisons with MDHE. This

structure has changed since 2012 but retains many of its original features, including the open General Assembly and Council (Bylaws, n.d.). Unlike NADE and MRADE, which changed their names to de-emphasize "developmental education" in 2019 for reasons I will discuss more later, MoDEC continues to use the term "developmental education" to frame its work (NOSS, 2019).

MoDEC Council's first 21 members had a range of disciplinary backgrounds and held a range of positions at their institutions. Of the 20 MoDEC Council members I could find information about online, I found the following disciplinary backgrounds and position types held in 2012-13:

- Disciplinary backgrounds: 7 had math degrees, 7 had degrees in English studies with at least 1 being in RCWS, 2 had higher education/administration or educational leadership and administration graduate degrees, 1 had literacy and higher education leadership degrees, 1 had a speech-language pathology graduate degree with reading background, 1 had a communication degree, 1 had a Spanish degree, and 1 had a guidance and counseling degree.
- Position types: 11 held faculty positions, 6 were in tutoring center and/or learning services positions (with some also teaching part time), 2 had developmental education coordinator/director positions, and 1 had an administrative position.

The 2012-13 MoDEC Council membership significantly overrepresented smaller, more rural-serving two-year institutions with 3 members from Crowder College (head count of 5,410 students in 2011), 3 members from East Central College (4,111 students in 2013), and 4 from Moberly Area Community College (a multi-campus, rural-serving system with the largest campus having a head count of 5,446 in 2010). Council membership underrepresented Missouri's largest, more urban two-year colleges/college systems that serve more students of

color: St. Louis Community College (head count 26,621 in 2012), Metropolitan Community College (head count 18,523 in 2010), and Ozarks Technical Community College (head count 15,123 in 2012) each had 1 member despite representing multiple campuses.

HB 1042: Timeline

After providing brief background about Missouri, its higher education coordination, and the organizations most associated with HB 1042, I turn to a chronological discussion of important state-level events and people associated with the formation and passage of HB 1042. See Appendix B for an outline of these events with more contextualizing information.

2010-2011: HB 1042's Complete College America Origins and Funding Changes

In 2010, Missouri State Senator David Pearce (Republican), Missouri State Representative Mike Thomson (Republican), and Dr. Mike Nietzel (then recently retired President of Missouri State University who became the education policy advisor for then-governor Jay Nixon in 2010) attended a CCA completion academy in 2010 in Austin, Texas, that provided the genesis of the ideas for HB 1042 and the associated CBHE (2013) *Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy (Missouri Mathematics Pathways Task Force, 2015, pg. 4). As the Missouri Mathematics Pathways Task Force 2015 report describes it,

> That [CCA] academy produced exciting results, including several initiatives to improve efficiency (course redesign and performance funding, to name two). It also inspired what came to be known as House Bill 1042, which was adopted in 2012 and led to the creation of the Missouri Reverse Transfer Initiative, the Core Transfer Library, and the adoption of best practices in remediation.

In 2011, MDHE had a new Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs, Rusty Monhollan, who acted as the point person leading the state's implementation process for bills

like HB 1042 and the resulting initiatives. A Kansas native who had been a "welder and machinist" prior to completing his bachelors through PhD in history, Monhollan had been with MDHE for a little over a year prior to accepting the Assistant Commissioner position ("Rusty Monhollan," n.d.). Prior to his time with MDHE, Monhollan had been an Assistant Professor of History at Hood College in Maryland ("Rusty Monhollan," n.d.). Like many faculty, administrators, and state-level bureaucrats and policymakers who have been involved in CCA projects, Monhollan is listed in CCA's Community Directory on its website as one of their "impatient reformers reigniting the promise of college success and providing a pathway for students to achieve their dreams" (Community Directory, n.d.).

Although MCCA reports that Missouri moved to a performance-based funding model for higher education in 2010 ("Funding," n.d.), MDHE (2016) reports that performance-based funding was only beginning to be implemented early in 2011 when "the Commissioner of Higher Education" created "the Performance Funding Task Force" (p. 2). MDHE (2016) reports that the Coordinating Board for Higher Education adopted the Performance Funding Task Force's recommendations in 2012, "and legislation has since been adopted that closely follows those recommendations" (p. 2). As I will explain more elsewhere, MDHE communicated the 2012 recommendations on the heels of HB 1042's passage, and the key performance indicators for the two-year college performance funding structure included two notable ones related to HB 1042:

> 2. Percentage of developmental students who successfully complete* their last developmental English course and then successfully complete* their first college-level English course
>
> 3. Percentage of developmental students who successfully complete* their last developmental math course and then successfully complete* their first college-level math

Course (MDHE, 2016, p. 7)

Individual institutions were allowed to define "successfully complete" for themselves, and MDHE (2016) credits the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) for recommending the measures for the "Public Two-Year Institution Performance Plan" (p. 7).

To give additional context and explanation for this funding model, "higher education institutions receive state appropriations based on how well they perform according to several benchmarks. Success on each measure is defined as improvement over the previous year's performance or, where applicable and appropriate, sustained performance in the top quartile of the National Community College Benchmarking Project" (MCCA, "Funding," n.d.). In contrast to its public universities, Missouri's community colleges are treated as "local political subdivisions" that are ineligible for individual state appropriations per the state's constitution ("Funding," n.d.). Consequently, MDHE is given one appropriation for all of the state's community colleges that is "distributed according to a formula developed cooperatively by the community colleges and the MDHE" ("Funding," n.d.). Because community college funding is dependent on tuition, local property taxes, and whatever portion of the state's appropriation they are able to gain, the move to performance-based funding had the potential to significantly impact institutions–and their programs, personnel, and students. As these funding changes took place, I recall the concerns and fears that were circulating in community colleges. Being part of the same retirement system and closely associated with K-12 teachers, I remember hearing many public two-year college staff and faculty discuss their concerns about jobs and about the testing and outcomes focus of K-12 infiltrating and negatively impacting higher education.

2012 - 2013: Passage of HB 1042 and Entextualization of New Remedial Education Policy

None of the documents I collected for the HB 1042 corpus of texts contained information about how the 2010 Texas CCA completion academy experience translated into the HB 1042 legislative process, and I have no knowledge of those events, either. The publicly-available documentation of the story of HB 1042's genesis picks up with an April 2012 report MDHE commissioned from MPR Associates, Inc., a California-based research firm that specialized in "research and analysis in elementary and secondary education, college and career preparation, postsecondary education, and adult education" (Newsroom, April 2013)[17]. Titled *Remedial Coursework in Postsecondary Education: The Students, Their Outcomes, and Strategies for Improvement*, the Radford, et al. policy brief (April 2012) provides research about the scope and outcomes of what it calls "remedial education" across the state and the nation and an overview of recent trends related to course delivery and program management. With three authors from MPR Associates, Inc., and two from MDHE's staff, Radford, et al. (April 2012) begin the policy brief by sharing that "improvements in postsecondary education will need to be made" for Missouri to achieve its recent goal of having 60 percent of the state's population obtain a postsecondary credential, a goal that conforms with "President Obama's objective for the nation" (p. 1). From there, Radford, et al. (April 2012) establish "remedial education" as one of the areas needing improvements due to its "adverse consequences" for students (p. 1).

The inclusion of MDHE authors into the report suggests that MDHE was prepared for the passage of HB 1040. Additionally, the Radford, et al. (April 2012) policy brief, which was

[17] By December of 2012, MPR Associates, Inc., had been acquired by RTI International, a North Carolina-based company that describes itself as a "an independent, nonprofit research institute dedicated to improving the human condition" ("About Us," 2012). RTI International employs over 6,000 people working across 75 countries and was originally started in 1958 by "with support from North Carolina government, education, and business leaders" and claims to "maintain close ties with North Carolina State University, Duke University, North Carolina Central University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill" ("About Us," 2021).

shared with relevant stakeholders in September 2012 after passage of HB 1042, included an already cultivated playbook of “best practices in remediation” to draw upon when it began reaching out to stakeholders for feedback and implementation guidance. The selection of sources suggests MDHE may have been assuming that Missouri’s faculty and programs were not sources for “best practices,” as the sources they relied upon for their “best practices” playbook emanated from outside of Missouri and (minus two sources) outside of the major publications associated with the disciplines and professional identities discussed in Table 1 as being associated with developmental education. Twenty-six of the thirty-eight sources cited in the MDHE-commissioned Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief came from research firms and other non-governmental organizations like the Community College Research Center (CCRC), MDRC, and the National Center for Postsecondary Research, which might best be categorized as independent research organizations. Six of the sources are academic journal articles, and I categorize the other six sources as internal institutional reports (two being from City University of New York and one from Community College of Denver), news sources, and a chapter in an anthology. Academic journals constitute a small percentage (15.8%) of the sources cited; as I note in Table 2 on page 102, only two sources are from publications and scholars that I would associate with the field of developmental education: the *Journal of College Reading and Learning* and *Journal of Developmental Education*, which features the only source from well-known scholars in development education, Hunter Boylan and Barbara Bonham. None emanate from any of the other disciplines or professional identities discussed in Table 1. See Table 2 for a breakdown of source types. The Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief prioritizes quantitative economic analyses and research overviews written by or for research firms like CCRC and MDRC.

Table 2

Radford, et al. (2012) Source Types

Source Type and Number	Note
26 Research Firms and Other Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) Sources	-Most of these sources are from the Community College Research Center (7) and MDRC (6). Other research firms and NGOs represented include National Center for Postsecondary Research, Policy Analysis for California Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Jobs for the Future, and the National Bureau of Economic Research. -Unlike the other NGO sources, the Mathematical Association of America represents a professional organization, in this case for mathematicians, and includes faculty perspectives.
6 Academic Journal Articles	Four articles provide economists' and sociologists' quantitative analyses. In the case of the Teachers College Record article cited, Dougherty is a sociologist who specializes in higher education policy research and is a CCRC research affiliate, and Kiezl has a PhD in economics and education that he has used to research higher education policies. The Bettinger and Long article (both authors are economists who focus on educational policies) is housed in a publication specifically written for upper-level administrators in community colleges, *New Directions for Community Colleges.* The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management article is written by an economist, sociologist, and education researcher. Two articles are from publications and scholars in the field of developmental education: the *Journal of College Reading and Learning* and *Journal of Developmental Education*, which features the only source from well-known scholars in development education, Hunter Boylan and Barbara Bonham.

Table 2 Continued **Source Type and Number**	**Note**
3 Internal Institutional Reports	These reports are internally published by a given higher education institution. Namely, two reports emanate from CUNY, one from Collaborative Programs Research and Evaluation and the other from the Office of Student Affairs. The third report that I categorized as internal is Debra Bragg's *Community College of Denver Breaking Through Outcomes* publication though given Debra Bragg was working as director of the Office of Community College Research and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign at the time the report was written, it is unclear to me if the report was an internal institutional report or a report emanating from Bragg’s research institute that happened to focus on Community College of Denver (Office of Community College Research and Leadership, 2022).
2 News Sources	One of these sources is from a higher education news publication, *Community College Times*, and the other is a city-specific news source outside of Missouri, *The Sacramento Bee*.
1 Work in an Anthology	This chapter in an anthology is written by CCRC founder and economist Thomas Bailey.

On June 7, 2012, Missouri’s state legislators passed House Bill 1042 into law (“House Bill 1042”). HB 1042 requires higher education institutions to replicate what it calls “best practices in remediation,” a phrase that set off years of reform in everything from placement to curriculum, state reporting requirements, and funding (Higher Education, 2012). In its main provisions, the bill:

> Requires the Coordinating Board for Higher Education within the Department of Higher Education to require all two- and four-year public higher education institutions to replicate best practices in remediation identified by the board and other institutions and organizations with expertise in the subject to identify and reduce methods that have been

> found to be ineffective in preparing or retaining students or which delay students from enrollment in college-level courses. (Higher Education, 2012)

It also "[r]equires the board to include in its annual report to the Governor and General Assembly campus-level data on student persistence and progress toward implementing revised remediation, transfer, and retention practices" (Higher Education, 2012).

As is discussed above, the MRADE Executive Board found out about HB 1042's passage in August 2012. Within a year, MoDEC had a formalized structure, CBHE had adopted the aforementioned key performance indicators related to developmental math and English completion rates that would be tied with performance funding (MDHE, 2016), and the newly formed MDHE Taskforce on College and Career Readiness (TCCR) was being leveraged to craft and then implement a new "remedial" education policy. According to TCCR's notes (January 2014),

> The Task Force on College and Career Readiness (TCCR) was created as a result of the state's involvement in the Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) standards that would measure college and career readiness. Also, the passage of HB 1042, which directed all public institutions to replicate best practices in remedial education, influenced the creation of this task force. The MDHE along with the task force then responded to this legislation by crafting a policy that addressed best practices in remedial education. This policy was brought before the Coordinating Board for Higher Education and was passed in September 2013.

TCCR was a mixed group of 34 cross-institutional faculty, program administrators like Diane, institutional researchers, upper administrators, and MDHE staff. I have no knowledge about how TCCR members were selected, and I had no interaction with the TCCR except through Diane,

who was a member and brought information back and forth between TCCR, MoDEC, and MRADE. The following is a condensed list of key HB 1042-related events that happened from the end of 2012 through the end of 2013:

- By the end of September, Diane had begun collecting self-reported "best practices" from institutions around the state to share at an end-of-month meeting between herself, another MoDEC representative, the MRADE Executive Board, and Monhollan. Prior to meeting with Monhollan, Diane and the MoDEC and MRADE representatives met to review HB 1042 and discuss the practices that colleges submitted and details related to the solidification of MoDEC's organization.
- In early October, the draft MoDEC structure and council application had been sent to the MoDEC listserv and communicated out to colleges, and MoDEC had met at MRADE's 30th anniversary conference.
- By the end of October, MoDEC had selected its first council from Missouri's 12 community colleges.
- At MoDEC's first meeting with its newly-formalized structure on November 9, MoDEC discussed its new structure and what it thought were proposed key performance indicators related to developmental education. By November 19, Diane had emailed the MoDEC listserv to say that the key performance indicators had been finalized.
- At some point that I have not been able to concretely determine, MDHE's Taskforce on College and Career Readiness was being leveraged to work on the new "remedial" education policy.
- In February 2013, MoDEC received the first suggested outline of the MDHE (2013) *Guidelines for Best Practices in Remedial Education*, provided in-person feedback during

a meeting, and written feedback collected from individuals across the state to Monhollan and MDHE about the first suggested outline of the MDHE (2013) *Guidelines for Best Practices in Remedial Education*.

- By April 2013, Diane asked MoDEC to provide feedback on the new MDHE (2013) *Institutional Guidelines for Best Practices in Remedial Education* document, a 12-page document. Monhollan also requested feedback from Missouri institutions' chief academic officers.
- In September of 2013 a year after the initial meeting with Monhollan, Diane shared the finalized, approved CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy to MoDEC's listserv.

2013-2017: HB 1042 Implementation Initiatives

In this section, I list some of the main HB 1042 developmental education-related initiatives that CBE and MDHE supported to give a sense for the scope of HB 1042's influence on Missouri's community colleges and their programs, courses, faculty, and students. I do not include HB 1042 work related to Missouri's course transfer library because it is outside the scope of my dissertation. The following are the largest MDHE initiatives that will be discussed later in the dissertation in more detail when relevant:

- Formed a placement cut score committee and implemented statewide placement cut scores.
- Partnered with CCA to host the Missouri Completion Academy (Department of Higher Education, September 2013).
- Worked with MOMATYC to create the Missouri Mathematics Pathways Task Force (MMPT) to create recommendations for math pathways reform (MDHE, June 2015).

- Partnered with CCA for CCA's Scaling Corequisite Initiative (Greer, 2016)

Messy Influences: My Role in the Early HB 1042 Response and Later Involvement

In August of 2012 during the timeframe when "portions of the law went into effect" ("House Bill 1042"), I was in the last two months of work for MRADE's 30th anniversary conference. As President in my third year on the executive board, I was in the middle of several email chains about last-minute conference details when the MRADE Executive Board found out that HB 1042 had passed and became involved in decisions about how to respond and next steps. Throughout the next few weeks, Diane made a concerted push to steer the MRADE executive board in the direction of reinvigorating MoDEC with renewed purpose and a more stable structure to enable two-year faculty to respond to HB 1042.

At the time, I was in my second year in a faculty coordinator role at what was a five-campus community college system, and I was rolling out the first semester of a new mandatory first-year seminar class I was in charge of developing and implementing. Over 4,000 students were taking the class with 101 faculty, and in addition to continuing to teach English and sections of the first-year seminar class, I was responsible for everything from hiring, training, and evaluating the faculty to developing and handling the curriculum, assessment, student complaints, and an associated peer leader program across all five campuses. Consequently, the timing of the passage of HB 1042 was such that developmental education and basic writing were not core parts of my job or teaching focus nor was I in a writing program administration role. The main reason that I was involved in the initial policy response had nothing to do with my job but instead had to do with my professional connection with MRADE. Consequently, I was part of the MoDEC and MRADE group who met with Monhollan to discuss how to begin to formalize MoDEC into a group that could collaborate with MDHE on HB 1042 implementation.

I was the note-taker who came up with the first MoDEC Council application, helped construct the process by which MoDEC representatives would be selected, and then handed off the work after the initial MoDEC Steering Committee was formed right at a time when significant work was being done to gather feedback that would inform the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy document.

At that point, I had very little to do with HB 1042 until 2014 when I left Kansas City's five-campus community college system to take a role as Director of Developmental Education Programs at a small, rural community college on the eastern side of the state. At this institution, my job description included acting as a liaison on state developmental education policy, which meant attending conferences and meetings where HB 1042 was discussed, reporting back, and developing and implementing related initiatives. At a February 2015 conference, MDHE discussed their desire to see institutions begin implementing thresholds–placement floors that would determine community college admittance–despite the fact that there was no statewide agreement about what the cut scores should be. My supervisor wanted the college where I worked to be a model for other institutions and directed me to come up with plans to implement a soft threshold for fall of 2015, a process that made me deeply uncomfortable and that I will discuss more later.

Another HB 1042-related event I attended was Missouri's 2014 follow-up to its 2013 CCA Completion Academy, something I attended in my previous role in September of 2013. Attending the follow-up afforded me first-hand experience with how these academies worked during that time period. CCA worked with different states' higher education coordinating groups to put on these statewide academies, and Missouri was only the fourth state to host such an academy (Department of Higher Education, September 2013). Held in hotels with conference

facilities, the completion academies required institutions to apply for these two-day events and bring a small team from the institution that would be charged with selecting from a CCA pre-identified list of “game changers” as CCA called them–significant curricular or programmatic changes, such as meta-majors and corequisite English and math classes, that had enough research support to suggest these changes would impact student outcomes in a positive manner. After hearing from people CCA identified as “experts” who gave presentations to everyone at the academies about their “game changers,” each institution’s team was placed in a room with food, planning materials (easels with paper, markers, etc.), and regular access to the academy experts–and required to work out their plan for implementing their game changers. The hours spent in a single room with a small team of people were conflict-ridden and tense, and at the end of the academy, institutions reported out to everyone at the academy about their plans.

The purpose of the 2014 follow-up was for institutions to report their progress on implementing their game-changers and to regroup with new plans as needed. As Director of Developmental Education, I was charged with working with English faculty to implement an accelerated, corequisite basic writing class based on the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) model. An English faculty member and I collaborated to create the class and piloted the first sections of it in the spring of 2015.

The last major HB 1042-related initiative that I participated in involved MRADE and emanated from my experience with the corequisite writing class. I knew that the faculty at the institution where I was working wanted professional development related to teaching corequisite classes, so I worked with the math division chair, who happened to be another former MRADE Executive Team member, to include a daylong professional development session at the 2015 MRADE Conference. The math division chair focused on math pathways reform, which became

one of MDHE's HB 1042-related initiatives, while I worked to bring a presenter from CCBC for a corequisite English professional development session right as MDHE was on the cusp of the new partnership with CCA to implement and scale corequisite English across the state.

The context I provide in Chapters 3 and 4 are important not just for understanding my positionality and contextualizing the discourses I describe in the next several chapters in a manner consistent with the discourse historical approach to critical discourse studies that I am using (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016); these layers of context also apply within Warnke and Higgins' (2018) critical reformer lens. As Warnke and Higgins (2018) discuss,

> Sometimes, in the spirit of protecting their college's mission, faculty position the uniqueness of their local contexts against national trends. In the context of current reform conversations, this is not a productive defensive strategy. With one eye on the ground and the other on the national terrain, critical reformers navigate the intersection of the national and the local as a productive tension that rewards an orientation toward scholarship and expertise. (p. 369).

Whose expertise and what scholarship are issues that merit further attention and research, though, given the different disciplinary and professional identities and scholarly traditions I discuss and the relative absence of RCWS and especially critical basic writing scholarship and scholars in the mix of the HB 1042 corpus of texts and the overall policy creation and implementation process. In the next chapter, where I describe three key features of what I call the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, I analyze some of the informing sources for what became Missouri's new "remedial" education policy and describe faculty and program administrator responses to the discourses in the policy draft, MDHE (2013). In later chapters, I

describe how these responses influence the final policy discourses in ways that critical basic writing scholars could have anticipated and, had their scholarship been consulted, mitigated.

CHAPTER V

HIGHER ED'S REMEDIATION PROBLEM DISCOURSE

In this chapter, I describe three key facets of a discourse I call "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. This discourse includes describing "remediation" as a system that threatens students and problematic system by nominalizing and abstracting "remediation" while using pejorative metaphors and adjectives to describe it and–in longer documents–relying on what Goudas (2017, 2020, 2021) describes as a "remediation is the barrier or ineffective" narrative. The "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse is important to describe and trace in the HB 1042 documents, especially within the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) (2012) *Principles of Best Practices* draft outline, to understand the reactions of faculty and program administrators to the draft outline as they relate to the trajectory of the (micro) changes in discourse that surface in later drafts of the *Principles of Best Practices* policy document and other key HB 1042 documents. It's also important to discuss to set context for my later discussion about the implications of this dissertation research: it is an especially pervasive, sticky discourse that has been in such high circulation that it has already shifted into at least one new discourse that I describe in Chapter 7. As I discuss briefly here and in more detail in Chapter 7, while many of Missouri's two-year faculty and program administrators expressed resistance to the discourse early in the HB 1042 implementation process, the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse has been taken up by many two-year faculty and program administrators and intertwined with other commonly circulating discourses.

Analysis Limitations: Genre and the Messiness of Discourse Identification

Identifying discourses and discourse features is messy, especially given how many overlapping and intertwined discourses an analyst might surface. Before beginning my

description of this chapter's three focal discourse features, I start with a few key limitations of my analysis related to the inherent messiness of undertaking a critical discourse study, especially one that spans meso-level through micro-level contextual factors and looks at discourse changes over time. Given that programs labeled "basic writing," "remedial," and "developmental" have existed as long as higher education as existed in the U.S., I entered this dissertation project well aware that the discourse I was attempting to describe would have overlapping features with other "remediation" discourses (see Boylan and White, 1987; Soliday, 2002; Stanley, 2010). Additionally, after my discourse features list began growing, I recognized that the discourse features I would describe in this dissertation would in no way represent an exhaustive list of features or facets of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse.

As the list of documents I analyzed grew, another limitation surfaced that is especially pertinent to this chapter: within the documents where I identify features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, I recognized that the saliency and saturation of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse varied across texts. Even though not all of the texts that I describe in more detail exhibit the same saturation of this chapter's three focal features, I attempted to choose texts that I interpreted as being more influential to the two-year faculty and program administrators and/or the organizations involved in the HB 1042 response and policy creation process. I gauged the potential influence of different documents largely based on what texts faculty, program administrations, organizations, and/or MDHE representatives discussed in either high frequency or at key points in document response or text entextualization processes, such as the Radford, et al. (2012) report that MDHE sent to the MoDEC list serv multiple times to provide context for HB 1042. As I iteratively returned to the texts to analyze them for different

features, genre surfaced as a key aspect of the HB 1042 corpus of texts that appeared to influence the saliency and saturation of the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse.

As I discuss in Chapter 2, when creating the HB 1042 corpus of texts, I drew upon a variety of genres, including drafts and final versions of state policies, governmental and non-governmental organization (NGO) white papers and policy reports, policy briefs, policy advocacy documents, meeting notes, listserv posts, slideshows, and peer-reviewed articles, among others. As I conducted my critical discourse study, I noticed how the discourse features that I was surfacing showed up in different ways in part due to when the texts were produced and who the entextualization agents were, aspects of the textual creation process and context that are related to and part of the text’s genre. Drawing upon linguistic and rhetorical understandings of semiotic processes, Devitt (1993) describes genre as “patterns and relationships, essentially semiotic ones, that are constructed when writers and groups of writers identify different writing tasks as being similar” (p. 580). Moving beyond mere formal characteristics of types of texts, Devitt (1993) notes that genre “is a dynamic response to and construction of recurring situation, one that changes historically and in different social groups, that adapts and grows as the social context changes” (p. 580).

In the context of the HB 1042 response and implementation process, the recurring situations included NGOs writing various policy advocacy documents for various reasons; policymakers engaging different stakeholders in constructing, responding to, and revising policies; and groups (MDHE, MRADE, MoDEC, and TCCR, for example) having meetings and participating in conferences and documenting those meetings and presentations in different ways, among other recurring situations. In each situation, one or more entextualization agents created meaning from the situation by producing a text with different intended audiences and purposes.

Those texts produced as part of similar recurring situations tend to share common conventions that might be labeled as being part of a given genre–but as genre is dynamic and highly constitutive of specific semiotic contexts, even texts associated with a given genre will have different features, leading to shifts in genre conventions and even disappearances of genres over time (Devitt, 1993). Because of the dynamic nature of genres, I want to be careful about overgeneralizing about discourse feature saliency and saturation in given genres too much. That said, this concept of genres is useful for considering the differences I noted in what features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse showed up in certain texts, the saliency and saturation of those features, and the response of faculty and program administrators to texts associated with certain genres–especially when information from texts of one genre (policy briefs and/or policy advocacy documents) are recontextualized as part of a text of a different genre (policies).

For example, early in my research process, I analyzed Bailey's (2008) CCRC Working Paper No. 14 because it is the precursor of a text Goudas (2017, 2020, 2021) labels as one of the earliest examples of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative, Bailey, et al. (2009). I wanted to look at a text that might be considered an early example of the "remediation" discourses that I was surfacing in the HB 1042 policy documents and understand what similarities and differences I might find in comparison with the MHDE (2012) and CBHE (2013) policy drafts. I found Bailey (2008) interesting because, when compared with later textual examples of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, a few differences surface in part due to a difference in genres, namely working papers and reports vs. policy brief/advocacy documents. As a writing teacher of two decades, I teach my students that hedging, caveats, and other rhetorical conventions for conveying messiness and contradictory research are typical of

more academically-oriented genres. In the case of the HB 1042 corpus of texts, Community College Research Center (CCRC)'s working papers like Bailey (2008) and documents like the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief that I discuss later in this chapter attempt to make use of some academically-oriented genre conventions through their use of hedging and caveats even as they fail to exhibit other conventions associated with academically-oriented genres that have an academic researcher/scholar audience and require peer review.

In terms of discourse saliency and saturation differences across genres, working papers (like those Bailey produced for CCRC), policy brief reports (like Radford, et al. 2012), and policy advocacy documents (like CCA, 2012) that contain the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse rely on similar narrative conventions and descriptions of remediation and tend to exclude faculty and program administrators from their primary audience, but as I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter, policy briefs and policy advocacy documents tend rely on even more distilled, highly synthesized information than working papers like Bailey (2008). Policy advocacy documents like CCA (2012) tend to use direct, more specific imperatives; include more pejorative descriptions; and include more explicit, direct examples of the nominalization of "remediation" (instead of "remedial education") and references to "remediation" as a system. These grammar and content changes are accompanied by use of colors and graphics to highlight points. In the case of policy advocacy documents and documents like the MDHE (2013) draft policy that recontextualize language from those policy advocacy documents, the accumulated genre-related differences result in significant changes in tone that can exacerbate the divisiveness for faculty and program administrators who are not necessarily the key audiences for the documents–governors and state higher education officials are–and lead to more direct, simplistic recommendations.

For example, in Bailey (2008), his first recommendation for a “reform and research agenda” for developmental education is “rethink assessment, focusing on understanding what students need in order to be successful in college rather than simply concentrating on placement within the sequence of a curriculum” (p. 18). This recommendation is one that I support even now as something that we need to do more work to address: as Bailey (2008) notes, “Two students with the same score on an assessment test may need completely different types of assistance to be successful in college-level courses,” an issue that continues to plague those of us in two-year colleges who are trying to create improved placement assessments and practices. Within the Complete College America (2012) *Remediation: Higher Education’s Bridge to Nowhere* and the Charles A. Dana Center, et al. (2012) *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education* policy advocacy documents, the phrasing becomes more focused, definitive, and imperative: “Principle 6. Multiple measures should be used to provide guidance in the placement of students in gateway courses and programs of study” (Charles A. Dana Center, et al., 2012, p. 10).

When describing the nominalization of “remediation” and the pejorative descriptions of “remediation” in the following chapter sections, I primarily draw upon examples from my analysis of CCA (2012), a document that both demonstrates many of the genre conventions I describe as being associated with policy advocacy documents and is highly saturated with the “higher ed’s remediation” discourse. Later in this chapter, I describe a “remediation is a barrier or ineffective” narrative sequence using the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief[18] that the Missouri Department of Higher Education commissioned and helped construct with the research firm MPR, Associates. Notice that I label CCA (2012) and Radford, et al. (2012) as different kinds of

[18] In this dissertation, I label Radford, et al. (2012) a policy brief even though Radford, et al. (2012) and MDHE representatives label the document a report, a generic term that I found too vague for unpacking genre and discourse.

policy documents: a policy advocacy document vs. a policy brief, two forms of what some scholars might identify as a single genre (the policy brief). I distinguish between a policy brief and a policy advocacy document in large part to make clear the distinctions in genre conventions and discourse saturation that I describe in the next few paragraphs. Namely, I call Radford, et al., (2012) a policy brief because while the authors do take a position as it relates to "remediation" and "remedial education"–namely, that it is ineffective and thus merits reform–they do not directly argument or advocate for specific reforms. In fact, they provide a broader range of reform options than any other document I analyzed. On the other hand, CCA (2012) directly argues and advocates for specific reforms. Both documents exhibit the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative pattern that I describe later in part because the overall pattern is similar to the organizational pattern of policy briefs as an overall genre.

Unlike the CCA (2012) policy advocacy document, the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief exhibits a lower saturation of the nominalization of "remediation" discourse feature that I describe, as it rarely uses the nominalized form of "remediation." Instead, it mostly uses the term "remedial education," which Radford, et al, (2012) define as "(sometimes also described as developmental education) refers to courses taught within postsecondary education that cover content below the college level" (p. 1). The Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief does not refer to "remediation" or "remedial education" as a system at all nor do they suggest that "remedial education" should be stopped as CCA (2012) does. That said, I still identify the document as one that relies heavily on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse because of the pejorative ways the authors describe "remedial education" and the heavy reliance on the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative, which I describe in detail later. To give one example of the pejorative assumptions and claims, after briefly discussing that higher education will need to be

improved to meet President Obama's completion agenda, Radford, et al. (2012) focus on "remedial education" as one of the areas needing improvement and write,

> Students who require remediation upon entering postsecondary institutions may face *adverse consequences* [emphasis added]...It is therefore in the best interests of Missouri that it *address* and *improve* [emphasis added] remedial education at the postsecondary level. If the state can devise and implement programs and policies that both *reduce the need for* remediation and *improve* [emphasis added] the way it is taught, Missouri will produce more graduates and do so more *efficiently* [emphasis added]. (p. 1)

As a report that attempts to use some conventions associated with more academically oriented genres, such as data tables and caveats about the studies it describes, the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief does not come across to two-year faculty and program administrators like myself as inflammatory or divisive to the same degree that CCA (2012) does. Yet, even though the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse is less salient, the message is and was still clear right from the report's introduction: remedial education is (at least one core area) to blame for higher ed's supposed completion problem–and, by extension, faculty and program administrators like myself are also to blame.

Discourse Features

With my caveats about genre and the variance in the saliency of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse in mind, I move to describing three key features of the discourse. Although there are many facets of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that I could discuss, I focus on three features that appear to be most related to the changes in discourses that happen within the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) (2012) and Coordinating Board of Higher Education (CBHE) (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy

document, which changed authors from MDHE to CBHE between drafts for reasons I do not know. I suggest that these three, intertwined features are most related to the "remediation" discourse changes based on the faculty and program administrator responses that surface in other HB 1042 documents, including the previously described MoDEC meeting notes from February 2013 and the MoDEC 2013 summary of faculty feedback to the initial MDHE (2013) draft of the final CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy document. More specifically, in the context of Missouri's decision to implement performance funding tied with developmental education course outcomes, I argue that the specific discourse features documented here--a. the treatment of "remediation" as a system that threatens students described with b. pejorative adjectives and metaphors within the context of c. "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative--fed into a climate of anxiety and concern that at least partially spurred faculty and program administrators to reshape the discourses within the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy document in specific ways that I unpack further in Chapter 6.

Placing the Blame on Higher Ed–and Us: Remediation as a System Threatening Students

In this section, I explain how many authors, organizations, and associated texts that rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse place the blame for student outcomes on faculty, program administrators, and higher education institutions–not on students, K-12, parents, or systemic societal factors–by treating "remediation" and "remedial education" as a system that is threatening to students. Part of how this discourse feature achieves this effect is through one of the more salient features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse: the prominent use of the word "remediation"--the noun form of "remediate"--and its adjective form, "remedial." Perhaps the most heavy-handed use of the term "remediation" comes within one of the documents that MDHE relied upon for much of the original 2012 draft outline of the *Principles*

of Best Practices in Remedial Education: Complete College America's (2012) *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere*. Complete College America (CCA) (2012) uses the nominalization of "remediate" within the title of and throughout the document to describe "a broken system" (p. title page) and then uses the adjective form "remedial" to describe "programs," "courses," and "students" (p. 2). Within this document and others that exhibit features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, the unnamed CCA (2012) authors refer to "remediation" in a manner that reifies it as an entity deserving of attention in and of itself, labeling it "a classic case of system failure" that frustrates students to the point of "never show[ing] up for classes" (p. 2). In other words, "remediation" is positioned as a system that threatens students. As I will explain more below, the fact that "remediation" is the title and focus of the document is one of many ways that this reification is signaled, and Missouri faculty and program administrators highlight the connotations of treating "remediation" as a system that threatens students in their feedback about the MDHE (2013) policy draft when they write: "And **then it places the blame awkwardly upon the shoulders of higher education** [my emphasis added] with the biased phrase 'broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding" (Scherer, 2013, p. 3). What faculty and program administrators read into the positioning of "remediation" as a system that threatens students is that it is higher education–and thus, themselves, their courses, and their programs–that are to blame for student outcomes. To put it another way, educators and the higher education system need remediation, not students.

Within critical discourse studies, Fowler, et al. (1979) provides one of the earliest discussions of the ideological nature of the sort of nominalization occurring within CCA (2012) and portions of the HB 1042 corpus of texts, noting how this process results in a form of "syntactic reduction" (p. 41) that "reduces a whole clause to its nucleus, the verb, and turns that

into a noun" and passive sentence constructions (p. 39). Critical discourse analysts associate nominalization and passivization with "deleting agency" by

- "transform[ing] statements that identified agents of actions into agentless statements that convey less information" (Billig, 2008, p. 785) as CCA (2012) does when it fails to mention individuals or groups of people associated with "remediation" and the "Bridge to Nowhere."
- reifying "processes and qualities" by affording them "the status of things: impersonal, inanimate, capable of being amassed and counted like capital, paraded like possessions' (p. 80)" and thus giving these processes and qualities "privileged discursive status because of their presumed existence " (p. 785)--much as CCA (2012) reifies "remediation" as a system that might otherwise be considered an act and/or process of "remediating" or "developing" students and skills.
- "positing reified objects as agents" (p. 786) as CCA (2012) does when it positions "remediation" as an agent that acts on students.
- and "maintaining unequal power relations" (p. 786) as CCA (2012) argues "remediation" does by keeping students–and especially BIPOC and lower income students from accessing college-level courses.

In the case of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, what is missing is the "who" when NGOs, politicians, teachers, scholars, and others use the term "remediation": the actors and agents in this "structure of remediation" where CCA (2012) claims "[t]oo many students start" and that "is engineered for failure" (p. 2). By positioning "remediation" as a vague but threatening agent acting upon students, as well as a place, a system, and a description

for programs and students, CCA and similar NGOs that use the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse

- obfuscate what, exactly, they mean by “remediation” and the “broken remedial system” that they--and then MDHE and CBHE (2012)--claim higher education institutions are responsible for fixing (CCA, 2012, p. 7; CBHE, 2012, p. 1).
- disassociate the people and labor associated with basic writing and developmental education programs from NGOs’ extensive calls for reform that includes reduction and/or elimination of programs. Simultaneously, these NGOs avoid directly blaming or even mentioning K-12 educators, higher education faculty, program administrators, and educational institutions, thereby hiding them and their roles and (potentially) stripping them of agency as it relates to the so-called “Bridge to Nowhere” that “is traveled by some 1.7 million beginning students each year” (p. 2).

Except to point to what “colleges and universities” (p. 7) and “states” should do (p.14), CCA (2012) does not directly implicate any people in what is happening on the metaphorical bridge, just “remediation” and “the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding” (p. 7)--the same “broken remedial system” that CBHE (2012) highlights in its draft outline of the *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*. At the beginning of its polemical policy analysis and call to action report, CCA (2012) writes, “The intentions were noble. It was hoped that remediation programs would be an academic bridge from poor high school preparation to college readiness — a grand idea inspired by our commitment to expand access to all who seek a college degree” (CCA, 2012, p. 1). Who the “our” is, is unstated, creating a sense of educational disembodied-ness that scholars like Taylor (2009) might note exacerbates the “ghost in the machine” effect that is well recognized within two-year college writing program administration,

where the faculty and program administration labor of writing programs goes largely unrecognized and unacknowledged despite being directly implicated in–and often blamed for the need for–the reforms and actions being demanded in these documents.

This emphasis on "remediation" is important not just because of how nominalization and passivization of "remediate" obscures the people, labor, and institutions implicated within what CCA (2012) refers to as a "system"; the emphasis on "remediation" indexes different assumptions, beliefs, values, and scholarly and ideological leanings--and enables users of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse to use what Stanley (2010) refers to as "the rhetoric of remediation" to accomplish "political work" (p. 140). As part of the rhetorical use of remediation for various political ends, the "embrace and disgrace" discourse that Stanley (2010) documents throughout the history of U.S. higher education focuses on student deficits and calls for "higher standards." However, the recent "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse relies on a remediation rhetoric that more directly implicates faculty, program administrators, and systemic educational issues, framing "remediation" as a core systemic problem within higher education that must be solved either in conjunction with addressing so-called student "preparation" and/or as a goal in and of itself. CCA (2012) and, by/in using CCA's (2012) exact words, MDHE (2013) position "colleges and universities" as the responsible parties ("have a responsibility") for the systemic issue they identify as "the broken remedial system that stops so many [students] from succeeding" (p. 7).

CCA's (2012) *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* most directly confronts one of the more typical features of remediation discourses like Stanley's (2010) "embrace and disgrace" discourse–namely, concerns about student "preparation" and "college readiness"—to emphasize that students are not the core problem when it comes to the problem it

identifies as college completion and an associated waste of time and monetary resources. In its second paragraph of their document where CCA (2012) sets up the argument for "remediation" being a "bridge to nowhere," CCA (2012) makes "the broken remedial bridge" the subject of its passively constructed sentence about the nature of the problem, "graduation":

> Sadly, remediation has become instead higher education's 'Bridge to Nowhere.' This broken remedial bridge is travelled[sic] by some 1.7 million students each year, most of whom will not reach their destination–graduation. It is estimated that states and students spent more than $3 billion on remedial courses last year with very little student success to show for it. (p. 2)

In the third paragraph, CCA writes: "While more students must be adequately prepared for college, this current remediation system is broken. The very structure of remediation is engineered for failure" (p. 2). In this sentence, student preparation is in the subordinate "while" clause that prefaces the main independent clause where the "remediation system" is the subject. Throughout the remainder of the document, CCA (2012) emphasizes what states and higher education institutions ("K-12 systems and local community colleges or universities" from p. 7)– and, by extension, governors, legislators, coordinating boards, educational institutions, and employees of educational institutions–need to do to "close the Bridge to Nowhere" to "eliminate all opportunities to lose students along the way, saving precious time and money" (p. 2). Throughout its report, CCA (2012) uses the imperative form to talk directly to its imagined audience about what needs to change within educational systems, and in the case of higher education, its "Big Idea" is "Start in college courses with support," telling its audience(s),

> College students come to campus for college, not more high school. Let's honor their intentions–and refocus our own good intentions to build a new road to student success.

(p. 3)

The usage of “our” in the sentence above parallels CCA’s (2012) usage of “our” in the first paragraph of the document:

> The intentions were noble. It was hoped that remediation programs would be an academic bridge from poor high school preparation to college readiness – a grand idea inspired by our commitment to expand access to all who seek a college degree. (p. 2)

In both instances, the referent for “our” is unclear, and while CCA (2012) may be attempting to reference the public or some other entity, their document provides a few ideas for more specific referrants. One clue about at least one of its envisioned audiences for CCA’s (2012) report is one of its document headings: “Four steps states should take right now to close remediation exit ramps,” which implicates governors, legislators, coordinating boards, and other state agencies. Governors seem a likely potential audience, given CCA (2012) praises “Governors Who Get It” for providing CCA with data and “publicly acknowledge[ing] problems, especially those that have wasted so many resources” (p. 4). CCA (2012) may also be referencing the National Governors Association (NGA) in the “our,” as the NGA “adopted the Complete College America Common Completion Metrics” (p. 4). Additionally, CCA (2012) may be referencing educators, including faculty and administrators who are not included among the educators they acknowledge in their preface as “Reformers Who Lead It”:

> Our greatest appreciation, however, must be reserved for impatient reformers who have toiled and innovated, often without the recognition they deserve, in community colleges, colleges, and universities across America. They are faculty and researchers who share extraordinarily important characteristics: intolerance for failure and the courage to change.

> If not for their willingness to see the truth in the data and to reject broken methods and long-held beliefs, a clear path forward would still be unknown. If not for their years of hard work and accomplishment, proven approaches that enable success for unprepared college students could not be recommended today. They were working simply to help save their students' dreams. (p. Preface)

In this highly publicized and widely circulated report, CCA's definition for "remediation" and the "broken methods and long-held beliefs" referenced above seem to include what CCA (2012) calls "traditional remediation" on page 9: stand-alone classes offered as part of a course sequence prior to a student taking what are often deemed "college-level" or "credit-bearing" courses. Instead, they recommend four strategies "to close remediation exit ramps," some of which align with directions that CBHE (2013) outlines in its *Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy, including efforts to avoid remediation and mainstream students. CCA (2012) specifically recommends changing high school to "[r]educe the need for college remediation altogether" (p. 12), making "co-requisite model[s] *the default*" (p. 12), and "redesigned first-year classes with built-in, just-in-time tutoring and support" (p. 3). These types of reforms aim to "[g]et students into credit-bearing gateway courses as soon as possible," mainstream college students of varying levels into a more uniform and faster pathway, and accelerate the college experience in ways that CCA (2012) "reformers" like Peter Adams and Katie Hern–both two-year college RCWS scholars–have advocated for through traditional academic means (conferences, publications) and NGOs (their own and ones like CCA).

To set the stage for my chapter 6 discussion about how the remediation discourses changed when MoDEC faculty and program administrators became involved with the entextualization process for the new Missouri "remedial" education policy, it's important to note

another facet of CCA's (2012) "higher education's remediation problem" discourse. In chapter 6, I describe how student deficit discourses tend to include discourse features that highlight sorting and excluding students; these sorting and exclusionary discourse features are largely missing from not only CCA's (2011, 2012) documents but from all of the NGO-sponsored documents I analyzed for this dissertation, including Bailey's (2008, 2009, 2010) Community College Research Center (CCRC) papers and the MDHE-sponsored Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief. The one example of sorting and exclusion associated with the "higher education's remediation problem" discourse within CCA's (2012) report is related to the report's second major recommendation:

> Immediately place freshmen with basic needs into entry-level, credit-bearing college courses with co-requisite support…For students needing more support, offer two-semester courses of the same content with built-in tutoring. Meanwhile, offer students with significant academic challenges skill certificate programs with embedded remediation. (p. 12)

In other words, CCA (2012) recommends three tiers or levels of approaches for sorting students that emanate from the examples of reformed programs that they highlight on a state-by-state basis, and the handful of sentences above represent the amount of time CCA (2012) dedicates to sorting students in the report. At no point do any of the documents discuss excluding students from college altogether. Contrary to the exclusionary threshold described in chapter 6, CCA wants to not only keep students in college but wants to accelerate their movement into and through college-level classes: CCA wants students to complete. Their suggestion is to improve, alter, modify, and fix the "system" rather than to sort, exclude, or fix students.

The closest CCA (2012) comes to excluding is more akin to rerouting; for the "students with significant academic challenges," CCA (2012) recommends "alternate pathways to high-quality career certificates" with "remediation and adult basic skills development" infused "into their instruction" (p. 9). CCA (2012) does not tie this recommendation with a specific reform in the context of that recommendation, but it likely emanated from Washington state's well-known I-BEST model that embeds "basic skills in reading, math or English language" with "job-training" (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2022). Positioned in contrast to stand-alone models of developmental education, I-BEST models emphasize inclusion and support:

> Pioneered by Washington's community and technical colleges, I-BEST uses a team-teaching approach. Students work with two teachers in the classroom: one provides job-training and the other teaches basic skills in reading, math or English language. Students get the help they need while studying in the career field of their choice; they learn by doing.
>
> The I-BEST model is also used in academic transfer classes so students can brush up their skills as they learn college-level content toward a degree.
>
> I-BEST challenges the traditional notion that students must move through a set sequence of basic education or pre-college (remedial) courses before they can start working on certificates or degrees. The combined teaching method allows students to work on college-level studies right away, clearing multiple levels with one leap. (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2022)

On a final note about the term "remediation," as I discuss in Chapter 1, scholars in basic writing and RCWS, as well as developmental education scholarly communities, have tended to

change how they discuss, position, and frame their work with students, largely eschewing the terms “remediate,” “remediation,” and especially “remedial.” As Stanley (2010) writes, “I shrink from that r-word, find it a bit of a slur” (p. 141). People who position themselves more with developmental education, including reading and math faculty, many learning assistance program and tutoring program administrators, and some two-year college English faculty with disciplinary backgrounds outside of RCWS may still use the term “remediation,” but more typically if they have any regular interactions with NOSS or CRLA-affiliated activities, they will use the term “developmental education” as a way of acknowledging a broader range of holistic concerns and interrelated programming, including learning assistance and tutoring (Higbee, 1993). Many documents that rely on the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse, including the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief, conflate “remedial education” and “developmental education,” treating the terms as synonymous even though they are not. The choice to focus on “remediation” and conceptions of developmental education that writers like CCRC’s Bailey equate with remediation means that whole theoretical traditions and aspects of developmental education programs, learning assistance programs, and basic writing programs are ignored--as are the people served by these programs.

Pejorative Adjectives, Metaphors, and Descriptions Associated with Remediation

Within the Missouri Department of Higher Education’s (2012) draft outline for the state policy that emanated from HB 1042, the sole guiding principle was a sentence directly taken from Complete College America’s (2012) *Remediation: Higher Education’s Bridge to Nowhere*: “Although students should be college-ready upon graduating high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding” (p. 1). As I note elsewhere, the word “broken” and its implications provoked the

Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (MoDEC) to identify this sentence as one of its seven problematic hot spots in the MDHE (2013) policy draft outline. Pejorative adjectives, descriptions, and metaphors used to refer to "remediation" and "remedial education" are another feature of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that provoked strong responses from faculty and program administrators who felt attacked. Within its document that relies on the extended analogy of "remediation" being a "bridge to nowhere," CCA (2012) uses the word "broken" six times. In its 2011 document, *Time is the Enemy*, CCA uses the word "broken" five times. Table 3 provides a few of the more salient examples of pejorative adjectives, descriptions, and metaphors used within a few documents that incorporate the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse; bolded lexical items are my emphasis.

Table 3

"Remediation" Adjectives, Descriptions, and Metaphors

CCA (2011) ***Time is the Enemy***	**CCA (2012)** ***Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere***	**MDHE (2013)** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **Draft Outline**
"Remediation is **broken**, producing few students who ultimately graduate" (p. 3). "Remedial classes have become the **Bermuda Triangle** of higher education. Most students are lost, and few will ever be seen on graduation day" (p. 14). "The current remediation system is **broken**" (p. 15).	"Bridge to Nowhere" in the title acts as extended pejorative analogy for the document. "Remediation is a **broken** system" on the title page. "It's time to **close** the Bridge to Nowhere." (p. 2) "Sadly, remediation has become instead higher education's '**Bridge to Nowhere**.'"(p. 2)	A. Introduction 3. Guiding principles a. Although students should be college-ready upon graduating high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the **broken** remedial system that **stops** so many from succeeding.

Table 3 Continued **CCA (2011)** ***Time is the Enemy***	**CCA (2012)** ***Remediation…Bridge to Nowhere***	**MDHE (2013)** ***Principles of Best Practices* Draft Outline**
	"DROPOUT EXIT RAMP" used to label four ways "[r]emediation is a classic case of **system failure**" (p. 2) "Having survived the **remediation gauntlet**, not even a quarter of remedial community college students ultimately complete" (p. 3). "If you're African American, Hispanic, or a low-income student, you're more likely to be headed toward the remediation **dead end**" (p. 6).	

Although the nominalization of "remediation" may obscure the people and labor involved from the public, policymakers, and even many upper-level administrators in higher education institutions, faculty and program administrators immediately see their livelihoods and labor implicated in these descriptions. For them, even if they do not use the "r" word as Stanley (2010) calls it, "remediation" and the "remediation gauntlet" index the classes faculty spend time preparing and teaching, including their work with students and the individual relationships they have built throughout their career. Thus, when faculty read that "remediation" is "broken" and a "failure," they read that their classes and labor are a problem that needs to be fixed, but in the case of the CCA (2012) report, it is not enough to fix what is broken: they call for the "end [of] traditional remediation" (p. 9) and new approaches meant to reduce or eliminate the needs for "remediation"--and thus, by extension, faculty jobs. This message is further reinforced by the

combination of pejorative descriptions that imply that faculty are, in fact, hurting students–deliberately–when CCA (2012) labels "remediation" as a system "engineered for failure" (CCA, 2012, p. 2). By calling "remediation" a "Bermuda triangle," CCA (2012) taps into U.S. English speakers' metaphorical understanding of the Bermuda triangle as a place where people are stuck and lost: a "dead end" (p. 6) where students are "trapped," the word CCA (2012) uses to describe what happens to students "in endless remediation sequences" that keep students from entering college-level courses (p. 11).

"Remediation is a Barrier or Ineffective" Narrative

A key feature of many publications that rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse is what Goudas (2017, 2020, 2021) identifies as the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective[19]" narrative. An Associate Professor of English at a community college in Michigan, Goudas (2020) calls the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative one of the "false narratives [that] drive reforms" and become "difficult to counteract...due to repetition bias" (slide #3). As Goudas (2017) argues in "Remediation is Not a Barrier: Confusing Causation with Correlation,"

> Unfortunately, however, for nearly a decade now the idea that remedial courses are a barrier has taken over higher education. Many educators, news articles, policy experts, advocacy groups, research centers, and legislators repeat this claim to the point that no one seems to question it. Also, because this sentiment is becoming accepted as true, even by some educators in the field, remediation is being restricted, excessively reformed, or cut entirely.

[19] Because of the continued circulation of Goudas' work within developmental education scholarly circles, I chose to use his naming of this narrative even though it is inexact. While both "barrier" and "ineffective" are pejorative descriptions, these descriptions have different implications that might merit separate consideration that is beyond the scope of this dissertation to address.

Goudas's (2020) description calls to mind Tannen's (1993) conception of frames or what Ross (1975) labels "'structures of expectation'" within narratives: ways that a person's existing understanding of the world may predispose them to tap into certain beliefs and explanations for events–and thus reinforce beliefs and narrative structures that align with and reinforce those pre-existing explanations (p. 16). Just four years after writing the quote above and nine years after his original identification of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative, Goudas changed his assessment of the uptake in use of and belief in this narrative among practitioners from "even by **some** educators in the field" (Goudas, 2017, n.p., emphasis added) to "[t]he barrier narrative has been repeated so frequently that it is now a **commonly held belief** even among practitioners across the nation" (Goudas, 2021, n.p., emphasis added). During the early 2010s time period of HB 1042, faculty and program administrators were just beginning to read and hear this narrative that was describing their classes and programs as "barriers" or "ineffective." Responding to several publications critiquing "remediation" and developmental education, Goudas and Boylan first describe the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative in a 2012 article that one Missouri Developmental Education Council (MoDEC) member references in response to the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy draft. The MoDEC member's reference suggests that at least some faculty and program administrators had enough awareness of the narrative and the way it might act as a frame for policymakers who had already been exposed to the narrative multiple times that MoDEC members wanted to make the connection to point out potential biases and problems in the original policy draft language.

In his 2020 presentation for the National Organization for Student Success (the new name for the former National Association for Developmental Education), Goudas (2020) traces over a decade of how the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative was circulated and

entextualized by NGOs with particular emphasis on Community College Research Center (CCRC), including publications by then-CCRC Director Thomas Bailey. Goudas (2020) writes, "Before almost all recent reforms had been implemented, CCRC's Bailey et al. (2009) had come to the conclusion that remediation was ineffective," suggesting instead that remediation should be accelerated. Bailey (2008) and Bailey, et al. (2009, 2010) instantiated a "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse in CCRC publications from 2008-2009 that relied heavily on four studies that are cited repeatedly and circulate broadly among publications that rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse and the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative to some degree. As Goudas and Boylan (2012) note, despite the "many caveats in their working paper that suggest otherwise," the caveats and even positive results associated with what they refer to as developmental education programs are disregarded, ignored, and otherwise lost in later highly-cited (and thus high-circulation) publications that distill Bailey, et al.'s (2009) central claim down to developmental education being ineffective—what Jenkins and Cho (2011) call a "dead end" (p. 1).

Taking a cue from Goudas's (2020) identification of the typical narrative sequence for publications where the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse circulates, I use the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief that MDHE commissioned and co-wrote with the research firm MPR, Associates to demonstrate the narrative sequence and argumentative structure of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative as it is often patterned within both papers like Bailey, et al. (2009) and policy advocacy reports like CCA (2012). I use the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief because of its potential influences on the HB 1042 response and implementation process: the Missouri Department of Higher Education paid for and contributed to the report in the months prior to HB 1042 passing and circulated the report broadly among

faculty and program administrators in the immediate aftermath of HB 1042's passage, suggesting that the report was influential in MDHE's understanding and framing of "remediation" and developmental education. The pattern that I present below is aligned most closely with the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief, but it also represents a basic pattern I found when analyzing Bailey (2008) and Bailey, et al. (2009), two of the earliest sources that Goudas (2020) mentions as establishing the contemporary "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative:

- Provide statistics about the number of students in remedial classes and the outcomes.
    - Typical statistics include the percentages of students who do not enroll in gateway classes, course success rates (usually defined as the percentage of students who earn a passing grade), retention rates (defined as the percentage of students who continue to be enrolled in college after a given amount of time), and graduation/transfer rates.
    - If they are mentioned (as they are in the Radford, et al, 2012 report and in the Bailey, 2008, and Bailey, 2009, reports but not in CCA, 2012), positive results associated with "remediation," "remedial," or developmental education programs are downplayed, disregarded, or ignored.
- Provide the claim: remediation is a barrier to student success and/or is ineffective at preparing students to succeed in college.
    - Reference costs and/or inefficiencies involved in remediation.
- Then, turn towards the positive and use innovation and/or reform language to provide information about needed changes and example model reforms that will increase the percentage of students who complete post-secondary credentials.

  - In the case of policy advocacy reports like CCA (2012), set out a reform agenda with recommendations and action items, typically including changes to high school preparation, placement and assessment, embedded support, and/or acceleration.

Table 4 provides an overview of examples of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative pattern that faculty and program administrators may have noticed in the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief.

Table 4

"Remediation is a Barrier or Ineffective" Narrative Patterns in Radford, et al. (2012)

Narrative Pattern	Example
Statistics	After the introduction, the report's first main section is "Participation: Who Enrolls in Postsecondary Remedial Courses and at What Rates?" followed by a section titled "Outcomes: How Do Remedial Students Fare Compared with Nonremedial Students?" that compares and contrasts national and state data about student dropout and retention rates and graduation/attainment rates
Downplayed or Disregarded Positive Statistics	"Focusing first on the national results, by the end of year two, remedial students at public two-year colleges were about 11 percentage points less likely to leave college than their counterparts who did not take remedial education (figure 3). The same relationship occurred at for-profit institutions (of all levels), with 15 percent of remedial students dropping out compared with 35 percent of nonremedial students (figure 4). This somewhat *counterintuitive pattern, with remedial students appearing to have more positive outcomes than nonremedial students*, has also been observed elsewhere in terms of transfer rates (Dougherty & Kienzl, 2006) and level of commitment to completing a program of study (Horn, 2009). It has been suggested that students who undergo remedial education may be more motivated to achieve success than their peers who do not take remedial classes (Dougherty & Kienzl, 2006). At public four-year and private nonprofit four-year institutions, the results are consistent with *what one might expect in terms of the outcomes of remedial and nonremedial students*." (p. 7)

Table 4 Continued Narrative Pattern	Example
	[my emphasis added in italics]
Cost and/or Inefficiency	"If the state can devise and implement programs and policies that both reduce the need for remediation and improve the way it is taught, Missouri will produce more graduates and do so more efficiently." (p. 1)
Remediation is Barrier or Ineffective	"Recently the state of Missouri, through the Missouri Department of Higher Education, has started to work toward the goal of having 60 percent of state residents hold some type of postsecondary credential…In order to reach this ambitious target, improvements in postsecondary education will need to be made in a number of areas. *One such area is remedial education*…Students who require remediation upon entering postsecondary institutions may face *adverse consequences*…It is therefore in the best interests of Missouri that it *address* and *improve* remedial education at the postsecondary level." (p. 1) [my emphasis added in italics]
Example Models and Reforms	Over a third (10 of 28 pages) of the report consists of two sections that provide example models and reforms: ● "High School Interventions" describes "Early Assessment Programs" and "Dual Enrollment Programs" meant to decrease the number of students who enroll in "remedial" courses ● "Postsecondary Interventions" describes placement score changes (increasing them), summer bridge programs, supplemental programs (such as tutoring and success courses), integrated instruction, modularized courses, accelerated learning models, and learning communities

As Goudas (2017, 2020, 2021) emphasizes and I noticed in the texts I analyzed for this discourse feature (all of which were working papers or reports), the narrative tends to assume poor outcomes for students who take "remedial" or "developmental education" courses. For instance, in its "Outcomes" section, Radford, et al. (2012) write, "the results are consistent with *what one might expect* [my emphasis added] in terms of the outcomes of remedial and nonremedial students" and then provide statistics about lower retention rates for students who

start in “remedial” courses (p. 7). Additionally, Radford, et al. (2012), note, “[r]emedial students at public four-year colleges were about 4 percentage points *more* likely than nonremedial students to have left postsecondary education” (p. 7). The phrase “what one might expect” and a later “same, more expected pattern” (p. 9) reference used to describe data where “nonremedial” students outperform “remedial” students both suggest the Radford, et al. (2012) writers are working from the assumption that students who begin in “remedial” courses and programs will be less likely to achieve similar retention and graduation rates as students who do not begin college by taking “remedial” courses and programs.

This “remedial students as underperforming” assumption is woven throughout the Radford, et al. (2012) literature and data review despite an equally prevalent amount of data suggesting exactly the opposite: that students who begin in “remedial” courses may perform as well as or better than students who do not begin in “remedial” coursework. The data “one might expect” follows an entire paragraph of data where Radford, et al. (2012) describe a “*somewhat counterintuitive* [my emphasis added] pattern, with remedial students appearing to have *more positive outcomes* [my emphasis added] than nonremedial students” (p. 7). Radford, et al. (2012) then share national two-year college data suggesting that “remedial students at public two-year colleges were about 11 percentage points less likely to leave college than their counterparts who did not take remedial education” (p. 7). Radford, et al. (2012) provide data about a similar retention pattern at for-profit institutions where students begin in “remedial” classes, as well as improved outcomes for “transfer rates (Dougherty & Kienzl, 2006) and level of commitment to completing a program of study (Horn, 2009). It has been suggested that students who undergo remedial education may be more motivated to achieve success than their peers who do not take remedial classes (Dougherty & Kienzl, 2006)” (p. 7).

When looking at national and state graduation rates for students who begin in "remedial" courses vs. those who do not, Radford, et al. (2012) again follow a similar pattern, noting positive trends in "public two-year institutions [where] the percentage of remedial students who dropped out did not significantly differ from their nonremedial counterparts" (p. 10) and at "for-profit institutions nationally…[where] remedial students continued to exhibit *lower* dropout rates than their nonremedial peers" (p. 12). Then, when Radford, et al. (2012) discuss Missouri's state-level data, the authors say, "the patterns are *more expected*" (my emphasis added) before providing two examples of lower performance for "remedial students" and then one example of inconclusive differences (p. 12).

In the case of the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief and others that rely upon the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative, national and state-level data are looked at in the aggregate by institution type with no accounting for the degree of variance in "remedial" courses or programs, student populations, or any other number of factors. No matter what data trends are explored and how many positive findings there are for "remedial" students, the reports proceed from statistics to assume that "remedial education" is a problem that warrants solutions and a reform agenda, which then take up the majority of the report. As can be seen in the examples I have provided, reports like Radford, et al. (2012) may be less saturated with examples of the first two features of the "higher ed's remediation discourse" and may include some hedges and caveats, explore a broader range of reform agendas, and avoid using overly pejorative metaphors in contrast with CCA (2012). Regardless of the less divisive rhetoric of the genre, the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief is a clear HB 1042-related example of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative feature of the "higher ed's remediation

problem" discourse. Importantly, as I will circle back to explain more in chapter 6, the assumed deficit is with "remedial education" in the Radford, et al. (2012) policy brief–not students.

Discourse Circulation and Origins of the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* Draft

No matter how people like Goudas and Boylan (2012) responded, Bailey, Cho, and many CCRC researchers reinforced the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that has been taken up by prominent national policy-making NGOs like the Education Commission of the States, Jobs for the Future, and–arguably the most powerful liberal think tank in the country–the Center for American Progress, which published its *Remedial Education: The Cost of Catching Up* in 2016. Once the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse gained stickiness, it became one of the circulating discourses that has dominated and continues to dominate policy papers and legislative agendas. In his tracing of the emerging "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative that is a key feature of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, Goudas (2020) points to CCRC's reports and working papers being taken up by non-governmental organizations like Complete College America (CCA) who then relied on their work in their highly influential *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* (2012).

As I discuss in chapter 4, in 2010, three Missouri representatives were among the many state policymakers influenced by CCA and the 2012 report when they attended a CCA completion academy that provided the genesis of the ideas for HB 1042 and the 2013 *Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy (Missouri Mathematics Pathways Task Force, 2015, pg. 4). In fact, almost the entire initial draft outline for the CBHE (2012) *Principles of Best Practices* document uses language taken straight from pages 7 and 11 of *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* (Complete College America, 2012) and from page 6 of the *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education* report (Charles A. Dana Center, Complete College

America, Inc., Education Commission of the States, and Jobs for the Future, Dec. 2012). Tables 7 and 8 in Appendix D include most of the text of the original outline for the 2013 *Principles of Best Practices* document as it was represented to the Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (Mo-DEC) by Missouri's then Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs for the Missouri Department of Higher Education, Rusty Monhollon. This outline consists of approximately two pages of text.

The MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft outline largely draws from the portions of the CCA (2012) *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* document that provide instructions for what colleges should be doing to address the so-called "broken remedial bridge" (p. 2). In the CCA (2012) *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* document, pages 7 and 11 are labeled "DO THIS!" pages and use instructional language, including imperative verbs, to talk directly to the envisioned audiences of higher education administrators and policymakers, including governors who are specifically called out in a section title "Governors Who Get It" on page 4. Because most of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse features are included on earlier pages of the CCA (2012) *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* document that set up and align with the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative, the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft outline contains very few examples of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse features—yet, those few examples are potent for a group of individuals who have been circulating reports that use the discourse on the MoDEC listserv.

Faculty and Program Administrator Response to the Discourse

After discussing key features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, I move into discussing the faculty and program administrator responses to the discourse found within the documents that MDHE distributed to MoDEC early in the HB 1042 policy creation and

implementation process, focusing specifically on the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft outline. For this facet of my analysis in this chapter, I provide examples from two Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (MoDEC) documents: 1. a set of meeting notes from February 8, 2013 and 2. a February 19, 2013 document that summarizes themes and trends from faculty responses from across the state to the draft outline. These two MoDEC documents provide textual residue of faculty and program administrator responses to the three features of the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse that I describe above.

The MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft policy outline is sparse and does not contain the “remediation is the barrier or ineffective” narrative sequence that marks publications that rely heavily upon the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse, yet it contains one example of the discourse in an important place for readers. To more clearly state what I have alluded to elsewhere, readers and responders like the MoDEC members were trying to make sense of this policy document that emanated from a policy many knew nothing about until it passed and that presented faculty with a done deal: faculty were given a policy draft that presents solutions to a problem that they were never consulted to discuss. The problem– “remediation” and “remedial education”--was assumed to be a problem in need of a solution in HB 1042 and the MDHE (2013) draft policy outline. As is documented in the February 2013 MoDEC meeting notes and the February 2013 MoDEC response to the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft policy outline, MoDEC participants noticed and commented upon the one key example of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, probably because it comes up in the document’s introduction and is found within the only stated guiding principle for what was then envisioned as a “revised policy on Remediation”: “Although students should be college-ready upon graduating high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial

system that stops so many from succeeding." The February 8, 2013 MoDEC meeting notes contains the following faculty and program administrator reaction:

> *tone of the document; "broken" "remedial" such language should be avoided and more positive language should be used to reflect opportunity and progress;

In other words, like many educators influenced by the types of education and literacy myths Goggin (2008), Graff (1986, 2010, 2013), and Trimbur (1991) describe, faculty and program administrators who identified as developmental education practitioners were working from a very different premise than MDHE: they positioned their "remedial" and "developmental" courses and programs as providing opportunities for educational access, societal progress, and upward mobility for people who might not otherwise have access to higher education. They did not perceive their courses and programs to be threats to students or problems in need of solutions

The February 19, 2013 MoDEC response to the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* outline labeled the guiding principle sentence one of their "seven 'hot spots' on the document [that] jumped out as causing great concern among a significant number of respondents" (p. 2). Written by one of MoDEC's two spokespeople during the 2012-2013 academic year at the bequest of MDHE Assistant Commissioner Monhollon, this document provides the spokesperson's analysis of 18 responses from "[d]evelopmental educators" at seven of Missouri's colleges who chose to send feedback about the MDHE (2013) *Best Practices* draft policy outline. As the writer, Scherer (2013), notes,

> Due to short turnaround and likely other factors, representatives from just half of Missouri's two-year colleges submitted responses. While these results, therefore, do not represent the views of all developmental educators in the state, the breadth of comment and presence of common themes lead me to believe little-to-no substantive new feedback

would have been contributed by those who did not participate. Therefore, I submit responses to the first draft with reasonable confidence in their validity for the purpose of guiding a second draft. (p. 1)

The longer summarized examples of feedback to the guiding principle is documented in the Mo-DEC response as follows:

1) Broken.

"Although students should be college-ready upon graduating from high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding."

It is first recognized that much of the initial MDHE draft is informed by the joint statement released in December 2012 by the Charles A. Dana Center, Complete College America, Education Commission of the States, and Jobs for the Future on core principles for transforming remedial education. Reports like these—while certainly including some respected recommendations—continue to largely command national attention by sensationally describing developmental education as "broken," even though the same data used to support that broad assertion ***actually supports the opposite conclusion.*** Two articles have been attached, both co-authored by Alexandros M. Goudas and Hunter R. Boylan, which demonstrate why such labels as "broken" and "bridge to nowhere" (another Complete College America report title), for example, are erroneous and threaten to lead redesign efforts in directions that will, in fact, undermine future student success. One response perhaps best captured the reaction of so many MoDEC members:

> "The sentence is evasive and divisive. First it **euphemistically avoids directly admitting that many students graduate from high school lacking basic skills**

> in reading, writing, critical thinking, and mathematics. Then it **refuses to admit that this lack of basic skills plays a role in students' lack of success in higher education.** And **then it places the blame awkwardly upon the shoulders of higher education** with the biased phrase 'broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding.'" [emphasis added]

One respondent suggested this could be rephrased to incorporate the more accurate notion that institutions "have a responsibility to continually evaluate and improve our (developmental education) system." Another echoed that same sentiment, writing, "These guidelines should also acknowledge the responsibility of institutions to research and engage in instructional best practices within developmental coursework."

Speaking from what I recall experiencing at the time HB 1042 was passed, HB 1042 brought attention to developmental and basic writing courses and programs in a way that faculty and program administrators at that time had not experienced in their careers and thus invoked a range of affective responses: anger, anxiety, concern, confusion, distrust, excitement, and fear being among the many responses. Into this mix add the new performance funding associated with developmental education course completion and changes to placement related to the new use of the Smarter Balanced Assessment and statewide placement scores, and MoDEC members were primed to be concerned about the potential implications of HB 1042 for their jobs and programs–be it because of fear of loss of autonomy or fear of job loss. In short, affective responses to HB 1042 ran high at the time, at least for those faculty and program administrators across the state who knew about it.

Although I do not have direct, documented examples of faculty responses to the "remediation is the barrier or ineffective" narrative that is a core component of many documents

that feature the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, I want to reiterate a few reasons I chose to discuss this narrative in this chapter. As I describe in detail earlier, the narrative runs throughout the Radford, et al. (2012) *Remedial Coursework in Postsecondary Coursework* report that MDHE commissioned prior to the passage of HB 1042, circulated to MoDEC and others as a rationale for HB 1042, and frequently cites throughout the HB 1042 corpus of texts. Additionally, it is a discourse feature of the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft outline's origin documents–Complete College America's (2012) *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* and Charles A. Dana Center et al.'s (2012) *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education*. Because this narrative is pejorative in nature in that it contains the argument that remediation is a barrier to students succeeding in college and is ineffective in fulfilling certain outcomes, the narrative also functions as an example of the overall negative framing of "remediation" within the communications and documents that faculty and program administrators responded negatively to themselves--a negative response that results in changed discourses in the final version of the policy, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education's (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy.

Changed Discourses

In their work "staking out a 'critical reform' position," Warnke and Higgins (2018) discuss the need to help faculty shift from the type of "ad hoc, defensive posture" that provokes the types of responses two-year faculty and program administrators provided in response to MDHE (2013). Affective responses and defensive postures to unsettling discourses are but one facet of the entextualization process that took place between the MDHE (2013) draft and the final policy, CBHE (2013). As Rose (2016) notes, "a percentage of faculty at most institutions believe some of the students they teach should not be in college, and certainly not in their

classrooms" for a variety of reasons that impact how they will engage with and influence policy work via the discourses they use (sec. "Enacting the model"). At the same time, these faculty and program administrators may espouse progressive ideals, as Warnke and Higgins (2020) describe, a tension that can make "it difficult to reframe deficit in the context of the two-year college" (p. 374). Warnke and Higgins (2018) suggest "(c)hallenging commonplace understandings of students' capabilities…[by] bringing to light assumptions and distinctions that often go unexamined and unchallenged" (p. 377). When discussions about students and their fit for college came up when working on MRADE conferences, I asked the kinds of challenging questions that Warnke and Higgins (2018) suggest, but what happens when such lines of inquiry are an unpersuasive, minority perspective—and critical reformers are not present for all parts of a policy creation process, as I was not during the main response and draft process for what became CBHE (2013)?

In Chapter 6, I will return to the MoDEC faculty and program administrator responses to the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse features and discuss how these responses may have impacted the discourses circulating within the final version of the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* document, focusing specifically on the inclusion of a different remediation discourse: one of exclusion indicated by the inclusion of a placement floor/threshold. As part of my exploration of the different "remediation" discourses within CBHE (2013), I discuss remnants of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, describe the student deficit discourses within CBHE (2013), delineate some of the beliefs and rationales that faculty and program administrators provided for the floor/threshold, and finish by discussing how the discourses intermingled within later HB 1042-associated texts.

CHAPTER VI

STUDENT DEFICIT DISCOURSE AND THRESHOLD ENTEXTUALIZATION

In Chapter 5, I describe three facets of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that influenced faculty and program administrator responses to the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) (2012) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy draft outline and other associated texts: the characterizing of "remediation" as a system that threatens students, the use of pejorative words and metaphors to describe "remediation," and the use of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative. In this chapter, I will describe how the remediation discourses changed from the MDHE (2013) policy draft throughout the entextualization process of the finalized policy, the Coordinating Board of Higher Education (CBHE) (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*[20]. As part of my discussion of discourse shifts, I will document the near disappearance and remnants of the three features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, further detail the events and people associated with the final draft, and describe the shift to a student deficit discourse in the finalized policy, paying particular attention to the inclusion of what is known as a placement floor or threshold.

Throughout this discussion and analysis, I highlight how the discourses and focus of the discourses changed within the HB 1042 corpus as different stakeholders became the entextualization agents for different documents and, in particular, how faculty and program administrators shifted the discourses away from ones that blame "remediation" for higher education's supposed student success and completion problem back to students. As part of this discourse shift, faculty and program administrators also enshrined practices like thresholds as

[20] As a reminder, for reasons unknown to me, the policy document's initial, two-page draft is attributed to MDHE, while the final policy is attributed to CBHE. I suspect this change represents the fact that MDHE led the document construction and revision process, which included different stakeholders and entextualization agents throughout the drafting process, while CBHE takes authorship and ownership rights after policies are officially adopted.

state-approved "best practices" and became arms of the state responsible for sorting, stigmatizing, and excluding potential students as a means of creating a more efficient educational system that would preserve academic standards and faculty minds and bodies. At the end of this chapter, I describe how, by 2017, when MDHE worked with the Committee on College and Career Readiness to conduct a survey and write a report about the first five years of HB 1042 implementation, the discourses of the previous documents–those blaming remediation as the problem or cause for students' and higher education institutions' completion woes and those blaming students and K-12–had intermingled. Because I am more interested in the inclusion of the threshold into the 2013 policy and because discourses related to the K-12 system represent another set of issues and discourses, I have chosen not to make them a major focus of this dissertation except as needed to compare and contrast remediation-related discourses.

Remnants of the "Higher Ed's Remediation Problem" Discourse in CBHE (2013)

In this section, I describe the few lingering remnants of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse in CBHE (2013).

Fixing the System/Higher Education vs. Fixing the Student: "Remediation" as a Threatening System Vestiges

The first feature of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that I discuss in chapter 5–namely, the positioning of "remediation" as a system that threatens students--is used in a much more limited way and takes on a very different meaning in the CBHE (2013) final policy document. In most of the documents I analyze for Chapter 5 that rely heavily upon and/or are more heavily saturated with the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, "remediation" tends to be described as a system that threatens students and implicates faculty and program administrators, often without specifically naming them or their courses or programs. In CBHE

(2013), "remediation" is more likely to be referred to as "remedial education" and tends to refer to remediating or fixing students and/or student skill deficits. In other words, as examples in Table 5. suggest, "remediation" may be used in its nominalized form, but the unmentioned referent of "remediation" is "of students," just as the direct object of "remediate" in higher education is "students": students take on the action of the verb "remediate." In the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, the treatment and reification of "remediation" as a system or entity in and of itself represents a semantic shift in the term "remediation," a shift that may not be immediately recognizable but that has important implications. In the "remediation of students" semantic meaning of "remediation," students and their "skills" are positioned as problems in need of fixing much as other nouns that are "remediated" are positioned as being in need of fixing: remediate(d) air quality, mold, products, vulnerabilities, and websites to name a few examples. Even when the word "remediation" is used in CBHE (2013), CBHE is typically referring to remediating or fixing students and/or student skill deficits as shown in the examples in Table 5.

Table 5

Examples of "Remediation" Usage in CBHE (2013)

"Remediation" Example	Explanation	What/Who Needs to be Fixed: System/Higher Education or Student
RSMo 173.005 (6): The coordinating board for higher education shall require all public two-year and four-year higher education institutions to replicate best practices in remediation identified by the coordinating board and institutions from research undertaken by regional educational laboratories, higher education research organizations, and similar organizations with expertise in the subject, and identify and reduce methods that have been found to be ineffective in preparing or retaining students or that delay students from enrollment in college-level courses. (p. 2)	This initial example is a direct quote of the statutory language of HB 1042. This example suggests the focus of the policy is on "methods," which I take to mean educational or instructional methods or approaches. By emphasizing educational or instructional methods or approaches, the statutory language indexes the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse that indirectly blames faculty and program administrators. This language does not implicate students and student preparation as being in need of change.	System/Higher Education
4.5 Some states have prohibited four-year institutions from offering remedial education. CBHE will no longer prohibit selective and highly-selective public institutions from offering remedial coursework. This policy does not seek to limit remediation to a single sector but to work collaboratively to improve student learning outcomes and increase educational attainment. (p. 3)	This example comes the closest to suggesting a "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, as it ends with saying that higher education institutions are responsible "to improve student learning outcomes," placing the focus on institutions and not students or student skills.	System/Higher Education

Table 5 Continued

“Remediation” Example	**Explanation**	**What/Who Needs to be Fixed: System/Higher Education or Student**
7.2 College-content readiness is defined as the level of preparation a student needs to succeed in specific credit-bearing courses in college—such as English or mathematics—without the need for remediation. (p. 6)	In this instance, “remediation” is an abstract noun referencing remediating a student’s level of preparation for college content. Students are implicated, not higher education or the “remediation system.”	Students
5.2 High schools should assess students’ basic skills prior to the 10th grade so that students who require remediation can receive instruction before entering public postsecondary education. (p. 3)	In this instance, “who require remediation” is a relative pronoun phrase that is giving additional detail about “students.” Students are implicated as needing remediation; the “remediation system” is not implicated.	Students
10.1 With proper academic support, students needing remediation in a single subject have a good chance of earning a postsecondary credential. (p. 8)	This example comes from the threshold section, section 10 “Minimum Standards of Academic Competence.” In this section, CBHE (2013) sorts students according to levels of preparation and potential need for exclusion from college via the threshold. In this example, “needing remediation” is a gerund phrase that describes “students.” Students are implicated as needing remediation; the “remediation system” is not implicated.	Students

Table 5 Continued **"Remediation" Example**	**Explanation**	**What/Who Needs to be Fixed: System/Higher Education or Student**
10.2 It is equally unreasonable to expect an institution to close the gap in a student's academic preparation through a one- or two-semester remediation sequence. (p. 8)	This example also comes from the threshold section and is setting up CBHE's (2013) argument that students who are deemed below the threshold for "minimum academic competence" be redirected to "other state-funded educational opportunities (i.e. Adult Education and Literacy) before being retested for admission as a degree-seeking student" (p. 9). The "remediation sequence" refers to courses.	Students
13.2 Pursuant to RSMo, 173.750, MDHE must provide a high school feedback report to Missouri school districts on remediation of their recent high school graduates. (p. 10)	The "of their recent high school graduates" is a prepositional phrase where the object of the preposition is "high school graduates"--the students who are implicated as being in need of "remediation."	Students
15.2 *Remedial education/remediation* Remedial education refers to coursework and programs designed to remedy a situation; that is, to teach students what they should already have learned. Remedial education seeks to improve the skills of underprepared students, both traditional and non-traditional, so that they may be successful in entry-level, credit-bearing courses. (p. 12)	This example comes from the definitions section of the policy and sets out the idea that "remedial education" is an equivalent proxy for "remediation." In this definition, CBHE (2013) directly implicates students: although they position remedial education as fixing "a situation," students and their lacking skills are positioned as the problem in the "situation" who need to be taught "what they should have already learned."	Students

Pejorative Descriptions of "Remediation"

In this section, I discuss the disappearance of pejorative descriptions of "remediation" in CBHE (2013). In contrast with the MDHE (2013) policy draft outline that characterizes "remediation" as "broken" and in need of fixing, CBHE (2013) characterizes students, as well as the K-12 system, as broken and suggests that "remedial education" and "developmental education" are essential for the success of students with the ability to benefit from these classes and programs. As I document in chapter 5, both in a February 8 meeting with Monhollan and in a February 19 document of compiled responses from faculty and program administrators across the state, MoDEC's early 2013 feedback about the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* policy draft outline focused heavily on the use of "broken" to describe "remediation" as a system that threatens students, another key facet of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. The compiler of MoDEC's response report identified the word "broken" as one of the two-page draft outline's seven hot spots, highlighting the "evasive and divisive" nature of the sentence where "broken" is used. In the February 8, 2013 MoDEC meeting notes, respondents described this word and the tone it set as "language [that] should be avoided" (Dump, 2013).

At the same time that HB 1042 was passed, the state began implementing performance funding and set completion of math and English developmental education classes as key performance indicators (KPIs) that would be tied with additional funding. Anticipating that these KPIs might be tied with course success rates and faculty evaluations, MoDEC's documentation of faculty responses to the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* draft policy outline also focuses on questions and comments about accountability for student outcomes and the need for a placement floor or threshold. The floor/threshold is rationalized in multiple ways that I describe in more detail later, including as a way to avoid faculty having to be held accountable for

students they believe will fail ("There has to be some sort of floor if we are going to (be) held accountable for student failure") and to better meet student needs ("so that those students who faculty express have no chance of succeeding are routed into other educational resources that better fit their needs").

In response to this feedback and whatever other feedback MDHE received, the state's Task Force for College and Career Readiness (TCCR) wrote a new, more complete first draft of the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* document, one that turned the initial two-page, double-spaced outline to just over 12 pages of mostly single-spaced text. As it is described on the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development website, the Task Force for College and Career Readiness was the primary state policy group involved with creating CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*, which is credited as a Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) policy and thus cited as such in this dissertation. The TCCR

> was established [prior to the passage of HB 1042] and includes representatives from community colleges and four-year universities and Missouri high schools, as well as members of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The task force has worked alongside MDHE staff to develop a policy that outlines best practices in the delivery of remedial education.

In its longer form, the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* document went through two drafts before the finalized version became Missouri's new remedial education policy. Between the drafts, the TCCR made minor changes from draft 1.0 (emailed to the MoDEC listserv on April 5, 2013) to draft 1.1 (emailed to chief academic officers across the state on April 29, 2013), which became the final version. The remediation discourses in the longer

versions of the document, which has been considered Missouri's statewide remedial education policy since 2013, are markedly different from the outline with the most pronounced difference being the near disappearance of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, especially as it relates to the pejorative descriptions of "remediation." The word "broken" is never used. Instead of cultivating a sense of urgency that "remediation" and "remedial or developmental education" need to be "reduced" or "eliminated," as in documents that rely on the pejorative descriptions associated with the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, the final version of the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy suggests that "remedial education" and "developmental education" are necessary components of higher education for students with the ability to benefit from these classes and programs.

In fact, rather than describing the "broken" remedial education system in the guiding principles, the final policy document establishes Missouri's commitment to "developmental or remedial education" in its guiding principles, stating, "At present...many high school graduates enter postsecondary education unprepared for entry-level coursework. To that end, Missouri institutions of higher education are committed to providing opportunities for underprepared students to attain the skills they need to succeed in college" (CBHE, 2013, p. 2). CBHE (2013) represents a major policy change for Missouri higher education institutions as it relates to developmental education and pre-college preparation courses and programs when it declares that "CBHE will no longer prohibit selective and highly-selective public institutions from offering remedial coursework. This policy does not seek to limit remediation to a single sector but to work collaboratively to improve student learning outcomes and increase educational attainment" (CBHE, 2013, p. 3). Prior to the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy, Missouri's "Policy on Remediation"—passed in 1992 and reaffirmed in

1996—aligned with other, similar 1990s state policies that sought to remove remedial and developmental education from four-year institutions (Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010), specifically stating that "No public four-year institution which is highly selective or selective will offer formal remedial coursework" (CBHE, 1992, 1996) as explained in Chapter 4.

"Remediation is a Barrier or Ineffective" Narrative Vestiges

It's important to return to my chapter 5 discussion about the impacts of genre on the salience and saturation of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Unlike the working papers, policy briefs, and policy advocacy documents I discuss as using the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse in Chapter 5, CBHE (2013) is a final version of a state policy, a genre that does not typically include some of the patterns that I describe as being associated with many documents (including research articles) that rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Consequently, some facets of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative pattern are not present in the document. For instance, CBHE (2013) does not include statistics or outcomes data because it is not typical for policies to contain this type of information.

Genre differences aside, my analysis suggests that CBHE (2013) never makes any direct or indirect arguments that "remediation" or "remedial courses" are to be blamed for student outcomes due to acting as a barrier to students taking college-level courses or due to being ineffective. As I note in the previous section of this chapter, CBHE (2013) makes a very different claim: Missouri is committed to providing remedial education as a strategy for remedying students' academic preparation deficiencies–but only for students who meet the "Minimum Standards of Academic Competence" as it describes in section 10 about the threshold (p. 8-9). In fact, blame is shifted away from higher education institutions and towards other people and entities, including the K-12 system, throughout the policy; section 6 "CBHE Recommended

College Preparatory High School Curriculum" is one of the more prominent examples of this blame shifting, where CBHE (2013) recommends changes to the high school curriculum to better ensure college academic readiness and decrease the number of students required to take remedial courses[21].

In the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, the reforms described and reform agendas proposed are targeted at what higher education institutions need to do to "fix the broken remedial system." Because HB 1042 and the resultant policy originated in texts that rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, CBHE (2013) does, as a necessity of what the original policy language requires, include section 5 titled, "Guidelines for Best Practices in Remedial Education." Unlike in the MDHE (2013) policy draft outline where section C. Guidelines made up over 75% of the policy language, Section 5 in CBHE (2013) takes up approximately 8% of the final 12-page policy and, with only ten guidelines, contains fewer guidelines than the original two-page draft. Because it is supposed to be focusing on best practices, this section is a likely place to look for language suggesting what faculty, courses, and programs should and should not be doing, should be considering or reforming, etc.

Section 5 follows the basic outline of topics from the draft policy language but is more precise about the agents involved, allowing for a clearer understanding of who is supposed to be doing what unlike in the draft policy or the informing documents that rely on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Additionally, as I will briefly discuss here and then describe in more detail later, student deficit discourses surface here, not the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Unlike in the MDHE (2013) draft policy outline, most of the best practices

[21] While this downward-education-system blaming focus is not unusual within education circles, one thing to consider about the heavy emphasis on changing K-12 standards is the emphasis on reducing costs in the introductory section of CBHE (2013)--and the fact that Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is funded separately and differently from Missouri's Department of Higher Education (MDHE).

in CBHE (2013) specifically call out what "higher education institutions" should be doing, including two recommendations about aligning high school and postsecondary course requirements, expectations, and programs of study. As with the policy sections directed at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), these recommendations directly include DESE and position high schools as responsible parties for making sure students are college ready and do not need remedial education. For instance, in section 5.2, CBHE (2013) reads, "High schools should assess students' basic skills prior to the 10th grade so that students who require remediation can receive instruction before entering public postsecondary education" (p. 3).

In direct contrast to documents using the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse and the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative, Section 5 includes guidelines for remedial education that assume the continued existence of stand-alone courses and directly discuss the faculty teaching those courses. For instance, CBHE (2013) section 5.3a reads,

> At each institution, higher education faculty teaching remedial or developmental courses and those teaching gateway courses by content area should work collaboratively to create a seamless transition from developmental coursework to college-level coursework. Exit outcomes should be aligned with entry-level expectations. Discussion should include topics such as skill attainment and student success behaviors. (p. 3)

Unlike the policy draft and most other state-level legislation from the 2010s, CBHE (2013) does not include references to accelerating coursework. Section 5 only contains two guidelines suggesting changes in course delivery–suggestions that are couched in tentative language using the modal "should" with the verb "explore":

> Institutions **should explore** [emphasis added] alternate delivery methods (a.k.a course redesign) to move students into credit bearing courses as quickly as possible, to save students time and money. These methods should provide appropriate instruction to accommodate the diversity of their developmental and remedial students. (p. 4, 5.7)

In the above instance, students and their "diversity" are highlighted as being the driving factor behind whatever "delivery methods" and "appropriate instruction" are used, not systemic problems with the courses themselves. Students are more directly the focus for the second guideline about course delivery, and in this instance, the modal "may" is used to provide another tentative possibility:

> Students who are significantly underprepared for college-level academic work need self-paced, mastery-based routes into programs of study. Students who are marginally underprepared **may** [emphasis added] benefit from alternate routes (e.g. co-requisite, bridge program, competency-based sequence) into a course of study. (p. 4)

The tentative, suggestion-focused language aligns with how MDHE representatives described their intentions with CBHE (2013) in presentations like the 2015 presentation at Missouri's Committee on Transfer and Articulation (COTA) Conference. I attended to hear presenter Jennifer Plemons (2015) emphasize that CBHE (2013) is not meant to be a "one size fits all 'best practices' list," nor is MDHE attempting to require institutions to "reinvent the wheel" (slide 5). Unlike in documents and among groups working from the assumptions and beliefs that position "remediation" as a core problem in higher education, CBHE (2013) and MDHE relied instead on other discourses, like the student deficit discourses that I will describe more below; and MDHE began publicly positioning the work as "An Opportunity" (Plemmons, 2015, slide 5) and "a team effort" between "MDHE Staff" and "Expert Educators," including the Task Force on College

and Career Readiness, MoDEC, DESE, and another group handling a specific assessment tool (slide 6)--shifts that represent a marked difference from the MDHE (2013) policy draft in discourses, stakeholders, relationships, and tone.

Threshold: Restricting Access

One of the most marked differences between the MDHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* policy draft outline and the final CBHE (2013) version of the policy is the inclusion of the floor/threshold that MoDEC Council members and faculty respondents requested. Called a “threshold” or “Placement Threshold” in the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices* final policy document, section “10.0 Minimum Standards of Academic Competence” is devoted to providing a rationale for the need for the threshold, describing how the threshold will be created and discussing how students will be routed based on how they score in relation to the “Statewide Degree-Seeking Placement Threshold” (10.5, pg. 9).

The inclusion of a threshold into this state policy document represents a marked change in discourse from the two-page policy draft and its informing documents. While the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse found in those informing documents points to the “system” of “remediation” (in other words, a system of math and writing course sequences with multiple classes) as the problem, thereby indirectly implicating faculty, the remediation discourse within the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* points to other sources for the low percentages of students who complete college courses, programs, and degrees--namely, the students themselves and the K-12 system. In the case of the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse, remediation--a system of stand-alone, sequenced courses often described within many HB 1042 texts as “traditional” or “semester-long” courses--is positioned as the problem that needs to be decreased. Faculty, classes, and certain instructional theories and

approaches are implicated as a means to increase student access to and success in college-level courses. At least within the final version of CBHE's (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*, the ultimate stated goal is "student retention and increased educational attainment through degree completion" or to increase the number of student bodies that take and pass college-level classes and obtain college credentials.

In the case of documents that lean into discourses of student deficit as the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* does, students, their skills, and their readiness and college preparation are the problem that needs to be addressed, which implicates their pre-college academic preparation and thus the communities from which they come. Within texts that rely on student deficit discourses, academic standards and the faculty minds and bodies that reinforce and uphold those standards must be preserved. To make the differences in discourses more visible, I include Table 6 that provides a few representative examples of remediation-as-a-system blaming within the Charles A. Dana Center, et al.'s (2012, December) *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education: A Joint Statement*, a document that relies on the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, and the student and K-12 blaming within CBHE (2013), a document that relies more heavily on student deficit discourses.

Table 6

Remediation as the Problem vs. Students and/or K-12 as the Problem Examples

"Remediation"/ "Remedial Education" as the Problem in Charles A. Dana Center, et al. (2012, December)	**Students and/or K-12 as the Problem in CBHE (2013)**	**Discussion**
"**Remedial education**. Required instruction and support for students who are assessed by their institution of choice as being academically underprepared for postsecondary education" (Charles A. Dana Center, et al, 2012, December, n. p.).	"Remedial education typically refers to a student's academic preparedness for postsecondary education, seeking to remedy the lack of skills that students need for college entry" (CBHE, 2013, p. 1).	Notice the difference in initial emphasis on instruction and support for students vs. students' academic preparedness. CBHE (2013) provides a more instruction-centric definition of "remedial education" in its final glossary of terms, but the definition I include here is much more prominent, coming in the first page of the document and positioning students and their skills more prominently.
"There is limited evidence of overall effectiveness in remedial education. The numbers tell a dispiriting story. Half of all undergraduates and 70 percent of community college students take at least one remedial course. Too many of these students never overcome being placed into a remedial course. Only about a quarter of community college students who take a remedial course graduate within eight years. In fact, most students who are referred to remedial education do not even complete the remedial sequence" (Charles A. Dana Center, 2012, p. 3)	"10.1 The needs of students requiring remedial or developmental education is broad, ranging from deficiency in a single subject area to a lack of basic literacy skills. With proper academic support, students needing remediation in a single subject have a good chance of earning a postsecondary credential" (CBHE, 2013, p. 7)	In the Charles A. Dana Center, et al. (2012) example, "remedial education" is described as having limited effectiveness, and the long course sequences are blamed for students dropping out of college. CBHE (2013) suggests that student preparation determines student outcomes, not anything associated with remedial education or long course sequences.

Table 6 Continued **"Remediation"/ "Remedial Education" as the Problem in Charles A. Dana Center, et al. (2012, December)**	**Students and/or K-12 as the Problem in CBHE (2013)**	**Discussion**
"**Remedial education course sequences are a key factor in high student attrition.** The long sequences of remedial education courses create many opportunities for students to drop out. A student may pass one remedial education course but fail to enroll in the next course. Worse yet, many who complete their remedial sequence never enroll in gateway courses. Thus, reforms to courses, while they may result in modest student learning gains, do not address the larger problem of students failing to persist through their remedial sequence or a college gateway course." (Charles A. Dana Center, et al, 2012, December, p. 3)	"Students who are severely underprepared have little, if any, chance of earning a postsecondary credential in a timely manner. Therefore, students wishing to take credit-bearing college-level courses at a Missouri public institution of higher education must demonstrate a minimal level of literacy and academic competence, as determined through appropriate and multiple assessments of learning… Too often, however, open enrollment institutions are expected to enroll students who lack even the most basic of literacy and academic skills. It is unreasonable to expect a student who has limited academic preparation to have success in college even with cutting-edge remedial coursework." (CBHE, 2013, p. 7-8)	Whereas the Charles A. Dana Center, et al. (2012) blames long course sequences for lack of student success (the course withdrawal that impedes college completion, in this case), CBHE (2013) suggests that it is students being "severely underprepared" that is to blame for student success ("earning a postsecondary credential").

As Melzer (2015), Rose (1985), Soliday (2002), and Stanley (2010) document, student deficit discourses have existed as long as higher education has existed within the United States. Similar with student deficit discourses of the past, sorting and exclusion are key facets of the CBHE (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* discourses, starting prior to the

threshold with the document's framing principles. For instance, in principles 1.4-1.6, the unnamed authors of CBHE (2013) attempt to distinguish between the term "developmental" and "remedial" to begin sorting what students and what student issues they are attempting to address.[22] As will be discussed in more detail, the unnamed authors of CBHE (2013) explicitly state in principle 1.7, "HB 1042…is directed primarily at academic preparedness…[and] students' lack of academic preparedness," language that frames its distinctions between groups. Table 7 demonstrates the way the *Principles* document (CBHE, 2013) initially attempts to create distinctions between students, their reasons for being deemed unprepared, and their differing preparedness-related issues and needs: differentiating between "remedial" and "developmental" education, terms that the CBHE (2013) policy notes are often used "interchangeably" but that will be differentiated to clarify the focus of HB 1042.

As CBHE (2013) highlights, HB 1042's focus is on "academic preparedness" and thus "remedial education"—and, by extension, primarily on traditional-aged students exiting the K-12 system or students who did not complete a high school diploma. By having this focus, CBHE (2013) is able to focus entire sections of the *Principles* document, including much of section 5.0 and all of section 6.0, on recommendations for high school preparation. While this focus on exiting high school students may seem innocuous, the students who are more likely to be impacted are Black and Latinx students, students from higher poverty schools, and students from high school contexts that supposedly do not prepare them, as multiple studies report these student groups are disproportionately placed into developmental education (Chen, 2016; Kolodner, Racino, and Quester, 2017; Ganga, Mazzariello, and Edgecombe, 2018). Another

[22] The distinction dissipates later in the document when the words begin to be used interchangeably; for instance, principle 4.2 reads, "The goal of developmental or remedial education is to prepare students for success in postsecondary education" (CBHE, 2013).

group of students likely to be impacted are disabled students who may have received a high school diploma under the modified curriculum allowed via page 17 of Missouri's *Graduation Requirements for Students in Missouri Public Schools* (MoDESE, 2017), as these students often came up in faculty conversations I overheard.

Table 7

Remedial vs. Developmental Education in Principles 1.4-1.6 (CBHE, 2013)

	Remedial education	Developmental education
Definition	"typically refers to a student's academic preparedness for postsecondary education, seeking to remedy the lack of skills that students need for college entry"	"addresses a more expansive set of learning challenges" and then provides a definition from the National Association for Developmental Education that "promotes the cognitive and affective growth of all postsecondary learners, at all levels of the learning continuum…[that] is sensitive and responsive to the individual differences and special needs among learners"
Definition of courses	"duplication of secondary courses in basic academic skills"	"education review courses aimed at strengthening the diverse talents of students, both academic and non-academic…also designed to review previous curricular areas of students who have not been involved in education for some time"
Definition of target student population/course audience(s)	"usually involving recent high school graduates or those students who did not complete their secondary curriculum"	"all postsecondary learners" "students who have not been involved in education for some time"
Possible interpreted target student population/course audience(s)	Anyone who does not fit definitions of "academic preparedness" as indicated by institutional placement measures and by the standards of the predominantly white, middle- to upper-middle class educators who tend to make placement process decisions and teach first-year courses	Adult learners and anyone who does not fit the target audience for remedial courses due to lack of "academic preparedness"

Sorting and exclusion also occur through the use of the language of preparedness within CBHE's (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* to describe its mechanism for sorting and excluding students, using a sliding scale of adjectives to describe different preparation levels and then prescribe remedies in a manner reminiscent of the illness metaphors Melzer (2015), Vidali (2007), and Villanueva (2013) note are often used to describe basic writers. Section 5.8 delineates "significantly underprepared students," who supposedly "*need* [emphasis added] self-paced, mastery-based routes into programs of study," from "marginally underprepared students," who "*may benefit* [emphasis added] from alternate routes (e.g. co-requisite, bridge program, competency-based sequence) into a course of study" (CBHE, 2013). Section 10.1 introduces the language of student exclusion and elimination that is a key element of the student-deficit discourse that emerged in the HB 1042 corpus of texts after faculty and developmental education program administrators became entextualization agents during the HB 1042 policy creation and implementation process: "Students who are severely underprepared have little, if any, chance of earning a postsecondary credential in a timely manner" (p. X), a sentence that is repeated as a justification for a renewed call for a statewide threshold within MDHE's (2017) five-year report about HB 1042 implementation (see MDHE, 2017, p. 5).

Principle 10.2 provides additional description of these "severely underprepared" students and the burden they place upon institutions and, by extension, educators:

> 10.2 Too often, however, open enrollment institutions are expected to enroll students who lack even the most basic of literacy and academic skills. It is unreasonable to expect a student who has limited academic preparation to have success in college with cutting-edge remedial coursework. It is equally unreasonable to expect an institution to close the

> gap in a student's academic preparation through a one- or two-semester remediation sequence. (CBHE, 2013, p. 8)

To determine potential students' level of preparation, principle 10.2 then proceeds to say, "students wishing to take credit-bearing college-level courses…must demonstrate a minimal level of literacy and academic competence, as determined through appropriate and multiple assessments of learning" (CBHE, 2013). This language is repeated in principle 10.2: "The intent of this section is to require students to demonstrate a minimal level of literacy and academic competence before they can enroll" (CBHE, 2013). Later, in principle 10.3, students who do not meet this minimum threshold are explicitly sorted into "non-credit-bearing classes," and principle 10.5 makes further distinctions between

- "Students who score just above the Statewide Degree-Seeking Placement Threshold" who are prescribed "concentrated routes into programs of study with multiple-levels of support" and
- "Students who score below" the threshold who "should be referred to other state-funded educational opportunities (i.e. Adult Education and Literacy) before being retested for admission as a degree-seeking student" (CBHE, 2013).

One of the key recommendations in MDHE's (2017) *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education* is to "[d]evelop and implement threshold policies and practice" using exactly the same language from principle 10.2 (quoted earlier) in the *Principles* document (CBHE, 2013)—despite the 2017 report citing that "remediation decreased from 35.5 percent to 28.2 percent," (p. 3) a decrease that is apparently not enough to eliminate the need to set a threshold for excluding potential students. The continued emphasis on a threshold comes during a time when many institutions in Missouri and across the country are struggling due to declining

enrollments and state-level financial support and increasing costs, among many other trends (Rudgers and Peterson, 2017).

Within the corpus of HB 1042 documents, the exclusionary language about thresholds and “severely underprepared students” stands in marked contrast to the stated “primary objective” of the law: “to improve student retention and increase educational attainment” (CBHE, 2013). When taken together, it is hard to ignore the juxtaposition of improving outcomes for some students—those deemed only “marginally underprepared” and those who are deemed to suffer due to the *Principles of Best Practices’* claim that “remedial education initiatives divert resources from other programs and credit-bearing coursework” (CBHE, 2013)—while providing a more expedient course of development for others and keeping others out altogether.

Student Deficit Discourses: Exploring Faculty Beliefs and Reasons for the Threshold

Based on everything I have found in the HB 1042 corpus, there was no publicly documented pushback against the threshold; the texts suggest faculty and program administrator consensus that the floor/threshold is needed in MoDEC and TCCR meeting minutes, as well as Davenport’s (2016) dissertation that focused on HB 1042 policy implementation responses. I discovered four, often intertwined beliefs and concerns associated with why faculty and program administrators communicated a floor/threshold was needed:

- a belief that there are students who cannot succeed who thus should not be in college, which is sometimes explained as a resource usage issue and/or a student success concern;
- a concern that faculty will be held responsible for student outcomes, which was paired with concerns about students who cannot or seemed less likely to succeed and the associated explanations;

- a concern about maintaining academic standards, which was also paired to one degree or another with one or both of the first two beliefs and concerns; and
- a belief that resources, including instructional focus, could be more efficiently and effectively used with a floor/threshold.

I describe the middle two concerns in a single section because of how often these concerns are intertwined within the documents I analyzed.

Setting Students Up for Failure: Students Who Cannot Succeed

The first evidence for faculty and program administrator support for the floor/threshold in the corpus comes from the February 8, 2013 MoDEC meeting notes that provide over a page of discussion notes about the MDHE (2013) policy draft. Broken down by section, under C. Guidelines, the notes read

> Mandatory placement of students vs. the Open Door Policies. Floors in math, reading, and writing are needed so that those students **with no chance of succeeding [emphasis added]** are routed into other educational resources that better fit their needs, for example, referring some students to ABE, which is a free program these students could use. (Dump, 2013, p. 2)

This first example of pro-floor/threshold language coincides with the student deficit discourses of CBHE (2013) and multiple other documents, and in this case, the student deficit discourse includes faculty and program administrators expressing a belief that there are students who simply cannot succeed in college. Intertwined with this belief are beliefs that students, faculty, institutions, and the tax-paying public are being failed by having their resources (time and money) taken by these students who cannot succeed–and that open door admissions policies

represent moral and ethical dilemmas for faculty, dilemmas with which they do not want to engage.

Notable examples of these intertwined beliefs about students who cannot succeed come from Davenport's (2016) dissertation about the implementation of state developmental education policy, where she analyzes two-year faculty interview responses about HB 1042 and a HB 1042-like bill passed in Connecticut in 2012. One of the clearest findings from her study is that "[f]aculty were more likely to embrace legislated change initiatives if they believed that the changes would positively affect developmental education outcomes in their respective states and their students" (p. Abstract), and in Missouri, one hundred percent of the faculty she interviewed at a suburban institution supported the threshold, believing it would have a positive impact. More specifically, Davenport (2016) writes that faculty

> felt that not having a threshold was **setting up the lowest level students for failure** [emphasis added] when they might be successful in other types of training programs. Tiffany felt that the threshold would be beneficial to student outcomes, saying that "It's much better that we have a threshold and that we don't just have the open door policy for everybody because **we're then setting [the students] up for failure, [emphasis added]** and that's not want we want to do as faculty. We want to help them to succeed." Donna, too, expressed concern regarding the current Missouri open door policy that allows any student to enroll in developmental coursework. From her perspective, allowing them to do so is questionable, both morally and ethically: "There's a question of moral and ethical treatment of such students, having their money taken to enroll in college level classes or college classes for remediation/developmental education **when there's no chance of them succeeding**." [emphasis added] (p. 134)

Faculty Responsibility and Academic Standards

When looking at how faculty and program administrator responses to the floor/threshold were entextualized, I found two more intertwined beliefs about why faculty and program administrators believed the floor/threshold was needed: a belief that performance funding would decrease academic standards and a concern that faculty would be held responsible for poor student outcomes. In the February 19, 2013 MoDEC response to the MDHE (2013) *Best Practices* policy draft outline, the floor/threshold comes up in the feedback that "developmental educators at two-year colleges in the state" provided in response to the MDHE (2013) policy draft (Scherer, 2013, p. 1). Scherer (2013), the MoDEC representative who compiled the feedback, organized the feedback into seven "hot spots" (p. 1) with the floor coming up in hot spot 7, "Performance Funding" (p. 6). This section starts with an explanation about how "[d]evelopmental educators know that performance funding has already been adopted" and continues to provide an explanation for why the respondents believe "[n]o matter the intended benefits–notably, increased completion–the end does not justify the means, because the end itself will be fundamentally and negatively altered, as a result" (p. 6). From there, the argument proceeds to unfold that performance funding will result in decreased academic standards, as evidenced in the following textual sample:

> Once institutional funding—base or base-plus—is put at risk, or incentives are offered up for competition, statewide collaboration inevitably **will be reduced, as will student performance standards.** Under a performance funding model, adjunct faculty, who comprise the greatest proportion of higher education faculty—and who have virtually no job security—will be **particularly vulnerable to pressure to pass students through**. While the end result of such a policy may be more Missouri adults possessing

> postsecondary credentials, **the value of those credentials will erode** when employers realize they don't stand for what they should. **This will further increase degree inflation**, which will increase an already bulging student loan situation, and ultimately depress economic productivity—the exact opposite outcome the completion agenda exists to accomplish. [emphasis added] (Scherer, 2013, p. 6-7).

Immediately after the quote above, which continues for another half a paragraph, the MoDEC response includes the following statement that does not mention performance funding per se, yet it is sandwiched between feedback about "lower standards" and "performance funding" (Scherer, 2013, p. 7):

> One respondent's only comment to the draft was as follows: "The only concern I have about the whole thing) is what will be the criteria for determining the ability to take remedial courses, and what is the minimum score required for entrance into remedial classes? **There has to be some sort of floor if we are going to (be) held accountable for student failure.**" (Scherer, 2013, p. 7)

This concern about accountability came up multiple times within the February 8, 2013 MoDEC meeting, where almost every draft guideline is followed by questions like the following one about accountability and responsibility: "How do we know if we are meeting the goal? How are **we to be held accountable** [emphasis added] for the success of the goal?"

Resource Usage

When analyzing faculty responses in her data set about faculty perceptions of HB 1042 implementation, Davenport (2016) found a resource usage argument for the floor/threshold. Specifically, she (2016) noted what she calls two "perspectives" for why "faculty participants were clearly in favor of it [the threshold]": "a student success perspective and a resource

perspective" (p. 134). Davenport (2016) then summarizes and quotes from one of her faculty participants:

> Janine pointed to the time, effort, and funds being spent on the lowest level students while she also considered alternatives for them, saying, "I'm not trying to be harsh—I'm just being realistic. We could be spending more time guiding and redirecting them to the path that suits their strengths....So I think it's good. I think you need some entrance requirements." (p. 134).

Later, Davenport (2016) pairs the resource usage belief with what she calls "instructional consistency," which she describes as two "socially relevant goals" that "Missouri faculty associated with the threshold" (p. 140). She draws upon the responses of Tiffany and Janine to demonstrate these goals, which are overlaid with assumptions about student deficits. For instance, when discussing why Tiffany believes "the threshold will insure instructional consistency," Tiffany communicates the belief that I describe earlier, the belief that students cannot succeed: "the lowest level students generally **don't have the skill set** [emphasis added] needed to pass the classes" (p. 140). Furthermore, "She said that not having a threshold also 'puts all the faculty into a difficult position when they have to tell the student, 'You can't pass this class; **you don't have the ability** [emphasis added]'" (p. 140).

Within the examples of the accountability, academic standards, and resource usage rationales, it is easy enough to see the influence of what critical policy analysts call neoliberal education discourses and what RCWS scholars like Adler-Kassner (2017), Higgins and Warnke (2020), Mutnick (2015), Sullivan (2017), and others label as the pervasive influence of neoliberalism due to the emphasis on efficiency and concepts like instructional consistency. Higgins and Warnke (2020) specifically describe "neoliberal capitalism's focus on maximizing

efficiency as well as the individual's market value" (p. 1). The emphasis on efficiency and concepts like instructional consistency brings to mind the findings in my pilot study related to CBHE's (2013) reliance on an ethic of expediency where efficiently using state resources is prioritized (Katz, 1992). As I note in my pilot study,

> the ethic of expediency found within the HB 1042 corpus of texts emphasizes that people and components of the educational system (courses, teachers, institutions, etc.) need to move students through educational systems efficiently—and exclude people entirely if they are deemed unable to traverse the system efficiently enough, thus hindering the system's efficiency and functioning for others. (Reid, 2018, p. 11-12)

Taken together, the faculty and program administrator beliefs and rationales for the threshold reinforce Melzer's (2015) finding that faculty are often complicit in circulating and maintaining "remediation" discourses, including what I call student deficit discourses and Melzer (2015) labels a "discourse of deficiency" (p. 90). Tying remediation discourses to reports like *A Nation at Risk* that "manufacture literacy crises," he notes that these discourses are "a replication of national metanarratives about remediation," which include relying on "the language of exclusion" (p. 89) and reducing "students' complex and fluid literacies to a static set of deficiencies in basic skills" (p. 83). As I will discuss more in Chapter 7, faculty and program administrator beliefs and rationales for the threshold merit more attention in future critical discourse studies, especially ones using a disability studies lens to consider the way faculty and program administrators position "ability" and "failure."

When Discourses Coexist and Intermingle: Remediation Discourses within MDHE (2017)

Within the HB 1042 corpus of texts, the next major MDHE document is MDHE (2017), a report where MDHE worked with the Committee on College and Career Readiness to conduct a survey and assess the first five years of HB 1042 implementation. Within MDHE (2017), the discourses of the previous documents—those like MDHE (2013) and Radford, et al. (2012) blaming remediation as the cause for students' and higher education institutions' completion woes and those like CBHE (2013) blaming students and K-12—had intermingled. The goal of HB 1042 shifted from a. "colleges and universities have a responsibility to **fix the broken remedial system** that stops so many from succeeding" [emphasis added] (MDHE, 2013, draft 1, p. 1) to b. "4.1 The primary goal of this policy is **student retention and increased educational attainment** through degree completion" [emphasis added] (CBHE, 2013, final p. X) to c. "While **decreasing the number of students taking remedial courses** [emphasis added] is a goal of this work, the real objective is to get more students to complete credit-bearing gateway courses and ultimately earn a certificate or degree. Studies have shown that **taking even one remedial education course greatly reduces the likelihood a student will earn a certificate or degree**" [emphasis added] (MDHE, 2017, p. 9).

The goal described in MDHE (2017) is far more indicative of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse than a student deficit discourse, given the way the last sentence suggests that "taking even one remedial education course" acts as a threat to students and their postsecondary attainment. On the whole, as Table 8 suggests, I would argue that MDHE (2017) includes more examples of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse than the student deficit discourse of CBHE (2013) with the notable exception of times when MDHE (2017) draws heavily upon exact language from CBHE (2013), especially as it relates to the threshold.

Table 8

Discourses within MDHE (2017)

"Higher Ed's Remediation Problem"	**Student Deficit**
These two practices are unquestionably best practices and essential to the state's efforts to **reduce the need for remedial education** [emphasis added] (p. 3).	**Develop and implement threshold policies and practices.** While many students need only to brush-up in a single subject, **others are severely underprepared and have little chance of earing [sic] a postsecondary degree** in a timely manner. **It is unreasonable to expect a student who has limited academic preparation to have success in college even with cutting-edge remedial coursework.** It is equally unreasonable to expect an institution to close the gap in a student's academic preparation through a one- or two-semester remediation sequence. [emphasis added] (p. 3)
Relying on a single, high-stakes assessment can result in many students being unnecessarily placed in remedial courses (p. 3).	While many students need only to brush-up in a single subject, **there are others who may be severely underprepared and have little chance of earing [sic] a postsecondary degree** in a timely manner. The *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education* **requires students to demonstrate a minimal level of literacy and academic competence** before they can enroll at a public institution of higher education in Missouri as a degree-seeking student. The data indicate that one institution has recently implemented a threshold score for both English and mathematics, while three other institutions are either in the process of implementing a threshold score or **are strongly advising students that are severely deficient** in English and mathematics to partake in programs through their Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs. [emphasis added] (p. 13)

Table 8 Continued **“Higher Ed’s Remediation Problem”**	**Student Deficit**
All institutions should be encouraged to adopt—as soon as is feasible—accelerated remedial education models that will allow many more students to progress into college-level gateway courses as quickly as possible (p. 3).	
Between 2011 and 2015, the state’s overall rate of remediation decreased from 35.5 percent to 28.2 percent (Table 5) (p. 9).	

The call to “[d]evelop and implement threshold policies and practices” is also made in MDHE’s (2017) *Annual Report on the Condition of College and Career Readiness*, an annual report for the Coordinating Board of Higher Education that contains the exact same content as the first 13 pages of MDHE’s (2017) five-year report about HB 1042. The next three years of MDHE (2018; 2019; 2020) *Annual Report on the Condition of College and Career Readiness* catalog the continued decrease in what they call student “participation” rates “in remedial education” (2018, p. 3) or “fewer students require remediation” (2020, p. 3); spend large portions of the text for describing the Missouri Math Pathways Initiative and the Co-Requisite at Scale Initiative; and contain no references to the threshold.

As “higher ed’s remediation problem” and student deficit discourses intertwined and intermingled, it becomes more difficult to identify and tease them apart, especially given how often documents recirculate the exact phrasing from CBHE (2013). The presence of the discourses in close proximity in the same document also makes it more difficult to tease out goals, rationales, and motivations for the work, as well as the implications. Returning to some of the issues I highlight at the end of Chapter 5 about faculty attitudes and beliefs, I add another

layer of complexity to Warnke and Higgins' (2018) suggestions for critical reformers trying to engage a range of faculty in mindful, social justice-oriented reform: what happens when faculty and program administrator discourses intermingle with state policymaker and other discourses in ways that resonate and create the sort of "densely articulated ideologic" that Crowley describes, an entanglement of attitudes and beliefs that can be difficult to untangle when so many stakeholders' interests—and power—are at play (p. 78)? In Chapter 7, I discuss how the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse has morphed into an equity-oriented discourse in the last several years and contrast the Connecticut PA 12-40 response and implementation process with HB 1042 to ponder alternative potential responses available to two-year faculty and program administrators. In Chapter 8, my discussion and implications chapter, I lean into autoethnography and a critical engagement lens to discuss what I have pondered in terms of implications for myself and others.

CHAPTER VII

HIGHER ED'S REMEDIATION EQUITY PROBLEM DISCOURSE AND DIFFERING FACULTY RESPONSES TO THRESHOLDS

"Neoliberal education practices are infused with competing discourses. On the one hand is global competitiveness and entrepreneurial, client-based practices and, on the other, civic engagement, professionalism, and inclusiveness (Arnott & Ozga, 2010; Chiper, 2006; Ryan, 2011)." (Rogers, et al., 2016, p. 1206)

In this chapter, I discuss how the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse has been circulated and taken up in recent years by a number of groups and scholars in a new form: the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse. With this new equity-oriented discourse in mind, I explore potential responses available to two-year faculty and program administrators engaged in policy labor by contrasting the HB 1042 response with the response to Connecticut's PA 12-40, a piece of legislation very similar to HB 1042 that was passed in Connecticut in 2012. Within the discussion of these discourse developments and policy response possibilities, I discuss impacts on the disciplines of basic writing and developmental education, which are being disappeared and/or reoriented as disciplinary identities in the last decade's wave of anti-developmental education legislation.

Moving from Floors/Thresholds to Equity: The Proliferation of the "Higher Ed's Remediation Equity Problem" Discourse

In 2012, Connecticut passed PA 12-40, a similar piece of state legislation as HB 1042 that makes use of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Economist Thomas Bailey, former director of the Community College Research Center (CCRC) and one of the most prolific early circulators of the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative (Goudas, 2012), was

one of three authors who critiqued the placement floor/threshold that was part of PA 12-40. In the critique, "Law Hamstrings College Remedial Programs," Bailey and co-authors Hughes and Jaggars (also of the CCRC at the time) (2012) express appreciation for Connecticut's attempt to overhaul "its system of remedial education," using one of the discourse features of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse. Noting that the legislators drew upon CCRC statistics and research for PA 12-40, they are quick to then write, "Given the paucity of knowledge about what works for remedial students, however, Connecticut's bill is too inflexible" (Bailey, Hughes, and Jaggars, 2012). In particular, they emphasize the inadequacy of the bill's "one semester of instruction…[for preparing] students with very weak skills," stressing that "little is known about how to help the most under-prepared students" (Bailey, Hughes, and Jaggars, 2012).

Believing that the "resistance to the bill" that two-year faculty across Connecticut expressed is due to "concern about these [under-prepared] students," who will be subject to a threshold/placement floor, Bailey, Hughes, and Jaggers (2012) express that "[w]hile faculty are generally passionate about student success, they have legitimate trepidation about their ability to handle the variety of skill levels that will inevitably result from students moving more rapidly into their college-level courses." They suggest that "faculty need to be convinced that they can teach effectively in more heterogeneous classes and be given some help in learning to do so." Sullivan (2015) suggests a more pointed reason for faculty responses to PA 12-40, namely concern about the exclusionary impact of the bill on people who will not be granted the opportunity to be in college. In the case of PA 12-40, which moved faster than Missouri with its floor considerations, the floor was mandated by the state, not added later by faculty and program administrators as it was in Missouri. Connecticut's floor was originally set "at or below the 8th grade level" based on different institutions' placement mechanism, which at the time consisted of

various standardized tests that the law also stipulated needed to be reconsidered in favor of a multiple measures placement system (Sullivan, 2015, p. 45). Students who tested below the floor were to be redirected to "regional remediation centers and adult education programs off campus," a position that has since shifted to allow institutions to "develop regional 'transitional strategies' for such students" with Sullivan's (2015) article focusing on the boot camp program developed at his institution (p. 46)

As I write this chapter ten years after HB 1042 and PA 12-40 were passed, the push for floors/thresholds in each state appears to have receded–for now–in large part due to the emergence of a new "remediation" discourse: the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse. After vociferous opposition to PA 12-40's elimination of stand-alone "remedial" classes, legislators postponed full implementation of PA 12-40 and redrafted it to mitigate the impact on the lowest placing students, allowing for the regional transition strategies that Sullivan (2015) documents and changing the original requirement that students who placed into their lowest level instructional option would not be allowed to repeat the course ("Connecticut Advocates Urge Funding," 2014; "Connecticut College Remedial Courses," 2014). Although some institutions have implemented a floor/threshold of some sort, Missouri has yet to implement any floor/threshold across the state. In fact, by MDHE's 2018 *Annual Report on the Condition of College and Career Readiness*, a floor/threshold is not mentioned, nor is it mentioned in the 2019 or 2020 reports. This change may be related to a few major changes in Missouri in 2016 and 2017. One of MoDEC's most vociferous advocates for the threshold retired. Missouri gained a new Commissioner of Higher Education, Zora Mulligan, a change that many of my colleagues in the Kansas City community college system saw as a win in large part because of Mulligan's role as Executive Director/CEO of the Missouri Community College

Association from 2010-14 (CBHE, n.d., "About the Commissioner"). In addition to dramatically realigning higher education with workforce development, Mulligan has also overseen a new Equity in Missouri Higher Education initiative with funding from the Lumina Foundation, the organization whose president and CEO was the original champion for the 60% college completion agenda that was a keystone of former President Barack Obama's education priorities.

The Equity in Missouri Higher Education initiative has not forgotten HB 1042 or Missouri's desire to "replicate best practices in remedial education" and relies on more pointed, equity-specific versions of the "remediation is a system that threatens students" and "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative discourse features. Within documents like the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development's (MDHEWD)[23] (2019) *2019 Equity in Missouri Higher Education Report* and among circles of people who focus on equity in education, the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse specifically focuses on and front loads data about the disproportionate placement of certain populations into "remedial education" and these populations' lower college success and completion outcomes. More specifically, in equity-informed discourses, "remediation" is positioned specifically as a barrier to low-income, BIPOC, and first-generation students–a barrier that threatens these students by limiting access to college and/or outright excluding them.

Here is a representative example of what I might label the new iteration of the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, the "higher ed's remediation equity problem"[24] discourse:

> Remedial education is seen as a **barrier to progress** [emphasis added] because students must take extra courses before enrolling in courses that count toward earning their

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[23] As a reminder, MDHE was renamed MDHEWD under Commissioner Zora Mulligan.

[24] Although this naming is clunky, I want to keep the name as short as possible while still communicating the gist of the discourse and its connection with the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse.

> degree. Strides have been made on the policy level to help ensure **students are given every opportunity to be placed in a gateway course** [emphasis added], including the use of multiple measures for placement. The participation rate of first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates in remedial education has declined by 35.6 percent since 2008, and there has been a 44 percent decline for all undergraduate students. While this downward trend extends across all populations, there continues to be **disparities in terms of race/ethnicity, age, gender, parental education, and income levels, and the gaps between White students and students of color are increasing in some cases** [emphasis added] (Figure 17). (MDHEWD, 2019, p. 22)

Notice the emphasis on "remedial education" as a "barrier" that keeps students from taking college-level (a.k.a. "gateway") classes paired with the specific identification of the students who continue to be disproportionately placed into "remedial education." In the MDHEWD (2019) report I am analyzing, the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative pattern continues with statistics about the number of Black vs. white, Hispanic, first-generation, and older students enrolling into "remedial education" classes.

In equity-influenced discourses, the differences and gaps–in placement, enrollment, and outcomes–between groups is a key concern, and the explanation for these gaps is more nuanced than in documents from the early 2010s, providing for a wider range of possible people and institutions to blame and policy directions than in documents like CCA (2012). The example below highlights these two differences between the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse and the newer "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse:

> These disparities **may be a result of differences in awareness, preparation, or even**

> **social capital.** [emphasis added to showcase more nuanced explanation] Students for whom both parents completed college may find it easier to navigate the secondary and postsecondary landscape, but regardless of reason, disparities still exist, and policymakers and stakeholders should continue to work to close these gaps.
>
> There is a **continuing gap** [emphasis added to highlight language about differences and gaps between groups] between first-time students who are within 200 percent below the poverty level and their peers from a higher economic background (Figure 20). As with remediation rates overall, rates between the two groups continue to decline significantly. The same is true for students below the poverty line. However, **the gap between these students has persisted over time and has, in fact, slightly widened**. [emphasis added to highlight language about differences and gaps between groups] Students below the poverty threshold are now twice as likely as their peers to be enrolled in remedial courses. **This gap is even wider taken in context of total undergraduate enrollment**. [emphasis added to highlight language about differences and gaps between groups] (MDHEWD, 2019, p. 23)

Within the more specific focus of this new "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse, a floor or threshold would be an unlikely potential policy reform direction. After all, within this more specifically-oriented discourse, a key problem with "remediation" is the way it acts as an exclusionary barrier to keep people from taking college-level classes. In the context of this new discourse, a floor/threshold would only exacerbate the barrier problem, creating the ultimate barrier–exclusion from college–and thus be part of the problem that needs to be changed.

This new equity-associated discourse has been shaped, taken up, and circulated by a variety of people and organizations associated with higher education and educational policy,

including policy advocacy groups like the Public Policy Institute of California (Mejia and Rodriguez, 2017) and the Education Trust-West (Castro, 2021) and individuals who consider the elimination of "remedial" coursework a civil rights issue (Edley, 2017; Jones & Assalone, 2016; Logue, 2021; Mendoza, 2017). As I noted in Chapter 5, Goudas (2020) recognizes the degree to which the "remediation is a barrier or ineffective" narrative now circulates among practitioners as a given, and he also recognizes the growing contingent of scholars who position "remediation" as "a civil rights barrier" (Goudas, 2020). Especially as it has been taken up within the ranks of faculty and program administrators associated with the disciplinary identities of developmental education and basic writing, the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse's circulation and uptake is leading to disciplinary changes and repositionings, the legacy of which will be better understood in time. These signals of change range from organization name changes to calls for the end of "remediation" that echo discourse markers from what had been polemical documents, like CCA's (2012) *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere*.

For instance, although the organization does not specifically say so in its March 2019 name change announcement (NOSS, 2019), the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse has circulated broadly enough that I have to wonder if this discourse is a major reason the National Association of Developmental Education (NADE) changed its name to the National Organization for Student Success (NOSS). Two years after the name change, NOSS's Equity, Access, and Inclusion Network published a white paper titled "Clarifying Terms and Reestablishing Ourselves within Justice: A Response to Critiques of Developmental Education as Anti-Equity" (Suh, et al., 2021, July). In this white paper that "summarizes and responds to recent claims that developmental education is an anti-equity, deficit-oriented model," Suh, et al.

(2021) write that “while NOSS no longer identifies as ‘developmental education’ in name, our student success practices are rooted in the research and scholarship of the field of developmental education, and in using the term ‘developmental education,’ we reference these aspects of developmental education as a particular field of study” (p. 3). Arguing that developmental education detractors have conflated equity and equality, Suh, et al. (2021, July) provide NOSS members with responses to what they call “common objections” to developmental education, which they position as more holistic, access-, inclusion-, and equity-oriented than widely-circulated (mis)conceptions of “remediation” and stand-alone “remedial education” courses:

1. “Developmental education holds students back from college-level coursework, costing them additional money and putting them behind their peers” (p. 4).
2. “Developmental courses cause a decline in academic standards” (p. 4).
3. “Being in remedial courses makes students feel alienated from their peers” (p. 5).
4. “Developmental education is a deficit-based model: it focuses on ‘fixing’ students who ‘aren’t college-ready’” (p. 5).

Within RWCS, well-recognized basic writing scholars and practitioners such as Susan Naomi Bernstein have also taken up the “higher ed’s remediation equity problem” discourse. In a 2022 *TETYC* article, Bernstein, a member of the CCCC’s Council on Basic Writing’s Executive Board, advocates for the elimination of basic writing (labeled “BW”), associating “remediation” with neoliberalism, white supremacy, and racism using phrasing I have bolded for emphasis in the quote below:

> BW, as a point of access, should have been the most important course in the first-year curriculum, a course that systemically would center students’ experiences and cocreate curricula with instructors (James et al.). Instead, BW, under

all its various labels and iterations, serves as **a barrier to access**. Fashioned under generations of neoliberalism, that **barrier** includes but is not limited to standardized placement through test scores and a labyrinthian appeals process, as well as offering no or partial credit for graduation and transfer, while **draining students' time and financial aid resources.** **Weaponized** as remediation and based on **deficit** models, BW too often served as an **instrument of white supremacy and a reinforcement of the segregation of Black and Brown students** (Inoue; Malloy; Saidy; Squire et.al)...After BW and the murder of George Floyd and too many others, and in the midst of a global pandemic, and climate change, I envision higher education as permanently shedding the **segregationist label of remediation** and **remediation's white savior fantasies** (Saad)...we can repudiate **what never served us** and move toward positive social transformation. **After BW**, we must imagine and enact another possible world. (p. 267)

Within the realm of writing program administration-associated policy work, RCWS scholar Hern and her California Acceleration Project have relied on the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse to advocate for new legislation to help reinforce existing legislation that requires "remediation" reform (Hern, 2022). California's 2017 legislation called AB 750 "required the state's community colleges to recognize high school coursework instead of relying on inaccurate and inequitable placement tests. It required that students be placed into English and math classes where they have the greatest chance to make progress toward a college degree" (2022, May). Under the auspices of the California Acceleration Project (CAP), Hern, Snell, and Henson (2020) studied implementation of AB 750 and report the following:

Overall, California community colleges have maintained large remedial course offerings despite clear evidence that these courses do not meet the legal standard of

> maximizing completion, and this is driving **ongoing inequities** [my emphasis] in access and completion for Black and Latinx students. The report closes with recommendations for how community college students, leaders, system officials, and legislators can achieve AB 705's full promise for maximizing student completion and **increasing racial equity** **[**my emphasis]. First and foremost, we recommend setting a deadline of fall 2022 for ensuring that all students begin in transfer-level courses, with corequisite support for those who need it. (p. 3)

Leveraging this report and others, CAP, the California Community Colleges' Chancellor's Office, and a number of other organizations have pushed for passage of AB 1705, which seeks to enforce a stricter interpretation of the placement policies of AB 705 (Hern, 2022). Although CAP appears to be leading the charge for passage of AB 1705 and has drawn organizations like CCA into its ranks of supporters, it is noteworthy that a number of student advocacy groups, including the Student Senate for California Community Colleges, are also part of the push, a marked difference from the NGO-heavy policy advocates primarily responsible for many early 2010s pieces of "remedial" reform legislation like HB 1042 and PA 12-40 (Irwin, 2022). By the time this dissertation is completed, AB 1705 will likely have been passed (it has already passed California's House with a 76-0 vote in favor of passage and is set to be heard in committee on August 1, 2022 according to AB-1705, 2022). If implemented as CAP and others intend, it may end the offering of stand-alone basic writing and developmental education courses in California.

Contrasting HB 1042 and PA 12-40 Threshold Responses

With the faculty response to PA 12-40 and the now largely-circulated "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse in mind, it seems important to state what might seem obvious: the floor/threshold did not have to be an outcome of the HB 1042 policy

entextualization process. Although I suggest multiple potential reasons for faculty and program administrator responses to HB 1042 and the policy draft outline of MDHE (2013), I have considered many countering ideas and reasons for why faculty and program administrators may have been inclined to shift the policy discourses away from ones where they were implicated and towards student deficit and K-12-blaming discourses. For instance, even in the face of faculty and program administrators concerns about being held accountable for students and their outcomes, accountability calls and performance funding initiatives were not new in Missouri when HB 1042 passed in 2012. As Dougherty, et al (2010, October) document, Missouri was "one of the first states to develop performance funding for higher education" in 1993 and thus had a longer history than most states with this type of accountability-driven funding.

The Floor/Threshold's Placement Problem

Throughout the four years I analyzed the HB 1042 corpus and cycled through my affective responses to what I was discovering, I asked myself repeatedly: why did MoDEC insist upon a floor/threshold, given there was no fair, valid placement assessment method or measure to implement a floor/threshold and very little research about how to effectively support a range of student needs at the time (Bailey, et al., 2012; Scott-Clayton, 2012; Belfield and Crosta, 2012)? Despite this lack of research and the lack of fair placement measures with predictive validity for discerning who should and should not be in college, faculty and program administrators publicly used their belief that some students have "no chance of succeeding" in college to insist on a floor/threshold. When the Task Force on College and Career Readiness (TCCR) began working on trying to determine potential threshold scores, their publicly accessible meeting notes from November 21, 2014 through July 31, 2015 catalog on-going efforts to parse through different institutions' data, policies, and practices to determine what, if

any, threshold scores could be set. These efforts were spurred by the monthly attention that MoDEC representatives brought to the need to create and enforce a threshold: the threshold is brought up at almost every TCCR meeting from 2014-2015 where the TCCR's MoDEC representative brought it up repeatedly, leaning into MoDEC and faculty to justify urgency for threshold. For example, in TCCR's January 28, 2014 meeting, one of MoDEC's representatives who was also a TCCR member "asked whether the data subgroup was familiar with a floor score, section 10…" then "mentioned that this was a really important section and issue for the folks at the Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (MoDEC)" (p. 4). After that, the meeting notes read as follows: "It is **unfair** to hold institutions accountable for those **students who have no chance of succeeding in remedial courses**. Their **deficiency** needs to be targeted in a different way. It is **unfair** to take their money and enroll them in courses that **they are not going to be successful in**" (p. 4) [emphasis added].

Given the lengthy exchanges and time put into attempting to parse data and decisions about the threshold, this "students who are unable to succeed" belief appears to have been based solely on faculty and program administrator perceptions of students. These perceptions and associated belief not only fed into the inclusion of the threshold and the student deficit discourses in CBHE (2013), but they drove many of the conversations and much of the work of the TCCR as it undertook high-level coordination for the implementation of HB 1042 and the "best practices" outlined in CBHE (2013). Below is a representative example of the types of threshold conversations that TCCR institutional researcher representatives were having:

> **4. New Business** *a. Threshold Score Data* Kristy guided the TCCR and data group members into a discussion regarding some of MCCKC's data. She noted that males are more represented in the data regarding lower assessment scores, as well as the nonwhite

student group. However, the majority of students that are assessed and then placed into developmental education are those in the 18-24 age group, not those over age 25. Kelli Burns' data from SLCC, as well as John Clayton's data from Ozarks Tech, were similar in nature to Kristy's data. It was discussed that **just the idea of looking at those placed into developmental education is not going to get to the question at hand**. [emphasis added] If we are looking at progress and success in developmental education, then we need to have an understanding of how many students were able to complete their developmental education sequence, and in what time frame, etc. Then we need to use those data to then go backwards and really flush out a threshold score, whatever score that might be. **It will then be important to look at those data and to note the demographics affected in order to determine the best alternative services that would be needed. The narrative needs to be centered around what other services are we able to provide for those students who are not successful in developmental education.** [emphasis added] Kelli shared a handout with the group that provided some analysis of SLCC's remediation data. From those data, she was able to determine the number of remedial education credits and college-level credits a certain amount of students were able to earn; however, it will be important to tease apart how many students out of a certain amount earned credits, not how many credits they earned collectively. Kelli said that she would be able to go back in and provide that number in the future. It will also be important to know where those credits fall? **What we need to know and understand is at what point do we see there is lack of progress in developmental education?** [emphasis added] Once we identify that point for the

> majority of students placed into remedial education, we will be able to better identify a floor score. (TCCR, 25 April 2014, p. 4)

To be clear, the above TCCR conversations happened after faculty and program administrators–through membership on MoDEC or feedback provided to/through MoDEC–called for a floor/threshold to be added to the final policy associated with HB 1042, the document that I reference as CBHE (2013) in this dissertation. As the example above indicates, institutional researchers like Kristy (with whom I worked), John, and Kelli had no framework for considering how to set what amounts to an admissions standard for two-year colleges and were talking their way through the process of trying to determine what questions to ask, what data to consider, and what interventions might be possible, should a threshold be implemented. Even with John's institution having a threshold in place, the TCCR knew that each institution had different student populations, different ways they were handling placement into classes, and different needs and resources to consider. Additionally, there was no easy way to get around the fact that implementing a threshold could result in enrollment declines at institutions, which would impact funding. Plus, while there was not major pushback against the threshold during the CBHE (2013) policy writing process, the one major piece of negative feedback that the TCCR received about the threshold was about the threshold scores that the TCCR attempted to include into a draft of what became CBHE (2013):

> after some negative feedback, those scores were deleted from the section. The task force ended up pulling out those numbers and instead established the principle without the numbers. Much of the opposition for this section came from the Community Colleges, as it is often in direct conflict with their missions. (TCCR, January 28, 2014, p. 4)

In other words, the TCCR, which included Rusty Monhollan and other MDHE representatives, as well as MoDEC representatives and other faculty across the state, chose to keep the threshold in the final policy document and to devote an entire section of a policy about "best practices" in "remedial education" despite having no effective, fair, equitable way to determine a threshold.

Layers of Power and Possible Explanations

In addition to pondering the lack of a fair placement assessment practices or measure(s) for a floor/threshold, I also asked myself this version of the "why the floor/threshold question": why did MoDEC insist upon a floor/threshold, especially at the same time as Connecticut English faculty pushed back against and helped dismantle the PA 12-40 floor (Sullivan, 2015)? Why did my colleagues choose exclusion, and was that choice a given in that context? These questions are not just individual existential questions on the part of someone concerned about how I am implicated in the HB 1042 policy response and implementation process; these are questions that RCWS needs to contend with. Scholars like Rose (2016) have long identified the different, often competing ideological impulses within RCWS related to college access. When compared with most other academic disciplines and professional identities, the stakes are higher in RCWS, as our placement assessments, courses, and programs have long acted as gatekeepers to college. Even if we eschew literacy narratives and myths with their often trumped up correlations between education and economic advancement (Goggin, 2008; Graff ,1986, 2010, 2013; Stuckey, 1991; Trimbur, 1991), we–and by "we," I mean RCWS scholars and practitioners like myself–are positioned as college gatekeepers whether we want to be or not. Even for individuals who are part of the majority of faculty who are underpaid, typically uninsured part-time faculty, our courses are often prerequisites for college and program admission and other classes. This gatekeeping function affords individuals like myself, faculty and program

administrators undertaking writing program administration labor in two-year settings, power over the lives of everyone who considers going to a two-year college for any reason, be it to take a refresher course, complete classes for their personal or professional development, take classes for less money before transferring to another institution, or complete a degree.

After spending four years tracing remediation discourses from the macro levels of NGOs and federal higher education policy to more NGOS and state policymakers to faculty while considering other spider webbed influences from different disciplines and organizations, as well as my individual, micro-level experience, I do not want to portray an overly simplistic picture of the power dynamics involved in the discourses I traced. I have found it difficult to parse the layers of power dynamics and have found myself turning in multiple directions in my attempts to process what I was finding while having normal human responses, including a feeling of shame for being associated with various facets of the HB 1042 implementation process; a desire to point fingers, find easy culprits, give them the sort of advice CCA (2012) and others have circulated; and a range of feelings associated with my colleagues and disciplines and myself for being one of the gatekeepers. What I come back to again and again is this: especially when policy work is rushed in the manner the HB 1042 response process was, many of the tensions of this work are difficult to avoid, alter, reframe, or reform without major ideological changes and overhauls in higher education, especially as it relates to funding because it is difficult to escape the many ways faculty and students are placed into an economic tug-of-war. For instance, to revisit the performance funding changes that were implemented around when HB 1042 passed, the inclusion of two key performance indicators associated with developmental education completion rates placed faculty and students in direct resource competition.

I have no definitive answers for my questions about the floor/threshold, but I speculated about many issues that are important for two-year faculty and program administrators engaging in this type of policy work to consider. For instance, I found myself asking, what is the impact of different disciplinary backgrounds (writing studies vs. rhetoric vs. English studies vs. the spectrum of areas encompassed by developmental education) on faculty responses to and engagement with policy work?

I also found myself asking about how faculty and program administrator career length and political might factor into responses. Davenport's (2016) dissertation about faculty responses to state developmental education policies focused on Missouri and Connecticut, and one of the differences I noted when looking at her overview of her participants' backgrounds was their length of time in the field. The Missouri faculty averaged much longer careers compared with the Connecticut faculty who tended to be earlier in their careers (Davenport, 2016). This difference caused me to wonder: What is the impact of career timing and length on faculty responses, given individuals who are later in their careers are likely to be more invested in their professional identities, among other things? I also found myself wondering about how political sensibilities might inform faculty ideological leanings and policy responses, given that Connecticut tends to be a more moderate- to left-leaning state when compared with the rightward tilt of Missouri overall in recent years and the conservative tendencies of Missouri's rural areas from where many of the 2012-2017 MoDEC representatives emanated.

In the context of considering professional identities and political sensibilities, I also gave considerable time to thinking about the way disability discourses might be at play within faculty and program administrator responses, especially given the repeated emphasis on "ability" and "failure" as it relates to students deemed to have "no chance of…succeeding" within the HB

1042 corpus (Davenport, 2016, p. 134, 140; Dump, 2013, p. 2; Scherer, February 19, 2013, p. 7; TCCR, January 28, 2014, p. 4). One of MoDEC's representatives and I had spirited conversations about what students should have access to our classes, and this person and another MoDEC colleague had many public conversations about limiting college access for students they suspected of having significant cognitive disabilities. As I noted in my pilot study, faculty also expressed concerns about students who graduated from high school with amended requirements due to disabilities. These conversations echoed in my head as I looked at the beliefs and rationales faculty and program administrators provided for the threshold. Vidali (2007) points to basic writing's early cognitivist influences as some of the sources of student deficit discourses before drawing parallels between basic writing and disability studies that merit more attention. As Hubrig (2022) makes clear in a recent special issue of *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* (*TETYC*) about disability,

> Much has been written in *TETYC* about two-year colleges and the importance of open-access institutions, which are theoretically open to anyone. But within these conversations about who has access in an 'open-access' institution, disability is frequently sidelined in two-year college English—or worse, omitted entirely. (p. 193)

Echoing Hubrig's (2022) call for more attention to disability within two-year contexts, I acknowledge that another limitation of this dissertation is the lack of parsing of potential disability discourses, discourses that represent an important future research direction for two-year teacher-scholar-activists.

Again, the best I can do is speculate about the differences in policy responses between Missouri and Connecticut, recognizing that the issues I note are some of many that merit further study. In the next and final chapter of this dissertation, I review what I discovered while

conducting the critical discourse study of the HB 1042 corpus and add research questions to better reflect the scope of what I learned. Then, following on my reflections at the end of Chapters 5 and 6, I use an autoethnographic perspective to discuss my move from a critical reform to a critical engagement lens. I finish by discussing useful framework and principles that I discovered for applying a critical engagement lens to policy work in two-year contexts.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT

In this chapter, I rely on autoethnographic perspective and what I call a critical engagement lens to discuss a few of the more salient implications for myself and my orientation towards two-year faculty and program administrator policy engagement. To address the original visibility goal of this dissertation and provide context for the rest of the chapter, I begin by describing aspects of my positionality in relation to HB 1042. As I worked through the dissertation's critical discourse study, my original desire to bring visibility to the messiness of two-year writing program administration labor expanded to wanting to explore how faculty and program administrators might approach policy-making work and to reconsider whether a critical reform lens was the best fit for policy-related contexts. As I will discuss in more detail, I moved from a critical reform to a critical engagement lens to allow myself a more nuanced, discursive understanding of policy creation, response, and implementation contexts and processes.

Relying on a critical engagement lens requires new research questions, beginning with this overarching question: knowing the messiness and complexities of policy-related labor, how can two-year faculty and program administrators involved in policy labor become critically engaged with policy processes in ways that are realistic and effective? Moving from that overarching line of inquiry, here is an updated set of research questions that merges my original research questions with topics I studied that I did not originally anticipate:

- What individual and institutional responses emerge on the part of two-year faculty and two-year institutions during state legislative response and implementation processes?
    - What contextual factors might influence these responses?

    - **New question:** How did two-year faculty and program administrator responses influence the policy process?
- How do and what discourses emerge and shift throughout various cycles of entextualization and recontextualization associated with the HB 1042 corpus of texts over a five-year time frame?
- What are the implications of these responses and discourses for two-year writing program administration labor in an era where all layers and levels of work are ever-more heavily shaped by policy-making? **New questions:**
    - What are the constraints, limitations, and obstacles keeping two-year faculty and program administrators from participating in policy matters?
    - Can and how can two-year college faculty and program administrators participate in policy processes in critically engaged, informed, effective ways?
    - How can they be prepared to engage in this labor? How could they be more effective in advocating between and amongst a variety of stakeholders in policy processes?

Chapters 3 through 7 attempt to address the first two sets of questions. Chapter 3 addresses national contextual factors related to HB 1042 and the discourses circulating within the HB 1042 corpus of texts, including the early Obama-era federal policies and documents that likely informed policies like HB 1042, as well as the expansive number of state-level higher education policies and legislative initiatives since the end of open admissions at CUNY. I also provide an overview of the impact of these policies and initiatives on basic writing programs in such aspects as placing students, program forms, curricular delivery models, and pedagogies. Chapter 4 provides state-level contextual information related to HB 1042, including an overview

of relevant history and politics, Missouri's higher education legislative and policy coordination organizations and processes, the professional groups that did–and did not–play significant roles in the HB 1042 implementation process, and a timeline of major events associated with the first five years of HB 1042 implementation.

Having expanded my discourse analysis from five years to 10 years after HB 1042 passed, I use Chapters 5, 6, and 7 to document some of the discourses and discourse shifts within the HB 1042 corpus. In chapter 5, I describe three key features of a discourse I call "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse, focusing on the features that I surmise provoked affective responses on the part of the two-year faculty and program administrators who participated in the early HB 1042 policy-making and implementation process. This discourse includes describing "remediation" as a problematic system that threatens students while using pejorative metaphors and adjectives to describe it and–in longer documents–relying on what Goudas (2017, 2020, 2021) describes as a "remediation is the barrier or ineffective" narrative. Recognizing the limitations of the analysis, given the different genres I analyzed, I trace textual sources of this discourse as it shows up in MDHE (2013) in an attempt to connect what was happening in Missouri with larger national "remediation" discourse trends and influencing people and organizations.

In Chapter 6, I describe how the remediation discourses changed from the MDHE (2013) policy draft throughout the entextualization process of the finalized policy, the Coordinating Board of Higher Education (CBHE) (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education.*[25] As part of my discussion of the discourse shifts, I document the near disappearance

[25] As a reminder, for reasons unknown to me, the policy document's initial, two-page draft is attributed to MDHE, while the final policy is attributed to CBHE. I suspect this change represents the fact that MDHE led the document construction and revision process, which included different stakeholders and entextualization agents throughout the drafting process, while CBHE takes authorship and ownership rights after policies are officially adopted.

and remnants of the three features of the “higher ed’s remediation problem” discourse and describe the shift to a student deficit discourse in the finalized policy, paying particular attention to the inclusion of what is known as a placement floor or threshold. As part of the process of faculty and program administrators shifting the discourses away from ones that blame “remediation” for higher education’s supposed student success and completion problem back to students they also enshrined practices like thresholds as state-approved “best practices” and became arms of the state responsible for sorting, stigmatizing, and excluding potential students as a means of creating a more efficient educational system that would preserve academic standards and faculty minds and bodies. At the end of this chapter, I describe how, by 2017, when MDHE worked with the Committee on College and Career Readiness to conduct a survey and write a report about the first five years of HB 1042 implementation, the discourses of the previous documents--those blaming remediation for students’ and higher education institutions’ completion woes and those blaming students and K-12--had intermingled.

As part of my analysis of the student deficit discourse of CBHE (2013) in Chapter 6, I discuss four intertwined beliefs and concerns associated with why faculty and program administrators communicated a floor/threshold was needed:

- a belief that there are students who cannot succeed who thus should not be in college, which is sometimes explained as a resource usage issue and/or a student success concern;
- a concern that faculty will be held responsible for student outcomes, which was paired with concerns about students who cannot or seemed less likely to succeed and the associated explanations;
- a concern about maintaining academic standards, which was also paired to one degree or another with one or both of the first two beliefs and concerns; and

- a belief that resources, including instructional focus, could be more efficiently and effectively used with a floor/threshold.

Then, in Chapter 7, I discuss how the "higher ed's remediation problem" discourse has been circulated and taken up in recent years by a number of groups and scholars in a new form: the "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourse. I explore potential responses available to two-year faculty and program administrators engaged in policy labor by contrasting the HB 1042 response with the response to Connecticut's PA 12-40, a piece of legislation very similar to HB 1042 that was passed in Connecticut in 2012.

In this final chapter, I attempt to address the last set of research questions about implications and critical engagement in policy processes, starting with an exploration of my positionality in relation to HB 1042 and some of the constraints, limitations, and obstacles that impact two-year faculty and program administrator policy engagement participation.

HB 1042 and the Changing Orientations of My Positionality

As I traced "remediation" discourses across the HB 1042 corpus and higher education documents throughout the 2010s and early 2020s, I traced–on a deeper level–the trajectory of my understanding as a participant observer of and within two-year policy processes. The critical discourse study of chapters 3 through 7 enabled me to move between and articulate the discourses and discourse changes swirling at the macro/meso through micro layers of my professional spaces; my positionality as a Sullivanesque (2015) two-year teacher-scholar-activist is what enabled me to conduct and interpret the analysis as I did. In terms of my positionality, I brought my experiences as a first-generation, low-income, Missouri-raised college student; I brought my experiences tutoring and teaching two-year college students in three states as a part- and full-time faculty member and program administrator, including being a writing center

administrator; and I brought my experiences as one of the first faculty members to talk with then-Assistant Commissioner of MDHE, Rusty Monhollan, about the HB 1042 implementation process and to help shepherd the formalization of MoDEC.

I also brought my experience of changing roles during the first few years of the HB 1042 implementation process, a changing positionality that altered my relationship with HB 1042 from one of close proximity and influence to relatively little influence and then back again. While working on this dissertation and trying to remember my experiences engaging with the HB 1042 response and implementation process–both as a Midwest Regional Association for Developmental Education (MRADE) board member when HB 1042 passed in 2012 and in my various two-year college roles–I recalled having deep reservations about the threshold, which had become part of state policy in CBHE (2013) after I was no longer participating in the HB 1042 response process through MRADE or MoDEC but before I took a Developmental Education Programs Director position at a small rural Missouri community college in August of 2014. One day, while looking for HB 1042-related documents for this dissertation, I came across a journal entry I wrote in late September or early October 2014 while I was in that director position where my supervisor wanted me to implement what she called a "soft" threshold: students would not be turned away from taking classes, but she wanted to try encouraging students to consider other options. Re-reading the journal entry reminded me of how early I began to have reservations about what I might be called to do in my new role, months before the threshold became a focus:

> Every day, they [my students] remind me: I grew up just like them. I was them. First-generation college student on a Pell Grant. Graduate of a small rural school where I attended from K-12 and graduated with a class of 31 students. Child of confused parents

who gave advice without context or understanding. First-year student who was bored with my first-semester classes. Student who worked multiple jobs to survive.

"I love shoes!" one student in the back of my developmental writing class exclaimed one day as I prepared for class. "It's a problem. Maybe I wouldn't have to work at two jobs if I didn't love shoes so much."

"How many pairs do you have?" I asked absentmindedly as I squinted at the computer screen, scanning for the day's PowerPoint and activities.

"Let me see…14, 15, 16 pairs or so. I know that sounds like a lot, but I need to get rid of some of them. My dad got this idea in his head to buy me shoes, and I don't know where he got them—Wal-Mart or something—but there's no way I'm wearing them. I mean," she paused, and I glanced up over the computer monitor to scan the room.

"Some of us only have two pairs of shoes," a student across the room started to say, "and they came from…" before being interrupted by the first student, quickly covering: "I mean, there's nothing wrong with Wal-Mart." A conversation ensued where several students discussed how clothing at Wal-Mart has become trendy.

Walking down the hallway after class, I looked up to see the battered black boots on the student who said she only had two pairs of shoes. This was my second month teaching at my new college, a rural community college in the Midwest where 80% of the students have Pell Grants and more than 60% are testing into developmental classes. As I come to know my students better and hear more and more stories that remind me of my own and those with whom I grew up, I wonder: what if I had stayed near my family to go to a community college instead of going four hours away to a state university? What if I had realized earlier in my undergraduate years that I was poor in comparison to most of

my classmates? What if I had not developed the support systems that I did among college faculty and staff, the people who gave me advice that made more sense within the context of my interests and goals than my family's advice?

Drawing Lines

Who makes the cut? Who stays and who gets pushed farther down the pipeline and away—literally, down the hill at my college?

In my new job as Director of Developmental Education Programs, I have been tasked with constructing my institution's response to Missouri House Bill 1042, a piece of legislation that targets developmental education across the state. In addition to

- House Bill 1042
- CCRC research about placement test problems
- Difficulty of using multiple means of placement
- Juliet's book
- CC Dean's response
- Disability studies and rights
- Questionable data
- Social justice: 80% of my students are on Pell Grants, and though I do not have an accurate count of how many identify as first-generation college students, I would wager that a majority of them are. Most are served by rural schools with the school that is situated within the same town as my college having had one of the lowest ratings for school performance in the state this year. In an analysis of college-going habits among urban and rural populations, the National Student

> Clearinghouse Research Center found that students from rural areas are less likely to attend college than their peers in urban areas with students at lower income rural schools being "less likely to attend college than their peers at high-income rural schools" and "less likely to continue on to their second year of college."

Written two months after starting my job in 2014, this journal entry affirmed that I knew the higher ed landscape better than I remembered. My job not only required me to coordinate that institution's response to HB 1042, but it required me to act as that institution's MoDEC representative, which meant once again being in the space to inform policy within an organization that had gone from being a poorly-attended grassroots group to the state-sanctioned voice for faculty and program administrators. I knew that MDHE was going to begin pushing institutions to implement thresholds. I also knew that I did not share my MoDEC colleagues' or supervisor's belief in the necessity of the threshold: on the contrary, I saw it as deeply problematic and antithetical to my personal commitment to social justice because I understood the threshold in the context of the many issues and theoretical lenses listed in my journal entry.

Here is some of what concerned me then and now, given that CBHE (2013) with its section 10 about the threshold stands as the official policy regarding "remedial education" in Missouri: even if there were some way to disentangle discourses about "remediation" and ideological issues about college access, "readiness," and literacy from the material activities required to determine if a student had "no chance of succeeding" or was being "set up for failure" according to threshold-supporting faculty, institutions would need mechanisms for determining who would not be able to succeed, who would be likely to fail. What higher education institutions had and have, though, are value-laden, ideologically-shaped person-sorting mechanisms known as placement tests or placement assessments. In 2014, Missouri's institutions

were mostly using the now defunct and discredited COMPASS test for placement (see Scott-Clayton, 2012, and Belfield and Crosta, 2012, for two frequently-cited studies that helped discredit COMPASS). More specifically, ACT phased out COMPASS by the end of 2016 after ACT conducted "[a] thorough analysis of customer feedback, empirical evidence and postsecondary trends [that] led us to conclude that ACT Compass is not contributing as effectively to student placement and success as it had in the past" (Fain, 2015). I was and continue to be puzzled: how could my colleagues across the state who read at least some of the same research that I read (like Scott-Clayton, 2012, and Belfield and Crosta, 2012, both Community College Research Center pieces) believe that implementing a threshold would be a show of kindness to people they deemed to have "no chance of succeeding" based on low placement test scores that lacked predictive validity for assessing who might be at risk for failing?

The implications were especially fraught in the context of what was happening in Missouri when I started this position in August of 2014. My second week on the job, Michael Brown was killed just an hour's drive away, and soon after, I was attending Black Lives Matter protests. That summer, Poe, et al. (2014) highlighted the need to better understand the impacts of writing assessment practices like placement tests/assessments on people of color, given

> we know that students of color are more likely to experience the negative effects of assessment because of rigid institutional requirements (Sternglass; Soliday). We also know that different writing assessment practices may yield quite different results that, in turn, yield different consequences (Kelly-Riley; Inoue). And when it comes to placement testing, we know that enrollment in noncredit, basic writing courses may either support or impede student writers. On one hand, basic writing may be an important, supportive

> environment for first-year students (Horner), as a number of advances have been made in the last two decades to help struggling writers in ways that situate basic writing students positively within institutional structures (Glau). On the other hand, remedial identity remains defined, in large part, by a model of writing assessment mired in a narrow vision of writing (Condon), including highly constrained lexico-grammatical interpretations of use (Shapiro)—that is, decontextualized drills in grammar and usage. Moreover, students assigned to remedial courses may resist being required to take additional courses, may not enroll in those courses, may complete them at lower rates, and may graduate at much lower rates than their peers (Complete College; Scott-Clayton). (p. 589)

Yet, with all of these issues and scholarship in mind, by January of 2015 I was tasked with constructing and implementing a "soft" threshold. In February of 2015, Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) representative Jennifer Plemons presented at Missouri's Conference on Transfer and Articulation (COTA) that a threshold needed to be implemented by the fall semester of 2016. My notes from the session read that "MDHE will set that [the threshold], and there will be discussion about differentiating students who place below the threshold in one area versus multiple areas; there has been talk about a threshold range of scores, and students below the range will need to be funneled to ABE programs." No matter what my understanding of research and scholarship was and regardless of my beliefs, instructional experiences, and theoretical influences, I was charged to work with the developmental education committee that I chaired to develop and implement a threshold.

To add another layer of complexity to the situation, the work environment became untenable enough due to one of the more pervasive facets of engaging in writing program administration work, workplace bullying (Elder et al., 2019), that my job felt threatened, and my

mental health suffered, so I started searching for jobs and moved back across the state for a lower-level position several months later. While I remained in the director role, though, I had to draw the lines, as I wrote in my journal, and decide who would be in college and who would be pushed down the hill, a reference to the physical location of the institution's adult education and literacy (AEL) program that is funded through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) (instead of MDHE) and was not set up for college-related support or instruction at the time. No resistance strategies were working, and even if I quit in protest, it was clear the threshold work would go on. Not for the first time, I wished I had a heuristic or some kind of guide or preparation for how to engage in this kind of program administration labor: what would be a good way to approach things? What would be best for students and faculty?

Moving from Critical Reform to Critical Engagement

When I proposed my dissertation in 2018, I leaned into Warnke and Higgins' (2018, 2020) concept of critical reform for my positionality and conceptual framework because it resonated with my experience at the community college where I worked at the time. In Warnke and Higgins's (2018) article setting out their critical reform positionality, they begin with a familiar story: being at a college in-service where administrators tap into NGO-supported research to discuss ways to address "achievement gaps for our students of color," and faculty steer the discussion towards concerns about the faculty contract. Warnke and Higgins (2018) write, "Rather than understanding the labor dispute and the racial achievement gap as separate conversations, we viewed them as two issues related to the overall ethic of just practices for all stakeholders at the college" (p. 362). Warnke and Higgins (2018) go on to summarize how this situation illustrates a larger tension within two-year colleges, that of "corporate-minded forces seeking to address demonstrable gaps in equitable student success" and "instructional solidarity

that, in its righteousness, obscures a more nuanced connection between labor and student equity" (p. 363). From there,

> A bind results from the conflict—us versus them—that leaves some instructors feeling unmoored and conflicted. As newer English faculty, we longed for a "third space" of resistance to both corporatization and the instructional status quo. We longed for a position of critical engagement with issues of reform. Our conversations with fellow two-year college faculty across the country tell us that our position is not uncommon. (p. 363)

What Warnke and Higgins (2018) describe deeply resonates with my experience at multiple community colleges in different parts of the U.S. and with my experience and understanding of the HB 1042 response and implementation process. As I conducted my CDS of federal, state, and disciplinary documents for this dissertation and considered my experiences as a whole, though, I began to question the word "reform" and found myself drawn to the "critical engagement" they mention instead. After all, Warnke and Higgins (2018) focus their critical reform lens on institutionally-situated reform work, working from the assumption that change–reform–needs to happen with a critical orientation. Initially, I picked up this positionality because I was enacting this type of critical reform positionality, yet I also recognize this positionality merits critique for what Bernstein (2022) labels "reformist goals that are 'mutually beneficial' to preexisting systems of power" (p. 266).

In the context of the policy work and policy discourses I unpack in this dissertation, I am more interested in considering how community college faculty and program administrators might engage in the policy work that is either required of them as part of job descriptions (like two of my writing program administration-associated jobs) or because of some combination of personal

proclivities and institutional context. Given the amount and scope of state policies directed at community college writing programs (Adler-Kassner, 2017; Estrem, Shepherd, and Duman, 2014; Higgins and Warnke, 2020; Sullivan 2017; TYCA, 2015; Whinnery, 2017; Whinnery and Odeker, 2021), it is difficult to avoid policy engagement labor, yet outside of a scattering of publications like Estrem, Shepherd, and Duman (2014), community college and two-year college policy engagement is largely invisible and undertheorized.

Borrowing from Warnke and Higgins' (2018) desire for "a position of critical engagement" (p. 363) and applying it to the social and discursive realms of policy work, I have moved to embrace a lens that I call "critical engagement" for considering how to navigate the policy work that has become a feature of faculty and program administration labor in community and two-year college settings. As I articulate in chapter 2 and here, my conception of critical engagement stems from many similar assumptions and ideas as Warnke and Higgins' (2018) critical reform positionality with a few crucial differences, especially for/within the domain of policy work. Most notably, critical engagement provides a more nuanced approach and range of agentic options without assuming reform of some kind must–or can–be enacted in the context of policy engagement labor.

In addition to positioning critical engagement as a more strategic, temporal, adaptive, and utopian lens for policy labor, my decision to move away from assuming a reform lens or stance stems in part from critical discourse studies of education reform discourses. Within critical policy analyses of education policy, reform discourses and their sources and implications are common objects of study, and these reform discourses tend to be associated with crisis discourses, where the impetus for reform often emanates from conceptions of crisis that are "used by powerful actors to guide human thinking and action in a certain direction" (Nordin,

2014, p. 123). A key finding of Nordin's (2014) critical discourse analysis of European Union and Swedish educational policies is that usage of a crisis discourse "implies that action has to be taken immediately and that there is no option other than to act, and the result shows that this normative discourse is becoming an important and powerful instrument in the hands of both national and transnational actors seeking public legitimacy for extensive reforms" (p. 109). While the problem-solving urges (often associated with social justice proclivities) of two-year faculty teacher-scholar-activists and RCWS scholars may draw individuals towards "reform" efforts in local institutional and community contexts, those same urges merit a slowing down within policy contexts where the stakes and potential unanticipated impacts of reform impulses may be much more significant, and the affective issues I describe in this dissertation may impact policy work and discourses in problematic ways. In the case of the changed "remediation" discourses in this dissertation, I discuss how faculty and program administrators' affective responses to the reform-oriented "remediation is the problem" discourse and pre-existing beliefs and attitudes resulted in a statewide policy infused with student deficit discourses, including the exclusionary threshold. What I might also suggest is that the influence of what Higgins and Warnke (2020) and Sullivan (2017) describe as the crisis-justified remediation reform discourses and pressures of bureaucrats, policymakers, and non-governmental actors created a sort of crisis response on the part of faculty and program administrators, creating a crisis-and-reform response cycle that exacerbated power issues under the guise of "reform."

By framing policy work as critical engagement rather than critical reform, two-year faculty and program administrators are provided the out to opt out–at least in circumstances where what Anderson (1998, 2008) describes as "authentic participation" cannot be achieved.

This policy (dis)engagement strategy is important, given what scholars like Anderson (1998) document about the "discourses of participatory reforms in education":

> Current educational reforms in the U.S. contain a pervasive discourse of participation. Although calls for participation of teachers, students, parents, communities, business, and numerous other stakeholders in schools are central to most reforms, there is increasing evidence that much participatory reform is either bogus, superficial, or ineffective (Beare, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Smyth, 1993).

Providing cultural and historical context applicable to U.S.-based faculty, Anderson (1998) notes,

> In the last decades of the 20th century, a pervasive discourse of participation entered professional and lay discussions of education in the United States. A language of collaboration, empowerment, and voice is promoted by trade books, workshops, motivational speakers, academic scholarship, and university courses…This discourse taps into feelings that run deep in the American psyche. Textbook images of U.S. democracy portray town meetings, voting booths, and the public square, as well as organized struggles in support of women's suffrage, labor, and civil rights. Viewed in education as an antidote to entrenched bureaucracy, hierarchy, and excessive specialization, participation appears to have strong support…regardless of…[people's] political ideologies. (p. 572)

In his discourse analysis of school reform participation, Anderson (1998) differentiates three "sources of inauthenticity in participatory reforms" (p. 576): "(a) how participation becomes a form of public relations to create greater institutional legitimacy for current educational practices, (b) how participation mechanisms, viewed as disciplinary practices,

become more sophisticated technologies of control, [and] (c) how structures set up for greater participation often become sites for collusion," much as I suggest state-sanctioned organizations like MoDEC can become such a site (p. 571). While he does not ascribe "Machiavellian intentionality" to the "cooptation of participatory discourse," he does highlight the need to reconsider and reconceive how individuals and groups participate in educational change efforts, noting that

> [s]hifting our notions of participation may require not only understanding the contradictions, inauthenticities, and ideological agendas of the current discourse of participation but also creating new discourses that address broader democratic issues of social justice and are do-able, in the sense that they address current barriers to participation at both micro and macro levels. (p. 586)

Limitations and Possibilities: Useful Frameworks and Principles for Critical Engagement in Policy Labor

Before I discuss more about how I am beginning to respond to Anderson's (1998, 2008) call for post-reform policy engagement and conceptualize critical engagement in policy labor, it's important to mention limitations of my dissertation and pragmatic realities that have implications for an individual, group, or department's ability to engage in such labor using a critical engagement lens. Because of my professional positionality, what has gone largely unexplored in this dissertation is the significant role of faculty and program administrator status within policy labor work. Notably, even though I changed roles and institutions throughout my experience with the HB 1042 implementation process, I was always in a full-time position. At every institution, although I was occupying interim or at-will roles (in other words, non-tenure track, unprotected roles at institutions that had not yet unionized as they have now), I had a

coordinator- or director-level title, affording me significantly more power, privilege, time, and–in the case of one position, a requirement–to provide direct investment in policy processes. Using a critical engagement lens requires resources for being able to engage at all, first and foremost. Yet, it is estimated that as many as 65% of all community college classes and 72% of classes categorized as "developmental education" are taught by part-time, contingent faculty who are not afforded power, privilege, or time to devote to the policy matters impacting their work (Anthony et al., 2020). Given that higher education's heavy reliance on part-time labor has not eased for decades and does not look likely to change, it will likely be up to full-time faculty and program administrators to find ways to engage part-time faculty in policy work using a critical engagement lens (Anthony et al., 2020).

Without attempting to address all facets of policy processes and labor, I also want to emphasize what may seem obvious: policy work is complex, involving layers of government, organizations, people, resources, and power structures over time. Policy work is so complex that my critical discourse study led me and will continue to lead me to imagine other ways of researching and participating in policy engagement labor. While this dissertation contributes to understanding discourses and layers of policy engagement over time and suggests frameworks to consider as part of a critical engagement lens, more scholarship and research is needed about critical engagement strategies. No framework for policy engagement is capable of being the lens or tool for accounting for or considering all facets of this work, which might seem daunting for individuals being pulled into a "sudden" (i.e. crisis-framed) policy conversation when they have little or no background engaging in this type of work and often are expected to work on short timelines as MRADE was when HB 1042 passed (Higgins and Warnke, 2020; Mutnick, 2015; Sullivan, 2017).

On the bright side, one of the other limitations of this dissertation–namely, the focus on higher education discourses and policies rather than those involving K-12–can be mined for inspiration and potential for future scholarship and research about policy engagement and related discourses. When the news of HB 1042's passage spread, some of the concerns that my former MRADE and MoDEC colleagues had about what might happen to community colleges and higher education were concerns based on what they saw from the K-12 accountability and standards push; as Mutnick (2015) points out in her discussion about the George W. Bush-era 2001 No Child Left Behind legislation, the K-12 sector has been navigating HB 1042-style legislative mandates and education discourses for longer and has scholars like Anderson (1998, 2008) to provide nuanced engagement strategies. Although I will not be spending time discussing specific strategies that individuals and professional organizations could or should consider, I do want to mention the work of K-12 scholars like Kevin Kumashiro who has written publications and provides free workshops to support educators who want to engage in collective action related to educational policy and change work. As part of my researching and thinking for this dissertation, I read two of his books, *Bad Teacher!: How Blaming Teachers Distorts the Bigger Picture* and *Surrendered: Why Progressives are Losing the Biggest Battles in Education,* and attended his workshop about writing policy briefs, which I hope to draw upon in future scholarship.

As I pondered both scholarly and NGO-informed perspectives on policy making, I found a combination of perspectives to be useful for critically engaging in policy processes and labor. As much as I, too, question the large-scale impact of Adler-Kassner (2017) calls the "Educational Industrial Complex" of NGOs of various types, realistically, they are and/or will be involved in most educational policy processes and have experience that may prove useful for

two-year faculty and program administrators with no or limited experience, especially given the paucity of scholarship theorizing this type of labor in two-year contexts. In the case of scholarly perspectives, I appreciate Anderson's (1998, 2008) "framework for moving toward authentic participation" in large part because of his focus on "the discourses of participatory reforms in education," an object of study that aligns well with my dissertation and addresses some of the issues with the HB 1042 response process. Anderson is Professor Emeritus of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at New York University who frequently uses discourse analysis in his study of "the symbolic dimension of educational leadership and the ways administrators "manage meaning" (i.e. dominant discourses)," especially when engaging in policy work, primarily in the K-12 sector ("Gary Anderson," 2022). Oriented toward what he (2008) labels post-reform policy engagement for educators, Anderson's (1998, 2008) framework is based on five questions that are useful for two-year faculty and program administrators to consider throughout their experiences of engaging in policy processes, and he divides these questions and associated principles into micropolitical and macropolitical considerations:

- Micropolitical considerations include asking
    - "Who participates?" in an attempt to foster "[b]road inclusion." (p. 587)
    - "Participation in which spheres" in an attempt to make sure there is "[r]elevant participation." (p. 587)
    - "What conditions and processes should be presented locally?" in an attempt to make sure there are "[a]uthentic local conditions and processes in place for reform participation." (p. 587)
- Macropolitical considerations include asking

- “Participation toward what end?” to make sure there is “[c]oherence between means and ends of participation.” (p. 587)
- “What conditions and processes should be present at broader institutional and societal levels” to make sure there is a “[f]ocus on broader structural inequities.” (p. 587)

Anderson’s (1998, 2008) framework shares many of the principles that the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) (2022) recommends in its framework for “equitable policymaking,” a framework constructed by a variety of higher education scholars and policy analysts[26] that emphasizes

1. An issue’s framing shapes the creation of the relevant policy.
2. Investments signal priorities.
3. Who participates in policymaking decisions shapes the outcome.
4. Data and empirical evidence are essential to effective policy.
5. Language must be precise, inclusive, people-first, and respectful. (p. 4)

Both Anderson’s (1998, 2008) framework and the IHEP (2022) framework emphasis considering the discourses of policies in manners consistent with the key aims of critical discourse studies (Wodak and Meyer, 2016), a methodological approach I found useful for critical engagement because it has allowed me to parse what IHEP (2022) refers to as the “framing” of a policy and see what is missing and needs to be considered. As the discourse changes I document in Chapters 5 and 6 suggest, what matters is how a or the problem(s) is defined–the premise–and the associated means of discursively talking about that problem, and analyzing a policy’s framing is

[26] See page 2 of the report for a list of authors and informing committee members from IHEP’s Advisory Committee for Equitable Policymaking Processes. No individual authors are listed. Contributors include Stella M. Flores, Associate Professor of Higher Education at New York University, and IHELP staff members Mamie Voight and Amanda Janice Roberson.

an important step for entering policy processes with a critical engagement lens. IHELP (2022) defines "framing" as

> the choices, concepts, perspective, and historical contexts – visible or invisible, conscious or unconscious – that influence how people see and understand the issue. Framing determines what is emphasized or ignored in public discourse and policy debates. Beyond messaging or marketing, 'framing' is the way an issue is viewed and understood throughout the policymaking process. (p. 8)

In the context of the HB 1042 policy making and implementation process, I was and continue to be concerned about the framing of college writing classes and experiences–no matter whether they are labeled "remedial," "basic," "developmental," "first-year composition," or otherwise. Regardless of the degree to which HB 1042 documents relied on the "higher ed's remediation problem," student deficit, and/or "higher ed's remediation equity problem" discourses, the documents shared certain underlying assumptions about the purpose of college writing classes: they are instrumental, service classes that are part of a linear literacy development process, building upon a defined set of exiting high school literacy competencies and meant to develop a defined set of college literacy competencies ("skills") that will prepare students for their remaining college literacy requirements and set them up for success. Scores of critical literacy scholars and RCWS scholars beg to differ and have produced careers worth of scholarship, arguing for broader conceptions of students' experiences in college literacy classes and people's trajectories of development of literacies (see the publications of Adler-Kassner, Bazerman, Bernstein, Phelps, Sullivan, and Trimbur, to name a few).

As someone who has taught college literacy classes at multiple institutions in three states for 20 years now, I have enough lore and data to fill another dissertation about the different

purposes and outcomes of literacy class experiences as compared with other college classes and to critique the reductive impulses conveyed within all of the "remediation" discourses described in this dissertation. These classes provide more than just college preparation and readiness and perform functions beyond academic standards maintenance. Yet, as Troyka (1998) pointed out after the end of open admissions at CUNY, RCWS scholars and practitioners have yet to bring a more nuanced framing of what can and does happen in college literacy classes and experiences into the policy making realm. Instead, even in the most well-intentioned of policy making work from the likes of scholars like Hern, narrow conceptions of literacy are reinforced, often because of lack of attention to certain macropolitical considerations and the narrow framing and forms of data and evidence used in policy making processes.

Anderson's (1998, 2008) micropolitical considerations of the local context are often neglected, also, as Hall (2020) documents. Hall's (2020) article is especially useful to consider, as it is based on three years' worth of survey results from students in the basic writing program at my undergraduate and master's degree alma mater in Missouri and related to programmatic changes emanating from HB 1042. She (2020) writes,

> My work takes a localized look at the experiences of students in a Basic Writing program at a four-year public university, during the early stages of implementing a corequisite model for Basic Writing. I experienced firsthand how the differences in the student population change the ways that students approach and interact with a corequisite writing course. It is no secret that the implementation of these courses is changing the landscape of Basic Writing, eliminating developmental education altogether in some cases. With Basic Writing courses gone, students who may wish for additional support in their writing lose that opportunity. Legislators and university administrators wouldn't

> know that, because they haven't asked the students themselves. If they had, they would see that many of their so-called cost-effective measures have hindered students' preparation for college-level writing. (p. 60-61)

In analyzing survey results from students taking basic writing classes as a means of readying for a new corequisite class, Hall (2020) discovered students who had taken advanced English classes in high school and who had high placement scores were choosing to take basic writing classes, an act of student agency that goes unaccounted for within the "remediation" discourses I describe in this dissertation. On page 62 of her article, Hall (2020) points to Parisi's (2018) attempt to refocus attention on "'*Who* are you *here*? [in basic writing classes]' and '*Who* is Basic Writing *for*?'" (122). From her survey results, Hall (2020) provides a very different framing to consider in policy conversations, a reframing that provides openings for different discourses:

> my analysis indicates that previous assumptions about the types of students who take Basic Writing courses are steeped in assumptions about lack of preparation for college-level work. My data show that, in fact, more students than anticipated are entering Basic Writing courses having taken advanced courses in English in high school. We need closer analysis of curriculum for upper-level English courses at the secondary level. We need more data on the structure of Dual Credit and AP courses and how credit for that work transfers (both in skill retention and in transcript form) to higher education with special attention to the effect on basic writing students. Understanding why and which students choose to enroll in Basic Writing courses, as well as their perceptions about their own writing abilities, will aid in the development of curriculum for future pilots of the corequisite as well as restructuring of the prerequisite courses. (p. 77)

Taking Anderson's (1998, 2008) cues to assess macropolitical considerations even farther and demonstrating all five of IHEP's (2022, January) equitable policy-making principles, Goudas (2020) demonstrates the type of critical engagement with policy that I believe professional organizations and graduate programs need to develop in two-year faculty and program administrators. In his working paper about the civil rights impact of "remediation" on students of color, he (2020) reframes policy conversations related to "remediation" and "basic writing" even more significantly in ways that align with my own perspective about the need for attention to holistic support. After outlining the ethical stances, narrative tensions, and differing data and methods that surface in publications about equity and civil rights concerns associated with stand-alone "remedial" or "developmental" classes for students of colors, he presents a strategic policy making solution that demonstrates the kind of nuanced, discursive understanding of issues that a critical engagement lens can offer:

> there is a model in higher education that obviates the either-or stances on remediation. That model is called the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), and it hails from the City University of New York (CUNY). It was originally implemented as a randomized controlled trial in New York City, and it has now been successfully replicated in Ohio (Miller et al., 2020). Instead of eliminating beneficial remedial coursework, the program embeds it into a framework of support that allows at-risk students, many of whom are students of color, to flourish and graduate at double the rates of the control groups. The all-inclusive model costs approximately $2,000 per student per year over and above Pell Grants and other financial aid for low-income students. This is because it covers free books, free transportation, and more tutoring, including lower student-counselor ratios.

Instead of labeling remediation a civil rights issue and barrier, and rather than maintaining its status quo, ASAP utilizes crucial remedial coursework and improves its delivery with a system of support that proponents of *developmental education* would argue embodies the term's original intent (Boylan & Bonham, 2014). The model's proper implementation resolves the ethical conflict created by civil rights proponents and remedial reform critics.

In a comprehensive discussion on remedial reform and its recent effects on students overall, Mangan (2019) summarized how ASAP reconciles both ethical arguments:

> While stand-alone remedial courses get a bad rap these days, one of the nation's most successful models of remedial reform—City University of New York's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs, or ASAP—allows students who need them to start there. The program, which has been replicated nationally, bolsters remedial and college-level courses with extensive financial, academic, and personal supports. A study by the nonprofit research group MDRC found that it nearly doubled three-year graduation rates. (para. 58) (n.p.)

Goudas (2020) closes by writing

> If two-year public colleges are going to address the entrenched racial gaps in higher education, more thoughtful, well-funded, and holistic reform efforts will need to take place. Equitable reform must be comprehensive to address the complex and varied nature of the problems of poverty, race, and inequality. It should not simply restrict, accelerate, or eliminate beneficial coursework. Holistic problems require holistic solutions. (n.p.)

Recommendations and Final Thoughts

Phelps (2002) points out that "leadership is an everyday, if largely invisible, part of belonging to a college faculty" (p. 3). Given the degree to which policy making and policy processes have influenced and infiltrated the labor environment of two-year colleges (Adler-Kassner, 2019; Estrem, Shepherd, and Duman, 2014; Goto, 2002; Miller, Wender, and Finer, 2017; Shaw, 1997; Sullivan, 2015, 2017; TYCA, 2015; Warnke and Higgins, 2020; Whinnery, 2017), I suggest graduate programs, professional organizations like NOSS and TYCA, and individuals of potential influence in two-year writing programs make policy engagement–and especially critical engagement–a professional development priority. Because of how instructive it has been to analyze the "remediation" discourses surrounding me in the context of this critical discourse study (CDS), I also recommend professional development in CDS, including having graduate programs incorporate CDS into methods courses and/or require stand-alone discourse analysis courses like the one I took that led to this dissertation. Higher education policies and the discourses threaded within them impact who is allowed to enter college, what faculty are required to teach and how, and who will be considered successful, making attention to critical engagement strategies an important object of study for two-year teacher-scholar-activists (Sullivan, 2015).

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[27] Between when I began conducting this research in 2018 and now, Florida's Higher Education Coordinating Council appears to have been eliminated, or its work is no longer publicly accessible. I had to use the Wayback Machine Internet Archive to find the last screen capture of this page from January 27, 2020. I could not find evidence for the Florida HECC on the Florida Department of Education website at the time of completing this dissertation in July 2022.

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APPENDIX A

ORGANIZATIONS LIST

Select Non-Governmental Research and Policy-Making Organizations

Organization	Abbreviation
Complete College America	CCA
Community College Research Center	CCRC
National Conference of State Legislatures	NCSL
Thomas B. Fordham Institute	

State Policy Organizations

Organization	Abbreviation
Coordinating Board for Higher Education	CBHE
Missouri Department of Higher Education	MDHE now MDHEWD
Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development	MDHEWD formerly MDHE
Taskforce on College and Career Readiness	TCCR

Professional Organizations

Organization	Abbreviation
Council on Basic Writing	CBW
Council of Writing Program Administrators	CWPA
Missouri Developmental Education Consortium	MoDEC now Mo-DEC
Midwest Regional Association for Developmental Education	MRADE now NOSS-Midwest
National Association for Developmental Education	NADE now NOSS
National Organization for Student Success	NOSS formerly NADE
NOSS-Midwest	formerly MRADE
Two-Year College English Association	TYCA

APPENDIX B

HB 1042 TIMELINE WITH DOCUMENTS

2012

April 2012

- State context: *Remedial Coursework in Postsecondary Coursework* report commissioned by MDHE and produced with MPR Associates
- National context: Complete College America's *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* published, which were followed later in the year similar reports like the Charles A. Dana Center, et al.'s (December 2012) *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education: A Joint Statement*

7 June 2012: HB 1042 Signed into Law

From MDHE website: https://dhe.mo.gov/HB1042.php

Home » HB1042

House Bill 1042 was signed into law June 7, 2012. Portions of the law went into effect Aug. 28, 2012. The bill addresses the following areas:

Developmental Education

All public two-year and four-year higher education institutions must replicate best practices in developmental education identified through collaboration between colleges and universities and research by experts in developmental education.

Core Transfer Library

Missouri higher education institutions will promote student transfer by creating a statewide core transfer library of at least twenty-five lower division courses that are transferable among all public colleges and universities by July 1, 2014.

Reverse Transfer

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education shall develop a policy to foster reverse transfer for any student who has accumulated enough hours in combination with at least one public higher education institution in Missouri that offers an associate degree and one public four-year higher education institution in the prescribed courses sufficient to meet requirements to be awarded an associate degree.

Out-of-state fees
The Coordinating Board may charge and collect fees from out-of-state public institutions to cover the costs of reviewing and assuring the quality of programs offered by out-of-state public higher education institutions.

National Conference of State Legislatures: "Higher Education Legislation in 2012": http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/higher-education-legislation-2012.aspx

22-24 August 2012: I find out HB 1042 passed via email

28 August - 19 September 2012: MRADE group plans meeting with state and communicate out via MoDEC and MRADE listservs

10-11 September 2012: More Emails and Rusty Monhollan Meeting Prep

- Includes attachments for MoDEC meeting roster and HB 1042 with Dec. 1, 2011 summary of rationale for bill and accompanying SB 455

20-21 September 2012: MoDEC/MRADE meeting held in Columbia

25-26 September 2012: Emails re: MDHE meeting and MoDEC applications

28 September 2012

MDHE representative shares "Remedial Coursework in Postsecondary Coursework" report commissioned by DHE and produced with MPR Associates. The MDHE representative says that the next phase will be to survey institutions to find out about their current practices.

3-5 Oct. 2012: MRADE 30th Anniversary Conference

26 Oct. 2012: MoDEC update email from MoDEC listserv

We are pleased to announce the first class of council members for the Missouri Developmental Education Consortium.

- *elected spokesperson

Thanks to everyone who applied and indicated interest in representing his or her institution on the council. We look forward to working with all MoDEC members as we move forward to meet the challenge of increasing student success at all of our institutions in Missouri.

Just a reminder:

Mark your calendar, **MoDEC Meeting on November 9th** in Columbia on the Moberly Columbia Campus (map below)

- 10:00-12:00 Classroom 141 for the MoDEC member's meeting
- 1:00-4:00 Conference Room 132 for the Council meeting

In preparation for the member's meeting

- Look over the MoDEC Organizational Structure and be prepared to discuss and vote.
- Contact your IR and/or CAO about the Performance Funding Simulation Results (Key Performance Indicators), especially items 2 and 3 related to DevEd completers and first college-level course success-identify pros/cons
- Identify pros/cons

9 Nov. 2012: MoDEC meeting

- General Meeting minutes: contain notes about statewide placement cut scores and KPIs, as well as MoDEC structure; call to send best practices by 8 Feb.
- Council Meeting minutes: more discussion of Best Practices -- see the list of sources (ALL DE, no sources from BW or other fields)

19 Nov. 2012: MoDEC update email

- Item 1--I have attached the MoDEC organizational structure with the requested changes *(MoDEC approved 11-06-2012)*.
- Item 2--Concerning the Key Performance Indicators:
- As I understand it, the KPI Benchmarks have been finalized, and I don't believe the addition of a peer group will be considered.
- Please continue to ask for your data. Since two of the five indicators are directly affected by DevEd student completers enrolling in the 1st college-level course, you will want to know the progress at your institution. I'm sure this knowledge will be valuable as you assess your program and create new action plans.

- I will be providing a BRIEF MoDEC update to the CAOs in December. In addition to sharing the new MoDEC structure, during that time, I will be asking them to consider letting MoDEC members share KPI data annually in effort to identify the top 1/3 DevEd success data in the state. With all of the redesign going on, this information could be extremely valuable. It would be my hope that instructors from identified schools would be willing to share their model.
- Item 3--Concerning the Smarter Balance Assessment
- You will want to respond during the open comment period, since this assessment could have a 2-fold impact:
- The number of traditional age students who test for placement into DevEd courses (therefore also impacting the enrollment in DevEd classes).
- The skill level of traditional age students who are permitted to enroll in college-level math or writing.
- The Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium will have a public comment period from November 28th through January 15.
- I recommend before you review the Achievement Level Descriptors and sample items that you watch the following archived webinar in either math or literacy depending on your expertise http://www.smarterbalanced.org/resources-events/webinars/#ela

2013

27 Jan. 2013: Statewide placement email

- MoDEC members,
  In response to House Bill 1042, MDHE is looking at the possibility of setting a statewide placement policy applicable to any incoming student entering a Missouri Public Postsecondary Institution. Dr. Rusty Monhollon, Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs, is putting together a small committee of 6 (2 from MoDEC, 2 from Private sector, and 2 from Public 4-year). If you are interested in serving, send me your name immediately. To help with the selection, include in 50 words or less a description of the qualities that make you the best candidate. I have a Thursday morning deadline, so all names must be submitted by Wednesday at 4:30.

1 Feb. 2013: COTA Conference Keynote by Rusty Monhollan

- "Something Better than in the Middle: HB 1042, the Common Core, and Increased Educational Attainment in Missouri" followed by panel discussion

8 Feb. 2013: MoDEC meeting (agenda linked)

- Meeting minutes: contain notes about Rusty Monhollan's visit with the group re: the Best Practices framing document

- Best Practices "Suggested outline for revised policy on Remediation"
  - NOTE that this document suggests this policy is meant to replace a previous policy: Current CBHE Policy on Remediation
    4. Remediation (Approved by the board December 10, 1992; reaffirmed April 18, 1996)
    All Missouri colleges and universities will provide appropriate instructional and student support services. No public four-year institution which is highly selective or selective will offer formal remedial coursework.

19 Feb. 2013: MoDEC Response to Best Practices framing document

5 April 2013: MoDEC given 11 April 2013 deadline to give feedback on Best Practices draft 1.0

20 April 2013: MoDEC listserv receives final draft of CBHE Policy

29 April 2013: Draft CBHE Policy on Best Practices Request for Feedback Goes to CAOs from Rusty Monhollan

- Draft Feedback Request Memo
- College and Career Readiness Taskforce (CCRT) Membership List
- Best Practices draft 1.1 (29 April 2013)

2014

29 Jan. 2014: Rusty Monhollan and Melody Shipley "Principles in Best Practices in Remedial Education" COTA Conference Presentation

12 Sept. 2014: Missouri Math Summit (initiates math pathways reform)

2014 Meeting Notes for the Task Force on College and Career Readiness

2015

13 Feb. 2015: Jennifer Plemons "HB 1042: Developmental Education Implementation Strategies" COTA Conference Presentation

HB 1042: DE Implementation Feb. 13, 2015 [My Notes]
-NOT a one size fits all "best practices" list

-NOT trying to reinvent the wheel
-Task Force on College and Career Readiness, MoDEC, DESE, SBAC
-Common definition of developmental/remedial education, as well as college and career readiness
-CBHE recommended College Prep HS Curriculum, including four years of math
-Consistent statewide assessment and placement policy
-Minimum standards of academic competence: Threshold scores for admission, adult education and literacy programs—still discussing, no implementation expected until FA16
-Accountability and data reporting
-Adequate funding for successful implementation and institutional program innovation
-Broad goals: collaborate with DESE to provide better communication and transition between K-12 and higher ed, be clear and consistent for parents and students, and collect and provide useful and pertinent data to institutions and legislature
-Implementation Workgroup: Task Force on College and Career Readiness (TCCR); Data Workgroup: 2- and 4-year IR reps; Committee on Curriculum and Assessment

Implementation Efforts to Date:
—Updated CBHE recommendations, including transcripts that include additional info that would be helpful for placement
—Assessment and Placement: creation of policy manual to guide institutions when placing students—placement scores and multiple measures—will be sending to CAOs for input
—Do not place based only on one high-stakes assessment; we get to decide what measures we feel will be best at each institution (GPA, institutional assessment, high school classes, etc.)
—Err on the side of placing students into college-level courses with support as needed, except for students with significant deficits
—Mathematics Summit & Math Pathways Grant: students going into a non-STEM field need to have alternative math pathway (statistics, quantitative literacy, etc.); 4 meetings so far with 4 sub-groups exploring alternative pathways and by September hope to have a 2nd Math Summit
—Communication strategies: MDHE staff, guidance counselors, DESE
—Minimum standards of academic competence (threshold scores): TCCR will continue with input from NADE, as discussions have stalled from a year ago
—Data collection and institutional reporting and compliance
—FA 15: multiple measures need to be used for placement (GPA and ACT has most research support)
—FA 16: threshold needs to be implemented, as MDHE will set that, and there will be discussion about differentiating students who place below the threshold in one area versus multiple areas; there has been talk about a threshold range of scores, and students below the range will need to be funneled to ABE programs
—FA 16: should have a year of data related to placement using multiple measures

—66 Algebra on Compass looks like a 24 on ACT when using 2010 concordance tables, yet the ACT score is set at 22—talked about why that cut-off was set differently for Compass. Scores will be reviewed and adjusted as needed.

25 March 2015: Rusty Monhollan Presentation "Rethinking College Readiness and Remedial Education"

June 2015: Report of the Missouri Mathematics Pathways Taskforce

2015 Meeting Notes for the Task Force on College and Career Readiness

2016

19 February 2016: Missouri Mathematics Pathway Initiative COTA Conference Presentation

28 February 2016: Missouri Takes Part in Scaling Corequisite Initiative

From NCTE: http://www2.ncte.org/report/missouri-joins-scaling-corequisite-initiative/

Missouri Joins Scaling Corequisite Initiative

Date: February 28, 2016

State: Missouri

Level: Higher Education

Analyst: Greer, Jane

Missouri has been selected to participate in the 2016 cohort for Complete College America's Scaling Corequisite Initiative, reflecting the state's commitment to ensuring that the majority of its post-secondary students have access to corequisite academic support, rather than being channeled into more traditional developmental, or remedial, courses. As Complete College America (CCA) explains, corequisite academic support allows underprepared students to enroll directly into credit-bearing, gateway courses–such as first-year writing (FYW)–while also participating in mandatory, additional class sessions or customized labs that provides "just in time" support for learners (*Corequisite Remediation* 2).

Missouri's participation in the Scaling Corequisite Initiative is part of the Missouri Department of Higher Education's (MDHE) ongoing response to MO House Bill 1042, which was passed in

2012 and mandated that all public, post-secondary institutions in the state "replicate best practices in remediation." Through its involvement in CCA's Scaling Corequisite Initiateive, staff at MDHE and other educators in the state will have access to professional facilitators and experts to develop corequisite plans for Missouri public colleges and universities.

Bruce Vandal, Vice President of CCA argues that "remedial education course sequences are a barrier, not a bridge, to college completion." In *Corequisite Remediation: Spanning the Completion Divide*, CCA has defined six pillars on which to build corequisite remediation programs in order to help ensure that underprepared students stay on track for degree completion. They include:

- Purpose, not placement.
- Treat all students as college students.
- Deliver academic support as a corequisite.
- All students should complete gateway courses in academic year one.
- Develop multiple math pathways into programs of study.
- Corequisite support is the bridge into programs of study. (*Corequistie Remediation* 7)

The power of corequisite academic support for writing courses has been well documented, most notably by Peter Adams, former chair of the Conference on Basic Writing, and his colleagues at Baltimore County Community College:

"The Accelerated Learning Program: Throwing Open the Gates"

"New Evidence for Success for Community College Remedial English Students"

Though corequisite initiatives hold much promise and writing teachers in Missouri are likely to benefit from the state's involvement with CCA's "Scaling Corequisite Initiative," it is important to remember that legislatively mandated programs for developmental education can be problematic. Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) has rightly raised questions about such legislatively mandated programs for developmental education. The TYCA White Paper on Developmental Education Reforms notes that faculty members, including contingent faculty, should be involved in substantive ways in the conceptualization and implementation of new approaches to developmental education; that localized, research-based pilot programs and local assessments should be carefully weighed before statewide requirements are implemented; and that writing teachers should have access to resources to support their own ongoing professional development.

2017

January 2017: MDHE "Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education" published

2018

March: MDHE publishes Annual Report on the Condition of College and Career Readiness

2019

MDHEWD publishes 2019 Equity in Missouri Higher Education Report

APPENDIX C

PILOT STUDY

The 21st Century Ideology of Remediation: Katz's Ethic of Expediency in Action

Casey Reid

Old Dominion University

Abstract

Taking cues from critical policy analysis and van Dijk (1995), this paper uses critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine the ideological elements present in key texts related to the passage of Missouri House Bill 1042 (HB 1042), a piece of legislation passed in 2012 that requires higher education institutions to "replicate best practices in remediation" (Higher Education, 2012). Though a collection of scholars (Bartholomae, 1993; Rose, 1985; Horner, 1996; Shor, 1997; Lamos, 2000; Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2002; Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2006; Vidali, 2007; Ritter, 2009; Stanley, 2010; Villanueva, 2013) have critiqued various facets of the discourses surrounding classes and programs for students who are labeled as below college ready, this paper extends the work of Melzer (2015) and suggests that the discourses surrounding remediation represent an ideology of remediation embraced by many English faculty who benefit from it, and in its recent iteration, this ideology is influenced by what Katz (1992) calls an "ethic of expediency" that uses the discourse of efficiency—of time and resources—to justify sorting, stigmatizing, and excluding groups of people as a means of creating a more efficient educational system. This analysis focuses on specific ways in which the ideology of remediation and its associated ethic of expediency manifest in the corpus of HB 1042 texts, highlighting their emphasis on the necessity, avoidance, and reduction of remediation. Discussion focuses on the social justice implications of this reframing of the scholarly discourse surrounding the ideology of remediation, or what has come to be known as "basic writing" within composition studies.

The 21st Century Ideology of Remediation: Katz's Ethic of Expediency in Action

As Doherty (2007) notes,

> A feature of education policy in late modernity is its relentless predisposition to fix the boundaries and horizons of national projects of education at all levels. Such policy production now takes place in an atmosphere infused by the economic, political, social and cultural affects of globalization. As a consequence, education policy is now cast in moulds that reflect this 'new complexity' in the policymaking climate, a complexity comprised of the interrelation between the supranational, the nation state and the regional. (p. 193)

In response to "this 'new complexity'" (p. 193), critical policy analysis has emerged with the purpose of unpacking "the ideological dimensions, values and assumptions of public policy" (p. 193). As Suspitsyna (2012) highlights, critical policy analyses of higher education-related "government discourses…are few (e.g. Ayers, 2005; George-Jackson, 2008; Jones, 2009; Shaw & Rab, 2003) and often based on the non-U.S. context (e.g., Davies & Bansel, 2007; Grundy, 1994; Nairn & Higgins, 2007)" (p. 50). Discourse analyses of the ideologies of federal-level education policies (see Suspitsyna, 2012) and of media coverage of state-level education policies (see Piazza, 2014, for instance) exist, as do critical discourse analyses of the way state-wide educational systems impact writing programs (see Melzer, 2015).

While prominent scholars in composition and basic writing have explored the influence of specific public and institutional policies on writing program administration and students using non-discourse analysis frameworks (see Adler-Kassner and Harrington 2002; Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2006), in this paper I use van Dijk's (1995) conception of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as ideological analysis to examine key texts constructed in response to the passage of Missouri House Bill 1042 (HB 1042), a piece of legislation passed in 2012 that requires higher education institutions to "replicate best practices in remediation" (Higher Education, 2012). This

paper suggests that the discourses surrounding remediation represent an ideology of remediation embraced by many English faculty who benefit from it, and in its recent iteration, this ideology is influenced by what Katz (1992) called an "ethic of expediency" that uses the discourse of efficiency—of time and resources—to justify sorting, stigmatizing, and excluding groups of people as a means of creating a more efficient educational system. This analysis focuses on specific ways in which the ideology of remediation and its associated ethic of expediency manifest in the corpus of HB 1042 texts, highlighting their emphasis on the necessity, avoidance, and reduction of remediation. Discussion focuses on the social justice implications of this reframing of the scholarly discourse surrounding the ideology of remediation, or what has come to be known as "basic writing" within composition studies.

A Note on Framing: Remediation as Ideology

I start this analysis with a critical word choice and framing decision that sets this analysis slightly askance from other, similar analyses within composition and basic writing. This decision will require additional work to support at a later time but helps consolidate the many scholars' arguments that I am bringing to this analysis. Composition scholars, including scholars who specifically identify as basic writing scholars, have given extensive time and energy to analyzing various facets of the rhetoric and discourses surrounding the literacy development of incoming college students who have been labeled as differently prepared by placement mechanisms created, selected, and/or supported by faculty, institutions, and the public at large. Within composition/writing studies, these discourses have become a source of discourse analysis themselves that has resulted in the gradual renaming of this work over time from remedial to developmental to basic writing (Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010; Melzer, 2015) though the public, legislators, and many English educators have continued to rely largely on the concepts of

remediation and developmental, as is demonstrated in the texts that I am analyzing. As part of and in response to analyses of these discourses, scholars have called for everything from dramatically reorienting the work toward mainstreaming efforts to eliminating basic writing altogether (see Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010 and Melzer, 2015 for longer discussions of these trends).

After reading and re-reading many of these seminal analyses and discussions, I am choosing to call upon all of this scholarship and the associated decades of reframing and analysis that has impacted thousands of people's lives something more comprehensive: an ideology. I rely on Eagleton's (1991) conception of ideology as a cluster or web of beliefs linked to social and institutional practice and other ideologies—all of which are enmeshed with institutional and social practices. Though ideologies often contain contradictory elements, they are inextricably intertwined with power struggles, and paying attention to the context of an ideology is key to understanding the ideology (Eagleton, 1991). While discourses have been shown to be ideological in nature (Fairclough, 2006; Wodak, 2001), I take cues from van Dijk (1995) and frame my critical discourse analysis as an ideological analysis. I make this choice largely based on what I see from the analysis in this paper: the continued maintenance of the ideology of remediation and its associated ethic of expediency via state and policy apparatuses supported by English faculty—representatives of composition who benefit from maintaining this ideology and its ethos. With this reframing, I am choosing to respond to Pavesich's call for a "politics of acknowledgement" that "'can change our view of the nature of the problems we confront…[and] alter our sense of what courses of action are open to us in the first place'" (Markell quoted in Pavesich, 2011, p. 102).

In the case of the ideology of remediation, I am referring to a host of beliefs, values, and assumptions that guide the work of faculty, higher education administrators and institutions, and the public at large—though many English faculty try to exclude themselves from this ideology. With its "discourse [that] reduces students' complex and fluid literacies to a static set of deficiencies in basic skills" (Melzer, 2015, p. 83), remediation is an ideology of deficiency within composition/writing studies/basic writing where not only are administrators, policy makers, and the public implicated—so, too, are English/writing faculty. As Melzer (2015) demonstrates in his critical discourse analysis of California State University's (CSU) Early State program, "Basic Writing teachers [demonstrate] unintentional complicity in the language of exclusion" (p. 83) despite Bartholomae's (1993) 25-year-old critique of basic writing programs and their "expressions of our desire to produce basic writers, to maintain the course, the argument, and the slot in the university community" (p. 8).

In his analysis, Melzer (2015) traces historical core elements of the discourse surrounding remediation, going back to the 1800s and English A at Harvard. These semantic macrostructures of "deficiency, skills, and testing" (Melzer, 2015, p. 95) frame many of the core beliefs of the ideology of remediation, which is often rationalized via literacy crisis tropes that provide a sense of urgency for invoking the ideology. Given that I am specifically analyzing a remediation policy and that, increasingly, much of what happens in higher education is directly impacted by state and/or federal legislation, Althusser's (2014) discussion of ideological state apparatuses is relevant. Because of what I and others (Bartholomae, 1993; Shor, 1997) suggest about how the ideology of remediation functions and is used to reinforce itself and other ideologies like whiteness (Lamos, 2000), the ideology of remediation often acts as an ideological state apparatus—in other words, legislators and non-governmental policymaking groups tap into this

ideology and its believers (the general public who have been exposed to literacy crisis after literacy crisis since *A Nation at Risk* and English educators, as both Melzer, 2015, and I suggest) to frame education policy and maintain the status quo. In the case of the ideology of remediation, the status quo involves maintenance of support for the educational and economic aspirations for groups considered educationally normative or mainstream, i.e. middle- to upper-class, white, able-bodied people (Bartholomae, 1993; Horner, 1996; Shor, 1997; Lamos, 2000; Vidali, 2007).

As I will suggest later, a key element of the ideology of remediation that aids in its maintenance is its reliance on what Katz (1992) refers to as the "ethic of expediency," where "the focus [of the deliberative rhetoric] is on expediency, on technical criteria as a means to an end" and "the resulting *ethos* of objectivity, logic, and narrow focus" (p. 257). As it is described by Katz (1992), the ethic of expediency permeates Western culture and "underlies…deliberative rhetoric," a "genre of rhetoric concerned with deliberating future courses of action" (p. 258) as legislation like HB 1042 is intended to do. The ethic of expediency is demonstrated in various grammatical and stylistic features, including "the heavy use of polysyllabic words, modified nouns, …a passive voice that obscures the role of the agent, and…subordinate clauses that separate subject from verb" (p. 258). As part of this style, "responsibility is shifted from the writer (and reader) to the organization they represent, the organization whose voice they now speak with, in whose interest they act, whose ethos they have adopted as their own" (p. 258), a style consistent with legislative policies like HB 1042 and the associated corpus of documents put out by various government policy implementation groups. In the case on HB 1042, this ethic is applied to (potential) students and their college experience.

This paper extends Katz's argument about the ethic of expediency to the ideology of remediation as it is represented in the corpus of texts associated with HB 1042 and its

implementation. Katz (1992) argues that "it is the ethic of expediency that enables deliberative rhetoric and gives impulse to most of our actions in technological capitalism as well" (p. 258). He critiques this ethic, as well as "writing pedagogy and practice based on it," because it relies on expediency and related notions of objectivity and rationality as the ultimate criteria for making decisions—the ultimate means to the societal ends of goodness and happiness (258). Critical policy analysts like Doherty (2007), Saarinen (2008), and Suspitsyna (2012) might explain the embrace of this ethos as an effect of the heightened neoliberal influences on education, an effect that, while not new, has certainly become a more salient belief and influence upon educators. This paper is framed around these ideas.

House Bill 1042 and the Resulting Corpus of Texts

This study analyzes House Bill 1042 (HB 1042) and two key documents from the corpus of texts produced as a result of its passage, *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education* (CBHE, 2013) and the *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education* (MDHE, 2017), that provide specific language that is used directly in documents throughout the corpus. Passed in 2012 in Missouri, HB 1042 is one of many examples of recent state legislation that invokes and reinforces the ideology of remediation. Specifically, the bill

> [r]equires the Coordinating Board for Higher Education within the Department of Higher Education to require all two- and four-year public higher education institutions to replicate best practices in remediation identified by the board and other institutions and organizations with expertise in the subject to identify and reduce methods that have been found to be ineffective in preparing or retaining students or which delay students from enrollment in college-level courses. (Higher Education, 2012)

It also "[r]equires the board to include in its annual report to the Governor and General Assembly campus-level data on student persistence and progress toward implementing revised remediation, transfer, and retention practices" (Higher Education, 2012).

In 2013, the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) through its Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) collaborated with representatives from higher education institutions across the state to construct the *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education*, the contextualizing document for HB 1042 that provides definitions and a framework for institution's to shape their responses to HB 1042 (CBHE, 2013). Since then, MDHE has worked with Missouri's public institutions of higher education and various stakeholder groups, including faculty-driven groups like the Missouri Developmental Education Consortium (MoDEC) and the Two-Year College Math Association (MoMATYC), to shape implementation of the best practices for the first few years after passage of HB 1042. In response to the legislative mandate for reporting, MDHE constructed and published its first *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education* in January 2017. Much of this report is based on the results of a mixed-method survey constructed by MDHE staff and "members of the Committee on College and Career Readiness (CCCR)," who tend to be faculty and administrators from across the state who were also given purview to review and revise the report during the drafting stages (MDHE, 2017, p. 4). MDHE says it is using the report to assess the effectiveness of various practices and plans to publish the report annually moving forward (p. 4).

Methodology

Starting with the text of HB 1042, I began collecting a corpus of texts related to HB 1042's interpretation and implementation, including texts that state-level education bodies use to communicate information about bills to higher education institutions and reports written with

input from college administrators, faculty, and writing program administrators about the results of attempts to implement the bills. As I began tracing when these texts were published, my attention focused on two core documents: one that emerged soon after the legislation passed, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education's (CBHE) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*, a multipage document that provides an explanatory framework for understanding and interpreting the intentions of House Bill 1042, and a second document published in January 2017 that assesses the effectiveness of institutions' initial implementation of HB 1042, the Missouri Department of Higher Education's (MDHE) *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education*. Though other documents in the corpus will be referenced, this paper focuses primarily on analyzing these texts, as they provide and—in the case of the latter document—reinforce the core ideological elements and specific language used throughout the corpus.

Using ideas from van Dijk's (1995) approach to undertaking ideological analysis via critical discourse analysis (CDA), I drew upon ideas from scholarship critical of conceptions of remedial/developmental education and basic writing (Rose, 1985; Bartholomae, 1993; Horner, 1996; Shor, 1997; Lamos, 2000; Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2002; Adler-Kassner and Harrington, 2006; and Ritter, 2009; Stanley, 2010; Villanueva, 2013) and Katz's (1992) conception of the ethic of expediency to identify and contextualize lexical and syntactic items (definitions, terms, and phrases) that communicate beliefs, values, and assumptions about students and the ideological functions of what is interchangeably called "remedial" or "developmental" education within the documents. I used an iterative approach, returning to the documents multiple times to reconsider the semantics and rhetorical functions of different lexical and syntactic choices. As a former staff member, English faculty member, and then Director of Developmental Education Programs at various institutions in Missouri during the first several

years of House Bill 1042's passage, I also rely on first-hand knowledge of people, groups, and processes involved in the governance and administration of higher education in Missouri to provide contextualization for my key findings and discussion. As part of this analysis, I take methodological cues from Suspitsyna's (2012) textually-oriented discourse analysis of U.S. Department of Education discourse and make "connections between the rhetoric" of the H.B. 1042 corpus of texts and "larger neoliberal processes and practices" with focus on the implications of these practices for students who may be impacted by HB 1042 (p. 54).

Analysis: Working from an Ethic of Expediency

Because it is foundational to my argument, I start the analysis by demonstrating the centrality of the ethic of expediency to the core guiding ideas within the HB 1042 corpus. Focused as it is on creating the most expedient educational systems possible based on supposedly rationale, objective means, the ethic of expediency found within the HB 1042 corpus of texts emphasizes that people and components of the educational system (courses, teachers, institutions, etc.) need to move students through educational systems efficiently—and exclude people entirely if they are deemed unable to traverse the system efficiently enough, thus hindering the system's efficiency and functioning for others. Even though this exclusion is likely to result in negative impacts on those excluded (financial losses due to lack of a college education, for example), the means are considered ethically justifiable when an ethic of expediency is applied if the ends result in an education system that is more efficient for those deemed worthy of it. As a central tenet of its ethic of expediency, the HB 1042 corpus of texts emphasizes efficiency of movement via many new pedagogical approaches and course design structures associated with the ideology of remediation, including the corequisite approaches MDHE (2017) references working with Complete College America to scale up across the state,

approaches that include Adams, Gearhart, Miller, and Roberts's (2009) Accelerated Learning Program.

The ethic of expediency features prominently within the core rationale for the bill as it is laid out in section "2.0 Policy purpose and objectives" of the Missouri CBHE's *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*. As stated in this document, one purpose of the policy is to "decrease the time it takes for students to complete academic programs," as well as "make more efficient use of state resources" (CBHE, 2013). These concepts—often phrased exactly as they are in the contextualizing document—are echoed throughout MDHE's 2017 *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education* and other documents within the HB 1042 corpus, especially presentations given to update various groups about the implementation process. For instance, in the 2014 presentation "Principles in Best Practices in Remedial Education: Overview & What's next?," presenters Rusty Monhollon from the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Developmental Education Coordinator Melody Shipley include the following language into slide 7 to provide a rationale for the bill:

- decrease the time it takes for students to complete academic programs
- make more efficient use of state resources
- hold institutions accountable for policy compliance. (Slide 7)

Even in the 2017 *Annual Report* document, the exact or near exact language from the 2013 *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education* document is used, including the original core stated intent of HB 1042, "improving student retention and degree completion," an intent that is used to justify the people sorted, stigmatized, and excluded in the corpus of texts (CBHE, 2013).

Sorting the "Underprepared"

The emphasis on efficiency of time and resource usage within the HB 1042 corpus of texts is paired with another core feature of the ethic of expediency as it is enacted within the ideology of remediation: the impetus to sort, stigmatize, and exclude groups of people as a means of creating a more efficient educational system. In the *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*, this feature is most prominently communicated in section "10.0 Minimum Standards of Academic Competence," which sets what is known as a placement floor or threshold: a minimum standard under which potential students will not be admitted to higher education institutions (CBHE, 2013). Unlike states like Florida, which targeted coursework labeled developmental and gave students with a "standard Florida high school diploma" or who are "active members of the United States Armed Services" the option of whether to enroll in suggested coursework below the college level (Education Committee, 2013), HB 1042 instead targets students.

HB 1042's corpus of texts sort and exclude potential students in two ways, starting with the *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education*'s principles 1.4-1.6, which attempts to distinguish the term "developmental" from "remedial," a distinction that dissipates later in the document when the words begin to be used interchangeably (see principle 4.2 for an example: "The goal of developmental or remedial education is to prepare students for success in postsecondary education") (CBHE, 2013). This distinction is created within the document despite the fact that most historians of the ideology of remediation would note that the term "remedial" was largely supplanted by the term "developmental" (Boylan, 1995) before being supplanted within certain circles of composition by the term "basic writing" (Otte and Mlynarczyk, 2010).

As will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs, the unnamed authors of CBHE's (2013) *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education* explicitly state in principle 1.7, "HB 1042…is directed primarily at academic preparedness…[and] students' lack of academic preparedness," language that frames its distinctions between groups. Table 1.0 demonstrates the way the *Principles* document (CBHE, 2013) initially attempts to create distinctions between students, their reasons for being deemed unprepared, and their differing preparedness-related issues and needs: differentiating between "remedial" and "developmental" education, terms that the CBHE (2013) document notes are often used "interchangeably" but that will be differentiated to clarify the focus of HB 1042. As the Principles document (CBHE, 2013) highlights, the focus of HB 1042 is on "academic preparedness" and thus "remedial education"—and, by extension, primarily on traditional-aged students exiting the K-12 system or students who did not complete a high school diploma at all. By having this focus, CBHE (2013) is able to focus entire sections of the *Principles* document, including much of section 5.0 and all of section 6.0, on recommendations for high school preparation. While this focus on exiting all high school students may seem innocuous enough, the students who are more likely to be impacted are Black and Latinx students, students from higher poverty schools, and students from other high school contexts that supposedly do not prepare them, as multiple studies report these student groups are disproportionately placed into remedial/developmental education (Chen, 2016; Kolodner, Racino, and Quester, 2017; Ganga, Mazzariello, and Edgecombe, 2018). Another group of students who are likely to be impacted are students with disabilities who may have received a high school diploma under the modified curriculum allowed via page 17 of Missouri's *Graduation Requirements for Students in Missouri Public Schools* (MoDESE, 2017),

as these students often came up in faculty conversations I overheard while working in Missouri.

Table 1.0: Remedial vs. Developmental Education in Principles 1.4-1.6 (CBHE, 2013)

	Remedial education	Developmental education
Definition	"typically refers to a student's academic preparedness for postsecondary education, seeking to remedy the lack of skills that students need for college entry"	"addresses a more expansive set of learning challenges" and then provides a definition from the National Association for Developmental Education that "promotes the cognitive and affective growth of all postsecondary learners, at all levels of the learning continuum…[that] is sensitive and responsive to the individual differences and special needs among learners"
Definition of courses	"duplication of secondary courses in basic academic skills"	"education review courses aimed at strengthening the diverse talents of students, both academic and non-academic…also designed to review previous curricular areas of students who have not been involved in education for some time"
Definition of target student population/course audience(s)	"usually involving recent high school graduates or those students who did not complete their secondary curriculum"	"all postsecondary learners" "students who have not been involved in education for some time"
Possible interpreted target student population/course audience(s)	Anyone who does not fit the normative definitions of "academic preparedness" as indicated by whatever placement measures institutions select and by the standards of the predominantly white, middle- to upper-middle class educators who tend to make placement process decisions and teach first-year courses	Adult learners and anyone who does not fit the target audience for remedial courses due to lack of "academic preparedness"

Sorting and exclusion also occurs through the use of the language of preparedness within CBHE's *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* to describe its mechanism for sorting and excluding students, using a sliding scale of adjectives to describe different

preparation levels and then prescribe remedies in a manner reminiscent of the illness metaphors Villanueva (2013) notes are often used to describe basic writers. Section 5.8 delineates "significantly underprepared students," who supposedly "*need* [emphasis added] self-paced, mastery-based routes into programs of study," from "marginally underprepared students," who "*may benefit* [emphasis added] from alternate routes (e.g. co-requisite, bridge program, competency-based sequence) into a course of study" (CBHE, 2013). Section 10.1 introduces the language of exclusion and elimination that is a key element of the ideology of remediation regardless of the particular way that ideology is enacted in different localized contexts: "Students who are severely underprepared have little, if any, chance of earning a postsecondary credential in a timely manner."

Principle 10.2 provides additional description of these "severely underprepared" students and the burden they place upon institutions and, by extension, educators—a burden that does not conform to the ethic of expediency:

> 10.2 Too often, however, open enrollment institutions are expected to enroll students who lack even the most basic of literacy and academic skills. It is unreasonable to expect a student who has limited academic preparation to have success in college with cutting-edge remedial coursework. It is equally unreasonable to expect an institution to close the gap in a student's academic preparation through a one- or two-semester remediation sequence. (CBHE, 2013)

In this passage, several lexical items reference the notions of objectivity and logic core to decision-making that relies on the ethic of expediency and hint at the technological expediency that Katz (1992) notes is often intertwined with political expediency within the ethic of expediency. Often used to describe technological innovations, the adjective "cutting-edge"

suggests the most advanced, recent, or progressive form of coursework that will give an edge or advantage to students—an edge that lends efficiency to their educational process so long as they are not "a student who has limited academic preparation" (CBHE, 2013). In fact, the passage suggests, even with this advanced coursework, these "severely underprepared students" cannot be expected to progress through the efficient "one- or two-semester remediation sequence" that the passage makes clear should be the goal: believing these students could achieve this goal is "unreasonable," suggesting that the only objective, rationale, expedient course of action is to exclude these students.

To determine potential students' level of preparation, principle 10.2 then proceeds to say, "students wishing to take credit-bearing college-level courses…must demonstrate a minimal level of literacy and academic competence, as determined through appropriate and multiple assessments of learning" (CBHE, 2013). This language is repeated in principle 10.2: "The intent of this section is to require students to demonstrate a minimal level of literacy and academic competence before they can enroll" (CBHE, 2013). Later, in principle 10.3, students who do not meet this minimum threshold are explicitly sorted into "non-credit-bearing classes," and principle 10.5 makes further distinctions between

- "Students who score just above the Statewide Degree-Seeking Placement Threshold" who are prescribed "concentrated routes into programs of study with multiple-levels of support" and
- "Students who score below" the threshold who "should be referred to other state-funded educational opportunities (i.e. Adult Education and Literacy) before being retested for admission as a degree-seeking student" (CBHE, 2013).

One of the key recommendations in MDHE's (2017) *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education* is to "[d]evelop and implement threshold policies and practice" using exactly the same language from principle 10.2 (quoted earlier) in the *Principles* document (CBHE, 2013)—despite the 2017 report citing that "remediation decreased from 35.5 percent to 28.2 percent," (p. 3) a decrease that is apparently not enough to eliminate the need to set a threshold for excluding potential students. The continued emphasis on a threshold comes during a time when many institutions in Missouri and across the country are struggling due to declining enrollments and state-level financial support and increasing costs, among many other trends (Rudgers and Peterson, 2017).

Within the corpus of HB 1042 documents, the exclusionary language about thresholds and "severely underprepared students" stands in marked contrast to the stated "primary objective" of the law: "to improve student retention and increase educational attainment" (CBHE, 2013). When taken together, it is hard to ignore the juxtaposition of improving outcomes for some students—those deemed only "marginally underprepared" and those who are deemed to suffer due to the *Principles of Best Practices'* claim that "remedial education initiatives divert resources from other programs and credit-bearing coursework" (CBHE, 2013)—while providing a more expedient course of development for others and keeping others out altogether. This juxtaposition within the corpus of HB 1042 documents provides further evidence for the manner in which the sorting and exclusionary functions of the ideology of remediation function to help sustain the interrelated ethic of expediency, as certain groups of students are culled to expedite the process and free up resources for others.

Avoiding Remediation

Another, more recent facet of how the ethic of expediency functions within the ideology of remediation is to find mechanisms for students to avoid remediation. Many of the avoidance-oriented passages of the *Principles of Best Practices* document and *Annual Report* suggest remediation is a form of punishment, where testing and early interventions (such as summer bridge programs) can be used as preventative measures to avoid the punishment that results in lack of expediency. For instance, all of section 6.0 of the *Principles of Best Practices* document is devoted to the "CBHE Recommended College Preparatory High School Curriculum," which includes a "recommended 24-unit high school core curriculum…for students who plan to enroll in a Missouri college or university" that acts as a core form of prevention against what is referred to as "college-content readiness": "the level of preparation a student needs to succeed in specific credit-bearing courses in college" (CBHE, 2013). Principle 6.2 notes the punishment for lack of ability "to demonstrate competency in high school core content": "placement in developmental/remedial coursework at additional time and expenses to the student" (CBHE, 2013).

Toward that end, much of section 5.0: "Guidelines for Best Practices in Remediation" of the *Principles of Best Practice* is devoted to describing how the ethic of expediency should be carried out. Using passive voice and thus simultaneously avoiding naming individual contributors and focusing on organizational membership, principle 5.1 assures readers that "The following have been identified by the CBHE and two-year and four-year institutions as 'best practices in remediation,' based on research…with expertise in the subject"—research that is not cited (CBHE, 2013). As it relates to the avoidance of remediation,

- principle 5.2 emphasizes the need for high schools to "assess students' basic skills prior to the 10th grade so that students who require remediation can receive instruction before entering public postsecondary education,"
- and principle 5.3 states that "high school exit outcomes need to be equivalent to college-level entry skills."

The ethic of expediency is reinforced in principles 5.5 and 5.7 via the phrase "as quickly as possible" with the addition of the phrase "to save students time and money" in principle 5.7 (CBHE, 2013).

Enforcing Mainstreaming Efforts

Intertwined with avoidance efforts are efforts to mainstream students into entry-level first-year classes via redesigned courses, efforts that again are indicative of the ethic of expediency as the portions of the HB 1042 corpus that mention mainstreaming efforts tend to be paired with the "as quickly as possible" phrase. For instance, in the *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education*, principle 5.7 calls on institution to "explore alternate delivery methods (a.k.a. course redesign) to move students into credit bearing courses as quickly as possible, to save students time and money" (CBHE, 2013). The *Annual Report on Best Practices* is more assertive in its promotion of mainstreaming efforts, using language reminiscent of the ethic of expediency to urge institutions to "[a]dopt accelerated remedial education models *as soon as possible* [emphasis added]" (MDHE, 2017, p. 3). Later, the ethic is further reinforced when the document pairs survey data suggesting that "corequisite remediation is highly effective" with information that the state is, in effect, enforcing a move toward corequisite models via the state's partnership "with 22 public institutions and Complete College America on the *Corequisite at*

Scale initiative" that requires a corequisite model by this academic year (2017-18) (MDHE, 2017, p. 12-13).

As Lamos (2000) notes, there are many unacknowledged "macro-level social and political implications of these mainstreaming arguments. In effect, they suggest that BW [basic writing] creates inequality through its practices; thus by removing BW, they insist that inequality is removed along with it" (p. 38). Unfortunately, as Lamos (2000) points out, this line of thinking ignores the larger "racialized economic, legal, and educational processes" that create the "inequalities present in BW" and the ideology of remediation it fits within (p. 38). Both he and Melzer (2015) highlight that the form of the program does not erase the problematic sorting, stigmatizing, and exclusionary effects of the ideology of remediation that are features of any program associated with the ideology of remediation, including corequisite models like the one Adams, et al. (2009) have promoted all across the country.

Faculty Participation and Reinforcement of the Ideology of Remediation

Part of what distinguishes the stigmatizing, exclusionary language of the corpus of Missouri House Bill 1042 texts from other recent textual examples of the ideology of remediation is that so-called remedial or developmental education is not dismissed as wholly problematic and averted altogether, as it was in Florida. Rather, even after pointing to the way resources are diverted "from other programs and credit-bearing coursework" to provide "remedial education," the unnamed authors of CBHE's (2013) *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education* explicitly call out the need for and effectiveness of remedial education, asserting in principle 10.2 that, "Remedial education is essential to Missouri achieving its goal of increased educational attainment."

One of Melzer's (2015) key findings is "faculty complicity in the discourse of" what he calls "the Remedial Writing Framework": "the discourse event of Early Start reveals that basic and developmental writing have been coopted by the Remedial Writing Framework" (p. 92) in a manner that supports earlier critiques of basic writing by the likes of Bartholomae (1993) and Shor (1997). Basic writing itself is a manifestation of the ideology of remediation, so these scholars, as well as scholars like Stuckey (1991) who link beliefs, practices, and pedagogies surrounding literacy with class-based systems of oppression, would find it unsurprising that English faculty would be complicit in the maintenance of the ideology via their participation in and support of ideological state-sponsored apparatuses like Missouri's Committee on College and Career Readiness that helped craft the language of the *Principles of Best Practice in Remedial Education* and gave input on MDHE's *Annual Report*, directly shaping the implementation of HB 1042 and enacting its ethic of expediency.

Discussion and Implications

This study has a number of limitations, including its focus on two key texts created by state agencies and my biases going into the research as someone who was involved in giving feedback on early drafts of the *Principles of Best Practice*—feedback that was disregarded, as it called into question section 10's threshold language. Another major limitation is the lack of attention to the placement issues that surface within the corpus of HB 1042 texts, a matter that merits a future paper of its own. The MDHE 2017 *Annual Report on Best Practices in Remedial Education* merits additional attention, as its design, structure, and numerous other elements provide ample additional directions for analysis.

Even with these limitations, the language of the corpus of HB 1042 texts provides ample examples of the ideology of remediation and the associated ethic of expediency, examples that

suggest the ideology of remediation and the various ideological state apparatuses that support it, including government bodies and faculty organizations, continue to remain more securely entrenched than the more aspirational critical discourse analyses of Melzer (2015) might suggest. In fact, one area of overlap in policy groups like Complete College America (n.d.) that tout statistics about the negative outcomes of students placed into developmental classes and ideology of remediation educational organizations like the National Association of Developmental Education is an emphasis on reform over elimination.

The HB 1042 corpus of texts lends further evidence for this ethic of expediency-informed reform movement with its pro-remediation stances that exist alongside language that supports the development of strategies for avoiding remediation and mainstreaming students via "cutting-edge remedial coursework" in an effort "to progress into college-level gateway courses *as quickly as possible* [emphasis added]" (CBHE, 2013; MDHE, 2017). This reform-oriented positioning may be in part due to a secondary issue related to the HB 1042 corpus's key influences: faculty and program administrators with jobs intricately intertwined with the ideology of remediation. HB 1042's core framing document, the *Principles of Best Practices in Remedial Education*, and several other key documents analyzed as part of the HB 1042 corpus were co-created and/or shaped by individuals and organizations (such as MoDEC) who are/were proponents of remedial/developmental education and the associated ideology and thus have a vested interest in the maintenance of this ideology.

Because of the ways in which the ideology of remediation and its ethic of expediency work to maintain hegemonic hierarchies, this investment in the ideology of remediation on the part of faculty and program administrators in particular merits more attention and thought. These educators and program administrators, as well as the members of Missouri's Department of

Higher Education (MDHE), appear to have subscribed to the ethic of expediency that has become a current, normative element of the ideology of remediation. In the context of the HB 1042 corpus of texts and their insistence on a threshold, the reliance on the ethic of expediency positions Missouri's English educators as oppressors regardless of how enlightened or "cutting-edge" their pedagogy may appear and has especially problematic implications for specific groups of students, including students from culturally and linguistically marginalized communities and disabled students (CBHE, 2013; MDHE, 2017, p. 3).

The language in HB 1042 parrots the "ability-to-benefit" language for Federal Student Aid as amended in 2012, which makes high school equivalencies the minimum threshold for demonstrating college readiness with two "Ability-to-benefit Alternatives" that include institutionally-defined tests and completion of six college credits without the support of federal financial aid (Federal Student Aid, n.d.). This "ability-to-benefit" language acts as coded, exclusionary language for people labeled outside of groups considered educationally normative or mainstream: middle- to upper-class, white, able-bodied people. Scholars like Bartholomae (1993) and Shor (1997) are among the many scholars who have pointed out this exclusionary function of the ideology of remediation as it is manifest in composition. In his call for the elimination of basic writing, Shor (1997) writes,

> I see the BW/comp story as part of a long history of curricula for containment and control, part of the system of tracking to divide and deter non-elite students in school and college. The students themselves are tested and declared deficient by the system, which blames the apparently illiterate and cultureless victim, stigmatizing the individual as the problem while requiring BW/comp as the remedy. (p. 98)

Shor (1997), Horner (1996), Lamos (2000), and Vidali (2007) are among the many who point to the classist, able-ist, racialized discourse embedded within the ideology of remediation as it has been discussed within basic writing, the sub-field of composition and rhetoric that developed in the 1970s largely in response to open admissions policies at places like the City University of New York (CUNY). As Lamos (2000) highlights,

> these processes of racialization within BW and open admissions suggest that race is fundamental to issues of educational access. As multitudes of non-traditional students seek higher levels of education, they are clearly labeled and sorted according to racialized conceptions of who does and who does not belong at the university. In the process, notions of race, academic ability, and overall worth become intertwined such that minority status and remedial status become one and the same. (p. 26)

Lamos argues that "racialization is endemic to educational enterprises" and that "[i]t is…important to look at discourses in which race is conspicuously absent," highlighting the rhetorical framing surrounding the end of open admissions at CUNY that relied on terms "like 'standards' and 'academic excellence'…and 'standards'" (p. 33)—seemingly neutral, even positive, terminology when viewed from an ethos of expediency that is reminiscent of the preparation language embedded within HB 1042. As Lamos (2000) notes, this coded language—the "discourses of 'standards'" or, as it is described in the corpus of HB 1042 texts, "preparedness"—serves to "re-render whiteness and the power" attached with whiteness as invisible, serving to "promote white hegemony" (p. 33-34).

Melzer (2015) attempts a positive reframing of his finding that faculty are complicit in some of the problematic aspects of the discourse surrounding basic writing, giving the basic writing movement of the 1960s and 70s credit for opening up some avenues of access and then

advocates for faculty being on the front line to “disrupt the discourse of the Remedial Writing Framework,” as he calls it (p. 100-101). Given how well he establishes the degree to which key faculty and writing program administrators subscribe to the ideology of remediation, it is hard not to see his suggestions for subverting the ideology via yet another course structure and via empowerment of faculty as either naïve or overly optimistic. Ideologies cannot be easily altered or mediated when key people in relative positions of power associated with the ideology are also supported by the ideology, and in the case of the ideology of remediation, questioning this ideology works against the vested interests—economic, social, and otherwise—of faculty and administrators who primarily teach classes or direct programs labeled remedial, developmental, or basic.

In her wide-ranging critique of many of the key scholars (Mike Rose and Adrienne Rich, for instance) and organizations (the National Council of Teachers of English that is the parent organization for TYCA, for instance) associated with the ideology of remediation and the overlapping ideology of literacy, Stuckey (1991) writes, “The ways in which literacy is thought about in this country are reductive and dangerous. In their application, they narrow the range of pedagogy and suppress the possibilities of research. This is the real literacy crisis” (p. 21). Her condemnation of those in English is harsh: “We in English departments usually believe that what we are doing is right” (p. 21). After critiquing Freire, she (1991) highlights the way that literacy is often positioned as though it

> Confers special power, the power to be human. To be wanting in literacy is to be wanting in human fulfillment. But literacy is more than self-fulfillment. Literacy is also social and political and economic in nature. Society wields its literacy more powerfully than the individual and a fight against the literate bureaucracy is more than, say, a fight against

> City Hall. Literacy neither imprisons nor free people; it merely embodies the enormous complexities of how and why some people live comfortably and others do not. (p. 67-68)

This quote encapsulates many of the core issues related to the ideology of remediation as it overlaps with ideologies associated with literacy and education: attempting to unveil and critique the ideology of remediation and its associated ethic of expediency requires enormous effort, especially given the ways in which it has become an ideological state apparatus through policies like HB 1042. Despite decades of scholarship arguing for reframing and even eliminating basic writing and other programmatic manifestations of the ideology of remediation (Adler-Kassner & Harrington, 2002; Adler-Kassner & Harrington, 2006; Bartholomae, 1993; Melzer, 2015; Rose, 1985; Shor, 1997), English faculty continue to allow and enable the ideology of remediation to flourish, along with its problematic effects on the groups it is used to exclude.

It could be argued that these educators are victimless agents subject to the same neoliberal, hegemonic influences that shape the ideology of remediation; and the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) notes (2015) that "[t]wo-year college faculty are frequently charged with implementing these initiatives and asked to make decisions about program redesign with little time for study and without training and compensation" (p. 227). These rejoinders in mind, Bartholomae (1993), Shor (1997), Lamos (2000), Troyka (2000), and Melzer (2015) suggest that there has been ample agency on the part of English educators—and ample explicit support for the ideology of remediation in its various iterations. In fact, as Bartholomae (1993) suggests, basic writing appears to exist at least in part to justify itself, including faculty jobs, and this ideology. Consequently, though Melzer (2015) advocates otherwise, it might be useful to be cautious and thoughtful about the extent to which English educators should be enjoined to be the

front people for bringing not only awareness but also resistance against the ideology of remediation and its associated ethic of expediency. As a final thought, I offer that one key voice is missing from much of the scholarship related to the ideology of remediation: students and the potential students who are excluded and effectively silenced as a result of the ethic of expediency. They might be better positioned to lead the disruptive efforts Melzer (2015) suggests if any are to instigate a serious effort at dismantling this ideology that re-invents, reforms, and re-trenches itself in response to the pressures of the very same ethic of expediency that propels it.

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APPENDIX D

CHAPTER V UNFINISHED DATA TABLES

Table 9:

Remediation is a Barrier/Ineffective Examples and Document Comparison

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	**2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	***2012 Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
METAPHORS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF REMEDIATION			
-"Remediation is broken, producing few students who ultimately graduate. Sadly, efforts intended to catch students up are most often leaving them behind." (p. 3) -"Broken" used 5 times SEE PAGES 14-15: -Pejorative metaphor: "Remedial classes have become the Bermuda Triangle of higher education. Most students are lost, and few will ever been seen on graduation day." -"It's time to **fix broken approaches** to remediation"--KEY DIFFERENCES IS "APPROACHES"	-Pejorative metaphors, adjectives, etc.: "bridge to nowhere" in title acts as extended analogy for the document -"Remediation is a **broken system**" on title page. -Identification of "remediation" as a "system"=no mention of people, institutions, etc. -"Broken" used 6 times -"It's time to close the Bridge to Nowhere." (p. 2) -Labeling: "Sadly, remediation has become instead higher education's 'Bridge to Nowhere.'"(p. 2) -"It was hoped that remediation programs would be **an academic bridge**...This **broken remedial bridge is**	-More positive phrasing: "transforming" in title, "current system of remedial education..built on a common sense premise....that..are flawed" (p. 3), "numbers tell a dispiriting story" (p. 3) -"Remedial education as it is commonly designed and delivered is not the aid to student success that we all hoped. It is time for policymakers and institutional leaders to take their cue from new research and emerging evidence-based practices that are leading the way toward a fundamentally new model of instruction and support for students who enter	-Pejorative "broken remediation system" language from *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (2012): A. Introduction 3. Guiding principles a. Although students should be college-ready upon graduating high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding.

Table 9 Continued **2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)**	**2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	**2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
METAPHORS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF REMEDIATION			
-Establishes "Remediation is a broken system": "The current remediation system is broken;" (p. 15).	—**travelled** by some 1.7 million beginning students each year, most of whom **will not reach their destination** -- graduation," "DROPOUT EXIT RAMP" used to label four ways "[r]emediation is a classic case of system failure" (p. 2) -Loaded language: "If not for their willingness to see **the truth in the data** and to reject broken methods and long-held beliefs, a clear path forward would still be unknown. If not for their years of hard work and accomplishment, **proven** approaches that enable success for unprepared college students could not be recommended today."	—college not optimally prepared for college-level work" (p. 5). -Still has negative examples: "failings of the current system" (p. 3)	

Table 9 Continued ***2011 Time is the Enemy* (CCA)**	***2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	***2012 Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
ANTI-THRESHOLD LANGUAGE: -suggests beliefs and values that prioritize college student access though in specific ways			
WORK ON	-"The intentions were noble. It was hoped that remediation programs would be an academic bridge from poor high school preparation to college readiness — a grand idea inspired by our commitment to expand access to all who seek a college degree. -"Can an '**open access' college be truly open access if it denies so many access to its college-level courses**?" (p. 2): reframes what college access means--access to college-level courses--rather than attempting to set a new bar for gaining college entrance	-"Across our country, state policymakers, higher education systems, and individual institutions are implementing new ways to improve college completion rates **without sacrificing quality or access**." (p. 1) -"The principles that guide this statement advocate changing current remedial education systems so that **all students, no matter their skill levels or background,** have a real opportunity to earn a college credential. Some may see this statement as supporting changes that discourage or divert students from their pursuit of a college credential. Nothing is further from the truth. Rather, we believe the systemic changes we propose, all of which can be found in some colleges and state systems around the country, are—	

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)	2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education*	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Outline**
ANTI-THRESHOLD LANGUAGE: -suggests beliefs and values that prioritize college student access though in specific ways			
		—much more likely than current practice to provide a clear path that all students can follow to achieve their academic and career goals. In the end, **the strategies we propose increase overall college completion rates, particularly among students who have traditionally been underserved by our postsecondary institutions.**” (p. 2) -SEE ALL OF PRINCIPLE 5 (p. 9).	

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	**2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	**2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
IT'S NOT YOU, EDUCATORS--IT'S THE SYSTEM -frames "remediation" as a system -tricky rhetorical dance of excluding faculty from explicit blame while implicating their work			
-"The current remediation system is broken" (p. 15)	-"Remediation is a **broken system**" on title page. -Identification of "remediation" as a "system"=no mention of people, institutions, etc. -"DROPOUT EXIT RAMP" used to label four ways "[r]emediation is a classic case of system failure" (p. 2)	"We cannot wait to act on what we know. It is not fair to students — nor is it fair to the faculty who teach them. It makes little sense to ask educators to be held accountable for student results when they must operate within such a flawed system." (p. 2) ---Bailey, et al. (2012) make a similar claim about the problematic "system" of developmental education in their response to Goudas and Boylan (2012)	

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	**2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	**2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
DISCOURSES OF ACCESS AND EDUCATION AS SOCIAL MOBILITY TOOL--contrast to threshold			
WORK ON FILLING OUT	-"If not for their willingness to see the truth in the data and to reject broken methods and long-held beliefs, a clear path forward would still be unknown. If not for their years of hard work and accomplishment, proven approaches that enable success for unprepared college students could not be recommended today. **They were working simply to help save their students' dreams**" (Sec. "Reformers Who Lead It").	-Higher education has always been a pathway to opportunity. For generations of Americans of all backgrounds, an education beyond high school has led to upward mobility in our society. This role for higher education is more important today than ever before. With evidence suggesting that a ticket to the middle class comes in the form of a postsecondary credential, institutions must take extraordinary measures to ensure that those who seek a postsecondary credential are able to earn it. To improve their economic futures, postsecondary students need to enter academic programs that result in degrees and certificates of value that prepare them for either further education or entry—	

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	**2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	***2012 Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
DISCOURSES OF ACCESS AND EDUCATION AS SOCIAL MOBILITY TOOL--contrast to threshold			
		—into the workforce. Across our country, state policymakers, higher education systems, and individual institutions are implementing new ways to improve college completion rates without sacrificing quality or access. (p. 1) -This is no time for merely testing the waters or for treading water. We can do better and both research and practice point the way forward. The task that lies ahead is to put this knowledge together with an urgency to drive large-scale change — for the sake of millions of students and families who are counting on postsecondary education as the first step to a better future. (p. 12)	

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	**2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)**	**2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**
Below = Comparison of Language across Documents Orange = Language from *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* found in *Best Practices* Yellow = Language from *Transforming Remedial Education* found in *Best Practices*			
	Students should be college-ready upon graduating high school. However, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding. (p. 7)	NOT FOUND	A. Introduction 3. Guiding principles a. Although students should be college-ready upon graduating high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding.
	Align requirements for entry-level college courses with requirements for high school diplomas. Academic requirements for a high school diploma should be the floor for entry into postsecondary education. K–12 and higher education course-taking requirements should be aligned. Provide 12th grade courses designed to prepare students for college-level math and English. (p. 7)—	One final note: Postsecondary leaders must work closely with K–12, adult basic education, and other training systems to reduce the need for remediation before students enroll in their institutions. Postsecondary institutions should leverage the Common Core State Standards by working with K–12 schools to improve the skills of their students before they graduate from high school. Early assessment of students in high—	C. Guidelines 1. College readiness b. Early assessment opportunities for high school students. 1. Provide 12th grade courses designed to prepare students for college-level math and English. 2. Requirements for high school diplomas should be aligned with requirements for entry-level college courses. The academic requirements for a high school diploma should be the floor for entry into postsecondary—

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)	2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education*	2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline
Below = Comparison of Language across Documents Orange = Language from *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* found in *Best Practices* Yellow = Language from *Transforming Remedial Education* found in *Best Practices*			
	—Administer college-ready anchor assessments in high school. (p. 7) Use these on-track assessments to develop targeted interventions. (p. 7)	—school, using existing placement exams and eventually the Common Core college and career readiness assessments, which lead to customized academic skill development during the senior year, should be a priority for states. (p. 12)	—education. 3. Administer college-ready anchor assessments in high school and use to develop targeted interventions.
Overhaul the current placement system. Current placement tests are not predictive. If placement tests are given, provide students with pretest guidance, practice tests, and time to brush up. (p. 15)	Use multiple measures of student readiness for college. (p. 7)	Principle 6. Multiple measures should be used to provide guidance in the placement of students in gateway courses and programs of study.	C. Guidelines 2. Assessment and Placement b. Multiple measures should be used to provide guidance in the placement of students in gateway courses and programs of study.
Divert students from traditional remedial programs — they aren't working. Mainstream as many students as possible into college-level courses. Provide co-requisite and embedded support for those needing—	Get students to commit to programs of study ASAP. Using placement scores, high school transcripts, and predictive tools to determine student aptitude, guide all students to choose among a limited number of—	Principle 1. Completion of a set of gateway courses for a program of study is a critical measure of success toward college completion. Principle 2. The content in required gateway courses—	C. Guidelines 2. Assessment and Placement c. Place students in the right math. Most students are placed in algebra pathways when statistics or quantitative math would be most appropriate to prepare them for their—

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)	2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education*	2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline
Below = Comparison of Language across Documents Orange = Language from *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* found in *Best Practices* Yellow = Language from *Transforming Remedial Education* found in *Best Practices*			
—extra help. Intensify instruction and minimize the time necessary to prepare students for entry into college-level courses. Eliminate the many exit points where students are lost by either not passing or not enrolling in courses. Provide alternative pathways to a career certificate or career-related credential for students with major academic weaknesses. Answer the fundamental question — is what's being taught in developmental education what students really need? It's time to revisit both the structure and goals of remedial math. Math should be a gateway, not a gatekeeper, to	—first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM — as soon as possible. Students should make the big choices of programs of study informed with an understanding of program requirements and available supports to achieve their career goals. Once they do, place them into structured program pathways constructed of relevant, sequenced courses chosen for them. Establish "default" programs for students not ready to commit. No longer allow students to be considered "unclassified." Upon enrollment, nudge them into first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM. This ensures a coherent pathway from the	— should align with a student's academic program of study — particularly in math. Principle 3. Enrollment in a gateway college-level course should be the default placement for many more students. Principle 4. Additional academic support should be integrated with gateway college-level course content — as a co-requisite, not a pre-requisite. Principle 5. Students who are significantly underprepared for college-level academic work need accelerated routes into programs of study. Principle 7. Students should enter a meta-major when they enroll in college and start a program of study in their first year, in order to	—chosen programs of study and careers. d. Students should commit to programs of study ASAP 1. guide all students to choose among a limited number of first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM — as soon as possible. 2. The content in required gateway courses should align with a student's academic program of study — particularly in math. 3. Students should make the big choices of programs of study informed with an understanding of program requirements and available supports to achieve their career goals. 4. Once they do, place them into structured program pathways constructed of relevant, sequenced courses chosen for them.—

Table 9 Continued *2011 Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)	2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education*	2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline
Below = Comparison of Language across Documents Orange = Language from *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* found in *Best Practices* Yellow = Language from *Transforming Remedial Education* found in *Best Practices*			
successful college and everyday life. Reading and writing should be integrated.	beginning with core college-level credits that will count toward certificates and degrees. By doing so, students avoid excessive course-taking while wandering the curriculum, shortening the time it takes to graduate. Place students in the right math. Most students are placed in algebra pathways when statistics or quantitative math would be most appropriate to prepare them for their chosen programs of study and careers. Expand co-requisite supports for additional college-level courses. Additional introductory courses serve as gateway classes for programs of study, not just English and math. Given high failure rates, they have	maximize their prospects of earning a college degree.	e. Establish "default" programs for students not ready to commit. 1. Enrollment in a gateway college-level course should be the default placement for many more students.

Table 9 Continued

2011 *Time is the Enemy* (CCA)	2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* (CCA)	2012 *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education*	2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline
Below = Comparison of Language across Documents Orange = Language from *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere* found in *Best Practices* Yellow = Language from *Transforming Remedial Education* found in *Best Practices*			
	become gatekeeper courses instead, too often blocking students' entry into their chosen fields. To help unprepared students get a strong, early start, build extra supports around introductory courses necessary for success like entry-level anatomy, biology, physiology, physics, accounting, and drafting. (p. 11) ...offer students with significant academic challenges skill certificate programs with embedded remediation. (p. 12)		

Table 10

2012 Bridge to Nowhere, 2013 Principles of Best Practices Document Outline, and 2013 Principles of Best Practices Document Final Version Comparison

2012 *Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere*	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Final**
EVIDENCE FOR "REMEDIATION IS A BARRIER/INEFFECTIVE" DISCOURSE		
-"Broken": used 5 times -Remediation referred to as a "system" (as documented in Table X.X) -See Table X.X for more	-"Broken": used 1 time in guided principles -Remediation referred to as a system - uses language from 2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere -See Table X.X for more	-**No evidence found** -"Broken": used 0 times -Remediation never referred to as a system. Remedial and developmental education used throughout the document. -No pejorative descriptions or metaphors for remediation used. Instead, the document positions "[r]emedial education" as "**essential** to Missouri achieving its goal of increased educational attainment" (10.2, pg. 8). Also, "Missouri institutions of higher education are committed to providing opportunities for underprepared students to attain the skills they need to succeed in college" (4.3, pg. 2). AS WILL BE DISCUSSED MORE IN CHAPTER 3, significantly changed discourses, including focus on "developmental and remedial students" (5.7, pg. 4) and underprepared students instead of remediation as a system.

Table 10 Continued ***2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Final**
COMPARATIVE SECTIONS/LANGUAGE (WHEN AVAILABLE)		
Students should be college-ready upon graduating high school. However, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding. (p. 7)	A. Introduction 3. Guiding principles a. Although students should be college-ready upon graduating high school, colleges and universities have a responsibility to fix the broken remedial system that stops so many from succeeding.	4.0 Guiding Principles 4.1 The primary goal of this policy is student retention and increased educational attainment through degree completion. - radically different goal from "fix the broken remedial system" 4.2 The goal of developmental or remedial education is to prepare students for success in postsecondary education. 4.3 Ideally, all students would be prepared for the demands of postsecondary education upon graduation from high school, and that is an objective to which the P-20 education community aspires. At present, however, many high school graduates enter postsecondary education unprepared for entry-level coursework. To that end, Missouri institutions of higher education are committed to providing opportunities for underprepared students to attain the skills they need to succeed in college. 4.4 These efforts include, but are not limited to, outreach to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education—

Table 10 Continued ***2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Final**
COMPARATIVE SECTIONS/LANGUAGE (WHEN AVAILABLE)		
		(DESE) to align standards, and to school districts to align curriculum. For these efforts to be successful, DESE and K-12 districts must become collaborative partners in the process. 4.5 Some states have prohibited four-year institutions from offering remedial education. CBHE will no longer prohibit selective and highly-selective public institutions from offering remedial coursework. This policy does not seek to limit remediation to a single sector but to work collaboratively to improve student learning outcomes and increase educational attainment. 4.6 Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to continually evaluate and improve their delivery of developmental education. Institutions must research and engage in instructional best practices within developmental coursework.

Table 10 Continued [*2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere*]	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Outline**	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Final**
COMPARATIVE SECTIONS/LANGUAGE (WHEN AVAILABLE)		
Align requirements for entry-level college courses with requirements for high school diplomas. Academic requirements for a high school diploma should be the floor for entry into postsecondary education. K–12 and higher education course-taking requirements should be aligned. Provide 12th grade courses designed to prepare students for college-level math and English. (p. 7) Administer college-ready anchor assessments in high school. (p. 7) Use these on-track assessments to develop targeted interventions. (p. 7)	C. Guidelines 1. College readiness b. Early assessment opportunities for high school students. 1. Provide 12th grade courses designed to prepare students for college-level math and English. 2. Requirements for high school diplomas should be aligned with requirements for entry-level college courses. The academic requirements for a high school diploma should be the floor for entry into postsecondary education. 3. Administer college-ready anchor assessments in high school and use to develop targeted interventions.	5.2 It is incumbent on both higher education institutions and DESE to work collaboratively to make sure that high school programs of study line up to college-entrance expectations. More specifically, course-taking requirements for high school diplomas should be aligned with requirements for entry-level college courses. High schools should assess students' basic skills prior to the 10th grade so that students who require remediation can receive instruction before entering public postsecondary education. 5.3 Secondary school curriculum and postsecondary curriculum must be aligned so that the completion of the high school curriculum transitions seamlessly to the beginning of the college curriculum. Specifically, high school exit outcomes need to be equivalent to college-level entry skills. Once in place, the high school and postsecondary curriculum must be reviewed periodically by an appropriate body (to be determined) to ensure the fidelity of the alignment. 5.3a At each institution, higher education faculty teaching remedial or—

Table 10 Continued ***2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Final**
		—developmental courses and those teaching gateway courses by content area should work collaboratively to create a seamless transition from developmental coursework to college-level coursework. Exit outcomes should be aligned with entry-level expectations. Discussion should include topics such as skill attainment and student success behaviors. 5.4 Institutions of higher education must assess the basic skills of all certificate- or degree seeking students, based on statewide minimum assessment standards for access to the college-level curriculum.
Use multiple measures of student readiness for college. (p. 7)	C. Guidelines 2. Assessment and Placement b. Multiple measures should be used to provide guidance in the placement of students in gateway courses and programs of study.	5.4a Accurate placement in appropriate coursework is key to student success. To improve accuracy, institutions must use multiple measures to assess student readiness for gateway courses and programs of study. See all of section 9.0 Assessment and Placement, which includes a table of statewide college-level placement scores for six standardized tests: 9.0 Assessment and Placement 9.1 The statewide placement

Table 10 Continued ***2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere***	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Outline**	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Final**
		policy [currently under development] is applicable to any incoming student entering a Missouri public postsecondary institution. All certificate- or degree-seeking students should be assessed in mathematics, English, and reading. 9.2 Placement of students into appropriate college-level courses must be based on multiple assessment measures, which provide a more precise measurement of a student's ability to succeed in college-level coursework. Institutions may use an array of assessment instruments to place students in college-level courses, including—but not limited to—SAT or ACT scores, high school grade point average, high school end-of-course examination scores, or an institutional created assessment instrument. An institution opting to use one of the assessments listed below to place students in college-level courses shall adhere to the statewide placement score. This table will be reviewed annually once Missouri data are collected. Placement scores may be adjusted higher or lower based on empirical data of student performance in college mathematics and

Table 10 Continued [*2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere*]	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Outline**	**2013** ***Principles of Best Practices*** **- Final**
		college writing courses. See all of section 10 for threshold: “10.0 Minimum Standards of Academic Competence”
Get students to commit to programs of study ASAP. Using placement scores, high school transcripts, and predictive tools to determine student aptitude, guide all students to choose among a limited number of first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM — as soon as possible. Students should make the big choices of programs of study informed with an understanding of program requirements and available supports to achieve their career goals. Once they do, place them into structured program pathways constructed of relevant, sequenced courses chosen for them. Establish “default” programs for students not ready to commit. No longer allow students to be considered “unclassified.” Upon enrollment, nudge them into first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM. This ensures a coherent pathway from the beginning, with core	C. Guidelines 2. Assessment and Placement c. Place students in the right math. Most students are placed in algebra pathways when statistics or quantitative math would be most appropriate to prepare them for their chosen programs of study and careers. d. Students should commit to programs of study ASAP 1. guide all students to choose among a limited number of first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM — as soon as possible. 2. The content in required gateway courses should align with a student’s academic program of study — particularly in math. 3. Students should make the big choices of programs of study informed with an understanding of program requirements and available supports to achieve their career goals. 4. Once they do, place them into structured program pathways constructed of relevant, sequenced courses chosen for them.	5.5 The completion of a set of gateway courses (see glossary for definition) for a course of study is a critical measure of success toward college completion. Remedial education should be designed to help students complete gateway courses in their course of study as quickly as possible. 5.6 The content in required gateway courses should align with a student’s academic course of study — particularly in math. College algebra may be an appropriate gateway course for many academic programs, but it should not be the only mathematics pathway for students to earn a postsecondary certificate or degree. Students seeking degrees in non-STEM fields may be served better by other gateway courses such as statistics or geometry. 5.7 Institutions should explore alternate delivery methods (a.k.a course redesign) to move students into credit bearing courses as quickly as possible, to save students time and money. These methods

Table 10 Continued

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college-level credits that will count toward certificates and degrees. By doing so, students avoid excessive course-taking while wandering the curriculum, shortening the time it takes to graduate. Place students in the right math. Most students are placed in algebra pathways when statistics or quantitative math would be most appropriate to prepare them for their chosen programs of study and careers. Expand co-requisite supports for additional college-level courses. Additional introductory courses serve as gateway classes for programs of study, not just English and math. Given high failure rates, they have become gatekeeper courses instead, too often blocking students' entry into their chosen fields. To help unprepared students get a strong, early start, build extra supports around introductory courses necessary for success like entry-level anatomy, biology, physiology, physics, accounting, and drafting. (p. 11)	e. Establish "default" programs for students not ready to commit. 1. Enrollment in a gateway college-level course should be the default placement for many more students. 2. Upon enrollment, nudge them into first-year pathways — for example, health, business, liberal arts, or STEM—to ensure a coherent pathway from the beginning, with core college-level credits that will count toward certificates and degrees. f. Expand co-requisite supports for additional college-level courses. 1. To help unprepared students get a strong, early start, build extra supports around introductory courses necessary for success like entry-level anatomy, biology, physiology, physics, accounting, and drafting. g. Students who are significantly underprepared for college-level academic work need accelerated routes into programs of study.	should provide appropriate instruction to accommodate the diversity of their developmental and remedial students. 5.8 Students who are significantly underprepared for college-level academic work need self-paced, mastery-based routes into programs of study. Students who are marginally underprepared may benefit from alternate routes (e.g. co-requisite, bridge program, competency-based sequence) into a course of study.

Table 10 Continued ***2012 Remediation...Bridge to Nowhere***	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Outline**	**2013 *Principles of Best Practices* - Final**
...offer students with significant academic challenges skill certificate programs with embedded remediation. (p. 12)		

VITA

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Education

PhD in English — *Old Dominion University* (2022)

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Master of Arts in Writing — *Missouri State University* (2004)

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Faculty Experience

Colorado Northwestern Community College — *Craig, CO*
Avila University — *Kansas City, MO*
Metropolitan Community College — *Kansas City, MO*
Lane Community College — *Eugene, OR*
East Central College — *Union, MO*
Johnson County Community College — *Overland Park, KS*
Missouri State University — *Springfield, MO*

Program Administration Experience

Avila University — *Director Academic Success and Tutoring Services* (2021-2022)

Lane Community College — *ATS and Writing Center Coordinator* (2016-2021)

University of Central Missouri — *Supplemental Instruction Coordinator* (2015-2016)

East Central College — *Director, Developmental Education Programs* (2014-2015)

Metropolitan Community College — *Academic Success Director* (2011-2014)

Selected Publications

"Am I a WPA?: Embracing the Multiverse of WPA Labor in Community College Contexts"
Co-Authored with Nicole Hancock
WPA:Writing Program Administration — Summer 2020

"Plenary Panel Sustainable Becomings: Women's Career Trajectories in Writing Program Administration" — *Co-Authored with Louise Wetherbee Phelps, et al.*
WPA: Writing Program Administration — Fall 2019

Honors

League for Innovation in the Community College (2021), Schafer League for Innovation Award (2017, 2019), Midwest First-Year Student Champion (2015), MCC Faculty Awards (2010, 2013)