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**THE ROLE OF ENCULTURATION IN STUDENT WRITING-RELATED BELIEFS, VALUES,
AND THE POTENTIAL FOR TRANSFER**

by

JOSEPH PASZEK

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, MI

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2016

MAJOR: ENGLISH (Rhetoric and Composition)

Approved By:

Advisor

Date

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my wonderful, loving, and ever-patient partner. Without him, none of this would have been possible. To Bug.

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First and foremost, I would like to thank my director, Gwen Gorzelsky, for her constant feedback, tireless support, and careful guidance throughout this dissertation process. Without her I would be somewhere lost in the quagmires of my data. Equally, I would like to thank the members of my committee, Ellen Barton, Jeff Pruchnic, and Deb Dew, for their valuable time and thoughtful feedback on my research.

I would also like to thank the five students who took the time out of their busy lives to come speak to me about their experiences, beliefs, and perceptions about their development as disciplinary writers. Each of them brought life, humor, and a wealth of complicated, messy experiences with them to their interviews. I wish them all the best as they move into their future endeavors.

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Finally, I thank my fellow graduate students (current and former) at Wayne State with whom I have grown up beside, particularly, Amy Ann Latawiec, Adrienne Jankens, and Jule Thomas. And, of course to the hodgepodge of friends, family, colleagues, and students who continue to inspire and support me. It truly takes a village to raise a graduate student.

PREFACE

The research questions for this project started as classroom observation during one of my semesters teaching Intermediate Composition. I began to notice a trend in student performance: students who were entering the classroom having had prior experiences in their major courses appeared to more quickly take to the core writing concepts (genre and discourse community) than their less familiar peers. The students who were well into their disciplinary coursework seemed to find almost immediate value and applicability in our discussions of writing as genre, or a situated, social activity. According to several of my students, they were able to reflect back on prior experiences in classes or internships and “anchor” these key terms to concrete instances. For instance, a nursing student one semester was very taken with the idea that her discipline could be understood as a “discourse community” with specific goals, specialized language, mechanisms for communicating and constructs for bringing in new members (see: Swales, “The Concept of Discourse Community,” 1990), and seemed to find strategies like genre analysis incredibly valuable for continued writing development in her field. On the other hand, students who were entering my classroom without this prior disciplinary knowledge often found little use for these core concepts, finding them to be little more than boring “theory” that we made them read. Anecdotally, the relationship seemed simple; students with strong prior experiences in their disciplines were more readily able to make connections between their experience and learning to write than their less familiar counterparts. But this anecdotal data was not quite satisfying enough for two key reasons:

- 1.) I was unsure if this categorization of students accurately represented what was occurring in the writing classroom. And,

2.) I was even less sure if the connections students were making extended beyond the writing classroom to help them write for new writing situations.

Thus, this qualitative research project examines the complex relationships between students' prior experiences with disciplinary roles, knowledge, purposes for, and modes of writing (what I define as students' prior enculturative experiences) and their perceptions of General Education (GE) writing courses; their development within those GE writing courses; and their eventual transfer of writing-related skills and strategies to future writing contexts.

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CHAPTER 1: THE QUESTION OF TRANSFER

Many strong claims have been made for the importance of transfer in education. Transfer of learning makes survival possible by allowing people to adapt to new situations. Schools are not able to teach students everything they will need to know for the rest of their lives; they must equip students with the ability to transfer -- to use what they have learned to solve new problems successfully or to learn quickly in new situations. (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström, & Young, 2003, p. 1)

Arguably, at the very heart of educational theory and practice resides a deep-seated concern with how information, knowledge, or skills gained in one course can be “transferred” for successful use or implementation in another. As Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström, and Young (2003) suggest in the above excerpt, the ability to “transfer” skills from one situation to another is very much akin to survival, especially within new and unfamiliar terrain (p. 1). And, while in everyday situations, transfer occurs rather naturally, in educational settings this occurrence is not always so automatic. Such concerns regarding student transfer have resonated within the work of writing studies scholars for more than three decades now. Yet, understanding and capturing writing transfer has proven to be a troublesome, enigmatic phenomenon that comes with its own specificities unique to writing studies, specificities that are tied to both scholastic and programmatic concerns. In her survey on transfer research in composition studies, Tiane Donahue (2012) argued that, as compositionists, “we want students -- considering most of our outcome statements -- to learn strategies, processes, values, rhetorical flexibility, and linguistic knowledge not just for topic-specific gain but expressly for broader transfer, for use in new contexts” (p. 146). These core outcomes hinge upon students’ ability to “transfer” writing knowledge and practices, yet, problematically, as Donahue observed, “At most universities (at least outside of composition programs), writing in general is always seen as transferrable, reliant on skills-based models that emphasize acquiring ‘skills’ to be replicated in all future classes” (p. 146). This perspective on writing transfer believes that the writing skills learned in First-Year

writing are (a) a one-shot, cure-all for the ailments of poor student writing, and (b) will uncomplicatedly be applied in future writing situations, no matter the context. Such limited views of writing transfer are not all that surprising, as arguments even within our own field have debated the success, relevance, and ultimate fate of required writing courses in the general education curriculum.¹ The past decade and a half of writing transfer research has indicated that student writing cannot be “cured” in one semester of writing instruction, nor can the skills they *do learn* be simply carried over to new writing situations. Thus, continuing to re-conceptualize and study the transfer of writing knowledge and practices can lead to developing strong pedagogical and institutional structures, which can facilitate long-term student success in writing.

For the past several decades, writing studies scholars have struggled to better understand student writing development and the complicated practices students use when transferring writing knowledge from one course to the next. Until recently, much of the scholarship on writing-related transfer has focused on the ways in which students are able to use a variety of writing process strategies (brainstorming, revision, editing, etc.) in future writing tasks. This research has often resulted in mixed findings. A goodly number of research projects in composition suggest that students seldom transfer writing knowledge and practices from one course to the next (i.e. from lower-division writing courses to higher-level major courses) (Herrington, 1985; McCarthy, 1987; Walvoord & McCarthy, 1990). If they do see connections, students often either encounter roadblocks (Nelms & Divley, 2007), or question their usefulness in new situations (Bergmann & Zepernick, 2007). Yet, some scholars argue that transfer does indeed happen. What transfer looks like, however, may not match what we are expecting to find.

¹ For a concise history of abolition and reform arguments in US Composition studies, see Bob Connors’ (1997) “The Abolition Debate in Composition.”

These views of transfer are perhaps best expressed by Elizabeth Wardle (2007) when she succinctly wrote: “I suggest that focusing on a limited search for ‘skills’ is the reason we do not recognize more evidence of ‘transfer’; we are looking for apples when those apples are now part of an apple pie” (p. 69). More recently, scholars such as Nowacek (2011) have reinforced this claim, arguing that the language of transfer is too limited, and that “transfer is both more common and more complex than research currently recognizes” (p. 18). Thus, Wardle argued in her 2013 panel presentation at the Conference for College Composition and Communication that we need an “expanded transfer vocabulary,” one that more fully expresses the array of ideas that are couched in the metaphor of “transfer” itself. In fact, current research in the study of writing transfer has investigated a wide range of factors that possibly contribute to students’ long-term writing development, including, cognitive processes and metacognition (Gorzelsky et al., 2016); student dispositions and emotions (Driscoll & Wells, 2012); and, prior knowledge and genre knowledge (Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Rounsaville, Golberg, & Bawarshi, 2008; Beaufort, 2007; Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014).

In my dissertation, I hope to continue expanding the focus of transfer studies in three key ways. First, as my study suggests, one of the many ways we can expand our scope of understanding related to writing transfer is to look backward, as well as forward, to better understand what impacts students’ ability to “transfer.” What we look for when we investigate writing-related transfer deeply impacts what we see and what remains invisible to the researcher. More specifically, many of the studies on student writing transfer have investigated what students take with them from the writing classroom, leaving unseen what students had actually brought with them in the first place. As this chapter will demonstrate in a review of the growing body of transfer literature from psychology and writing studies, we as writing studies researchers

should be equally interested in what students bring with into the writing classroom, as much as what they take with them from our classes.

Second, the things that students bring with them are not only knowledge and skill sets that they can access, reflect on, and adapt for use in the current situation, but also a wide range of deep-seated beliefs about writing that can impact perceptions, engagement, and learning in the writing classroom. Toward the end of this chapter, I propose that the field of writing studies should continue to investigate what students bring with them to the writing classroom, particularly in terms of their values, perceptions, and prior experiences. More specifically, I argue that we need to look at a particularly kind of prior set of experiences: disciplinary experiences, or what I refer to as components associated with “disciplinary enculturation.”

Finally, we must continue to think beyond the study of transfer and writing development in the first year writing course. Valuable work has already begun to investigate writing done after the first year course (e.g., Dias et al. (1999), Fraizer (2010), Lindenman (2015), Jarratt et al. (2007)), and while much of this research deals either explicitly or implicitly with writing-related transfer, more needs to be done to understand student writing development throughout the undergraduate curriculum and the various factors that impact this development.

“What We Know So Far²”: A Short History on the Study of Knowledge Transfer

Original definitions of transfer emerged from early 20th century studies in experimental psychology on knowledge transfer, which focused on “identical elements” between learning situations (Thorndike & Woodworth, 1901) and “deep principles” that could be abstracted and applied across contexts (Judd, 1908). The first theory of transfer came as a result of experimental studies conducted by Thorndike and Woodworth. These experiments were set up to see if and how the transfer of knowledge and learned skills occurred when subjects moved between

² This title deliberately echoes Smit’s work in *The End of Composition Studies* (2004).

contexts. In short, they determined that subjects could most readily apply (or, “transfer”) what they learned if the initial situation and the target situation shared similar characteristics, or “identical elements.” The higher number of shared elements between tasks, the higher likelihood that transfer would occur.

A second theory of transfer came from the work of C.H. Judd. Judd argued that the act of transfer was more than just the application of skills between similar situations. Instead, transfer occurred when subjects understood the underlying principles of how something worked, and then were able to abstract that concept for reconstructed use under different circumstances.

Since, critiques have been leveraged against these early models of knowledge transfer. First, the original studies designed by Thorndike and Woodworth, and, later, Judd’s work, were experimental, taken out of the context of real-world learning environments. Participants were put into a study atmosphere and asked to repeat tasks to see if and how transfer occurred. These types of laboratory designs neglect to take into consideration the complexities of real-world learning. Second, as much of the contemporary transfer literature has attested, early models of transfer placed the impetus of transfer solely on the individual, neglecting to consider the role that situational affordances had on the likelihood transfer could happen. Despite critiques over experimental design and conceptual differences regarding the overemphasis of the individual in the act of transfer, the work of both Thorndike and Woodward, and Judd became the foundational bedrock for contemporary theories of transfer.

In contemporary approaches to transfer, G. Salomon and D.N. Perkins, two psychologists who have had a deep and sustaining impact on research in writing transfer, argued that transfer is enacted through a complex set of *internal mechanisms* that can either enhance performance in a new context (positive transfer) or undermine it (negative transfer). For Salomon and Perkins

(1989), these internal mechanisms of transfer, whether negative or positive, can occur via two "roads": *low-road transfer* and *high-road transfer* (p. 115). Expanding Thorndike and Woodworth's model of identical elements, *low-road transfer* reflects routinized responses that have been developed from repeated practice with an object or task in varied situations (p. 120). In a famous passage, Salomon and Perkins exemplify low-road transfer by describing the process of learning to drive an automatic car and then transferring that knowledge in order to drive an automatic truck.

In contrast, echoing Judd's work on deep principles, *high-road transfer* shows "mindful deliberate processes that decontextualize cognitive elements which are candidates for transfer" (p. 124). Thus, "the hallmark of the high-roads -- forward reaching and backward-reaching transfer -- is mindful abstraction. By this we mean the deliberate, usually metacognitively guided and effortful, decontextualization of a principle, main idea, strategy, or procedure, which then becomes a candidate for transfer" (p. 126). Unlike low-road transfer, which connects two similar situations (driving a car vs. driving a truck), high-road transfer emphasizes the cognitive mechanisms involved in making strong connections between *dissimilar* contexts. They write, "the main distinction of the high road to transfer is the mindful generation of an abstraction during learning and its later application to a new problem or situation from which basic elements are similarly abstracted" (p. 127). While drawing from earlier models of transfer, Salomon and Perkin's provided updated theories of transfer by taking into account how the act of transfer is situated within specific contexts, and that both near (low-road) and far (high road) transfer could be facilitated through hugging and bridging strategies in new learning situations (Perkins & Salomon, 1992).

These contemporary models of transfer agree that transfer is a situated activity. Understanding how transfer works requires us to understand how individuals are working within specific contexts, and how they are actively constructing relationships between learning situations (Lobato, 2003). Or, as De Corte aptly explains, “learners acquire an activity in response to constraints and affordances of the learning situation. Transfer of an activity to a new situation involves a transformation of the initial situation and an invariant interaction of the learner in the new context” (p. 557).

While establishing successful ways to promote the kinds of mindful abstraction central to high-road transfer continues to be a key focus for transfer research, “expanded views of transfer” have critiqued traditional conceptualizations of the transfer as “linear,” “static,” and “decontextualized” (Beach, 1999; Schwartz, Bransford & Sears, 2005). Rather than approaching transfer from a researcherly perspective in which one searches for evidence of knowledge application in unfamiliar contexts, those promoting a more expansive understanding of transfer are interested in the “mediating factors by which individuals activate and apply prior learning, both productively and unproductively during transfer tasks” (Royer, Mestre, & Dufrense, 2005, p. xvii).

Conceptualizing transfer as a socio-cultural phenomenon, rather strictly cognitive, scholars such as Beach (1999) and Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström (2003) expanded the relationship between learner, knowledge, and context within transfer research. While drawing from different theoretical traditions (Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström relied on burgeoning theories in Activity Systems), both theories highlight the fact that classical and cognitivist views of transfer place an “overemphasis on the role of the individual learner, excluding from the transfer

process humans involved in the construction of tasks or collectively and historically linking situations” (p. 151). In sum, as Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström explained:

The conceptualization of transfer based on socio-cultural views takes into account the changing social situations and individual’s multidirectional movement from one organization to another, from home to school or from workplace to school and back. Based on activity theory, this conceptualization expands the basis of transfer from the actions of the individuals to the collective organizations. It is not a matter of individual moves between school and workplace but of the efforts of school and workplace to create together new practices. (p. 34)

Similarly, Schwartz, Bransford, and Sears (2005) argued that classic definitions of transfer and the methodological approaches to studying it have failed to account for the complicated nature of knowledge that subjects/students bring into our research contexts. Definitional and methodological approaches to “transfer” based on linear metaphors of portability have focused on *application of ideas* rather than “flexible *adaptation* of old responses to new settings” [emphasis mine] (p. 5). They wrote:

We believe that the classic definition of transfer is too narrow. Accepting it results in many cases that appear to show “failed transfer,” because people do not apply the identical procedures they learned previously when in a new transfer context ... The reason is that most studies of transfer also include an unnecessary constraint that stems from measuring people’s abilities to *directly apply* what they have learned previously in new settings ... Tests of the “direct application” view typically place people in sequestered environments where they have no access to “contaminating” information sources other than what they have learned previously, and where they receive no chances to learn by trying out an idea and revising as necessary (p.p. 4, 5).

As a corrective, Schwartz, Bransford and Sears argued that not only must we design transfer experiments that allow students to make use of the various knowledges and sources that they bring with them to any given context (experiments that allow students to “look smart” rather than “look dumb” (p. 6)), but we must also design experiments that differentiate between what students are “transferring in” to the context as opposed to “transferring out.” They argue that “for many new situations, people do not have sufficient memories, schemas, or procedures to solve a

problem, but they do have interpretations that shape how they begin to make sense of the situation" (p. 9). Their approach emphasizes studying how people make use of these interpretations and how people determine what new information they need to learn to solve new kinds of problems. Only within the last ten years have researchers in writing studies considered investigating the wide range of writing knowledge, skills, and strategies that our students bring with them to our writing classrooms. Even less seldom have we looked into the various beliefs and value systems that can inform students' utilization of these knowledges and skills sets within diverse writing situations. Each of these factors can and should be seen as contributing factors to the processes by which students learn and transfer writing skills to future contexts.

Transfer in Writing Studies Research

Corresponding to the critiques of transfer models based on application of skills, compositionists have begun to critically question the language and models of transfer as they investigate the phenomena of student writing development. Scholars have increasingly called for either "more robust" definitions of transfer, or have attempted to move away from the term all together, in favor of more theoretically nuanced terms such as "generalization" (Wardle, 2007), "creative repurposing for expansive learning" (Roozen, 2009), or "integration" and "recontextualization" (Nowacek, 2011). While all of these terms suggest something akin to "transfer"³ writ large, specifically high-road transfer, they also offer us new language to describe the complex array of phenomena that occur before, within and after our courses. Simply put, these multiple and multi-faceted terms proposed by composition scholars suggest the wide range of practices that actually occur as students move between courses and contexts. Additionally, a

³ Throughout the dissertation, I continue to use the word transfer to describe the wide-range of activities and processes highlighted by this body of research. I do so consciously, as I believe that our field should establish and maintain terms identifiable to not only the field, but also equally identifiable and usable for those outside of our field that might be impacted and/or interested in our findings on writing related-transfer.

growing body of research in writing transfer suggests that we not only have to look at the skills that students are transferring out of our courses, but we must understand what they are transferring into the classroom as well.

The Transfer of Writing Knowledge and Strategies

Studies such as Bergmann and Zepernick's 2007 study, "Disciplinary and Transfer: Students Perceptions of Learning to Write," and Wardles' (2007) study, "Understanding 'Transfer' from FYC," both looked at what students learned in first year writing and what they did with those knowledge and skills in future writing situations. Published the same year, Anne Beaufort's 2007 ethnographic study followed one student, Tim, as he moved through his undergraduate curriculum, and into the workplace. All three of these studies produced similar findings, and indicated similar problems. When moving through diverse writing situations, students either (a) had troubles making connections between what they learned in FYC and new writing situations, or (b) as Wardle (2007) suggested, they "did not *perceive a need* to adopt or adapt most of the writing behaviors they used in FYC to other courses" (p. 76). Moreover, as Bergmann and Zepernick highlighted, "students seemed to connect with writing pedagogy only at a narrowly mechanical level and at a broad, moral level – taking away a series of behavioral 'shoulds' that they remember and apparently accept, but don't necessarily follow" (p. 137).

Out of this line of transfer research was born a variety of pedagogical approaches, geared toward the facilitation of long-term student writing development and transfer. Approaches such as Downs and Wardles' Writing-About-Writing, and Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak's Teaching for Transfer attempt to provide first-year classrooms with a course design that helps students to develop skillsets necessary for adapting to the wide range of writing situations that they will encounter after their first-year writing course. In short, the field of writing studies believes that

student transfer of writing knowledge and practices not only happens, but, moreover, that we can create learning situations that can more productively lead to positive transfer. Yet, in order to create classrooms with the tools and affordances for this to happen most effectively, we must continue to investigate and understand the wide array of attitudes, beliefs, values, and prior experiences that can influence how students will engage with classroom affordances. As emphasized in the *Elon Statement on Writing Transfer* (2015), “prior knowledge is a complex construct that can benefit or hinder writing transfer. Yet, understanding and exploring that complexity is central to investigating transfer” (p. 4).

The Role of Prior Knowledge and Experience, Beliefs and Values

In their 2014 book, *Writing Across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Cultures of Writing*, Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak argued that “prior knowledge – of various kinds – plays a decisive if not determining role in students’ successful transfer of writing knowledge and practice” (p. 5). In line with Schwartz, Branford, and Sears’ call to design studies that investigate what students are bringing with them into the research site, writing transfer researchers have become increasingly interested in what our students bring with them to our writing classrooms. Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak’s use of “prior knowledge” takes into account a wide range of factors, including: previous writing experiences, antecedent genre knowledge, dispositions, personal values, as well as perspectives and beliefs about writing. Each of these factors can either become pathways for the positive transfer of writing knowledge and practice, or detrimental barriers that close off avenues for transfer in new and unique writing situations.

Prior Knowledge and Experience. In studying the impact that prior knowledge has on our students’ ability to make connections between previous writing experiences and new writing tasks, research in the field has investigated the scope and depth of genre knowledge that students

bring to the writing classroom, particularly that of first-year composition. Much of this work has focused on identifying the prior genre knowledge (or, lack thereof) that students bring to the FYW classroom, and understanding what they do with that prior knowledge in order to accomplish the goals of new writing tasks. As Rounsaville et al. (2008) explained, “understanding the types *and* uses of students’ prior discursive resources ... can provide important insights into the diverse meta-cognitive habits and assumptions students bring with them into FYW courses, and how these meta-cognitive habits and assumptions inform how students make use of their prior resources” (pp. 98-9). While both Rounsaville et al. and Reiff and Bawarshi (2011) claimed that most students require either verbal or written cues to prompt engagement with prior genre knowledge during new tasks (a sentiment that echoes earlier transfer research’s stance that students were unable to see connections between dissimilar tasks and contexts), Reiff and Bawarshi argued that certain students (“boundary-crossers” (p. 325)) are able to actively access prior genre knowledge in order to critically engage with those knowledges and practices to satisfy requirements in new written tasks. Others, however (“boundary guarders” (p. 325)), rely on low-road transfer strategies and directly apply old knowledge to new writing situations without engaging with the specificities of the new task. Crossers are not limited by prior knowledge, but rather draw from that body of knowledge to strategically develop new and creative ways to approach new tasks, whereas guarders become uncomfortable when new tasks do not match their prior writing experiences, and tend to apply genres wholesale within new situations, regardless of the rhetorical specificities of the new task.

R. Nowacek (2011) makes similar moves toward the investigation of prior genre experiences in *Agents of Integration: Understanding Transfer as a Rhetorical Act*. Drawing from earlier work in rhetorical genre studies (Miller, 1984; Schryer, 1994; Bazerman, 1997), Nowacek

acknowledges that writing involves more than just the task at hand, but rather involve an entire “genred discursive space” (Bawarshi, 2003; Bazerman, 2002) that students move within and between:

genre not only provides a sociocognitive resource for crafting a response to a social situation but it also provides a resource for interpreting (and indeed constructing) the situation in the first place ... as such, genres are not merely a set of textual conventions but encompass an entire constellation of associated social relations, goals, identities, ways of knowing, and even knowledge domains. (Nowacek, p.p. 18, 19)

Transfer, for Nowacek, is more than just *application* of prior information. Rather, transfer is also an act of *reconstructing* ones’ understanding of these prior genred discursive spaces within new, relatively unfamiliar spaces. Whereas other transfer projects have addressed prior genre knowledge by focusing on task-based analysis (e.g. what students do with prior genre knowledge during a specific assignment), Nowacek offers us a truly expanded definition for writing transfer by calling for “systematic analysis of how antecedent genres make up the genred discursive space in which individuals perceive the need and opportunity for transfer” (p. 17). What we are concerned with when we talk about transfer in writing studies goes beyond just making connections between two writing tasks, but an active adaptation of a prior genred discursive space that re-negotiates both prior experiences and current contexts.⁴

Most recently, in Yancey, Taczak, and Robertson’s third chapter of *Writing Across Contexts* (2014), “How Students Make Use of Prior Knowledge in the Transfer of Knowledge and Practice in Writing,” they argue that through the use of prior knowledge, students engage in new writing situations in one of three ways *assemblage*, *remix*, or *critical incidents*:

1. by drawing on both knowledge and practice and adding a limited number of new key concepts to this critical knowledge base, an unsuccessful use of prior knowledge we call *assemblage*;

⁴ Joanne Lobato (2003), a K-12 researcher looking at transfer of math and science skills and concepts, describes a similar phenomenon of transfer as the “dynamic production of sameness” across contexts (p. 20).

2. by reworking and integrating prior knowledge and practice with new knowledge as they address new tasks, a more successful use of prior knowledge we call *remix*; and
3. by creating new knowledge and practices for themselves when they encounter what we call a setback or *critical incident*, which is a failed effort to address a new task that prompts critical ways of thinking about what writing is and how to do it. (p.103)

In sum, this body of research showcases how impactful prior experiences and prior genre knowledge can be on the ways that a student engages with writing tasks and new knowledge within our writing courses. Rather than seeing our students as veritable *tabulae rasae*, teachers and researchers should take into account the wide range of experiences and knowledge that could potentially facilitate or hinder writing-related transfer. Yet, experiences and knowledge are but two of the key factors that are potential keys to understanding what students bring with them to our classrooms, and how they engage with tasks and materials in writing classrooms.

Student Beliefs and Values. Student beliefs, values and epistemologies are known to substantially impact transfer (Haskell, 2000). From within the field of writing studies, Dana Driscoll (2011, 2014) has examined the impact of students' attitudes and motivation and vocationalism on student learning. In "Connected, Disconnected, or Uncertain," Driscoll's (2011) findings suggested "the attitudes students bring with them about writing impact their perceptions of the transferability of writing knowledge." More specifically she found that students' perceptions regarding the transferability of writing knowledge to future contexts (particularly disciplinary contexts) were often negatively impacted by their perceptions of the amount and types of writing they would be expected to do in the future. As discussed above, many students see little or no value in their writing courses by the end of the semester, corroborating similar findings from prior research in writing studies (Bergmann & Zepernick, 2007; Wardle, 2007, 2009). Driscoll (2014) reported similar findings in "Clashing Values: A Longitudinal, Exploratory Study of Student Beliefs about General Education, Vocationalism, and Transfer of Learning." In this study, Driscoll explored connections between students' beliefs

about general education courses (of which required composition courses fall into), vocationalism, and transfer of learning. Importantly, Driscoll found that “Some participants, especially in their first year of coursework, see GE courses as a waste of time and money because these courses appear disconnected from their majors and careers and because they have not been taught otherwise. For these students, preparation for a career is the goal of their enrollment in college, and anything that they perceive as not immediately aligning with their goal is viewed negatively.” Additionally, it is important to note that students’ attitudes toward First-Year Writing often mirror the attitudes and perspectives that Driscoll discussed in relation to other GE Courses.

Findings from both of Driscoll’s studies strongly indicate that (1) there is a strong connection between students’ beliefs about writing, the value they see in general education writing courses, and the strength and frequency to which they transfer writing knowledge to future contexts, and (2) these connections are often mediated by students’ definitions of “writing” and “good writing.”

Perhaps Downs and Robertson (2015) synthesized the findings of prior genre knowledge research and the work on writing-related beliefs best when they described the role that both of these factors play in how students conceptualize writing and writing instruction. In their chapter, “Threshold concepts in first-year writing,” they explained:

Every writer has a set of knowledge and beliefs about writing, some explicit and some tacit, that make up their personal theory about writing. The concepts that make up this personal theory are developed through education, experience, observation, and cultural narratives about writing; few writers will ever explicitly articulate their theory, but they will live by it. By *theory*, we mean a systematic narrative of lived experience and observed phenomena that both account for (makes sense of) past experience and makes predictions about future experience. The “better” –the more completely, consistently, and elegantly – a theory accounts for past experience, and the more accurate its predictions about future experience, the stronger or more robust it is, and thus more useful it is. The writer’s personal theory of writing – their conceptions of what happens when they write,

what ought to be happening, why that does or does not happen – shapes both their actions while writing and their interpretations of the results of their writing activities. (p.110)

I cite from Downs and Robertson at length here because it offers us one of the most explicit and robust theories of how students systems of beliefs about writing can impact a variety of activities and learning processes related to writing as students work their way through college. Downs and Robertson’s article does a deft job of understanding how these “theories of writing,” however tacit, inform the ways that students engage with and evaluate writing. Moreover, what Yancey, Taczak, and Robertson ultimately propose is a “general pattern” seen within student data: “what we begin to see here is that we need to explore what difference a student’s culture, major, and the intellectual tradition it represents makes in a students’ use of prior knowledge” (p. 125). Thus, this study is interested in exploring this facet of student prior experience: looking at how a students’ prior disciplinary experience can inform attitudes and beliefs about writing, and in turn, their perceptions and valuations of general education writing classrooms.

The Study of Transfer Beyond the First Year Classroom

To date, much of the literature has focused on the first-year writing context, an important site of study for our field. All of the cited studies above have focused their attentions on transfer from the first-year writing classroom to subsequent courses. Yet, according to the National Census of Writing, more than 50% of reporting institutions require writing courses beyond the first year (n=341), and more than 40% of reporting 4-year institutions specifically require mid-level writing courses (n=121). To date, only a small number of studies have focused on writing transfer between college courses and professional contexts (e.g., Anson & Forsberg, 1990; Dias et al. 1999), and even less attention has been paid to writing transfer starting with courses after FYC. Several notable exceptions come to mind: Thaiss and Zawacki (2006), Susan Jarratt et al’s (2007) “Pedagogical Memory,” Dan Fraizer’s (2010) “First Steps Beyond First Year: Coaching

Transfer after FYC,” and Heather Lindeman’s (2015) “Inventing Metagenres: How Four College Seniors Connect Writing Across Domains.”

As highlighted by Shirley Rose (2015), the development of writing skills and strategies is a continual process that does not stop after the first year writing course: “Writers never cease learning to write, never completely perfect their writing ability, as long as they encounter new or unfamiliar life experiences that require or inspire writing” (p. 59). Yancey (2015) in the same volume, expanding on Rose’s point, explained:

learning to write effectively, especially in different contexts or communities of practice, takes different kinds of practice, and such practice takes time and effort, is troublesome for three reasons. First, writers are often assumed simply to be “born”: that is, a good writer is assumed to be a good writer “naturally” ... In this view of writing, the amount and kind of practice is irrelevant and superfluous because practice would make no difference. Second, some people believe that when we learn to write in one genre, we have learned to write in all; but to write in any genre, we need practice in that genre and in the conventions defining that genre. Third, this threshold concept locates writing specifically as a practice situated within communities, which suggests how complex writing is and how, as an activity, it spans a lifetime. (p. 63)

Thus, more work must be done to see how we can better promote continued writing engagement beyond the first-year course and to help students transition from general education writing courses to the discipline-specific writing tasks encountered in their majors and beyond. Where Driscoll’s research investigated student beliefs, values, and epistemologies related to general education and writing, I was interested in seeing how those views progress beyond the first year classrooms. More specifically, I investigated a point of critical transition for students as they moved into more discipline-specific courses and mid-level writing classrooms. Therefore, the focus of this study is to explore how students’ own systems of beliefs and values are impacted by their prior experiences in disciplinary and professional contexts, and how these values impact their perceptions of writing and general education writing instruction beyond first year writing.

The Study

Research Questions

To investigate the relationship between students' prior professional and disciplinary experiences (what this study short-hands as *enculturative experiences*), and students' perceptions, values, and expectations related to writing and writing classrooms after the first year, this study asked the following research questions:

- What are the enculturative experiences students bring with them to the intermediate writing classroom?
 - What influences this sense of enculturation?
- Do students' prior enculturative experiences impact their perceptions of writing and of the writing classroom?
 - If so, how and to what extent?
- What connections do students make between their mid-level writing course, and the way that they conceptualize writing after the completion of the course?

I addressed these questions through an interview-based study that examined the experiences of 5 students in a mid-level writing course (Intermediate Composition) at Urban Midwestern State U (the course and its role in Midwestern U's curriculum are discussed below). Through a series of semi-structured interviews conducted during, at the conclusion, and a semester after they completed Intermediate Composition, I examined the relationship between students' prior enculturative experiences and learning to write in the middle of students' undergraduate education.

Research Design and Methods

While many transfer studies in composition have turned toward longitudinal research in order to better understand student development over time and over the span of several courses (Sternglass, 1997; Wardle, 2007, 2009; Beaufort, 2007; Sommers & Saltz, 2004), others, like Nowacek (2011), have focused on collecting a “thick slice” of data throughout one semester. Nowacek argued against relying solely on longitudinal studies to understand writing transfer, “because the traces of the phenomenon of transfer are often subtle and hard to identify. We cannot better understand students’ experience of transfer without a detail-rich context within which to make visible their experiences and connections” (p. 3). My research was neither longitudinal, nor thick description of a single semester. Instead, my research took a *moderate* slice of data that looked at students during a complex moment of transition in their coursework, between their general education courses, and the bulk of their major courses – though as some of my data suggested, this moment of transition is not so clearly delineated. This project focused on a complex moment of transition into Intermediate Composition and into future courses. The data I have collected reflects this focus, and spanned two crucial semesters: (1) the semester in which students took Intermediate Composition, and (2) the semester directly following successful completion of the course. Doing so allowed me to dive into students’ experiences and beliefs about writing, and how these experiences and beliefs impacted them throughout their mid-level writing course and beyond.

Methodology

Joanne Lobato (2003, 2012), Dana Driscoll (2011, 2014), and Dana Driscoll and Jennifer Wells (2012) have called for researchers to re-address the role and perceptions of the individual (or actor) when thinking about transfer. Additionally, Heather Camp (2012) explained that

“rather than positing a single developmental trajectory, situated theories suggest that individuals negotiate unique development pathways within and between the communities in which they participate, with the individual and his/her community contributing resources and defining the terms on which development will occur” (p. 97).

Traditional methodological approaches to investigating transfer have looked at how knowledge is applied or adapted to future contexts. In this design approach, experts (e.g., writing studies experts) look for how they expect transfer *should* happen, and what these transferred skills should look like in the new situation. As this chapter has briefly covered, these approaches to investigating transfer often result in mixed findings and outcomes that do not actually capture the complex decision making and engagement that students employ when deciding what and how to make use of old and new knowledge. Approaches that instead focus on these latter points, like Lobato’s actor-oriented approach (AOT), seek to understand the connections students are making with new concepts and strategies as they progress through their education. According to Lobato (2003), “the actor-oriented transfer approach focuses on the process by which learners form personal relations of similarities across situations, whether or not those connections are correct or normative, and on the specific ways in which the instructional environment affords and constrains learners’ generalizations” (p. 20), and later argued (2012) that AOT can “afford new insights into understanding: (a) how students interpret transfer situations, (b) the socially situated nature of transfer processes in classrooms, and (c) how contextual-sensitivity can play a productive role in the transfer of learning” (p. 233). Lobato’s actor-oriented transfer approach suggests that it is actually in the self-reporting that we can find more fully conceptualized visions how students negotiate old and new knowledge, or transfer. The impact that prior experiences

and felt-senses of disciplinary identities have on their perceptions of writing and the value that writing instruction can have in future contexts.

Others in writing studies have taken similar methodological approaches when investigating transfer (e.g., Wardle, 2007; Nowacek, 2011). They argued that we need additional data on students' knowledge about writing and their writing-related beliefs, perceptions, and dispositions and how they identify as writers. Rather than having prior assumptions for how and what students engaged with in and transfer from the writing classroom, I asked students to explain what they brought with them to the mid-level writing classroom, and discuss the connections *they* saw and what *they* valued before and after the course.

Limitations

Admittedly, there is useful information to be gained from classroom observations, which is not included here. While this could be seen as potential limitation of the study, as mentioned above, Lobato's actor-oriented transfer approach argues that it is actually in the self-reporting that we can find more fully conceptualized visions of transfer. Additionally, Driscoll argued that, "in cases of research that focuses on students' attitudes, self-reported data gained through surveys and interviews is one of the best means available for data collection" (n.p.).

For this project, I was most interested in understanding how students' perceptions of their prior experiences influence perceptions of writing and of the writing classroom, which can impact the potential for transfer. Because of these project objectives, I use an interview-based design for my study. For future research, careful observation of student performances in their writing classrooms and in courses beyond might offer new and exciting details about how students negotiate prior knowledge and experiences on specific writing tasks. Furthermore, as the current project interviewed students from a wide array of academic backgrounds with their own

individualized course trajectories, it would have been unfeasible to observe *all* students in future courses. Future case study investigations might be able to investigate student practices for continued research in these matters.

Additionally, as the university curriculum requires certain pedagogical components to be included in the teaching of Intermediate Writing, I did not collect data on individual instructor assignments or additional course materials. Alongside my reasoning for not conducting course observations, this study was more concerned with student perceptions of assignments and course concepts. This proves to be a slight limitation, particularly in the conversations had in Chapter 4, as certain teachers might have included certain minor assignment requirements or emphasized some strategies more heavily than others. Thus, some of the findings cannot take into account these factors.

Finally, while I did discuss specific writing tasks completed by the students throughout the study, I did not collect additional writing samples from the students. Additionally, my analysis did not focus on direct measures of writing transfer. As this study was focused on students' perceptions, beliefs, and values, their discussions of these strategies was more valuable than the execution of the written assignments.

Study Context and Assignment Sequence

Description of the Research Site. At my home institution (Urban Midwestern Research University), students must take a core sequence of writing classes in order to fulfill the general education requirement for written competency. This sequence starts at either basic writing or first-year writing, continues through a mid-level writing course (intermediate composition),⁵ and culminates in a writing intensive course hosted by each individual discipline.

⁵In lieu of taking Intermediate Composition, students are also permitted to take one of the following: a service-learning writing course (e.g. Writing and Community), Technical Communication, or a Literature Course designated

The intermediate writing course, the focal site of the study, prepares students for writing in the disciplines, specifically in preparation for the kinds of writing tasks that they may encounter in their Writing Intensive course.

This course is often taken during students' sophomore or junior year, though there are no formal restrictions that prevent the student taking it earlier or later in their coursework. While this scaffolding allows students to have a large amount of scheduling flexibility in terms of when they take their more advanced composition courses, the "writing gap" that occurs between freshman writing and intermediate composition can be as short as a semester break or as long as three years. Because of this flexibility, students with a wide variety of majors, investments, and educational and professional experiences populate each intermediate writing class.

Assignments and Reflective Portfolio. In Intermediate Writing, students are introduced to key writing studies concepts (e.g. discourse community, genre, metacognition) in order to build an explicit awareness about the types of writing that are performed in their disciplines and potential job contexts.⁶ Through the custom-context textbook for the writing sequence, we tell students: Focusing on these key writing studies concepts "will help you see how others' texts attempt to accomplish particular purposes given their rhetorical situations so you can craft your own texts to achieve your goals no matter what rhetorical situation you face." To do so, students must investigate a chosen discourse community (often their major or future profession) and analyze a variety of genres that are often used to help their chosen discourse community achieve large and small objectives (to respond to the recurring situations that dominate that community). In doing so, students are asked to identify language choices and genre conventions that with and

as an IC replacement course (e.g. Great English Novels). While these options are available as alternatives, most students (around 53%) continue to take Intermediate Composition to fulfill their IC requirement.

⁶ Similar course designs and concerns have been outlined in recent years, primarily by Kain and Wardle (2005) who suggest that in "the skill set we seek to help students transfer is not the ability to remember and write the conventions of specific genres but, rather, the ability to assess contexts and identify related genres, evaluate the ways that genres mediate those contexts and determine the role of generic conventions in that mediation" (p. 135).

across community genres and to reflect on these findings to make larger claims about the community and its writing practices., Additionally, each section is required to incorporate an end-of-semester reflective portfolio that requires students to assess their writing development over the semester and explicitly discuss their mastery of course learning objectives.

Participants

Forty-three students consented to participate in the research study. Out of these forty-three consented students, eight were selected from the list based on year within the curriculum, major, race and gender – although only 5 completed all of the study requirements. I attempted to maintain an equal distribution across sections and instructors (a total of six instructors and eight sections were involved), but had less success balancing gender and race (one male, four female; four Caucasian, one African-American). Such a spread is not unexpected at the study site female students are, historically, more apt to participate in research studies, whereas males are much more resistant. Similarly, Caucasian students more commonly participate in research studies, whereas African-American students, despite having a large presence in the university, are less likely to do so.

Data Collection

To investigate the relationship between students' experiences with and beliefs about disciplinary roles, knowledge, purposes for, and modes of writing, and their perspectives on writing and the writing classroom, I conducted the following data collection methods:

- Entrance and exit surveys with students to gather demographic data and preliminary information about student perceptions of writing and acculturative experiences

- Three thirty-minute open-ended, text-based interviews with student participants that took place in the middle of Intermediate Composition, at the end of Intermediate Composition, and in the semester following Intermediate Composition

The chosen student participants were asked to complete an entrance and exit survey (see Appendix A and B) that gathered demographic data on each student, asked them about their relationship to their future profession or major, and asked them to rate their perceived connections between their intermediate writing courses, and future writing situations (i.e. major courses, non-major courses, and civic/professional contexts).

The data gathered from the surveys were used to conduct two thirty-minute interviews during the semester in which students took intermediate writing and a thirty-minute follow-up interview conducted during the semester after completion of the course.

The first interview asked students to discuss a variety of prior experiences and influences that they saw as impacting either their choice in majors and/or impacting their performance with the requirements of intermediate writing. The second interview asked students more specific questions regarding their perspectives on enculturation, primarily experiences developing familiarity with genres and practices within their selected major discourse communities (a key concept from our intermediate writing course), and questions pertaining to transfer during and after intermediate writing. The first two interviews attempt to get students to reflect on their prior experiences and discuss the connections they see between them and the writing studies concepts that they were given during Intermediate Composition. The final interview asks students about how their experiences in Intermediate Composition have helped them successfully negotiate writing situations in their courses after Intermediate Composition.

Representing the Data

As I transcribed the interviews, I made editorial decisions regarding grammar and punctuation to assist in clarity and readability. These choices in no way altered the meaning or significance of student language and response.

Coding and Analysis

A multi-level coding process based in traditional qualitative coding methods was used to find and examine patterns in my data (Merriam, 2009). First, open and generative coding derived from the research questions was conducted on surveys, student interviews, and reflective portfolios. During this phase, I read each of the student interviews and reflective documents in order to construct student profiles and established the following primary coding categories:

- Student background / prior experience
- Connection to major, field, or profession
- Perceptions of the mid-level writing course
- Transfer from writing course
- Perceptions of major/field's writing activities and investments

Next, these codes were further refined during a second, axial round of coding (described in each of the following chapters). During this second phase, I cross-analyzed each of these primary codes, looking for similarities and differences between student profiles. This cross-analysis produced sub-codes represented in the coding categories in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter 2

In Chapter Two, I propose a framework for understanding the relationship between the theories of enculturation, disciplinarity, and student writing development. In this chapter, I

outline existing theories of how newcomers join communities and communal activities (broadly defined as the process of enculturation) and examine how these theories apply to academic settings in two different ways (broad academic enculturation and discipline-specific enculturation), specifically as how both relate to writing and student writing development. Synthesizing the existing models of discipline-specific enculturation from writing studies, I suggest that we use this enculturative framework to better understand how this process connects to students' own perceptions of disciplinary development and how this connects to student beliefs and values related to writing after the first year.

Chapter 3

In Chapter Three, I use the enculturative framework established in Chapter Two to explore the ways in which prior enculturative experiences can impact students' perceptions of writing and GE writing instruction, as well as impact the ways that students develop a growing understanding of the type of instruction and reinforcement they need in writing instruction.

Chapter Three begins this exploration by examining the disciplinary and professional influences students bring with them to an intermediate composition course and how these influences have impacted their perceptions about what skills, strategies, and experiences are most beneficial to their progression into their major and future professions. This chapter then proposes a model for categorizing students' "pathways toward enculturation" that can be used to better understand what students will value in their future courses, most importantly in their writing courses after the first year.

Chapter 4

In Chapter Four, I use the pathways constructed in Chapter Three to think about how these prior experiences and perceptions related to student enculturative development impacts

their perceptions of General Education writing courses and, more specifically, the ways in which these disciplinary experiences impact students' "theories of writing" as they transition out of their mid-level writing class.

Drawing heavily from student accounts of their own uptake of writing studies concepts during Intermediate Composition and the connections made during their interviews, this chapter compares the impact of the writing classroom on the way students conceptualize "writing" and how students talk about writing after the end of the course. Most interestingly, I discuss how the findings from Chapters 3 and 4 come together to help us better understand how students think about writing through the construction of disciplinary metaphors, which impact their systems of expectations and values related to writing instruction.

Chapter 5

The final chapter explores the theoretical and pedagogical implications for understanding the role of enculturation in writing transfer. In many ways, this chapter is both a response to current scholarship that addresses writing contexts beyond the first year (e.g. Dan Frazier's "First Steps Beyond First Year: Coaching Transfer After FYC" (2011) and a call for further attention to these spaces. While this project is qualitative at its core, it also attempts to think through several key pedagogical, programmatic and administrative concerns. In this chapter, I attempt to think critically about the value of including post--first-year writing instruction that is intimately tied to the general education curriculum throughout our students' undergraduate experience; pedagogical practice that can facilitate this growth in enculturative progress; and what needs to happen for students between writing courses, or as it has been called before, the "writing gap" that occurs between FYC and later writing courses.

CHAPTER 2: AN ENCULTURATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFER STUDIES

Introduction

In Chapter 1 I argued for the extension of transfer research in writing studies in three key ways. First, researchers must look at what students bring into the writing classroom, as opposed to just what is taken out of them. Second, we must investigate more than just writing skills and strategies, but also students' experiences, beliefs and values that may impact engagement and eventual transfer. And, third, we must investigate writing contexts beyond the first year, specifically mid-level writing courses that are common in universities across the United States.

I argued that writing studies research on transfer must continue to address more than students' ability to "transfer" writing-related knowledge and skills to future contexts. Educational Psychologists, Schwartz, Bransford, and Sears (2005) have suggested we pay equal attention to what students are "transferring in" to our research sites (or, classrooms) as much as to what they are "transferring out." In turn, writing studies scholars have begun to investigate a variety of factors that influence transfer. Key to this research has been the study of prior knowledge, experiences, and beliefs about writing, which have been shown to significantly impact how students engage with new writing situations. One area of this prior experience research has focused on the antecedent genre knowledge that students bring with them to the first-year writing classroom, and what they do with that genre knowledge throughout the course (Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Rounsaville, Goldberg, & Bawarshi, 2008; Yancey, Robertson, & Taszak, 2012). Another has focused on how students' beliefs, dispositions, and motivation impact their perception and valuation of writing instruction (Wardle, 2009; Bergmann & Zepernick, 2009; Driscoll, 2011, 2014). Both branches discuss how prior experience and systems of value can act as either a facilitator or barrier to the positive transfer of writing knowledge and

practices. Chapter One brought together these two branches of research and argued for further investigation of the relationship between students' prior knowledge and belief, and how these prior investments impact their perceptions of writing and of general education writing instruction (GEWI). Finally, much of this research has been focused on first-year writing, I proposed that we also need to continue expanding our scope of writing study research to spaces after first-year composition so that we can understand how to facilitate long-term writing development throughout our students' undergraduate experiences.

As Driscoll (2011, 2014) has discussed, many of our students' beliefs and systems of value related to general education instruction are oriented around the ideas of perceived value and vocationalism. Echoing prior research on general education (e.g., Twombly, 1992), Driscoll's findings showed that "students do not often see the connection between their general education coursework, their majors, and their overall vocational desires" (p. 34). Where Twombly and Driscoll's research investigated student beliefs, values, and epistemologies related to general education and writing, respectively, I was interested in seeing how those views progress beyond the first year classrooms, particularly as students move into more discipline-specific courses and through a mid-level writing class. Therefore, the focus of this study was to explore how students' own systems of beliefs and values were impacted by their prior experiences in disciplinary and professional contexts, and how these values impacted their perceptions of writing and general education writing instruction beyond the first year course.

The remainder of this dissertation explores the relationship between two interconnected sets of student perceptions. First is the connection between students' prior experiences in disciplinary and professional contexts (what I call students' prior *enculturative*⁷ experiences) and

⁷ Within the literature of writing studies, both enculturation and acculturation have been used to describe similar phenomena. In short, both terms have been used to describe the complicated process required for full participation

how they envision the most effective ways to become a more fully participating member in these contexts (what I call their proposed “pathways toward enculturation”). And second, how these perceptions impact the ways in which they engage with writing and writing instruction after the first-year.

In this chapter I propose a framework for understanding the relationship between the theories of enculturation, disciplinarity, and student writing development. To do so, I outline existing theories of enculturation and examine how these theories apply to two different types of academic engagements, broad academic enculturation and discipline-specific enculturation. Finally, I examine three existing models for understanding disciplinary enculturation from writing studies, synthesizing what we know about how students engage in writing tasks and contexts throughout their undergraduate education. I suggest that we use this enculturative framework to better understand how this process connects to students’ own perceptions of disciplinary development, and how these perceptions impact the way they see writing and general education writing courses.

The Process of Enculturation

Enculturation is a term commonly used to describe the process by which we join and learn to fully participate within communities of peoples. As described by various theories of community (e.g., discourse community, communities of practice, and/or activity systems), these communities have established goals, values, practices, epistemologies, and modes of communication that ensure the continued success of its operations. Enculturation, therefore, serves as the primary mechanism for introducing newcomers to community functions, simultaneously allowing for new members to take on more advanced modes of participation

within community practices. Enculturation has been more commonly used in educational and writing studies literature (see this chapter) whereas acculturation has strong ties to the field of sociology (e.g., Berry, 2006; Padilla, 2003; Sam, 2006; Teske & Neilson, 1974).

within that community and for the community itself to continue growth and expansion across generations.

This process of enculturation has traditionally been understood as the one-way transmission of stable, specialized knowledge from expert to novice within a community (Prior, 1998; Prior & Bilbro, 2012). In this model, novices move from outsider to insider status in a linear fashion as they learn the approved ways of thinking and doing established by the extant community. Over the past two decades, however, researchers influenced by socio-cultural models of communal action have challenged these transmissional perspectives on enculturation. These revised models of enculturation have been deeply tied to notions of situated activity (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and identity formation (e.g. Ivanic, 1998). From within writing studies, scholars, such as Paul Prior and Christine Pearson Casanave (2002), have described enculturation as the “dynamic process of appropriation, externalization, and alignment” (Prior, 1998, p. 286) or, perhaps more directly, as “a process in which novice community members learn to engage in a community’s practices and hence to participate in ways that redefine their identity” (Casanave, 2002, p. 27). Unlike transmissional models of enculturation, these socio-cultural models highlight the dynamic relationship between newcomer and established community/members, as well as the simultaneous communities that the new member must negotiate during their enculturative processes. In effect, the process of enculturation into communities is quite complicated: an individual does not simply enter into a singular, static space, but rather an individual enters into a “set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation to other tangential and overlapping communities” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98).

Seen through the lens of socio-cultural models of community joining, the process of enculturation entails more than just the accrual of field content knowledge (its declarative knowledge). Rather, successful enculturation toward full community membership requires an active engagement with the literate practices that “weave together writing, reading, talk, observation, and action to achieve what we typically and metonymically refer to as writing” (Prior & Bilbro, 2012, p. 20). Expanding his work with Lave on legitimate peripheral participation, Etienne Wenger (1998) has argued that “the required learning [of community activities and relations] takes place not so much through the reification of a curriculum, as through modified forms of participation that are structured to open up practice to new members” (p. 100). Full community membership ultimately entails new members to make sense of their identity and participation within these communal practices through three “modes of belonging”:

- Engagement: taking part in “meaningful activities and interactions, in the production of sharable artifacts, in community-building conversations, and in the negotiation of new situations” (Wenger, 1998, p. 184).
- Imagination: “locating [their] engagement in a broader system through space and time” (Wenger, 1998, p. 185). “As we engage with the world we are also constructing an image of the world that helps us understand how we belong or not ... We use such images of the world to locate and orient ourselves, to see ourselves from a different perspective, to reflect on our situation, and to explore new possibilities. ... These images are essential to our interpretation of our participation in the social world” (Wenger, 2009, p. 5).
- Alignment:” coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises” (Wenger, 1998, p. 174). This is

not a one-way street, but rather “a two-way process of coordinating perspectives, interpretations, actions, and contexts so that action has the effects we expect” (Wenger, 2009, p. 5).

The exposure to legitimated modes of activity and social relations through these modes of belonging enables individuals, particularly students (as I will discuss later), the affordances to make strong connections between the abstract content knowledge of the field (specialized knowledge obtained in the classroom, for instance) and the important social relations, knowledge, and activities requisite for community membership and participation (e.g., knowledge obtained in an internship, perhaps). These modes of belonging, as noted by Casanave above, can have tremendous impact on how the individual views the construction and dissemination of knowledge and their own sense of self (i.e., as members of communities, majors, and/or professions) and, thus, can potentially impact their perceptions of a new community’s knowledge and practices (for instance, how students understand the role of general education writing instruction).

In response to this recognition of enculturation’s complexities, over the last fifteen years, scholars from both writing studies and educational psychology have been deeply invested in understanding the content, contexts, and practices involved in enculturation, resulting in research on widely varied and often divergent facets of enculturation. Prior and Bilbro (2012), in their review of the extant literature, suggested that this empirical research has focused on *what* is learned during the process of enculturation (e.g., Delcambre & Donahue, 2012; Lea & Street, 1998; Rinck & Boch, 2012), *where* it happens (e.g., Becher, 1989; Dias et al., 1999; Prior, 1998), and *how* it happens (e.g., Carlino, 2012; Lillis, 2001; Roozen, 2009). Ultimately, as Prior and Bilbro argue, “In the fullest sense of the term, enculturation not only includes specific discursive

forms but also practices that migrate and are recontextualized across settings, practices, and changes in participant identities” (p. 30). The similarities in language between enculturation research and recent research in student writing transfer is worth noting here, further bolstering the argument for investigating the relationship between the process of enculturation and the potential for transfer. In fact, at the heart of the enculturative process is the expectation that novices will be able to deal with more complicated and context-specific tasks (often involving writing) within their new community and will be able to adapt prior knowledge and experiences to meet these demands. While the frameworks for enculturation apply to the broad processes of joining and participating within a variety of communities, the research into enculturation has perhaps been most useful for understanding academic and disciplinary enculturation (the focus of this current project).

In the following section, I trace through and differentiate between two types of academic enculturation, (a) broad academic enculturation and (b) discipline-specific enculturation. While on the surface, these two processes of joining academic spaces follow similar patterns, I argue that we need to differentiate the two in order to understand the ways in which students engage differently with these two practices of joining, accounting for students’ level of investment in relation to the situational demands placed on them in order to be successful.

Broad Academic and Disciplinary Enculturation

As Bartholomae (1985) and others have argued (e.g., Bizzell, 1982), there is no single university discourse, but rather a variety of complicated knowledge communities that make up the university system and it is vital that students recognize these differences in order to successfully navigate university curricula. In her 2006 volume, *Writing Games*, Casanave productively used the metaphor of (serious) game playing (Ortner, 1996) to articulate the

complicated web of processes involved in joining and participating within academic communities: “This metaphor suggests first that social life itself, including the social practice of writing in academic settings, is organized by a set of rules, conventionalized practices, and strategies” (p. xiv). A large part of successfully learning to play the academic game (or enculturating into the broader context of the academic university and successfully approximating diverse systems of thinking and writing) is developing the ability to recognize and understand the various roles, practices, and purposes for writing within different disciplinary contexts (p. 260). In this sense, students’ successful enculturation into broad academic discourse, designated by their entrance into the university system, is marked by an understanding of the various practices, both textual and social, within general education classrooms and a realization that literate practices may vary across disciplinary contexts.

In short, general education coursework provides students the potential means to learn the various “intellectual activities, social roles, and purposes for writing” (Herrington, 1985, p. 331) across the disciplines, acting as a “gateway” to seemingly stable disciplinary communities represented by the university department (see below for more discussion on this point). Arguably, broad academic enculturation plays an important role in student development by providing opportunities to observe the various ways of knowing and doing across the academy (i.e., thinking and writing) and to temporarily approximate and execute the various, disciplinary ways of thinking, believing, doing, and writing. This process of learning strategies for “serious game playing,” however, are often inhibited by two interrelated issues that have been highlighted in transfer research: (a) students don’t often see the relationship between academic courses, or, at least are not offered the opportunities to reflect on the variance in academic discourse, and (b) as we have seen in much of the transfer research from writing studies, this process of broad

academic enculturation can be challenging for students as they progress through their undergraduate coursework. To draw from another classic metaphor from writing studies, often students move through general education courses feeling like “a stranger in strange lands” (McCarthy, 1987, p. 234), trying to figure out the language and customs of each classroom.

It is from this perspective that the current literature on enculturation has represented academic enculturation as “partial, diverse, conflicted, and fragmentary” (Casanave, xiii). In fact, in reflecting on the extant literature, Casanave surmised that:

There is probably not enough time or singularity of purpose, partly because of the fragmentary nature of undergraduate education and partly because many undergraduates simply don't know what they want to be or who they want to be. Within their tentative beginnings, however, undergraduate students need to find a way to make some order out of the diversity of academic literacy games they are engaged in if only to survive. Perhaps a deeper sense of investment and coherence comes only later. (p. 81)

Nonetheless, students must not only traverse the wide range of disciplines represented by introductory and mid-level general education courses to fulfill graduation requirements, but, on top of it all, they must negotiate these disparate communities while beginning to develop deep familiarity with their major discipline in order to successfully enculturate into highly-specialized disciplinary communities and future professions. As seen in the writing transfer literature, moving between diverse academic writing contexts is perhaps one of the most difficult “enculturative” experiences that students have early in their college careers⁸. How they perceive the differences and learn to manage them can have potential impacts on how they view the disciplines, and their own process of enculturation into these disciplines. To put it rather simply, learning to moving quickly between contexts is perhaps one of the most important transfer

⁸ Most of our First-Year outcome statements are structured implicitly around helping students develop strategies for successful broad academic enculturation. Rhetorical flexibility, the ability to write for various audiences (in various contexts), embodies this sensibility.

strategies that students can acquire early on in their undergraduate educations and one deeply connected to broad notions of enculturation.

If broad academic enculturation is seen as an important step for student success during their undergraduate education, so too is their simultaneous process of enculturating into specific disciplinary communities. Whereas broad academic enculturation is marked by students' observation and approximation of the important conversations, ways of doing, and textual practices in general education courses (through course content and assigned writings), students' entry into and progress through the enculturative processes of their majors requires different strategies and modes of engagement. As suggested above, faculty expectations for students' successful adoption of discipline-specific ways of knowing and writing are considerably less in general education courses than they are in the disciplinary courses, which are meant to facilitate the enculturative process of those registered in the major. In return, students often demonstrate higher levels of interest and motivation to enculturate into those disciplinary courses (Driscoll, 2011, 2014), even though they may not be deeply familiar with the literate practices of the community, which are required for full disciplinary enculturation. Unlike the depictions of student enculturation into general education classrooms (what I have categorized as broad academic enculturation), depictions of successful enculturation into specific disciplinary communities, such as advanced major courses and future professional contexts, demonstrate how students must not only learn the content knowledge and accepted writing practices of that discipline (its genres), but also to internalize its ways of knowing and doing, and to understand the important social relationships that exist in those communities. Or, to borrow from Wenger's modes of belonging, they must not only engage, but begin to imagine and align with disciplinary activities.

The Role of Writing in Disciplinary Enculturation

While writing plays a pivotal role in both broad academic enculturation and disciplinary enculturation, of specific importance to this project is the relationship between disciplinary enculturation and writing. In “Writing is a way of enacting disciplinarity,” Neal Learner (2015) discussed the relationship between writing and forming disciplinary identities. He wrote: “disciplines shape – and are shaped by – the writing that the members of those disciplines do” (p. 40). In the same volume, Addler-Kassner and Wardle (2015) explained:

Faculty use writing (mostly in the form of publications) to share ideas with others and demonstrate that they understand both the ideas of others (research and current issues) and appropriate ways of talking about those ideas in their disciplines. As students delve more deeply into disciplines (as they move, for instance, toward majors or advanced degrees), they are expected to use writing in the ways members of their disciplines do, to engage with others in their disciplinary communities in ways that demonstrate that they understand the work these people do and how to communicate with them, as one of them. (p. 50)

These sentiments are perhaps most succinctly argued within contemporary genre research. Rhetorical Genre Studies has long argued that the production of disciplinary genres requires writers to not only understand and represent the declarative knowledge of the field (i.e., the content of the piece of writing), but also its associated “norms, epistemology, ideology, and social ontology” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1993, p. 501). Research in rhetorical genre studies, however, is quick to note the complexity of enacting these disciplinary genres, as (a) writers must negotiate shifting expectations, competing demands, and the intertextual relationships that genres have with other genres in the field (Bazerman, 1997, 2002); and (b) the enactment and representation and enactment of norms, epistemology, ideology, and social ontology through genre “requires immersion into the culture, and a lengthy period of apprenticeship and enculturation” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1993, p. 487). Key here is the impact that not only the

process of enculturation can have on writing in disciplinary and professional contexts, but students' perceptions of themselves enacting those practices.

In order to produce these genres, members must be able to internalize the epistemological assumptions of their fields as “texts reflect attitudes toward and beliefs about knowledge by virtue of the ways that knowledge is represented, even if no explicit theoretical stance is taken in the document. In this sense, to produce a discipline-specific text is to identify with an intellectual and epistemological tradition whether or not one intends to or one is aware of such a commitment” (Casanave, 2002, pp. 28-29). Other studies have similarly noted the important role that writing and other literate practices play in the processes of joining and participating within community activities. Mateos et al. (2011), for example, have argued “students' participation in social practices shaped according to certain conceptions of writing will contribute to how they learn to write and to a personal way of conceiving of writing, representing it to themselves and seeing themselves as writers” (p. 53).

In sum, the process of disciplinary enculturation is explicitly linked to students' specific ways of seeing and doing (e.g., knowing and writing) throughout their undergraduate education. “The act of writing, then, is not so much about using a particular set of skills as it is about becoming a particular kind of person, about developing a sense of who we are” (Roozen, 2015, p. 50). This process of can, however, have tremendous impact on how students see themselves and the kinds of value that they place on courses and activities both in and out of their chosen discipline. Moreover, despite being involved in multiple communities throughout the undergraduate curriculum (as demonstrated in the above discussion of broad academic enculturation), the discipline-specific epistemological assumptions, genres, and strategies required for textual production are viewed as potentially more important to students than those

observed in other less-central courses (for instance a major or future professional community over general education courses). These necessary components acquired during the enculturative process can strongly influence how students see knowledge and (writing) practices within other, less central communities (like a general education writing classrooms). Thus, one of the central concerns for the current project was to understand how students' level of enculturative development in their chosen discipline can impact their perceptions of writing and GE writing instruction. Students' perceptions and beliefs regarding their progress toward "full enculturation" (whatever that may mean) and their current perspectives on their participation within those communities may have a significant impact on how they view/define "writing" and how they view the courses that are meant to teach them skills for continued writing development.

To date, much of the literature on disciplinary enculturation has focused on the processes and practices of graduate students, rather than that of undergraduates (e.g., Prior, Casanave). This research has argued that most of the substantive work of enculturation happens during cohesive and sustained training, access and peripheral participation – opportunities only afforded during advanced education. Yet, both my own data and work from educational psychology suggests that at least *preliminary* processes of enculturation occur far sooner than much of the writing-related enculturation research proposes (e.g., Jheng, Johnson, & Anderson, 1993; Muis, Benedixen, & Haerle, 2006; Perry, 1968; Schommer, 1990). In fact, the student data used in this project often shows high levels of engagement, familiarity, and approximations of the ways of knowing and doing within disciplinary communities during undergraduate education. As scholars and teachers we must establish ways to understand, categorize, and analyze these processes in order to aid in student learning and writing during vital transition moments in their undergraduate careers.

So while much research has been conducted on the processes of enculturation and the ways in which it mediates and re-mediates student practice and identity through writing, less research has been done on the impact that these processes have on students as they negotiate various contexts of their undergraduate curriculum. More specifically, to the knowledge of this researcher, no research has been done that explores the impact of students' perceptions of their own enculturative process, and how these perceptions impact writing development in general education composition classrooms.

A Framework for Categorizing Student Perceptions of Disciplinary Enculturation

Categorizing students' perceptions of their enculturative process will help researchers and teachers to learn how these perspectives shape students' interactions with general education writing course instruction. In turn, this knowledge will help researchers and teachers to more effectively develop curricula and pedagogical practices that speak to students with different perspectives on their enculturative processes. In the existing writing studies literature, there have been three different models used to categorize different modes of participation within disciplinary communities that relate to the enculturative process: Prior (1998), Haas (1994), and Thaiss and Zawacki (2006).

Prior's (1998) socio-historical model attempted to capture the ways in which graduate students engage with and appropriate various writing tasks as they move through advanced disciplinary coursework. In his model, Prior proposes three general modes of participation that students enact during graduate classes: passing, procedural display, deep participation. The first, "passing," is a way of participating from an institutional perspective, which equates to the completion of grades and credits. Quite literally students are enrolled in courses and are, thus, assumed to be enculturating into their chosen fields. The second, "procedural display," is

participation in the individual and collective activities in a classroom or seminar. These activities can range from the writing of a research proposal to the participation in classroom discussions. Finally, “deep participation” is signified by the roles that students assume within a classroom. Forms of deep participation include taking on leadership roles within a classroom, making connections between classroom activities and professional activities that will open up gateways to future success. Prior takes care to note that these are not contrastive forms of participation. Rather, students can engage in all three forms simultaneously.

Through his textual analysis of two Non-Native English Speaking Master’s students (Mai and Teresa) in a Second Languages Program in the College of Education, Prior demonstrated how two students moving through the same program could have radically different modes of participation. Ultimately, as Prior explicated: “Teresa was more tightly aligned with local and broader streams of disciplinary and professional activity than Mai, whose connections to such streams of activity seemed tenuous and irregular” (p.p. 132-133). Prior’s findings are valuable for establishing the theoretical framework for this study for two key reasons. First, the data from Mai and Teresa emphasize how important alignment is for the eventual success and continued disciplinary advancement of our students, particularly as they are learning disciplinary activities and forms of writing. Second, the ability to adequately align with disciplinary communities is deeply impacted by prior experiences.

And, yet, while Prior’s model is valuable in conceptualizing the process of enculturation as rooted within socio-historical activities of the disciplines, his work is focused on graduate students and only tells us about how students engage with activities and tasks within their graduate work, rather than how they conceptualize their advancement through the disciplines, particularly at the undergraduate level. The other two models from writing studies (Haas, 1994;

Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006) begin to help us understand the process of disciplinary enculturation that occur at the undergraduate level.

Another model, in fact the earliest model, comes from Haas' (1994) longitudinal study, "Learning to Read Biology: One Student's Rhetorical Development in College." In the study, Haas tracked one undergraduate student's (Eliza's) rhetorical development across four years of undergraduate coursework, attending in particular to her reading development and growing awareness of textual production, authorship, and the relationship between knowledge production and writing in her major field of Biology.

Over the course of her disciplinary enculturation into biology, Eliza's reading and writing practices shifted from understanding and memorizing specific terms and concepts of the field (declarative, or content, knowledge) in her freshman year to understanding her place within the academic community during her senior year. By senior year, "Eliza began to see her own role as not simply learning the facts but of negotiating meaning – that is, doing her work – amidst the many voices of her discipline" (p. 74). Ultimately, Haas attributed Eliza's rhetorical growth to four key factors: (a) increase in domain knowledge, (b) instructional support and exposure to different courses and assignments in the biology department, (c) her "natural development" related to her understanding of knowledge production (see: Perry, 1970) and (d) mentoring in a sociocultural setting, which included a director mentor and working with a larger team of researchers in the lab.

Haas' framework for understanding Eliza's deepening relationship to her chosen discipline through the enculturative process highlights several important findings for studying enculturative development at the undergraduate level. First, as my findings also highlight in chapter three, there are a variety of factors that play into a students' deepening familiarity and

participation into the literate practices of their disciplines. Haas' model moves us to think beyond the accumulation of content knowledge in the enculturative process, and to look for important affordances and structured support when studying student enculturation. In the example of Eliza, we see her begin to engage more deeply in the rhetorical practices of the field, imagine how these texts and her writing as participating within disciplinary meaning making, and finally, aligning her values with those of her chosen field.

Finally, Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) also propose a three-stage model that depicts the development of disciplinary writer. In the first stage, writers draw from a limited set of courses to generalize disciplinary rules and conventions that are seen as static and consistent. During the second, as the writer as has experienced a variety of "different exigencies in different discourses" (p. 110), they begin to challenge the consistency of these rules and conventions, often representing these inconsistencies as instructor idiosyncrasies. In the last stage, the writer sees these differences as "components of an articulated, nuanced idea of the discipline" (p. 110). In this stage, Thaiss and Zawacki also see the merging of the writer's personal goals with disciplinary expectations: "students with the most experience writing in their majors understand how the discipline, in its dynamic variety of voices and exigencies, can accommodate original ideas and new perspectives" (p. 134). [Neither Haas' model nor Thaiss and Zawacki's model, however, look at students' own perceptions about values and perceptions of this development, values and perceptions that could significantly impact their relationship to their discipline as well as their relationship to the general education writing classroom.

Each of these models provide a way of thinking about the staged progression toward deepening understanding of disciplinary activity – echoing the modes of belonging from Wenger (see above). However, from the models posed in each of these studies, the progress through these

modes and stages are relatively unreflective, tacitly occurring throughout our students' undergraduate education. Yet, if we take seriously the claims from Chapter One about the impact that student perceptions and values related to writing can have on development and transfer, we should also take seriously students' perceptions of their own enculturative processes and how those perspectives can potentially impact what they value and what they feel they need in terms of their own progress of enculturation and their own values and perceptions related to general education writing instruction.

Summary of Theoretical Framework

Despite the fact that both enculturative processes require students to engage, imagine, and align (Wenger, 1998), each is distinguished by specific classroom affordances and level of student investment. The existing literature on transfer and enculturation that I have covered in the first two chapters has emphasized the impact that students' value systems and perception of self can have on their long-term writing development. While each of the current models on enculturation offers valuable insight into the ways that our students advance through their disciplines, and how they eventually participate within community activities, none explicitly cover how students see themselves as developing members of their disciplinary and professional communities, nor do they highlight the values that students place on educational experiences that could benefit their continued expertise within their disciplines. Thus, my study adds to the existing frameworks for enculturation by looking at student perceptions of their own familiarity with their chosen disciplines and what they feel is important for their continued success in their fields.

Thus, in Chapter Three, I use this enculturative framework to understand the disciplinary influences and experiences that students bring with them to their mid-level writing class, and

how these experiences inform the ways in which they view their continued participation and success in future disciplinary and professional contexts.

CHAPTER 3: ENCULTRATIVE INFLUENCES

Introduction

In the last chapter, I presented a theoretical framework for thinking about students' process of enculturation into academic communities. Differentiating between two common forms of academic enculturation, I discussed how both broad academic enculturation and disciplinary enculturation are vital for student success during their undergraduate coursework, and beyond. Despite the fact that both enculturative processes require students to engage, imagine, and align (Wenger, 1998), each can be distinguished by specific classroom affordances and level of student investment. Existing models of disciplinary enculturation (Haas, 1994; Prior, 1998; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006) aptly demonstrate not only how students grow to engage in the meaning making activities of their chosen disciplines, but have also emphasized the changes that occur in students' perceptions of what those activities look like and entail, particularly in relation to writing. Despite the valuable knowledge that the existing models of disciplinary enculturation have offered the field of writing studies, there is still much we do not yet know about how student beliefs and values impact their disciplinary enculturation and perceptions mid-level writing courses.

Chapter Three uses the framework of disciplinary enculturation to identify the disciplinary and professional influences that students brought to a mid-level, general education writing course, and to show how these influences can impact students' perceptions of their own enculturative progress. Additionally, this chapter operationalizes this data and categorizes these "pathways toward enculturation" that can be used to potentially understand what students will value in their future courses, especially in their writing courses after the first year. While I do not suggest an explicit causal relationship between students' perceived pathways toward

enculturation and their perspectives on writing and expectations for writing instruction, this study hopes to highlight important links, which will allow me to suggest pedagogical and curricular approaches that may facilitate positive engagement with writing in mid-level writing classrooms and future contexts (i.e., transfer) in Chapters Four and Five.

In order to investigate the kinds of disciplinary influences and experiences that inform students' enculturative development, I ask the following research questions in this chapter:

- 1.) What are the sources of influence that impact students' sense of enculturation in their disciplines?
- 2.) How do these perspectives on enculturation impact students' beliefs about continued disciplinary enculturation?

In what follows, I provide an overview of the methods and resultant codes that extend from the preliminary open coding described in Chapter One. Next, I discuss each of the coding categories produced during the second round of coding that relate to the influences and experience that students bring with them to our mid-level writing courses. Finally, I operationalize those findings by constructing student profiles for each of my five focal students. In doing so, I demonstrate how these findings not only depict a range of values and perspectives related to disciplinary enculturation, but also coalesce around the types of students we might see in our writing classrooms.

Methods

In order to identify the sources of influence that impact students' perceptions of their own enculturative progress and perspectives on their continued development, the codes and findings from this chapter were drawn from data excerpts coded as "student background/prior experience" and "connection to major and/or field" in the generative coding process, as outlined in Chapter

One. Furthermore, the data used to develop these categories were primarily drawn from the entrance survey and the first round interviews (unless otherwise noted). Data was limited to these sources for two reasons. First, the survey and first-round interview questions were originally designed to prompt talk about source of influence and perspectives on their own development. Because of the open-ended nature of the interview process, codes were also found in subsequent interviews, but much of this information either reiterated previous information, or added nuance and detail to those answers. Second, data was limited to these two primary sources so as to limit the degree to which the mid-level writing classroom could have modified their beliefs and values related to disciplinary enculturation. This second reasoning is not without limitations as some of the interviews took place a few weeks into the semester, and, naturally, some of the course discussions could have impacted perceptions. I have tried my best to account for these impacts during my data analysis process.

The categories and, eventually, the pathways themselves, were developed from a theoretically informed reading of my data, but I do not assume these categories to be exhaustive for all the major influences that might come from a study with larger participant numbers. I see the results of this chapter as a beginning point for thinking about student values and beliefs as they relate to enculturation. Additionally, my findings do not assume to suggest any sense of *accuracy* in terms of student perceptions of their own development, or in terms of what they will need to successfully integrate themselves into their disciplines. Rather what my data *does* begin to suggest is that whether or not these students' perceptions of their disciplinary development and potential futures are accurate, their personal perceptions of field objectives, values, concerns, and writing practices can impact their perceptions of writing and general education writing courses in significant ways.

Part of the coding process outlined in Chapter One provided information about the factors that students believed had strongly influenced their familiarity and confidence within their major, as well as what they felt they would need to continue their enculturation into their chosen disciplines. Analysis of these codes produced four primary influences that students believed helped to familiarize them with their chosen discipline, and that they brought with them to their mid-level writing course. Along with each code, several sub-codes were produced during the data analysis process. These codes and sub-codes are as follows:

1. Familial Influence
 - a. Family-Facilitated
 - b. Family-Promoted
2. Classroom Experiences and Instruction
 - a. Distribution of Major and Non-Major Courses
 - b. Varying Perceptions of Knowledge
3. First-Hand Practice
 - a. Reflective Practice
4. Beliefs about writing

Second, while the coding process allowed me to determine the influences that had impacted students' current sense of enculturative progress into their discipline, it also afforded insight into what additional knowledge and experiences the students would need to advance their sense of enculturation. From the data, three categories of continued enculturation were established (what I call "Pathways toward Enculturation"):

1. Content-focused pathways
2. Practice-focused pathways

3. Reflective Application pathways

As I will discuss, the findings in this chapter intersect and overlap with existing literature on student values and enculturation in writing studies -- Haas (1994), Bergmann and Zepernick (2007), Driscoll (2011, 2014), and Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) – as well as conversations from the broader field of writing studies – Sommers and Saltz (2004). The corroboration of these findings provides further evidence for the role that these influences and perceptions can have on students' long-term writing development (see summary section below for further discussion).

Findings

During recruitment for this study, all students were asked to complete an entrance survey that asked about their felt sense of engagement and familiarity with their chosen major or discipline. Student self-report from the entrance survey (n=43) showed that students felt as if they had a relatively high sense of familiarity with their chosen discipline upon entering their mid-level writing course (with mean response of 7 out of 10, but with a bimodal score of 6 and 9 out of 10). These numbers show students, primarily in their sophomore and junior years (80% of respondents), felt as if they were fairly well versed in both the content and practices of their chosen majors. Responses related to the level of familiarity with the writing practices of these majors (mean 6, mode 8) and the felt sense of confidence writing for the various tasks in the discipline (mean 7, mode 8) shared a similar distribution. Interestingly, there was little correlation between students' sense of connectedness, familiarity, and confidence and their grade level.

The “global” data from this survey provides a bird’s eye view of students’ sense of their enculturative progress that they bring with them to the writing classroom. It provides a base from which to begin investigating the influences that my focal students discuss during the interview

process. Beyond this global data, three key influences were found in my focal data that had a strong impact on students' sense of engagement and progress toward deepening modes of participation required for disciplinary enculturation: family influences, classroom experience, and first-hand practice.

Familial Influence: Family-Facilitated and Family-Promoted

The impact that family influences can have on enculturative development can be seen in two different ways in my data. First, family-facilitated influences are where a family member had been part of the same disciplinary community that the focal students had decided to join. Alternatively, family-promoted influences are instances where a family member has no disciplinary experience or expertise to offer their children, but either actively or passively promotes the student's continued engagement with the field. A third category, family-ambivalent influences, presented itself during data analysis, but this category only occurred in one, incomplete student dataset. While of interest to this study, the limited data that were gathered from this student prevents it from inclusion in this factor.

In my group of focal students, three of the five students in the study had direct introduction to their disciplines through immediate or extended family members; two of those three emphasized the direct and positive impact that their family members have had on their level of familiarity with disciplinary knowledge and activities, their level of confidence in engaging in those activities, and their sense of development and progress that they would need in order to be successful in those fields. During their interviews, these two students spoke at length about the impact that their families had been during their formative years. Both students recounted being raised in households where family members would actively discuss topics related to their fields (psychology and education). These family members would often bring

work home, introducing students to not only disciplinary content knowledge, but also the practices (including writing practices) involved in the day-to-day operations of the field. The third student spoke about having a family member (an aunt) who was familiar with the field, but had only just begun to talk to her about the discipline and the best ways to move forward in the field. While not having a deep impact on her development yet, her relationship with her aunt was significant for her because it gave her a valuable source of information that she could use in the future, thus increasing her confidence moving forward toward her degree.

Students who had family members that were directly involved in their chosen field of study cited them as not only inspiration for deciding to pursue that discipline and future profession, but also a source of information, and a valuable way to feel more immediately connected to the field. In contrast, students who discussed family-promoted influences seemed to emphasize the impact of this influence in ways slightly different than those with family-facilitated influences.

During the interviews, the other two students noted how important it was for their family members to be supportive of their disciplinary choices and their enculturative progress, despite not having direct knowledge or involvement in the field. For instance, while not immediately connected to the field of dance, Cora's mother and father were incredibly important for her enculturative development because it was them who first introduced her to her dance classes at an early age. It was through their active involvement in signing her up for dance that Cora was able to begin her enculturative process at a much earlier age than some of her peers. She recognized that her parents' continued support, while not directly beneficial to her understanding of the field, provided her the additional confidence needed to grow as a dancer, a profession that she acknowledged was not the most stable, nor the easiest to enter into. Similarly, Iko's family

was relatively unfamiliar with the medical aspect of her enculturative development, but was highly supportive of her continued science education. They also promoted a second-hand influence on Iko's decision to also pursue a business degree, as they were both in sales and marketing in the automotive industry. Yet, unlike Cora's family, Iko's parents were passive participants in her development, offering only emotional support rather than direct enculturative experiences that would have introduced her to various aspects of the field at an earlier age. Still, she talked about the pride her parents had in her as she continued to learn and develop toward her goals as a pediatrician (and eventual hospital administrator).

Classroom Experiences and Instruction

Unsurprisingly, each of the focal students cited classroom instruction as a key part of their enculturation, bolstering familiarity and confidence participating in and writing for disciplinary contexts. While coming from different disciplines, the focal students saw the accrual of disciplinary knowledge and practices as vital for their continued education and successful integration into their future professions. Upon entering the Intermediate Writing classroom, each focal student had taken at least some preliminary courses in their major, as well as at least some general education coursework.

Yet, despite outward appearances of shared values regarding the importance of classroom experiences on their level of familiarity and sense of disciplinary engagement, students differed in number of major courses they had taken, the number of general education courses they had taken, as well as the level of coursework completed upon entering their mid-level writing course. Connected to this distribution of coursework, students also had differing perspectives on the role that those classrooms played in their enculturative development, particularly in terms with how

they understood the acquisition of knowledge (or, their epistemological assumptions related to their disciplines).

Distribution between Major and General Education coursework. While all focal students cited classroom experience as vital to their disciplinary development, three of the five students had taken a larger portion of their general education courses, saving their major courses for later on in their curriculum. For instance, Iko, a second-semester Biology student, had taken only a few low-level science courses (Intro to Biology, Microbiology, and General Chemistry) and a handful of general education courses before enrolling in Intermediate Writing (Intro to Business being the most impactful based on interview data). Similarly, Bianca, a second-year Food Science major, had taken just a few more low- and mid-level science courses, only few general education courses, and no advanced science courses. Sara, on the other hand, had all but completed her coursework in psychology, leaving Intermediate Writing as one of her last remaining general education courses before graduation. The remaining two students had taken a wide range of courses toward both their major and general education requirements. As demonstrated in Haas (1994) and Thaiss and Zawacki (2006), along with this distribution of courses came more nuanced language that indicated an understanding of disciplinary epistemology, which, as the data show, actually deeply informed students' sense of familiarity and, eventually, their imagining of the field's activities and landscape (as discussed below).

Varying Perceptions of Knowledge. Despite the fact that each of the focal students cited significant classroom experiences as influential to their level of enculturation into their disciplines, there was a distinct shift as to what students valued within these courses in terms of knowledge and enculturative development.

Some of the students focused on the accrual of content knowledge as the primary value provided by the course. They saw the knowledge provided in these courses as both domain-specific and certain. Knowledge gained from these courses was uncontested, certain, and specific to the discipline in which they were learned. Many of the comments that focused on the aggregation of content knowledge from disciplinary courses had (a) come from students that had only taken lower-level disciplinary courses, and (b) were from students in the life and physical sciences. For example, during the first interview Iko talked about memorization of course content as key to her success not only in her current courses, but in future science courses as well. She explains: “It’s because the content is kind of repetitive, it just builds on; so since I have a good understanding of what the course is about I think it’s pretty not difficult. It’s just you remember all that you’ve learned.” Similarly, Bianca makes similar comments about the relationship between her lower-level science courses, particularly in food science as requiring memorization of key facts, but also emphasizes the specificity of that knowledge in successful learning: “The teacher was not helpful at all and I just felt like the exams are really hard and there was the information that I couldn’t find in the notes, so I didn’t learn anything from it.” More than just emphasizing the importance of learning content knowledge of the discipline, both Iko and Bianca emphasize the certainty and transmissional nature of this knowledge. Furthermore, their responses suggest that the purpose of learning this body of knowledge was for either (a) their success in the immediate course, or (b) for successful learning of concepts in more advanced courses.

Other students focused on the transferrable, applicable skills that came from the courses. Unlike the accrual of content knowledge, these comments focused on the development of long-term skill sets, such as the learning of a technique or strategy, or even modeling techniques done

by the instructor in terms of their pedagogy. A majority of these comments came from students who had (a) taken a wider range of both disciplinary and general education courses, and (b) came from disciplines that were in the humanities, social sciences, and performance arts.

In sharp contrast to the students who believed that content knowledge was the key value in their disciplinary courses, Cora discussed how some of her courses, provided more than just the knowledge of dance (e.g., ballet movements and its history). For instance, in the semester prior to her mid-level writing course, Cora took her Intro to World Dance class, which challenged Cora's sense of what the field of dance entailed. In her description of the course, she detailed the ways in which the course readings and assignments broke down her preconceived boundaries between dance and history and philosophy:

She [the instructor] really took a different approach to it and really challenged me to read all these very intellectual philosophers who just very wordy. That challenged me to dig deeper into those readings and trying to pick them apart ... We did one where we watched a dance video by this company Urban Bush Woman which I actually took a class with them last week. We watched this video of their performance something about the African Diaspora that was what their performance is about. We had to compare it to, it was like Marx or somebody bigger than that that wouldn't be compared to dance at all but we had to compare them. She didn't give us a page from it. We just had to rely on a library. That's when I noticed that dance is more than just dance like writing is very important.

This course, as she attested, changed her perspectives on what it was to be a dancer, pushing her imagination of the field beyond the physical movements that she must master, and connecting the field of dance to spaces and events beyond the stage, and event to activities such as writing, which are commonly thought to be unrelated to the field of dance: "A dancer is always... there is always learning going on constantly because the field is constantly evolving and so you always have to be on top of current events and on the issues and terms that are going on at that time."

Allen and Sara discussed the goals of their courses and the role that these courses play in their development in relatively similar ways. Allen, for instance, remarks about he knows that

learning how to play certain instruments will be pivotal in his successful profession into the field of music education. Equally important was his attention to the ways in which his instructors taught the course and assisted individual students in their development. For him, each instructor was different in this regard and each course allowed him to see for himself what was successful and what was unsuccessful in music pedagogy.

Unlike courses in the physical and life sciences, courses in the social sciences and humanities are known to value knowledge differently, and, thus, many of their courses and writing assignments are set up in ways that encourage student engagement with concepts and ideas that do not necessarily reinforce the idea of fixed knowledge transmission and mastery. The engagement of knowledge construction does indeed happen in the physical and life sciences, as indicated by Eliza's development in Haas' study, but these modes of engagement do not occur until much later on in their undergraduate coursework. Thus, it is not simply the fact that the students who view knowledge as contestable and critically constructed by members of the community come from disciplines that value critical meaning making earlier in their curriculum, but these students have also taken a wider range of courses that have allowed them to engage in disciplinary writing that encourages this type of practice. What is important here, however, is that these students brought in very disparate experiences and views of disciplinary knowledge and knowledge making that, even from early data analysis showed significant impacts on how they viewed their enculturative progress, and even how they viewed the role of meaning making and writing within their courses and majors, perspectives that were only reinforced during their first-hand experiences in the field.

First-Hand Practice

All five students discussed having experiences with first-hand practice in their discipline, or in a professional context applicable to their field of study, and all five students emphasized how important these experiences were in how they thought about the field and their own progress toward professionalization. As one student succinctly put it: “You can like, anybody can pick up a book and, you know, teach themselves teach whatever like that’s one aspect of it, it’s not fully engaged actually going into the field and experience it for yourself like you have to do the experience.”

Three out of the five focal students talked about these experiences in a very positive way, suggesting that it was through hands-on practice that they learned about the actual practices of their discipline or related profession after. These experiences ranged from performing with an actual dance troupe to working as an assistant to a high school band teacher, helping to organize materials and scheduling meetings. Yet, while each of these five students talked about positive first-hand experiences, each student discussed the positive impact of these experiences in different ways.

One student, for instance, talked about how her first-hand practice entering into an Africana dance troupe had finally made her feel like a current member of the field, and that constant engagement in these practices re-enforced her belonging and ability to visualize a future in her discipline/profession. This experience built on her prior experiences with dance to help her understand the day-to-day realities of being a dancer. The lived experiences were more than just what it felt like to dance on stage as a professional, but also valuable experiences moving between troupes (experiences that this student found immensely valuable thinking about her life after college).

Another student used first-hand experience to look forward toward his future engagement in the field, but this looking forward expanded his idea of what it meant to do the disciplinary work in his chosen profession. He talked at length about working as an “apprentice” to his band teacher at his high school. This experience showed him that a teacher’s life was more than just being in the classroom. Instead, “teaching” often consisted of advocating for programs and writing proposals and plans for the department, two activities that he never realized were part of his future professional life.

Finally, the third student used first-hand experience to forge strong links between classroom content and prior first-hand experiences. Beyond looking forward and/or feeling a deeper sense of participation, this student actively used first-hand experience to reflect and think about prior knowledge and experiences and in a sense, re-imagine her own mode of participation in the field (see: “Reflective Practice” below).

Two of the other students, however, reported failed attempts at participating in activities that would provide them valuable experience for disciplinary development. Both Iko and Bianca attempted to secure positions outside of the classroom that they felt would garner them valuable first-hand experience and lead to a deeper understanding of their discipline and future professions. Yet, in both cases the internship or shadowing experience was short-lived, as they were not able to properly engage with the professional practices required of them. Bianca, for example, attempted to do a volunteer experience alongside hospital dieticians in order to better understand their day-to-day operations. During her interview, she explained the failure of this experience, highlighting her lack of disciplinary knowledge as the reason for her problems continuing:

I was like in first year so I volunteered like a hospital just to kind of because I want to be a dietitian so I wanted to get an idea of it but I didn’t really know anything about it at the

time like nothing and they just kind of asked me all these questions and I didn't know anything so I thought that was really difficult. And like I didn't even volunteer that long because that was like uncomfortable like it wasn't good.

Similarly, Iko signed up for a medical transcription service for physicians. She made similar claims about her lack of disciplinary experience and knowledge as the reason for her being unable to continue with the position.

Reflective Practice. While only one of the students demonstrated “reflective talk,” her emphasis on its importance and impact on her enculturative development warranted its inclusion in this chapter. In *Reflection in the Writing Classroom*, Yancey (1998) argued that reflection is a critical component of learning and learning to write. Perhaps most provocatively, she defined *constructive reflection* as “the process of developing a cumulative, multi-selved, multi-voiced identity, which takes place between and among composing events, and the associated texts” (p. 14). In this study, each student reported the influence of direct experiences with first-hand practice (both successful and unsuccessful) related to their discipline or profession, yet another type of first-hand experience stood out that was both disciplinary and professional, but was *not* related to their chosen discipline. Sara, a fourth-year psychology student, talked at length about transitioning from studying the hard sciences (biology) and working in a patient-care facility in her hometown to studying psychology at the study site. Her crossing over from biology and patient care to psychology and a future in law school challenged her perceptions of disciplinary divisions, activities, and writing. During this process she was forced to critically think about the ways in which she engaged with disciplinary practice amid and amongst various discourses and communities of practice in much the same way that Yancey described the act of constructive reflection. Moreover, we see, in much the same way that Thaiss and Zawacki discussed the bridging of personal and disciplinary values, Sara discussing disciplinary and professional

practice as less static than that of her peers. Her prior disciplinary experiences became a rich site of negotiation, thinking about the ways in which certain previous knowledge and experiences could help her engage in new and interesting ways with future professional practice. For instance, during our first interview, Sara talked about a revelatory moment in which she was able to reflect on prior experience to make connections between course content and disciplinary practice:

But I feel pretty connected to my major like I've done work in the field and one of my greatest 'aha' moments was when I was sitting at a psychology class last winter something like that... I'm sitting in a class and the teacher is explaining what is schizophrenia and I was like 'Oh, my God, I know this and it wasn't just textbook material, I can actually go the field and say, 'Oh, I've seen this, I know this,' helps me study, you know, learn myself a lot quicker or easier, so then I felt pretty connected with the stuff I do outside the classroom.

We see this kind of connection forging again as Sara talks about how in the future she intends to integrate her medical, psychological and legal training in order to help people with psychological disorders receive proper legal, medical and psychological help. It is because of her prior experiences in a variety of fields, she understands and actively *reflects* on what might be of use from her past, but as she moves forward she also critically renegotiates how she sees prior knowledge (much in the same way that Yancey, Taczak, and Robertson (2015) talk about critical incidents; see Chapter 1).

Other students (e.g., Iko and Allen), also talk about shifting from one context to the next, but do so in a much different way. They talk about moving between disciplines and professional contexts, but this transition is not about creating links or renegotiating knowledge. Instead, they talk about these transitions as if they were snakes, shedding the skin of the old discipline in favor of new knowledge and new practices. As such, these students did not demonstrate talk about

these transitions as impacting how they thought about and perceived their continued development in their current discipline or future profession.

Beliefs about writing

Alongside students' epistemological assumptions and experiences with forms of first-hand practice (legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991)) that influence how they see the production of knowledge from their disciplines, students also brought a variety of beliefs about writing in their disciplines and future professions. During the course of their first interview, both Iko and Bianca discussed the role of writing within their field and major courses. Unsurprisingly, their view of writing aligned well with their epistemological assumptions indicated in the previous sections. For Iko, writing was meant for the communication of mastered knowledge. Her reporting of lab findings was to show her TA and her professor that she was able to perform the experiment correctly, rather than any larger social performance. Similarly, Bianca emphasized the fact that test taking and lab reports were the only kinds of writing expected of students in her major, and that, they too, were only meant to demonstrate successful learning and the ability to follow instructions. These beliefs reflected Iko and Bianca's limited engagement with writing. As they had both been exposed to classroom assignments that emphasized writing with limited purposes (demonstrating mastery of knowledge or skill) to limited audiences (instructors as experts), they perceived disciplinary writing and their engagement with them as representative of the types of writing and practices that they would encounter in the future.

Unlike the clear-cut focus on direction and content in writing that the science students exhibited, two students (Allen and Sara) demonstrated a wider range of opinions and beliefs about writing, particularly as they pertain to the epistemological assumptions of the field in which they were operating.

Rather than having a singular definition or belief about writing, Allen distinguished his beliefs about writing in three different ways. First, having some first-hand experience in the field, he talked about the rhetorical and argumentative dimensions of writing as they related to professional contexts (specifically as an administrator). Second, having extensive classroom experience in which professors marked on his musical scores, he talked about the minimalist annotations made as a musician on score sheets and music. And finally, in fields that he only had cursory involvement in (such as Business), he also discussed how writing much in the same way as Iko and Bianca did. For example, in the Intro to Business to business course, he described the writing he had to do as “just a lot of facts on paper.”

Similarly, Sara talked about classroom writing in a way that seemed relatively reductive compared to the way that she discussed “real world” professional writing. In her classes she had completed both tests and research papers, both of which she felt fairly competent at, but in her discussion of these genres talked about formatting and source usage as the key factors for her feeling confident (values that she probably saw as being held by instructor evaluations of her papers): “It’s easy for me. I have enough knowledge and I’ve taken enough classes like I have all the resources like at home I have bookshelves and bookshelves ... but I feel very comfortable like, you know, APA when I have the side sources, finding credible website, actually writing it.” Her discussion of real world professional genres comes across as much more nuanced, having impacts on audiences and purposes beyond the disciplinary boundaries of the classroom: “so I know like, you know, if I get into like health law I know I will have to like learn how to read these forms properly because if a physician puts a wrong date on the form, the form can become invalid and someone can turn around and say that this is a huge issue.”

Much can be said about the range of beliefs and familiarity with writing as reported by these focal students. Limited understanding of audience and purpose, along with discussions of genres that are rooted in classroom practice, rather than real world situations have been discussed widely in the field of writing studies (e.g., Wardle, 2007; Melzer, 2014). Of interest here, however, has more to do with the depth of engagement in different writing practices that students get at different points in the writing process. The exposure to writing that Iko, Bianca, and Cora have had thus far has influenced the way that they see writing functioning both in and out of the classroom. Whereas students who have had a wider range of experiences to engage with and think about writing, provides them with more expansive beliefs about writing. In fact, what we see in Allen and Sara is a differentiation in writing based on their prior enculturative experiences. Allen in particular shows more nuances in his beliefs about writing in contexts where he has had more engagement, and thus more thorough enculturation, such as disciplinary and professional contexts, and has a more limited understanding of the socio-rhetorical elements in contexts where he has had less engagement (such as Intro to Business).

Of interest in the next chapter will be how these prior experiences and beliefs about writing impact their valuation and expectations of writing instruction during their mid-level writing course and how they transfer knowledge and strategies from their course to future writing situations.

Summary of Influences of Enculturation

First, the data above tell us much about the impact that family involvement can have on students' perceptions of themselves and their progression through their disciplinary enculturation. Students who came into their mid-level writing classroom having had parents who were members of their chosen disciplinary or professional communities saw those prior

experiences as highly valuable for their development. These experiences at home with family members discussing discipline-specific ideas and exposing these students to disciplinary activities provided students with implicit knowledge about their chosen field, which provided them additional confidence as they moved into their college-level courses in their major. Interestingly enough, students without family who were participating members of the field, also drew from family-supported experiences as sources of confidence for their continued development. While perhaps having less direct influence on their knowledge about disciplinary concepts and activities, these students were still encouraged to continue on in their disciplinary development, even within fields that were highly competitive and/or relatively unstable.

Second, and perhaps even more influential in student enculturative development, was students' curricular experiences. It would seem only natural to assume that students who had taken more major courses, and more courses at a higher level would feel more confident and more enculturated into their chosen discipline than their less experienced peers. Yet, analysis of the data showed that more classroom experience was not the only key factor in students' sense of familiarity and engagement within their disciplines and future professions. In fact, while each of the students in my study valued coursework as a necessary factor in their continued progress into their major (similar to that of Prior's category of passing), the valuation of their classes was influenced by their own epistemological assumptions about their discipline. The findings from my data discussed here echo existing work from educational psychology that has suggested that "students' domain-specific epistemic beliefs were not entirely reflective of experts' beliefs; students' beliefs were more naïve, particularly in well-structured domains" (Muis, Benedixen, & Haerle, 2006, p. 37).

From the field of educational psychology, both Schommer (1990) and Perry (1968) have claimed that students' epistemological beliefs develop as they continue through their advanced education. Similarly, Jheng, Johnson, and Anderson (1993) have argued that schooling plays a major part in students' beliefs about knowledge. Their research findings suggest that students acquire these beliefs about knowledge through the process of *enculturation*, they "learn to view knowledge from the same perspective as those around them" (p. 25). Furthermore, they suggest that epistemological beliefs "evolve as one is exposed to more advanced education," and "depend on a students' academic field" (p. 32). In such cases, the literature has termed these epistemologies: *domain-specific epistemic beliefs*.

Domain-specific epistemic beliefs are often categorized as "beliefs about knowledge and knowing that can be articulated in reference to any domain to which students have been exposed" (Muis, Benedixen, & Haerle, 2006, p. 37). More specifically, through their survey of existing research on the subject, they posit: "As individuals become more specialized in a particular domain, which typically begins in upper-level high school, their academic epistemic beliefs are more representative of their focal domain. Through higher levels of education, especially in graduate school, their domain of study predominantly influences their academic epistemic beliefs" (p. 35). And, that these acquired domain-specific beliefs "may influence beliefs about other domains. For example, students' domain-specific epistemic beliefs about biology may influence their domain-specific epistemic beliefs about sociology, and vice versa" (pp. 38-9). As the data that follows suggest, the same can perhaps be said about how these beliefs from students' epistemological assumptions about their majors can influence values related to writing, and, eventually their beliefs and values related to general education writing instruction (see Chapter Four for a more robust discussion of this latter point).

Finally, exposure to the field via first-hand practice seemed to have tremendous impacts on how students understood not only the landscape of the field itself, but also how it used the content knowledge of the field (sometimes in conjunction with writing) to satisfy a variety of socio-rhetorical purposes. Positive first-hand experiences required students to draw from content garnered in previous curricular experiences in order to be successful. If students were able to do this, they found that their conceptualization of the field was expanded, and they continued to seek out more, or continued, experiences in order to deepen their sense of involvement in the field.

Both Iko and Bianca's claims about not having the requisite disciplinary knowledge to successfully perform the duties required of them in these first-hand experiences is not unsurprising; both students had only just begun to take their disciplinary course work, and had not yet had the time to really learn more advanced content knowledge that would be of use on the job. Yet, what is perhaps more important about these moments of failed experiences is the way that both students re-internalized the necessity for additional content knowledge in their courses, perceptions that, as I will discuss below, shape and are in turn shaped by their pathway toward enculturation.

The impact that these first-hand experiences (these, opportunities for legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991)) had on students is quite telling. Their justification for their successes or failures in these experiences can be traced back to students' own conceptualizations of disciplinary knowledge making and dissemination (their epistemological assumptions about the field). Furthermore, their justifications and assumptions signal underlying beliefs about what the field actually looks like, its boundaries, purviews and limits. In short, how they *engage* in these reported moments of legitimate peripheral participation

is deeply tied to the way in which they have *imagined* and attempted to *align* themselves with field boundaries and activities.

In sum, the findings discussed above demonstrated how student perceptions of what they brought with them to the writing classroom not only affected their sense of the depth to which they had become enculturated within their disciplines, but also how these influences impacted their perceptions of what they felt they needed in order to continue their enculturative progress into their disciplines and future professions. In fact, closer analysis of the data resulted in three key “pathways” that students’ envisioned would help them in this progression.

Three Pathways Toward Enculturation:

Operationalizing the Influences of Enculturation

In the end, the analysis produced three categories pertaining to students’ perceptions of their own enculturative processes. Each of these categories were centered around one key concept, or pathway that would lead students to deeper, more confident participation within their chosen discipline. The categories are: content-oriented, practice-oriented, and reflective-application pathways.

I present student profiles constructed around these three pathways toward disciplinary enculturation in order to (a) categorize students’ prior disciplinary experiences that they bring to the intermediate writing classroom, and (b) show how these findings and pathways operate in the lived experiences of our students. Additionally, these profiles will not only help me to demonstrate how the coding dimensions help to examine students’ level of enculturation, but also to extend this analysis to two other relevant issues in Chapters 4: impacts of these enculturative pathways on student perceptions of writing classrooms and associated transfer of writing knowledge and strategies. It is my hope that these findings can help us develop pedagogy

in our writing classrooms that will enable students to identify and critically engage with their prior disciplinary beliefs and investments, and also inform programmatic design that will help students decide when to take certain types of mid-level writing courses (see Chapter 5 for further discussion).

Content-Focused Pathways

This category is one of preliminary, content-based engagement with the discipline, primarily influenced by exposure to coursework and declarative knowledge from the field. A necessary step in the enculturative process, students at this stage are just beginning to understand and identify the practices, identities, beliefs and values required for success within their majors, but have yet to fully internalize many of these components. In many ways, these students have only begun to engage with disciplinary knowledge and practice, and having very limited understandings of how to imagine and align with their chosen major and future profession. What are notably absent from student data in this category are familial influences that would help to socialize students into disciplinary practices, and discussions of important experiences observing or participating within the actual activities of the community, which would serve to introduce students to the social contexts in which disciplinary work occurs, and the procedural practices that disciplinary writing circulates. Because of the factors (or lack thereof), the two content-oriented students in my study perceive the process of enculturation to be based on the accrual of uncontested content knowledge and, therefore, imagination and alignment with disciplinary practice is based almost solely on the mastery of this content. As highlighted in the student examples below, students who display characteristics of content-oriented pathways are often aware of their lack of knowledge in certain key areas of disciplinary development, and in turn

emphasize the accumulation of additional declarative knowledge as avenues for their continued advancement in the field.

Bianca

Bianca is a third year food science major who wants to become a dietician after graduation. During her first interview she explained that she had always wanted to work in the medical field, but she chose food science and dietetics because she wanted to work closely with patients who had eating disorders (disorders that are, perhaps, psychologically related according to Bianca). More specifically, Bianca wants to work at local health care facilities, rather than larger hospitals, because of her interest in continued patient interaction and care. Through some personal volunteer experiences and cursory discussions with a relative that teaches in her major at Wayne State University, Bianca reported some familiarity with her major and intended profession, though much of this knowledge was quite shallow. Additionally, Bianca had taken a variety of relevant coursework (e.g., Intro to Food Science, Human Nutrition, Microbiology, and Organic Chemistry), which has provided her with some declarative knowledge from her field.

Despite these positive disciplinary experiences, during the entrance survey Bianca reported low levels of familiarity and connection to her major and future profession, self-reporting a 3 out of 10 in connectedness to the field and a 2 and 4 for familiarity with her chosen major. Most of her courses, like many other students in the sciences, require standardized, multiple-choice tests and short answer quizzes and very few written assignments (see also: Iko, below). Moreover, she felt she could only speculate about the day-to-day operations of dieticians in her field, as she had no first-hand practice with these disciplinary/professional contexts. During the interview, she explained that the reason for such low numbers stemmed from three key concerns: 1.) she felt she had a lack of declarative knowledge in the field of dietetics, 2.) she

had relatively little familiarity with the social/professional contexts in which a dietician may work, and 3.) she felt that she needed to know more about the function of her community and how the range of professionals working in health care work together to help patients (three key components for moving into Practice-oriented Pathways).

In light of Bianca's low scores in connectedness and familiarity, Bianca's low self-report scores on familiarity with writing knowledge of her major and field (2 out of 10) are to be expected. While she is able to identify certain key genres from her intended profession (i.e., medical charts and diet plans), she has had little engagement with those writing practices during her coursework or first-hand volunteer experiences. When probed about these professional genres, she was able to provide some purpose they serve for her profession and even some context, but admitted that she could not fill them out if asked.

Early on during the first interview she explained, "I feel like going into the field I would kind of [know] more what to expect; an idea of the life [of the] discourse community like how all the personnel have to act together, not even dieticians just like doctors and nurses and all that and how it's like to work as a team." But, further expanded upon these concerns during the second interview when she discussed her internship at the hospital in more detail:

I: I was like in first year so I volunteered like a hospital just to kind of because I want to be a dietitian so I wanted to get an idea of it but I didn't really know anything about it at the time like nothing and they just kind of asked me all these questions and I didn't know anything so I thought that was really difficult. And like I didn't even volunteer that long because that was like uncomfortable like it wasn't good.

F: Sure what were some of the things they were asking you to do that you had just no clue about?

I: Maybe like just like certain content knowledge I guess that I hadn't known yet since I didn't take any nutrition classes I was still like taking basic science so that I didn't know and like I didn't really know anything about the job of a dietitian at

the time so I didn't, I mean it was interesting to see that way I kind of had an idea knowing like what to expect

While Bianca is highly aware that her process of disciplinary enculturation is only in its nascent stages, when talking about she continued to emphasize the importance of mastering the declarative knowledge of the field and made no mention of the socio-procedural practices that hospitalist dieticians would have to learn in order to successfully function in the day-to-day activities of her future profession.

In many ways, Bianca is a type of student often seen in Intermediate Writing. She has had a variety of general education courses and some major courses, and is able to demonstrate some generalized knowledge about disciplinary/professional objectives, roles, and contexts. Also, like many other students in the sciences, her felt sense of connection to the field and confidence in participating in that field is mediated by both a lack of content knowledge and only a shallow understanding of the professional roles and context that they may be expected to work. Moreover, as we see with Bianca, these limitations often coincide with limited knowledge about the writing practices of their field. Beyond identification, Bianca knows little about the social function of professional genres and how those genres allow for various professionals within the community to achieve global functions for the field (i.e., adequate patient care). Despite her acknowledgement that she didn't have first-hand experience, her key emphasis was the mastery of content knowledge. So, this leads me to believe that students might identify other important components to their enculturative development, but at the stage they are in, they see other parts of the process as more important for their immediate progress (i.e., a focus on content over first-hand experience).

Iko

The second student focused on content mastery as the pathway toward deeper enculturation was Iko, a junior at the university. While undeclared at the beginning of the semester, she chose a major in Biology and a minor in business to meet her career goals of becoming a pediatrician/business owner.

An emigrant of Ghana, Iko came over to the US in her early teens with her mother, a supplier for a tire company, and her father, an employee at Ford. Unlike Bianca above, Iko had taken a majority of her general education courses, but few science courses (two in Biology and two in Chemistry), and none in business. Rather than relying on her experiences in disciplinary courses, her choices for declaring her majors/minor are primarily affective (“I want to help people” and “I like kids”). Her dominant knowledge of the field comes from cultural artifacts such as TV Shows like *Grey’s Anatomy*. Though she has had a small shadowing experience in high school and at the time of her first interview was applying for an internship position at Scribe-In, a service for physicians where a scribe takes patient notes for the physician, as they are caring for patients.

In support of her self-repot of 7 out of 10 for familiarity and connectedness to her chosen discipline, during the interview Iko demonstrated some knowledge of the genres for Biology and chemistry, linking the lab reports written in both majors during her writing process:

J: And how familiar do you think you are with the writing practices that you’ll have to do in biology?

N: I think I’m getting really familiar with it because in all of the science classes that I’ve taken chemistry classes as well and they do lab write up and it does the same thing in it that it has done in biology classes as well. So I’m using the same technique style learned in chemistry I’m applying it to biology right now. In 1500 we wrote only two lab reports and those were more extensive. They had so much information but for microbiology it’s not that much...for some reason it doesn’t seem that difficult... because I have some previous experience with it.

J: So what do you have to do when you put together lab report for microbiology let us say?

N: First you have to write pre lab which involves introduction and background information of what you are going to be doing for the lab and you have to have a purpose and procedure and materials and your results that you can draw a picture or write whatever you saw in the procedure and conclusion.

While this lab report remains at the level of a classroom genre (Iko notes that this genre will probably not cross over into medical school or her work as a physician), she is able to identify and describe textual features of the genre to help her write. She also notes that in order to learn the features and elements of this genre she spoke to her TA for assistance.

J: Cool. And what are some of the things that have helped you besides just like maybe repetitive practice, do you have friends in the class that will help you to go to your instructor to get advice on how to put these lab reports together?

N: Yes, I spoke with my TA before the first lab book check because that is the first one, nobody really knows what they are looking for so I spoke with him, he told me what points I should focus on and when we got our lab report back he commented on what we need to work on so in the second one I made sure I tackled all the points that he gave me and I hoped for a better grade and I got a better grade.

Iko's discussion of learning to write lab reports demonstrates a foundational understanding of some written genres from her major field, but moreover, emphasizes a particular perspective on the process of enculturation in two key ways. First, this moment is described as strictly transmissional where fixed knowledge (i.e., how to write a lab report) is handed down from an authorial source (in this case, the TA). While Iko's primary goal is to obtain a good grade for the assignment ("I got a better grade"), she recognizes the cultural importance of lab report writing for her field as a way to communicate information, but also more broadly in the construction of the scientific method for professional research (see Chapter 4 for a more in-depth discussion of Iko's representation of professional research). Iko does not, however, represent her enculturative experiences sufficiently enough to be categorized within practice-oriented pathways. Though she

has begun to acquire the fundamental declarative knowledge of the field, and has even begun to see how procedural knowledge is constructed through observation and data reporting in the lab report genre, Iko did not demonstrate an awareness of the larger social function of this knowledge and how knowledge, even in the sciences, is contested and negotiated (for a comparative example see Haas' description of Eliza during her Freshman and Sophomore years). Iko felt, perhaps correctly so, that "having the time to be fully connected in the environment" and instruction and practice during medical school would fill in any gaps regarding her writing knowledge in the field.

This idea of dis-connectedness is perhaps felt most concretely in her depiction of a failed internship opportunity for a local transcription service. Echoing Bianca's description of her volunteer experience at a local hospital, Iko describes difficulty adapting to the training environment for the transcription service, Scribe-In, during her second interview. In her response to my asking about her work at Scribe-In she remarked:

It didn't work out I went into the program but I didn't finish because my skills were not up to the level that they wanted but when I began then I was very novice into it because most of the participants they were graduates and they had more experience in the medical terminology and skills so I was definitely more reserved because I have learned as much information as I could as well as do my homework because I had a lot of homework to do.

And shortly thereafter when asked about what skills she felt she was lacking during the training:

Definitely in medical terminology I knew a little bit from high school because I took a medical skills class but when I went there it was a much more elaborate vocabulary and they required us to have a high typing speed but my speed was not there and my listening skills are not the best because we had to make sure we catch everything that goes on in training, the visit and sometimes I don't know, I missed some important information and that's very important because it's a very, it's just a patient and doctor interaction so you have to make sure everything is accounted for health so if something happens the doctor can be sued or something can go wrong.

Thus, both Iko and Bianca describe not only the difficulty involved in joining a highly specialized work environment, but highlight their lack of content knowledge as a prime reason for this difficulty.

Summary of Content-Focused Pathways

The first two profiles presented above represent a category of student enculturative experience that is deeply invested in knowledge building as a means for successful participation within disciplinary and professional contexts. In short, both successful participation in and writing for these contexts rely heavily on a mastery of discipline-specific content knowledge (declarative knowledge) learned from curricular course work that builds from class to class. These epistemological assumptions regarding the fixed-certainty of knowledge, which is seen as cumulative over a curriculum, is often linked to the hard sciences (Muis, Benedixen, & Haerle, 2006). Both of the students above do, in fact, come from the sciences (food science and biology) and both come to the Intermediate Writing classroom with only curricular experiences as the primary source of disciplinary experience from their field (a fact that is underscored by both students recounting failed internship or volunteer experiences during their second interview). As mentioned in the category's description, and highlighted in the student examples above, students who focus on content-mastery as their pathway toward deeper participation within their discipline are perhaps aware of their lack of knowledge in certain key areas of disciplinary development, yet I would argue, they often emphasize the accumulation of additional declarative knowledge as avenues for their continued enculturative advancement⁹. As such, it is possible that both of these students bring to the writing classroom certain conceptualizations of writing and expectations of GE writing instruction that emphasize these ideas of vertical growth and

⁹ While not demonstrable in my current dataset, I might suggest that students may identify other important components to their enculturative development, but at the stage they are in, they see other parts of the process as more important for their immediate progress (i.e., a focus on content over first-hand experience).

correctness in their writing (see Chapter 4 for a discussion of student response in Intermediate Writing). Of pedagogical interest then is how the GE writing classroom can engage with these students classified as in the content-focused of enculturation and introduce them to theories of writing that emphasize the need for more contextualized knowledge related to the socio-procedural operations of their future professions.

Practice-Focused Pathways

This pathway toward enculturative development is represented by students expanding knowledge of disciplinary goals, values, genres, and social relations in conjunction with practical experience from the field. Key to this category, and in fact where the name is drawn, are the preliminary connections students make that begin to connect their field's declarative with the socio-procedural practices of the field via internships, work, and/or personal experiences. Through these practical experiences, students are afforded opportunities to make strong connections between ways of knowing and ways of doing that are important to their chosen majors, a development, which informs their relationship to literate practices. Borrowing language from Wenger (1998) and the models of enculturation from writing studies, we can see these students honing their ability to imagine disciplinary landscapes beyond the fixed content knowledge acquired within their courses.

These students were focused on finding additional opportunities for connecting their disciplinary knowledge (domain/declarative/content) to the socio-rhetorical practices of their future professions. Interestingly, this pathway is not uni-directional. In that, I mean that students do not think that they have mastered all of the content knowledge needed to be successful in their disciplines and future professional endeavors. They continue to look forward to new practical experiences that would allow them to gain new knowledge in practice, but also to make use of

prior experience. Additionally, unlike the students found in the content-oriented pathway, these students see additional coursework as not just building on prior information, but rather allowing them to continually acquire new information and link that to their current and future literate practices.

Allen

Allen is a second-year, music education major in the honors program that identified multiple points of connection to his major through family and prior experience. Despite these points of engagement, he was very conscious about the multiple activities writing practices that he has yet to encounter in his discipline and future profession. Unlike those students in the content-focused pathway, the combination of extensive classroom training, familial support, and supplemental internships and assistanceships has allowed Allen to actively apply this declarative content knowledge learned in music and education courses with the wider socio-procedural practices of music education.

Allen is an interesting student to look at. Citing an 8 out of 10 for his familiarity and connectedness to both education and music, he has had a significant amount of family background in both fields (music and education), a strong chunk of courses in both fields, and has even had very practical experiences working as an administrative assistant to a band director in high school. Both his father and grandfather were professional musicians who taught Allen to play the piano and read music at a young age. Additionally, his mother was a life-long schoolteacher, who often brought home work, and wrote lesson plans and assignments from home. Because of these experiences and influences, Allen is become fairly versed in both music performance skills (playing instruments, reading scores, etc.) and understands the social realities of being in education (he notes a variety of situations where writing is key to achieving social

action: constructing course schedules, filling out paperwork for damaged equipment and organizing documents, and even proposes a hypothetical situation where he may have to argue in front of a school board to maintain funding for the arts program).

Additionally, Allen has developed a diverse repertoire of knowledge in music, taking a range of performance-based (e.g., band, piano, men's choir, etc.) and theoretical courses (e.g., Music Theory). While both types of courses have prepared him well for the types of knowledge and skills that he will have to master to successfully teach music at the secondary and post-secondary levels, according to Allen, neither of these courses introduced him to many kinds of writing. In fact, Allen admitted that the most substantial types of writing were encountered in his Intro to Business class, which required him to write business plans, applications, and resumes, genres whose purpose were to simply recount "just a lot of facts on paper." Beyond the Intro to Business course, the majority of his engagement with writing happened outside of the classroom, either at home (e.g., the writing his mother did as a teacher) or in his professional experience as assistant band manager.

Thus, Allen has a somewhat complicated relationship with writing in his field. On one hand, he understands the various goals of writing, including the organizational effects of writing (e.g., schedules and lesson plans), and in particular, the rhetorical effects of professional writing (e.g., letters asking for financial support for a band program):

If I ever have to present in front of the school board why we should keep the arts program I think it would apply greatly to that I'm just being on to write a good argumentative essay properly with good facts and stats, details keeping that on relevant would help make the argument much clearer and to the point then just kind of going at it without that experience.

On the other, he believes that writing is comparatively unimportant to his success as a music educator: "Just mostly because as a music educator you don't go into as much grammatical and

things like that. A lot of it has to do with music and social writing in most English papers you should not go into and talk about – dynamics, tempo, marking stuff like that; kind of evaluating scores.”

Far more important to Allen are the practical experiences teaching and working as an administrator. Beyond substantial formal training in the classroom, Allen has had several internship/assistanceship experiences and a tremendous amount of practice with the social and written practices of music and music education, which reinforced his rating of 7-8 in his connection to the field. He identifies both theoretical training and a lack of experience in dealing with classroom dynamics as components, which bring his score down from a full 10.

Throughout the interviews, Allen continued to reinforce the importance of engaging with the music community, and learning its diverse styles and instruments. Through his substantial experience with music in his coursework and familial life, Allen doesn't feel as if additional courses or content knowledge will help him grow in his practice. On one hand, he must continue to practice his instruments so that he can “evolve as a musician overall and as an individual on [his] principle or main instrument.” On the other, he must jump into his teaching observation role in the near future so that he can execute all the skills and strategies he has acquired in his curriculum. The peripheral activities will “just come naturally” along the way.

Cora

Cora is a sophomore dance major (at the time of her first interview she was a BS in Dance, but has since matriculated into the BFA dance program at the university). Her experience with dance extends back to early childhood (age 3) when her parents enrolled her in dance classes to help with coordination and balance issues that stemmed from a severe medical issue in one of her eyes. She has been “professionally” dancing since high school, a distinction she

makes from non-professional dancing based on when she took on a new coach and started defining her technique and practicing for additional hours. Since entering the study site, she has taken a wide range of major courses including a variety of dance styles (ballet, modern dance, jazz, etc.) and non-performance courses such as kinesiology, world dance, and dance production (all three of which take on particular meaning during her interviews). Her goal is to either join a professional dance company in Los Angeles or New York City or, because job opportunities are slim, to teach classes and work in peripheral positions related to dance (e.g., stage managers, company leaders, and press release writers).

Like Iko and Bianca, Cora's family has no connections to the field, as both parents are engineers, however, she has amassed significant familiarity with the goals, values, and social practices of dance through her schooling and participation in a variety of dance companies. Though trained in Contemporary Modern Ballet, at the time of her first interview, Cora had recently joined an African Dance troupe at the university in order to diversify her dance repertoire and bolster her professional resume. Because of these wide ranging academic and professional experiences, Cora reported a high level of familiarity and connectedness to her major and future profession (9 and 8), scores which were reinforced with her comments about the field of dance more broadly:

A dancer is always... there is always learning going on constantly because the field is constantly evolving and so you always have to be on top of current events and on the issues and terms that are going on at that time. As far as college level like I said, I really always concentrated on a professional aspect in high school but when I got to college there's a completely different level; a whole another level up and down. They have been really training me but it's only my second year so I have a lot to learn.

While somewhat shallow, Cora's interview response signals a deeper understanding that the field of dance is not static, nor discrete from the world outside of it. These understandings her of field

are reinforced during her discussion of her Intro to World Dance class that she had taken the previous year:

I had an Intro the World Dance class and we were introduced to... We didn't dance in that class. We were introduced to a lot of philosophers and Marxism and just topics that I didn't think would really be useful for dancing ... We did a lot of writing but that's because we had a new teacher in the department who taught that class. That class would've never been taught that way before. She really took a different approach to it and really challenged me to read all these very intellectual philosophers who [were] just very wordy. That challenged me to dig deeper into those readings and trying to pick them apart and make connections between dancing and world issues.

Before this course, Cora did not understand the role that writing could play for dancers themselves, after the course, however, she has begun to expand her conceptualization of the dance field, adding to it potentialities for more robust form of writing. Ultimately, Cora is very specific about how her process of enculturation could be furthered: "Me getting out into the actual professional world. I still feel like I have a lot of learning to do and I need to make more contacts in New York, L.A. and big cities like that."

Summary of Practice-Focused Pathways

Unlike Bianca and Iko, the next two students bring to the Intermediate Writing classroom a wide array of personal experiences as sources of influence for their enculturative progress. Both the students on the practice-focused pathways seek out opportunities to make use of the skills and concepts that they have gotten in their coursework, and are eager to become professionals in the field through additional real world practice. Because of this deep focus on practice, both students have a slightly different relationship to writing than those in the content-focused pathway. Whereas the students in the previous pathway believed writing to be specifically instructive and to represent mastery of the content accrued within their courses, students on the practice-focused pathway have opened themselves up to the deeper socio-rhetorical purposes that writing can have for their fields. Much like Content-focused Bianca,

both students in this pathway have indicated that they understand that their field requires acting professionals to engage in types of writing that go beyond simple regurgitation of knowledge (and, similarly, might not know the exact rhetorical strategies that might be required for successful execution of these genres). However, both these students have a slightly different approach as to how they will discover the knowledge and strategies needed to be successful writers of these genres. Unlike the content-focused pathway students, who after failed internship/shadowing experiences, sought out additional knowledge from their courses, both these students believe that it will be through additional practice that they will learn the appropriate strategies to become both as successful practitioner in the field, as well as a successful writer. Thus, it is possible that these students will have specific expectations for the writing classroom. As they value practice so heavily, they might not value the added classroom styled writing genres with hypothetical audiences. They might value more real-world exigencies, audiences, and genres that can only be found in the workplace. However, they might see the mid-level writing classroom as potentially valuable for learning to become a successful writer in their non-major courses, as they have not had as rich and deep of first-hand experiences that would allow them to truly understand what writing for those context entails (much like Allen's discussion of his papers for Intro to Business). In, short, they might still value a mid-level writing course, but they may value it differently or for different reasons than those students in the content-focused pathway.

Reflective Application Pathways

The final pathway that appears in my data is not only marked by a student's substantial knowledge of, participation in, and critical engagement with the goals, values, genres, and functions of their chosen discipline, but also with experiences transitioning between disciplines

and professional practices. Echoing similar findings from both Haas (1994) and Thaiss and Zawacki (2006), the single student in my study that falls under this category had accumulated a significant body of content and rhetorical knowledge through her coursework and had received mentoring and first-hand practice in the literate practices of her field outside of the classroom. Not quite to the level of “full participation,” as most students do not have full access to community benefits and status, “reflective application” suggests that students have begun to identify with the community values and expectations and had begun to think and work as a growing member of that field (e.g., they have adopted, at least in part, those discipline specific epistemological assumptions that allow them to participate appropriately in these communities). Beyond this, students on this pathway are able to draw from a substantial body of disciplinary knowledge, knowledge of discipline-specific genres, and extended first-hand experiences from their major or profession (through internships, work, and/or personal experiences), but more importantly use this knowledge and experience to critically reflect on the function of writing both within and across communities. The significant experience within their community is further motivated by a student’s desires to apply these disciplinary practices within a variety of professional spaces, spaces that are often only peripherally connected to the standard disciplinary spaces that they are directly trained within during their undergraduate education (e.g., receiving instruction and having first-hand experience in medicine and psychology, but are interested in joining the law field). Thus, students on the reflective application pathway are interested in discovering the intersection between their primary discipline and a related secondary discipline. The education and experiences they have received are incredibly valuable to them, but they believe that their continued success will derive from the crossing over to the secondary

community, while thinking critically and reflectively about how the two communities relate and how they can make connections as they move forward.

Sara. Sara was a 4th year psychology student with plans to apply to and attend law school the following academic year (since the completion of the interview process, she has matriculated at a local law school). Unlike the other four focal students, Sara had not only taken almost all of her major and general education courses, but she is also a transfer student from another university where she had taken courses in biology in an effort to one day go to medical school. During her tenure at her previous institution, Sara had struggled with both chemistry and math, finding her ability to memorize and retain large amounts of facts and information left her struggling to maintain a satisfactory GPA. Now, at the research site, she cites her natural penchant for psychology as a motivating force for her major change and has done well in all of her major and general education courses. Yet, throughout the interview process, Sara discussed much deeper influences for deciding to switch her major and continue the process of enculturation into the field of psychology. Moreover, Sara's pathway toward enculturation is a complicated one. While finding it necessary to enculturate into the field epistemologies, activities, and writing practices of psychology, she was also keenly aware that she has to again transition from her discipline of psychology to the professional field of law over the next couple of years.

First and foremost, her mother worked as a psychologist while Sara was growing up. Sara recounted how her mother would bring work home, and would talk about psychology-related ideas and topics at the dinner table. These conversations and interactions with professional content and practices tacitly introduced Sara to the field of psychology from a young age, so much that when she returned to the discipline during her Junior year, she felt as if

she was returning to a field that she already had prior knowledge and experience in, one that felt natural. In discussing her transition from biology to psychology, she explains: “Honestly, it just comes naturally to me ... obviously it took sometime but I mean like my mom basically introduced our whole family to it, we have like a little therapy session like- so that’s all we’ve grown up on like that’s how it’s been. So going into psychology classes was pretty easy.” Adding to these familial influences, by the time Sara had arrived to her mid-level writing class, she had already taken all of her major courses, and most of her general education courses.

Additionally, Sara had already had a variety of opportunities working as a manager at a mental health care facility near her hometown. While there, Sara was introduced to a variety of real-world genres that gave her experience with audiences and purposes that went beyond what she was seeing in the classroom at the time. Despite the fact that Sara’s engagement with them was limited in terms of writing, she was able to see how they operated in the socio-rhetorical realm of a clinic, and how these genres worked to communicate patient information between doctors and nurses, nurses and patients, and between medical health care professionals and office staff. Through this first-hand experience Sara was able to learn a variety of concepts and writing strategies that were used in professional settings, and, as she was working at a mental health clinic, she was also able to see how the field of medicine intersected with other fields, such as psychology, administration, and business.

In the end, Sara’s wide array of prior experiences set her apart from the other students in this study. She comes to the mid-level writing class with tremendous familial, course-based, and first-hand experiences that allow her to conceptualize her field of study (and disciplines more broadly) in a much more nuanced way. Yet, these experiences are not the reason for her being categorized as Reflective Application.

During her interviews, she talked at length about her first-hand experiences across disciplines. Specifically, she talked about transitioning from studying the hard sciences (biology) and working in a patient-care facility in her hometown to studying psychology at the study site. Her crossing over from biology and patient care to psychology and a future in law school challenged her perceptions of disciplinary divisions, activities, and writing. During this process she was forced to critically think about the ways in which she engaged with disciplinary practice amid and amongst various discourses and communities. Thus, Sara discussed her disciplinary and professional practice as less static than that of her peers. Her prior disciplinary experiences became a rich site of negotiation, thinking about the ways in which certain previous knowledge and experiences could help her engage in new and interesting ways with future professional practice. For instance, during our first interview, Sara talked about a revelatory moment in which she was able to reflect on prior experience to make connections between course content and disciplinary practice:

But I feel pretty connected to my major like I've done work in the field and one of my greatest 'aha' moments was when I was sitting at a psychology class last winter something like that... I'm sitting in a class and the teacher is explaining what is schizophrenia and I was like 'Oh, my God, I know this and it wasn't just textbook material, I can actually go the field and say, 'Oh, I've seen this, I know this,' helps me study, you know, learn myself a lot quicker or easier, so then I felt pretty connected with the stuff I do outside the classroom.

We see this kind of connection forging again as Sara talks about how in the future she intends to integrate her medical, psychological and legal training in order to help people with psychological disorders receive proper legal, medical and psychological help. It is because of her prior experiences in a variety of fields, she understands and actively *reflects* on what might be of use from her past, but as she moves forward she also critically renegotiates how she sees prior knowledge.

Ultimately, Sara believes that it is through the critical connecting of the disciplines that she will become a successful practitioner. More specifically, it is her ability to forge connections between her past experience in the medical field, her current experience in psychology, and her future education and experience in law that will allow her to achieve not only her own personal goals, and also be able to properly care for her clients. We get a clear sense of this connection making even early on in our interview process when she talks about the active connections she was seeing between the fields:

In the mental health field, they have forms for patients when they come into the emergency room, so the police brings them in, the physician has to assess them first and they can hold them in the hospital for 72 hours but they have to give them this form, say we are holding it for this time. So if you don't give them that form that's against the law. So I need to learn how to read these forms, you know, a lot of forms are pretty much the same like again it says the name of the person who it's been given to, the physician, the criteria they have to meet and they all pretty well the same except for the criteria that they are actually meeting, so it's something new that I like I only been told about it, my mom has explained it to me before but I mean now I have a physical hard copy in front of me where now it's like the actual act where you, you know, physically see it and I know I'll probably, like I met with the hospital lawyer, she deals with the mental health as well as my mom and she even said that those like this mental health Bible, she called it her Bible, she brought it out, put it on the desk, she had everything tagged in there, so that's like the crossing of my two fields my two fields, so I know like, you know, if I get into like health law I know I will have to like learn how to read these forms properly because if a physician puts a wrong date on the form, the form can become invalid and someone can turn around and say some and this and that, so I know that for sure and even, I'm pretty much sure this is it.

Summary of Reflective Application Pathway

This final category of reflective application is more than likely rare at the undergraduate level. Yet, this pathway is an important one to talk about as it not only represents a type of student that we might potentially see in our advanced writing classrooms, but perhaps a pathway that we want to encourage, and hopefully send more students down if we can determine exactly what students need and when during their undergraduate curriculum.

Sara's situation is unique. She brings to the mid-level writing classroom far more experience and knowledge, garnered from a wide array of sources of influence. In fact, Sara represents characteristics of many of the factors that have been found to benefit students' long-term writing development: increased genre awareness and highly-attuned metacognitive thinking. In order to continue her enculturative development, Sara believes she must continue to make these inventive connections between disciplines, but can only do so through continued engagement and opportunities to make these connections.

Sara values additional content knowledge and practice in much the same way as students in the previous two pathways did, but the value that she sees in these experiences is very different. The skills and concepts from writing studies that were offered in the mid-level writing course during the time of this study could potentially be interesting for Sara to engage with, but her valuation of writing instruction at this time might be fraught if they do not help to foster those reflective engagements that Sara values.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to identify the sources of influence that impacted students' sense of enculturation in their disciplines, and to determine how these perspectives on enculturation impacted students' beliefs about their continued disciplinary enculturation.

As a whole, the focal students of this study all brought a wide range of prior experiences related to their major or future profession to the Intermediate Writing classroom. These experiences included family influences, major courses that provided vital declarative knowledge from the field, and both successful and unsuccessful observational and first-hand experiences. Furthermore, what my data and analysis suggest is that while the process of disciplinary

enculturation may remain the same, the perceived pathways toward attaining that deepening level of enculturation may vary between students.

These “pathways toward enculturation” grouped students’ perceptions of this process into three discrete categories: through the mastery of additional content (content-focused), through additional first-hand experiences in the field (practice-focused), and through the application of knowledge and practices across domains (reflective application). In short, these pathways demonstrated three ways in which students’ thought about their relationship to their growing sense of familiarity and membership into professional and disciplinary communities, highlighting writing as one of the key ways in which this process can be forwarded.

Students who have only engaged with disciplinary writing tasks from the classroom (i.e., the students in my study who are on the Content-Focused pathway) focused on both the correctness of content and writing strategies that are equally focused on “correctness” – grammar and mechanics, having ‘said things right.’ This focus is (1) common and (2) unsurprising. In his book length study of writing assignments across the curriculum, Melzer (2014) found that a large majority of classroom writing assignments across the discipline had limited purposes (informing = 66% of classroom assignments (p. 22)) and audiences (student to examiner/teacher = 82% of classroom assignment (p. 28)). Additionally, prompts and rubrics for these assignments, while sometimes indicating larger-order content concerns, continued to emphasize grammatical correctness, which diverted the focus on higher-order concerns. Data from both Iko and Bianca echo Melzer’s findings as they emphasize these concerns over learning strategies for disciplinary writing.

Conversely, students who had first-hand experience with writing tasks in real-world, disciplinary situations (i.e., students on either the Practice-Focused or Reflective Application

Pathways) were able to identify and describe writing situations that emphasized socio-rhetorical purposes and audiences that went beyond informing a teacher-audience. Additionally, they emphasized a desire for continued practice both in the larger activities of their disciplinary communities, but also in the written practices of them. While at times these students may not have known about the genre conventions, or even the total scope of the audience and purposes of these genres, they were attuned enough to desire additional engagement with the discipline and sought out information regarding these practices that went beyond the correctness of the Content-Focused students. The difference is perhaps intuitive, but none-the-less, important. Students who have had exposure to the real-world, social genres of their disciplines seemed to have a much more robust idea about what these writing practices entailed and a desire to learn more through either reflective engagement or additional practice.

It should also be noted that while reflective engagement should be encouraged and taught toward, the data analyzed for this project (as well as findings from similarly focused projects), suggest that this perspective might be rare. This view of the enculturative process *can* happen during undergraduate course work, but perhaps only at advanced stages and in conjunction with reinforcement from real-world engagements in professional and disciplinary contexts. It is quite reasonable to think that more often than not mid-level writing instructors might encounter content-oriented and practice-oriented students in our classrooms.

At first appearance, it would seem that Sara's Reflective Application pathway would be the pathway that would promote the most robust perspectives about the goals of a mid-level writing course and the most positive forms of engagement. Sara comes equipped with a fairly expansive repertoire of experiences and genre knowledge, as well as a relatively nuanced understanding of disciplinarity and some reflective thinking. Yet, do these experiences and

pathway objectives translate in the way that we would think? Or, despite more limited experiences and engagements, do other students on other pathways engage with the mid-level writing classroom in more productive ways?

Thus, in Chapter Four, I use the pathways constructed in Chapter Three to think about how these prior experiences and perceptions related to student enculturative development impact their perceptions of General Education writing courses and, more specifically, the ways in which these disciplinary experiences impact students' "theories of writing" as they transition out of their mid-level writing class. Drawing heavily on student accounts of their own uptake of writing studies concepts during Intermediate Composition and the connections made during their interviews, the next chapter compares the impact of the writing classroom on the way students conceptualize "writing" and how students talk about writing after the end of the course.

CHAPTER 4: ENCULTURATIVE IMPACTS

Introduction

In Chapter Three, I analyzed findings from my data to determine which kinds of prior disciplinary experiences impacted students' perceptions of their enculturation into disciplinary communities, and the types of experiences that they felt would be needed to continue their enculturative process in the future. Data analysis showed that familial influences (both facilitated and promoted), classroom experiences, and first-hand practice within the field impacted the ways in which students not only saw the activities and operations of their chosen disciplines and future professions, but also how they understood the epistemological assumptions of the field, and the associated writing practices that represented both the activities and epistemologies of experienced members. In addition to these enculturative influences that students brought with them to their mid-level writing course, students also formulated "pathways toward enculturation," which highlighted the types of experiences that they would need in the future to ensure continued, successful integration into their fields. Each of the five focal students emphasized one of the following: continued exposure and mastery to the content knowledge of the field ("content-focused pathway"), additional first-hand practice with field activities ("practice-focused pathway"), and, finally, opportunities to make active connections between seemingly disparate communities and practices, which break down boundaries between disciplinary communities and practices ("reflective-application pathway").

In Chapter Four, I use the pathways constructed in Chapter Three to think about how these prior experiences and perceptions related to student enculturative development impacted their perceptions of a mid-level, General Education Writing (GEW) course and how they engaged with new writing tasks as they transitioned out of the class.

In order to explore if and how these enculturative influences and pathways impacted students' perceptions of GEW courses, and about what skills, strategies, and experiences have the potential to promote positive writing transfer, I asked the following research questions:

- How do students' pathways of enculturation impact their perceptions of mid-level writing courses?
- How do the intersections between prior experiences, process of enculturation, and their mid-level writing course potentially promote the transfer of writing-related knowledge and strategies?

In order to answer these questions, this chapter is broken down into two primary parts. First, I draw connections between data on students' enculturative experiences and pathways from Chapter Three and data related to their perceptions about the purpose and value of their mid-level writing course (Intermediate Writing) both before and during the course. In forging these connections, I attempt to show how students' prior enculturative experiences impacted the value that they placed on GEW instruction, and how they can influence the ways in which they responded to certain types of pedagogies and assignments¹⁰.

The second part of this chapter returns to the question of transfer initiated in Chapter One. This section addresses how students may (or may not) modify their systems of values based on experiences within the writing classroom, or how they will, instead, continue to invest in these systems of value after the course has concluded. To think about the impacts of these questions, we must return to the question of transfer, and think about how we can determine what knowledge, skills, and concepts students have continued to engage with after the completion of

¹⁰ The research on student values and beliefs related to general education writing instruction has shown to impact investment and performance related to transfer (Driscoll).

the course, and to what extent, if any, their experiences in their mid-level writing class had impacted the way that they see disciplinary writing.

A Broad Statement of Methods

As this chapter is broken down into two primary parts (perceptions of the mid-level writing course and writing-related transfer from mid-level writing to courses, and contexts beyond,), descriptions of specific coding categories and methods of analysis will be explained during their appropriate sections. However, as a broad methodological approach, the data from this chapter was drawn from two of the initial coding categories identified in the generative coding process outlined in Chapter One: “perceptions of the mid-level writing course” and “transfer from writing course.” Each of these coding categories contained sub-codes that were developed during the axial coding process.

The process of finding connections between students’ enculturative experiences/pathways and the data in this chapter was much more holistic and interpretive than the construction of the coding categories themselves. During this comparison process I looked specifically for similar language or themes that ran concurrently through the data findings. For instance, I looked at the language students used to describe their values related to their enculturative process and experience to see if they used similar language in discussions of the value and beliefs about their mid-level writing course.

Perceptions of Mid-Level Writing

Question #1: How do students’ pathways of enculturation impact their perceptions of mid-level writing courses?

In order to identify the perceptions of the purpose of their mid-level writing course, the broad coding category, “perceptions of mid-level writing,” was further broken down during the axial coding process, resulting in three sub-codes:

- 1.) Initial beliefs about the course
- 2.) Specific perspectives about the relationship between the course and their writing
- 3.) Shifting perspectives and values

Students’ Initial Beliefs about the Purpose and Value of Mid-Level Writing Courses

Initial Purpose. Despite having different experiences with writing, and different experiences within their chosen disciplines, each of the focal students in the study came to Intermediate Writing with the belief that the course’s expressed purpose was to help them develop writing skills that would be valuable for writing in their major and future careers. While not asked directly about their familiarity with the University’s description for the course¹¹, during the interviews each of the students described the purpose of Intermediate Writing using language that directly connected to some, if not all, of the proposed public goals of the course.

For example:

- To “learn to write better papers in my major.”
- To “get me to figure out how to write longer research papers.”
- To “help fix my grammar and stuff so that I can write better papers for my other classes.”

¹¹ Building on students’ diverse skills, ENG 3010 prepares students for reading, research, and writing in upper-level college courses. ENG 3010 also prepares students for Writing Intensive courses in the majors by asking students to consider how research and writing take place across the university in the broad disciplinary and interdisciplinary patterns of the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professions. The main goals of the course are (1) to have students read materials from different disciplines across the university; (2) to introduce students to the ways writing constructs knowledge in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professions; and (3) to develop a sustained research project that analyzes or undertakes writing in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professions.

In addition to these beliefs, the most frequent belief about the role of Intermediate Writing was that the course would somehow prepare them to develop as writers for their chosen discipline. Across students, and, therefore, across enculturative pathways, students appeared to be superficially in sync with each other and with the public goals of the course when asked *directly* about the purpose of Intermediate Writing. Yet, as I looked at other parts of the collected data, an interesting contrast stood out between what they believed the purpose of Intermediate writing to be and how they self-reported and talked during their interviews about the actual goals of the course and the values that students placed on these goals.

Initial Value. First, students' self-report scores about the relevance/connection between Intermediate Writing and their major and non-major courses painted a much different picture about what students saw as the primary objectives of the course, and the values they placed on those objectives. Based on the entrance survey, there was little consistency between the way the focal students defined the broad goals of the course in the interviews and the values of that goal, which they reported in their survey. Bianca and Sara (content-focused and reflective application, respectively), both reported straight 9's for the relevance between Intermediate Writing and learning to write for their major/professional and non-major writing contexts. Iko, Allen and Cora (the remaining content-focused, and the two practice-focused students), reported low-end numbers (4's) for the connection between Intermediate writing and their major, and only slightly higher numbers for professional contexts (6, 5, and 4, respectively), and a small spike in relevance to non-major courses with both Cora and Allen reporting a 7 and Iko reporting a 6. From the larger dataset (n=43), the variance of numbers holds true, with students reporting numbers from as high as 10 and as low as 3 in all categories. Based on the survey numbers alone, no significant relationship between either students' definition of course objectives and the

valuation of those objectives, nor student's level of enculturation and the perceived value of these course goals could be inferred. During initial interviews, however, each of the students reported a wide range in opinions about what they valued about the mid-level writing course in relation to their own writing development.

Specific perspectives about the relationship between the course and their writing

Despite a wide variance in valuation found in the survey scores, during initial interviews, each of the students reported seeing at least some level of value in their mid-level writing course; *what* these students valued, however, varied drastically.

The two students on content-focused pathways continued to perceive the mid-level writing as offering what we would consider to be “lower-order” writing skills that allowed them to become clearer, more effective communicators in the broadest sense. Iko talked about correcting some of her grammar in the course and, “learning to write longer papers in [Intermediate Writing].” Similarly, Bianca discussed the primary focus of Intermediate Writing as “learning how to write longer research papers.” Each of these foci for the course are general writing skills that the students believed would help them to become more proficient disciplinary writers, but both lack any deeper sense of connection between their suppositions about the course and the kinds of writing they had experienced in their majors thus far (e.g., lab reports), nor assistance in any specific type of genre writing that they believed they would see in their future professions (e.g., patient charts). As neither of these students had begun to develop a sense of the deeper socio-rhetorical nature of disciplinary writing, they instead focused on the learning writing skills and practices that aligned well with their prior writing experiences in their low-level science courses – namely, a-contextual, classroom writing tasks that focused on the

demonstration content mastery and lower-order issues pertaining to grammar and mechanics (See: Chapter 3, also Melzer, 2014).

Allen, on the other hand, demonstrated conflicting values related to the writing classroom. While he believed that his mid-level writing course would have had some general value for writing in other disciplines (such as the type of writing he believes is done in medical and business disciplines), he saw little relevance for his own disciplinary development as a music educator because, as he stated: “as a music educator you don’t go into as much *grammatical* and things like that. A lot of it has to do with music, and the components of writing in most English papers you should not go into and talk about” (despite having discussed complex rhetorical situations as an administrator that would require similar types of argumentation (see: Chapter Three)). Additionally, he commented about how the writing knowledge and skills he expected to learn through the course might have been applicable in his Honors 1000 and 2000 courses (both of which he had taken prior to the start of Intermediate Writing):

I actually got my most of my writing out of the way. I’m in the honors college and you always have to take Honors 1000 and Honors 2000 or something like that in your freshman year, and in those classes you have to write about three papers in 1000; I think three or four in 2000 ... But that was before. Going through that before [Intermediate Writing] is kind of like useless because I feel like I’ve done some of this stuff before, but I also feel like if I would have had this much more practice in writing I would have been able to achieve a little bit higher in these previous courses. Just being able to write and get feedback in general that always helps.

So while Allen admitted to seeing value in a course related to writing development, he isolated the value of the course to (a) types of writing that he could identify as argumentative and “academic,” such as papers you would find in an English class, or similarly-structured Honors courses; or (b) to writing support that reinforced writing skills related only to structure and length of argument, rather than any socio-rhetorical function. In fact, when asked about his reasoning for this belief, Allen reported that he assumed this was to be the case because of his

prior experiences in AP English back in high school and the types of writing experiences he had had in other courses where the focus was on the learning of grammar (and other “English stuff”).

Finally, Cora and Sara, despite their deepening understanding of the various reasons and purposes for disciplinary writing (which suggest a broader understanding of writing as both social and contextually informed), believed that their writing class would offer much the same writing instruction as they had experienced in prior college writing classes, which focused on general writing skills, and in previous English courses they had taken. In fact, Sara, early on in her second interview, was quite shocked at how different the course had been from her preconceptions of it: “Like I won’t lie, at first, I couldn’t stay in the class it was like ‘oh’ like it’s, like a thought about it as a theme like in the class and then after, once you understand it and I was so just like whatever, you know, it’s just an English class.” So, even despite a much deeper enculturative process, and being able to identify the purpose of the course as dealing with developing skills for disciplinary writing practices, both students initially drew from prior experiences with English courses where they focused on lower-order writing issues, rather than their own first-hand experiences with writing that had more nuanced purposes and audiences than writing tasks in other classroom contexts.

In sum, we do not see any clear indication that students’ initial beliefs about the purpose of Intermediate Writing or their valuation of such a course are connected to their enculturative experiences or pathways toward enculturation. These findings are perhaps echoes or a continuation of other findings from writing studies scholars such as Wardle (2007) and Bergmann and Zepernick (2007) who have found that students don’t see the value of general education writing instruction for their disciplinary courses, and that the disciplinary expertise of English faculty in GEW courses relates only to grammatical correctness. Thus, we do see

variations of perspectives that General Education Writing Courses are meant to provide them with just that: general writing skills that *should* be applicable to their disciplines or fields afterward. In short, none of these students, no matter the depth of their enculturation articulated strong connections between learning to write for their disciplines in their mid-level writing course, and actual disciplinary experiences with writing. Instead, each student's belief about general education writing instruction was informed not from prior disciplinary experience and learning to write, but from other general education courses (such as their intro to writing course, or previous English courses – i.e., AP English in high school). Even at more advanced stages of their undergraduate course work, and even advanced enculturative progress, these students still came to our mid-level writing classrooms with the opinion that the course was only meant to provide support based on grammar, structure, and length (a belief that is strongly held from their experiences in other "English" courses). A clear continuation of the values and beliefs reported in writing studies research at the freshman level.

Even at this stage, this finding is interesting as the general beliefs about the purpose of their Intermediate course conflicted with what they actually felt they *needed* to become successful participating members of their disciplinary communities and growing disciplinary writers (as evidenced in their pathways toward enculturation). Yet, as the courses were labeled as English courses, students appeared to draw not from their prior disciplinary experiences to think about the value of the course, but rather from a different set of prior experiences, specifically experiences in high school and previous English courses. Moreover, as these student beliefs and values echo findings from studies on writing related transfer focused on FYC courses, we also being to see a secondary problem: students' values and beliefs *may not be* changing much between their FYC courses and when they enter into their mid-level writing course.

Students' Shifting Perceptions and Values

Despite initial conceptions about the purpose and value of a mid-level writing course, upon entering Intermediate Writing students' perceptions and values for some of the students began to change. In fact, some of the students in my study began to report an investment in certain types of assignments and writing strategies that seemingly began to more closely align with investments and values echoed in their enculturative processes (and thus, their proposed pathways toward enculturation). In fact, it would seem that students latched onto projects and course objectives that reinforced their own perceptions of what they needed to advance within their disciplines – though, as some of the examples will suggest, I saw some preliminary impact from the writing course on student beliefs and values.

Iko and Bianca. Iko and Bianca's focus on the accrual of content knowledge and grammatical correctness continued throughout the semester. Additionally, their expectation that the mid-level writing classroom would provide these generalized writing strategies, making their writing more correct and clearer to readers. Halfway through the course, the value that they found in the assignments, and the writing strategies that they reported as beneficial to their writing development emphasized those enculturative values, rather than providing them a deeper understanding of writing as a situated, socio-rhetorical activity. For instance, during the second interview Iko discussed the final research paper as an assignment that had a linear writing process (scaffolded and completed in discrete parts) and provided her the opportunity to write a longer research paper. She saw this assignment as valuable, not because of the concepts that she learned in the process of writing them, but because she believed that they taught her important skill sets that might be useful to her success in writing the disciplinary genres she was already familiar with, (e.g., writing lab reports) and in disciplinary genres she knew were important to

the field (i.e., scientific research). In discussing the research project for her final paper, she emphasized connections she saw between the writing classroom and the limited forms of disciplinary writing that she did have experience with:

We've already done discussion, intro, the experiment steps and in the research paper we had to write and intro a discussion conclusion even though it was slightly different sometimes our discussion and conclusion can be integrated [for instance in the lab report] but in English it wasn't necessarily integrated. And the coding process was kind of similar to our experiment steps, the procedure steps, so it definitely helped me.

Similarly, Bianca emphasized the connections she saw between writing properly formatted documents and strategies for writing clearly and cohesively as the most beneficial knowledge and skills gained in the writing course.

Rather than the course assignments prompting either Iko or Bianca to delve deeper into the socio-rhetorical facets of disciplinary writing (i.e., the focus of the discourse community analysis and genre analysis projects), they both invested in broader writing strategies such as process, organization, and cohesion/clarity that they assumed could apply to a variety of writing tasks. As neither student brought to their mid-level writing class knowledge about "real world" genres beyond those found in the classroom, perhaps they could not see the benefit from assignments that asked them to expand their understanding of disciplinary activity, particularly the writing in the field.

Perhaps what we see here is Iko and Bianca assuming that they would be using the same writing strategies that they have been using on the classroom genres they had experience with (i.e., the lab report) on future disciplinary and professional genres. For instance, because of the fact that her only experiences with disciplinary writing comes from the lab report genre, and the types of feedback and strategies she received from her TA and instructor to complete these genres were focused on content and grammatical correctness, Iko *overgeneralized* the

applicability of genre purposes and strategies in future disciplinary contexts. By this I mean that she assumed that future disciplinary writing would have similar purposes (e.g., reporting information), writing processes (e.g., writing up section by section), conventions (e.g., passive voice, etc.), and values (e.g., correctness). Thus, throughout her interviews, Iko and Bianca stress that the projects in class taught them strategies that would broadly apply to all writing tasks in the future.

Chris Anson (2015) has discussed a similar phenomenon when he described how habituated practice can lead to entrenchment: “when writers’ contexts are constrained and they are subjected to repeated practice of the same genres, using the same processes for the same rhetorical purposes and addressing the same audiences, their conceptual framework for writing may become entrenched, ‘solidified,’ or ‘sedimented.’ When this happens, they may try to apply that framework in a new or unfamiliar writing situation, resulting in a mismatch between what they produce and the expectations or norms of their new community” (p. 77). Similarly, we can see traces of Reiff and Bawarshi’s (2011) descriptions of “boundary guarders” who directly apply old knowledge and strategies to new writing situations without engaging in the specificities of the new tasks. Here, however, Iko and Bianca potentially show signs of future negative transfer because of boundary guarding specifically because they have not had experiences with disciplinary writing that engages them beyond the limited purposes and audiences of classroom genres, which may require revised writing knowledge and practices.

Allen. From the beginning of the semester, Allen was skeptical about the value of Intermediate Writing on learning to write for his major (see above). However, he was particularly invested in broad writing strategies related to argumentation. As his beliefs about general education writing courses were rooted in his assumption that English courses taught

sustained argumentation (as evidenced by his connection between Intermediate Writing and to Honors courses and his previous high school English courses), these views continued to persist throughout the duration of the course.

During the semester, the core writing studies concepts (genre and discourse community), while interesting to him, didn't really seem to provide an avenue for thinking about writing or learning to write *in his discipline* (tasks and contexts that he did in fact believe have socio-rhetorical aspects to them). In fact, when asked about the value he saw in the discourse community analysis and genre analysis assignments, he replied: "It's interesting to know about them but if I never learned about them I don't think it would have affected me too greatly." Rather, he saw Intermediate Writing as being much more applicable to disciplinary contexts and tasks other than his own.

In response, he discussed how the assignments provided him with additional writing opportunities, which he saw as beneficial in some broad way, rather than any conceptual change in his understanding of disciplinary writing: "Just being able to write and get feedback in general that always helps." When probed if he saw any of the assignment providing him with specific writing strategies that would be helpful he replied: "maybe learning how to write a bigger paper and getting feedback on the structure will help." Yet, he reinforced that the types of writing he believed would benefit from these strategies and feedback were not disciplinary writing tasks, but classroom assignments like the types of arguments found in his Honors courses.

Allen's beliefs and valuation of what his mid-level writing classroom had to offer his writing development provides us with not only a lens through which we can see how prior disciplinary beliefs and experiences can impact the ways that students value writing and general education writing instruction, but Allen also provides us with an example of what can happen to

students as they experience the simultaneous processes of broad academic enculturation and disciplinary enculturation. Before Intermediate Writing, Allen had demonstrated a deepening awareness of beliefs, activities, and socio-rhetorical writing practices of his field of music education, which culminated in him valuing continued first-hand experience over additional disciplinary content knowledge. However, upon entering the mid-level writing class he emphasized a value in many of the same low-level writing strategies that both of the content-focused students do, and connects these skills to other courses that he has less knowledge of and experience in (such as his other non-major courses like business and his honors courses). The reason for this, I believe, is two-fold. First, he draws from prior experiences with previous English courses, and contexts where writing was similar to the types of (argumentative) writing that felt similar to those English contexts – much like many of the other students who had preconceived connections between their mid-level writing course and prior English classes. Second, and perhaps more revealing for this study, because Allen made these associations and value connections between Intermediate Writing and writing for contexts and disciplines in which he has less enculturative progress, he places more importance on both additional accumulation of content knowledge and more generalizable writing skills in the same way that the content focused students had done. For example, toward the end of the semester, Allen reinforced the fact that while writing for music was “simpler” as it “came naturally to explain things in my own words and I know more about it all,” writing for other courses that he wasn’t majoring in was much more difficult because he needed to “understand the concepts and [be] able to explain them in a clear and concise way because they are obviously very, very complex.” Therefore, he felt that Intermediate Writing helped out a bit in preparing him to write for these

contexts in which he was less familiar as it gave him the skills he would need to write more effectively for them:

Of course, they expect grammar out of you there wasn't only thoughts, you were expected that. A lot of structuring being able to produce a paper that is in right order it's comprehensible. Being able to make sure you're not plagiarizing this kind of a bigger thing. Coming up with your own ideas and concepts so you're not just like not just all opinion based or not all other people's facts based like having a good thing in commentary and detail. And being able to produce an argument a good argument and backing it up with the facts.

In short, without confidence in content knowledge usually gained through coursework, Allen (as well as Iko and Bianca) continued to believe that general writing knowledge such as grammar, structure, and fact-based writing strategies were the most pivotal for success in writing. This provides further evidence that prior experiences *do in fact* influence the how and what students will value in the writing classroom, but that the similarities that they see between their prior experiences – either broad academic experience or discipline-specific experience – and their preconceptions of the role of general education courses significantly impact what they learn and value during the semester.

Of note, he did find the readings of interest, particularly the idea of moving from novice to expert from James Paul Gee, John Swales, and Anne Johns. He did, not, however, make any sustained connections between these readings and learning to write until the third interview, which took place after the conclusion of the course. Through these readings, Allen began to develop connections and new understandings of both his continued process of enculturation and his own future role as an educator that deeply impacted what he explained was transferred from the course (see below for further discussion).

Cora and Sara. In contrast to Iko and Bianca both of who drew from either their limited disciplinary experiences in which they believed learning to write was based on the accrual of

knowledge and basic writing strategies; and also in contrast to Allen, who instead of drawing from his more robust disciplinary genre knowledge drew from his prior experiences in other English-styled courses, two other students did in fact draw from their disciplinary experiences to inform the value that they found in the Intermediate Writing classroom.

First, Cora discussed the assignments in the course, particularly the discourse community analysis projects as expanding her sense of practices found within the field. As discussed in Cora's profile, at first she did not see many instances of writing for dancers themselves, but began investigating peripheral professions related to dance that did various types of writing. So while she believed that a general education writing classroom would not directly help her to become a better dancer, it did begin make her feel more confident knowing she could have writing skills to run a yoga studio. This back-up plan not only expanded her understanding of the geography of the field of dance, but also would increase her level of confidence as she continues to enculturate into the field. When asked about which assignments and concepts expanded her understanding of the various practices related to dance, Cora was quick to talk about the idea of genre and genre analysis:

I would say the genre analysis paper. I believe that was one of the first papers that we've done. I remember that when she... my professor introduced the terms discourse community and genre, I had no idea what they were but usually when I don't know where they try and pick up context clues and genre was very hard for me to grasp because I had such a preconceived conception of what that word meant. To try and figure out the genres within dance and that doesn't mean modern ballet but the actual writing genres was really difficult for me at that time. Writing the genre analysis paper, I was able to focus on those different genres and explore more areas of dance than just dancing.

In short, because of her interest in expanding her understanding of the field of dance – imagining differently the size, scope, and modes of engagement that can occur across the field – Cora saw value in certain projects such as the discourse community analysis, the interview process, and the genre analysis because it enabled her to explore various ways of belonging to the field of dance.

While not quite linked to Cora's pathway of enculturation that focused on additional practice in the field, this data shows us that she did not return to lower-level concerns in writing, but rather emphasized higher order concepts that allowed her to better understand the makeup of the field and the socio-rhetorical practices that are involved in the various activities of this new makeup. This finding perhaps does not reflect the entirety of Cora's perceived pathway, but it does in fact link up with the importance that she placed on her Intro to World Dance course, which initiated this disciplinary expansion. Her new focus became an expansion of her knowledge about the field, and perhaps therefore new connections that she could make within the field that would, in fact, provide additional first-hand experience opportunities that would promote additional practice for continued enculturation.

Finally, Sara latched onto the concept of genre and genre analysis very quickly during her semester of Intermediate Writing. While Sara's original beliefs about the course were founded upon perceived connections she made between prior English classes and learning to write ("it's just an English class"), she quickly revised this way of thinking as she reflected on her own experience and about the knowledge and strategies that the course had to offer. First and foremost, in reflecting on her own future as a lawyer, she knew that she would have to learn new genres and new strategies for writing that she had little current knowledge and experience. After recognizing that the Intermediate Writing course had more to offer than the general "English skills" she was expecting, Sara refocused her attention on the legal field, a discourse community in which she had little knowledge, but knew she would be entering soon:

I'm trying to stay away from [analyzing] the psych-type of discourse community. I know the discourse communities of psych and law kind of relate, but I mean I'm trying to focus more on the law aspect and because it's so foreign to me.

While intending to focus on deepening her familiarity with writing practices related to law, Sara found herself continuing to emphasize the role that genre and genre analysis could play in her future movement between disciplinary domains (the key component in her proposed reflective application pathway). More specifically, she used genre analysis to not only deepen her understanding of disciplinary genres, but also in conjunction with the concept of discourse community, showed how these genres were in fact *not specific* to one discipline. Instead, these genres crossed disciplinary boundaries to complete a wide array of tasks for multiple audiences:

In the mental health discourse community, they use forms for patients when they come into the emergency room; so the police brings them in, the physician has to assess them first and they can hold them in the hospital for 72 hours but they have to give them this form, say we are holding it for this time. So if you don't give them that form that's against the law. So I'm learning how to read these forms [in Intermediate Writing]. You know, a lot of forms are pretty much the same like again it says the name of the person who it's been given to, the physician, the criteria they have to meet and they all pretty well the same except for the criteria that they are actually meeting, so it's something new that I like I only been told about it ... so that's like the crossing of my two fields my two fields, so I know like, you know, if I get into like health law I know I will have to like learn how to read these forms properly because if a physician puts a wrong date on the form, the form can become invalid and someone can turn around and say some and this and that, so I know that for sure and even, I'm pretty much sure this is it.

Here we can see strong connections between Sara's shifting perspectives on the value of the core course concepts and her beliefs about what she would need in order to continue her enculturative progress. Using the genre analysis to actively reflective and make conscious connections between seemingly disparate communities (i.e., medical and legal discourse communities) suggests that Sara will transfer these skills readily out of the classroom and help her to address new, unfamiliar genres as she progresses into law school. Moreover, Sara alludes to other opportunities for forward reaching transfer as she discussed other places in which these genre analysis skills are of value:

To be honest my favorite thing right now is the genre analysis because whatever field you are going into has its own genres, and you can sit to analyze them yourself or you can

meet with someone to have them explained to you, so I think is gonna prepare me to study different things or learn a new types of writing in other places.

Sara's excitement over genre analysis signals both her active connection making between disparate communities (as valued in her enculturative pathway) and her intention to use these skills and concepts in new discourse communities (forward reaching transfer). From this perspective, it would seem that Sara's reflective application pathway positions her the best out of the three pathways to engage with writing concepts and potentially transfer these concepts to new writing situations. But what remains to be seen is *if* this active transfer actually happens, to what extent and the impact that these perspectives and connections have on her engagement with writing situations after the course is over.

Cora and Sara's focus on the value that they saw in course concepts such as genre and discourse community does not mean that these students did not also value some of the same generalizable writing strategies that the other three students addressed. In fact, both Cora and Sara at times emphasized a variety of writing-related knowledge and strategies that they suggested were "basic writing strategies" that could help them in all contexts.

Sara discussed at length writing knowledge and strategies related to citation. In her Intermediate Writing class, she was allowed to write in APA format. While she had been intimately aware of APA citation for years, she never really questioned how or why she was incorporating sources. During the semester, however, they talked about source usage and Jessica began to think differently about her use of evidence through sources: "I'll think okay how can I explain this more, what can I add more to it, like quotations, but what's the significance that it has in your paper? What's the relevance between this quote and what you're setting out to do?" So while this was a general writing strategy, this strategy shows signs of having a larger rhetorical purpose for her writing (i.e., "What's the relevance of this quote and what you're

setting out to do?”). Moreover, she links citation practices with the discipline specific values of other discourse communities across the college: “we’re doing a paper in history class and it needs Chicago style, which I’ve never written. I’ve never done you know put footnotes at the end of that so that was like a total 360 from what I’m used to ... I mean it’s more so the understanding the discourse, so I’m understanding the fact that I’m in a different discourse and I’m going to have to learn the ways in that like the ways of that discourse.” While shallow, even during the semester, Sara is beginning to rethink the demands of other courses even at the level of these general writing strategies.

Linked to this idea of citation, Cora emphasized learning new strategies for research that she thought would be helpful in her other courses. “The way I research things definitely changed because I was very lazy about it before, kind of google and the first thing that comes up I put in my paper. I really learned how to use the academic resources and how to properly cite them in my paper.” Through conducting her secondary research for her research paper, she not only finds new ways of finding “reliable information for [her] paper,” but also begins to think about how she might conduct research in her other courses: “you have to think about what you want to say, and how you want to get your point across. You need to figure out what sources are going to help you do that.” Again, while shallow, discussions such as this signal a burgeoning awareness that not all sources will be credible in all situations. You have to figure out what kinds of sources will be useful in the context you are writing.

Yet, despite the fact that these students interpret the value of these writing strategies to be broadly applicable to other writing contexts, both students suggest (at least on a shallow level) that these strategies are not “one-size fits all.” Sara, invested in the ideas of genre and discourse community is very attuned to the fact that citation practices may vary in other contexts, and that

you have to “learn the ways of the discourse” in order to be successful. Cora, finally revising her approach to research knows that different writing tasks will have different expectations for research. Both of these examples show how these two students, perhaps because of their increasing awareness of various purposes, audiences, and conventions for writing more broadly, talk about broad writing strategies with an eye for adaptable transfer, rather than wholesale application (like we see in Allen, Iko, and Bianca). Additionally, at no point in their interviews – beyond preliminary discussions of Intermediate Writing – do these students bring up the value of grammar and mechanics in their valuation of the course.

The data reviewed thus far in this chapter work to reinforce these findings that students prior knowledge and beliefs do in fact have a significant impact on how students value courses that they believe to be disconnected from their majors, but also specifically inform the field about how students system of value related to their writing development and deepening understanding of their disciplines and disciplinary ways of doing (and writing) are seen here to tie directly to broader senses of importance related to their deepening participation within the field. In fact, the types of knowledge and the types of writing assignments that students immediately find value within during their mid-level writing courses find significant connections to broader ideas of disciplinary meaning making and their own perspectives on their enculturative progress.

This finding alone is important for teachers of writing, as what researchers and teachers need to think about is how students will modify these systems of values based on their experiences within the writing classroom, or how they will, instead, continue to invest in these systems of value after the course has concluded. To think about the impacts of these questions, we must return to the question of transfer, and think about how we can determine what

knowledge, skills, and concepts students have continued to engage with after the completion of the course, and to what extent, if any, their experiences in their mid-level writing class had impacted the way that they see (disciplinary) writing.

The Question of Transfer

Upon completion of the course and the exiting survey, a majority of the students reported *decreasing* value from Intermediate Writing in terms of how they were able to write for their majors and future professions (interestingly, some did report a slight increase in the value seen in writing for their non-major courses). 3 of the 5 focal students reported a 2 or 3-point drop in value from the start to the completion of the course, whereas the remaining two (Cora and Sara reported the same, high scoring value number of 9 and 10, respectively). 2 of the 5 focal students (Allen and Iko) reported a 2-point *increase* in value for learning to write for their non-major courses. Again, interestingly, Allen, while scoring lower value seen in learning to writing for his major in Intermediate Writing, scored an increase in familiarity and confidence in participating and writing for his major upon exiting the course. Sara, too, reported a slight increase (1 point in each section) in familiarity and confidence in participating and writing for her majors. All other students reported no change between entrance and exit surveys.

Naturally, these numbers can be explained in a variety of ways (not all of them encouraging for the study and the understanding of student writing development). First, with so few students, and such minor changes, the difference in report score could be justified by students' general sense of things, rather than any meaningful reflection between start and end – although students were provided their scores via email before completing the exit exam. Yet, much as with students' initial beliefs about the value of Intermediate Writing at the start of the semester (see above), perhaps there is more to the story than meets the eye. Drawing heavily

from student accounts of their own understanding of writing studies concepts and strategies during Intermediate Composition and the connections made during their interviews, the next section compares the impact of the writing classroom on the way students conceptualize “writing” and how students talk about writing tasks in other courses after the end of Intermediate Writing.

Based on my data, whether or not students reported transfer as happening, or if they still saw the knowledge and skills learned in Intermediate Writing as valuable, seemed to be based on two key factors:

- Students’ memory of writing concepts and skills encountered in Intermediate Writing
- Students’ engagement with writing tasks after the course

Whether positive, negative, or no transfer was reported in the final interview after the completion of the course, an additional finding was quite interesting. The ways in which these factors impacted transfer usually reinforced students’ beliefs about writing that were present in their prior enculturative experiences before the start of the semester. This reinforcement (in all but one student) acted as either a barrier to deeper conceptualizations of writing or a moment of expansion or slight re-theorizing of disciplinarity and writing.

During their final interview, which took place after the completion of Intermediate Writing, Iko and Bianca both reported on general principals and writing strategies that they believed they had learned in Intermediate Writing. Iko, while briefly mentioning “discourse community” was able to define the concept as “people that are like mine in a certain way and have common interests.” But believed that the sole purpose of a discourse community was to help provide knowledge to newer members (“where someone who knows more than I do and they want to help me get better”). Even with some gentle prompting, Iko was unable to discuss

elements of discourse community related to the development of knowledge (and specific modes of dissemination (i.e., genres)), particularly in terms of writing. Iko, in addition to discourse community, also focused on the idea of audience in relation to writing, particularly as she continued to look forward to her disciplinary courses: “I had to answer everything that they were looking for. I considered what my target audience was and how to get their attention.” Iko echoed this emphasis on figuring out the correct information for the audience when discussing anxiety in her future courses: “Anxious because I don’t know the teacher’s strategy and how they teach the class ... I want to know from them how they are going to work, like how they like for us to study, and what they are going to cover and ask on the exam.” So while we *do* see slight growth in her understanding of *some* social components of disciplinary writing, Iko makes few connections between these ideas to specific forms of and strategies for disciplinary writing beyond the classroom genres in which she has had extensive engagement.

Bianca, on the other hand, focused on the concept of “genre,” which she defines as “types of writing that have a certain format and kinds of information.” Yet, Bianca, rather than focusing on the idea of audience, talked at length about the incorporation of evidence (and quotes) as a key concept she found valuable in her Intermediate Writing class, and even some genre awareness of when it was appropriate to use quotes as evidence within a certain type of writing. She contrasted the academic essay (which she wrote in her Intermediate Writing course) with two other forms of writing she did the following semester: the blog and the lab report. While all three of them required her to use “evidence” to back up her claims, the degree and the types of evidence varied. In her academic essays during Intermediate Writing, you had to use quotes to back up your ideas, but in the blog entry and the lab report, she didn’t have to. “I mean I should use quotes, but for the theatre class we did have to, So I could have done it, but I didn’t,”

compared to her description of the lab report: “I guess in the lab reports for the intro and stuff I would use examples to make it easier to understand, but I didn’t quote. You have to be more general.” Yet, when asked if she had drawn on genre to think about the differences between these three types of writing, she brusquely replied: “No.” When probed, she replied: “I guess because I didn’t think about it. I just did it.”

Beyond the preliminary understanding of discourse community and genre (and the associated key ideas of audience and evidence), both Iko and Bianca reaffirmed their inability to find much use from the skills and knowledge they gained in their Intermediate Writing course. Yet, both of them had few opportunities to develop writing projects in their disciplinary courses (Iko reported that the only writing she had done in her courses had been exam-based, and Bianca reported only having to complete one lab). When projecting into the future to the types of writing that they still believed might be influenced by their mid-level writing course, both of these students continued to re-affirm these ideas, but as these examples above and others in their interview suggest, even these concepts were tied explicitly to prior investments in additional content knowledge and accuracy of that knowledge in writing.

Unlike Iko and Bianca, after Intermediate Writing, both Sara and Cora had at least some opportunity to write and to think about the concepts that they learned in the course. Beyond their comprehension of both genre and discourse community – concepts that they found almost immediately valuable in during the semester - both students found a variety of skills and concepts potentially useful in their engagement with writing tasks outside of the course, particularly as they continued to expand their notions of disciplinarity and writing. Yet, only Cora seemed to be able to make concrete use of these knowledge, skills and strategies in new writing situations.

After the completion of Intermediate Writing, Cora found herself writing in a variety of courses and contexts that she felt were connected to her ever-growing understanding of what the field of dance was, and the wide range of activities that comprised the field. During her final interview, Cora discussed writing in her Writing Intensive course (a course designed to reflect on their development as “dancers”), in her dance pedagogy course (which involved a lot of reading, summarizing, and integrating ideas about how to teach dance), and in her personal application to the dance BFA program (which asked her to make a claim for why she should be admitted into the more rigorous program from the BS degree). Each of these writing situations, Cora explained, required her to draw from her understanding of genre and discourse community and from the larger repertoire of writing strategies she had learned in the course (annotation skills, research skills, and evidence-based claim making) in order to successfully negotiate both familiar and unknown writing situations.

For both her Writing Intensive course and her Pedagogy class, Cora was asked to do a considerable amount of complex reading and synthesizing work. Drawing on her prior experiences in reading difficult material in her Intro to World Dance class (see Chapter 3) and the newly acquired annotation skills she used to complete the research paper in her Intermediate Writing, Cora was able more confidently approach difficult readings in her advanced disciplinary courses, as well as compose those annotations effectively so that they could be used when synthesizing complex information while writing her final papers in high stakes courses: “When I just came through without writing my own notes down it’s not very helpful. That way I can go back and read it. After I write my notes I go back and read it a second time to see how those points work into the paper that I highlighted.”

While Cora did not mention this strategy before her final interview, nor did she provide an explicit example of this writing process, she emphasized its relevance for her as she continued to engage with more difficult disciplinary readings and her ability to engage with writing strategies valued by her major (i.e., synthesizing information). Thus, I address this moment of transfer here briefly as it represents a positive moment of transfer for a student.

Beyond specific annotation strategies, Cora also talked about the benefit of doing discourse community analysis (which required an interview with a professional) and genre analysis to continue to expand her ideas about what the field of dance entailed: “Writing the genre analysis paper, I was able to focus on those different genres and explore more areas of dance than just dancing.” But, moreover, her expansion was also importantly linked to her forging of real-world connections that would potentially lead to additional opportunities for first-hand practice:

I would say that what was most required of me was to really make connections with people in my discourse community. I had to do an interview with the professional and normally I would just interview a professional dancer. It's the easiest thing to do but this had to be someone that wrote within the community. I was able to interview [Professional] who is a major aspect of the production part of [The University's] Dance Department. He sends out all the press releases, all those things. That was really cool to see a different side of dance and know that if that professional thing doesn't work that I have so many other options.

Beyond just continuing to expand on her understanding of the field (which had been initiated by her World Dance class, and re-emphasized in the assignments for Intermediate Writing (see above)), Cora was able to mobilize her growing understanding of the field to make an effective written argument for her entry into the BFA program in dance. With her expanded knowledge of the field that she gained throughout her investigations in Intermediate Writing, Cora reported that she was more confident talking about the field and her future role within it: “I just knew more about the field and what people were doing in it.”

Moreover, during this process, she described how writing the final reflective portfolio (which asked her to “figure out how certain parts of my other papers would show how much progress I’ve made”) helped her better understand the process of selecting audience-appropriate experiences that would highlight her own development in dance: “I had to think about which master classes I was in, which companies I was a part of, all the activities I had been a part of and really picked out the ones that would be most prominent to the people who are going to be reading the paper. I had to do it an audience analysis of the professors that were going to be reading my paper and figure out which would most effectively persuade them to let me switch.”

In this process, Cora demonstrated how effective her active combination of prior experiences, knowledge, and skill sets related to writing were, particularly as Cora successfully navigated what she considered to be an unfamiliar genre (she was admitted to the BFA dance program shortly before her final interview).

As mentioned above, Sara found almost immediate value in the core concepts of discourse community and genre early on in the semester for helping her conceptualize the transitions between the disparate discourse communities in which she will be moving (psychology, medical, legal). Additionally, throughout the semester, we even find her making use of the core concepts in other courses in the same semester as Intermediate Writing (e.g., in her History course, see above). After the course, Sara could remember specifically the core concepts, and the value that she held in these concepts, highlighting their use in courses outside of her chosen major. Broadly, toward the start of the interview, she discussed the core concepts and how they were of value:

Using the whole concept [genre and discourse community] instead of like not necessarily just writing but being able to take something from one area of study and apply it to another, so in the whole general outlook on things like what I learn in [Intermediate Writing] I should be able to take to another class and the same thing was done with our

papers. ... Understanding like terminology of the new discourse and being able to analyze things related to writing - like the readings and understanding what words meant, what this and that was in the community - and it really helped me.

While shallow, Sara's talk about the usefulness of learning to transfer skills and concepts between courses *does* seem to be valuable to her. Yet, within most of her third interview data, she remained at the same level of abstraction. Only later on during the interview, did she become slightly more specific about where and how these concepts were made useful:

I'm taking Greek mythology, criminal justice and ethics ... I step out of like [Intermediate Writing] and I go into a different discourse meeting where they have a different language even not necessarily just the content but I mean the words being used like Greek mythology and the writing that is expected; you've got all the meanings of this and that, so it's kind of like when I go to those classes I think about the writing for it and go, 'oh, this is a, you know, genre of this so they are using this lexis, you know, how they communicate with each other, so I always have [Intermediate Writing] in the back of my mind when I go to these classes cause it is like entering a different discourse communities, so I guess it is kind of relevant no matter where I go.

Much like in the statement above, throughout her third interview, Sara talked only in broad strokes about her use of the core writing concepts. Despite her sufficient understanding of these concepts, and her excitement to make use of them in new situations after Intermediate Writing, she provided few examples that actually demonstrated her actual use of them after the course. The explanation to this disconnect comes from understanding the *types* of writing Sara was asked to do following the completion of the course.

While Sara continued to define and reflect on how these skills and concepts could be used in understanding the discourse community and even some preliminary written genres (primarily through reading), in her courses after Intermediate Writing, she was offered few opportunities to *demonstrate* their usefulness. In her semester after Intermediate Writing Sara had only two courses that required sustained writing, Psychology Research Methods and Human Sexuality – both advanced psychology courses. Because these the two courses that *did* require

writing were from her major courses, and the other general education courses had her only taking tests and quizzes, Sara reported that she merely had to do “more of the same” in her writing practices. She found little challenge in composing these types of writing, often leaving the assignments to the last few days. She reported that she had already known the content, structure, and strategies that would be necessary for completing the tasks: “Because I already had a basis for this kind of thing. I know what’s required, I know what’s needed, I know how, you know, the papers are to be submitted sort of thing so I already have a background layout.” Therefore, it would seem unnecessary for her to take the time and effort to engage in deeper analytic of conceptual thinking about the tasks.

Based on Sara’s data, it is quite hard to determine if much real transfer happened. While she was able to remember the concepts from writing studies and she was even given opportunity for writing after the course, these writing tasks were in situations in which she already had intimate declarative knowledge and knowledge of genre conventions. This familiarity with the writing tasks did not require Sara to make full use of the concepts that she found so valuable in her Intermediate Writing class. In fact, Sara makes strong mention of how the Intermediate course would have been much more valuable earlier on in her undergraduate education as it would have helped her more deeply familiarize herself with disciplinary epistemologies, activities, and writing conventions, all of which would have allowed her to transition easier between communities, and learn the specific community writing strategies at a much more efficient rate:

Maybe recommending it for like earlier instead of later on like maybe earlier because I think if I would have taken as maybe like first or even second year it would have been a little bit more beneficial instead of like I’m so going to use it now that I mean if I had this again the background knowledge of all these kind of stuff earlier I could probably produce better writing as I go and as I grow kind of learn from all that kind of stuff.

While a provocative thought, the value and impact that this type of instruction may have earlier in their college career is somewhat dampened by other students' data which suggests that they did not have the proper depth of enculturative experience to make the strong connections and valuations did (see Chapter 5 for fuller discussion of this timing).

As demonstrated by these findings, students who had only a vague recollection of the knowledge, skills and concepts discussed and produced during Intermediate Writing, and limited chances to write "sustained writing projects" after Intermediate Writing saw little opportunity for transfer, and did not demonstrate any significant shift in the way that they engaged with disciplinary writing after the course. Moreover, these students tended to reaffirm the prior beliefs about writing that were highlighted in both their enculturative experiences with their disciplines or professions, and their pathways toward enculturation.

An important, yet unaddressed factor is not only students' memory of the core concepts, but their initial learning of them. During their second interview, each of the students were able to successfully talk about the concepts, and provide an adequate definition of them, but some of the students (Iko and Bianca) never applied those concepts in any substantive way. Thus, questioning whether or not the inability to define concepts *after* the conclusion of the course could potentially be called a failure to transfer, but equally, it could be a failure of initial learning. In either case, this inability to define the core concepts in the weeks and months following the course could be connected to students' lack of prior knowledge and experience with disciplinary genres that have real-world audiences and purposes. This "failure to learn" (Chi & VanLehn, 2012) could be understood as a failure to connect, or a, in transfer terms, a failure of backward transfer. It is possible that students who come into their mid-level writing class without more robust genre knowledge from real world experiences might not yet have the proper

experience to connect with the core concepts of the course, and therefore never actually learn the concept itself. In short, they do not see the types of writing that they have completed in their low-level disciplinary courses as “generic” and therefore find little use in the concept during or after the semester.

In either event, one assumption that we could make is that the Intermediate Writing course had little long-term impact on student writing. In short, students did not see the value in the course concepts and, therefore, did not continue to conceptualize their writing and associated writing practices in terms of the concepts provided during the semester (e.g., discourse community and genre). Yet, perhaps we can think about it in a different way. Much of the scholarship on transfer suggests that if students *do* value some of the writing knowledge and strategies they learned in their writing courses, (a) they might not have opportunity to use them in the semester following, and/or (b) the way in which they use them might look drastically different than what we are expecting to see (e.g., Wardle’s apples turning into apple pie metaphor). With only half a semester passing in between the mid-level writing course and the third, and final interview, many of the students reported that they had not had very many opportunities to make use of the things that they had learned in Intermediate Writing.

If I were to speak with them again, perhaps a year later, we might see these students discovering stronger connections between the concepts from their writing course and real-world writing experiences recently acquired from their continued enculturative progress. Doing so has its own risks, however. If a year passes and the students have not seen any value from the type of instruction they received from one of their general education writing courses, they might have all but forgotten the types of concepts they learned and the strategies they practiced by the time they might be of use. I pick up some of these timing issues once again in Chapter Five.

In contrast, both Cora and Sara both had strong recollection of the core writing studies concepts and both had at least some opportunity to write after the completion of the course. As demonstrated above, Cora was able to make strong use of the concepts to help adapt to new and unfamiliar writing concepts. In particular, her focus on expansive understanding of her discipline coupled with strong strategies from the course allowed her to address new writing tasks successfully. What we also see is a stronger link forming between her enculturative focus on practice, her expanding sense of other practices in the field of dance that operate off-stage, and a slightly growing understanding of what those peripheral practices entail.

Sara on the other hand, while given some opportunities for writing, only experienced writing tasks in her major that she was intimately familiar, thus seeing little need to actually draw from the writing studies concepts in more substantive ways. Despite this, her excitement to use the concepts in other contexts – even in less writing focused situations – remained high and her excitement to learn more about the field of law in the following year was deeply motivated by the usefulness of these concepts. So while we see within these two students some components of transfer happening, informed even by influenced from prior experiences and where these students were in the enculturative process, these transfer occurrences were potentially limited by the types of writing engagements that occurred immediately after the course.

Up until this point, I have not fully talked about Allen's potential for transfer. I have saved this student's transfer-related discussion until here, as he falls slightly outside of the discussions above. As mentioned in the previous section, throughout his semester in Intermediate Writing, Allen had focused on the broad writing strategies he associated with the types of argumentative writing found in his non-major courses. Rather than stemming from his investment in practice, or prior enculturative experiences that Allen brought with him to the

course, Allen made strong connections between prior English courses he had taken and the types of instruction he expected from the Intermediate Writing course. In a fascinating move, during the semester of Intermediate Writing (and in the conversations that ensued after the course had ended), Allen had become increasingly invested the movement from novice to expert within discourse communities that he read about in some of the course readings (Gee, Swales, and Johns). From these readings, Allen began to think about his own experience moving in an out of communities, and in and out of classroom settings:

Yes, I kind of picked that up just because that class you'll call into if you didn't know like any of the background you're going to come in without knowing anything and you fully expect to come out knowing things. So there's stuff like that the teacher being the expert and you being the novice so that kind of relationship goes on throughout the class and kind of using the concepts from Swales and you just get kind of a better really idea of the structure of how it's going to work out not just kind of going in there mingling, listening and coming out 'oh, now I've learned things.'

During the concluding parts of his intermediate writing course, he began to articulate a strong connection between the theories of expertise and his own process of enculturation into the field of music:

It's kind of like overwhelming at first like when you look at a page of music maybe it's not yours but like not my dad's and you just see black ink all over the page and it's like another language to you and then like throughout band you start to learn every single thing within the scale and playing piano helped me both clefs music beyond that. So you begin to learn first off by the notes and then you start learning all like the different markings and tempos and things on the page feel like stylization and it's like once you get most of that done you kind of you speak the language of that discourse. Once you understand that you can start accelerating how fast you become an expert.

As he forges this connection between theory and disciplinary experience, a lightbulb goes off for him, as he begins to reflect on his own struggles entering into his Intermediate Writing course, especially with readings that he found difficult to engage with:

Actually it was kind of like similar that way like she just like comes off and says we're going to talk about discourse communities and I didn't have any idea what that was. And so we'll be like reading into those, getting all the terms from Swales, Gee and the other

readings and then actually became more familiar with it, enough to write about it and kind of like understand the concepts.

This connection-making becomes a crucial moment of reconceptualization for Allen. While throughout the course, Allen had found only the generalizable skills of value to his non-major courses, but as he wrote his final paper (on the topic of expertise in teaching), he begins to see a connection between the course and his lived experiences that expand not only the values he sees in the course, but expands his own understanding of his field, his experiences within that field, and, eventually, the way that his profession will operate:

I think it really helped when I finally get to like education and especially since I did right in my final draft on kind of doing that just really knowing what to look for when I'm listening to the teacher and kind of that on relationship what can I pick up on that will make me accelerate to become an expert faster or become a better expert or something.

Above, I used the term expansive to describe Cora's experiences with core concepts, here too I find the word equally applicable; and expanded understanding of field purposes and activities is exactly what Allen transfers out of the course:

Learning this theory really changed the way I thought about handling students ... One of the most important things I wrote about and that I read on I think after my interviews with instructors and teachers is that you have to always constantly be learning and one of the most like biggest tools for learning is the students so kind of throwing ideas at them and concepts and my lesson plans whatever I thought up for the course and noticing how they respond and their reactions and their comments or whatever they say to me about what I'm doing and using that to create a better lesson plan or method of teaching.

While a bit convoluted, this description of Allen recognizing that he has to become responsive to student learners to create better lesson plans (a real world writing situation that he has only just added a new sense of purpose (responding effectively to student learning) and audience (students). This sense of field activity actually starkly contrasts his description of what his own instructors did, even in his college course, which was to demonstrate a technique and repeat until mastery. In fact, later on he makes a strong connection between the theories of expertise and learning to be responsive to your students when he emphasizes a much different way of learning

how to be an effective teacher: “like if you’re a new teacher you can use your students to help you create, to help you make a better teacher and that can be better off than using another teacher to help you become a better teacher.” Thus, rather than focusing on writing strategies and concepts, Allen instead focused on the theories the course, which significantly altered how he believes he will engage with the field and how he imagines field activities and the construction of pedagogical knowledge (through collaboration with students). Because of learning these theories of expertise, Allen had begun to develop more nuanced understandings of his future profession, giving him a new sense of what needs to be practiced to further enculturate into the field.

Summary and Transition to Chapter Five

So, despite the fact that all of my focal students reported preliminary beliefs about mid-level writing which expressed their beliefs that the course should benefit their learning to write for disciplinary contexts, and many of these students had prior disciplinary experiences that they *could have* drawn from to guide their values and expectations, all of the students instead drew from prior experiences related to prior courses in English (courses that emphasized argumentation and the generalizable writing strategies associated with argumentation). During the semester, what we see is that the students who held general ideas and beliefs about their discipline continued to invest in general ideas about writing and general ideas about writing instruction – e.g., values and beliefs focused on correctness and the level of content. In contrast, students who had more enculturative experience in their disciplines (specifically those who engaged with modes of writing in real-world contexts) invested in more nuanced ideas about writing that incorporated expansive understandings of field activities and valued more nuanced approaches to writing instruction that supported that expansiveness and reflection. The one

outlier, Allen, who came to the writing classroom with more in-depth enculturative experience and maintained the generalized belief about writing and writing instruction did so because of the connections he made between the mid-level writing course (as it was listed as an English course) with prior English classes that he had only general experience (much as the lower enculturated students had).

The concluding parts of this chapter discussed the impact that prior experiences and perceptions had on the transfer of writing-related knowledge and strategies. While it seemed at the onset that students with more enculturative experience (i.e., Sara) would have the strongest demonstration of writing-related transfer after the end of the Intermediate Writing course, the data represented in this chapter highlights a slightly different picture.

Through the course and after, the students on the content-focused pathways reinforced prior expectations and continued to conflate classroom genres (and their requisite strategies) with the types of writing that would be done in future, professional contexts. Students like Iko mistook classroom genres for field genres because they did not have the experiences outside of the classroom to begin expanding and re-conceptualizing the scope of writing that occurs at the professional level, the way that writing is constructed, and the effects that happen from the circulation of those forms of writing. In short, after the completion of the course, content-focused students demonstrated little writing-related transfer. On the other hand, Allen and Cora, both students on the content-focused pathway, demonstrated beginning stages of expansive imaginings of their fields as they through the course (and after) they used writing studies concepts to recognize the scope and impact of disciplinary and professional writing in a much more substantive way. Even despite Allen's initial resistance to the new aims of the course, he was able to find connection to concepts in writing studies that resulted – if not in direct changes

in his writing practices – a reconceptualization of his relationship to the field and to the way that he can engage with field practices. Finally, as suggested before, Sara came to her mid-level writing classroom with the most potential for positive writing transfer. While she continued to remain affirmative about the impact that these concepts would have on her disciplinary engagement and writing practices, the lack of new and unfamiliar writing tasks prevented her from demonstrating their usefulness within this data set, and, thus, remaining inconclusive on any writing-related transfer that may or may not occur.

The final chapter explores the theoretical, administrative, and pedagogical implications of understanding the role of enculturation in writing transfer. In many ways, this chapter is both a response to current scholarship that addresses writing contexts beyond the first year (e.g. Dan Frazier’s “First Steps Beyond First Year: Coaching Transfer After FYC” (2011) and a call for further attention to the experiences and time that occurs between when students take their general education writing courses and when they next encounter any real substantive forms of writing. In this chapter, I attempt to think critically about the value of including post--first-year writing instruction that is intimately tied to the general education curriculum throughout our students’ undergraduate experience; pedagogical practice that can facilitate this growth in enculturative ability; and what needs to happen for students between writing courses, or as it has been called before, the “writing gap” that occurs between FYC and later writing courses.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENT ENCULTURATION, THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIATE WRITING, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the role that prior disciplinary experiences played in the way students valued writing and the kinds of instruction they were to receive in a mid-level writing course (Intermediate Writing), and to see how these values and beliefs impacted what types of writing-related knowledge and strategies were transferred from the course. The study presented in the previous four chapters represents what Pat Hutchins (2000) has termed as a “what is study” – a study that aims to describe what something looks like, or to determine what the features of a certain phenomenon might be – as opposed to a “what works” study. Through Iko, Bianca, Allen, Cora, and Sara – the five focal students in my study – I was able to collect a “moderate slice” of data that helped to identify a wide range of student beliefs and values relating to disciplinary enculturation, writing, and writing-related transfer.

In Chapter 3, I identified a variety of influences that impacted students’ sense of enculturation with their disciplines, and determined how these influences informed students’ perceptions about their own process of disciplinary enculturation. To summarize quickly, my five focal students brought a wide range of prior experiences related to their major or future profession to the Intermediate Writing classroom. These experiences included family influences, major courses that provided vital declarative knowledge from the field, and both successful and unsuccessful observational and first-hand experiences. Furthermore, I argued that these disciplinary influences also impacted student beliefs about what they would need to move toward deeper disciplinary participation.

These “pathways toward enculturation” grouped students’ perceptions of this process into three discrete categories: through the mastery of additional content (content-focused), through additional first-hand experiences in the field (practice-focused), and through the application of

knowledge and practices across domains (reflective application). In short, these pathways demonstrated three ways in which students' thought about their relationship to their growing sense of familiarity and membership into professional and disciplinary communities, highlighting writing as one of the key ways in which this process can be forwarded.

In Chapter 4, I used interview data to explore if and how these enculturative influences and pathways toward enculturation impacted students' perceptions of general education writing courses, and about what skills, strategies, and experiences have the potential to promote positive writing transfer, particularly in relation to students proposed enculturative pathway. I found that despite the fact that all of my focal students reported preliminary beliefs about mid-level writing, which expressed their beliefs that the course should benefit their learning to write for disciplinary contexts, and many of these students had prior disciplinary experiences that they *could have* drawn from to guide their values and expectations, all of the students instead drew from prior experiences related to prior courses in English (courses that emphasized argumentation and the generalizable writing strategies associated with argumentation). During the semester, I argued that the students whose prior disciplinary experiences emphasized content and grammatical correctness continued to invest in these beliefs and see value in assignments only as they related to generalizable ideas about writing and writing strategies. In contrast, students who had more enculturative experience in their disciplines and more robust experiences with disciplinary writing practices (specifically those who engaged with modes of writing in real-world contexts) invested in more nuanced ideas about writing that incorporated expansive understandings of field activities and valued more nuanced approaches to writing instruction that supported that expansiveness and reflection.

The concluding parts of that chapter also discussed the impact that these experiences and perceptions had on the transfer of writing-related knowledge and strategies. Through the course and after, some students reinforced prior expectations and continued to conflate strategies appropriate for classroom genres with strategies needed in the types of writing that would be done in future, professional contexts. Students like Iko assumed that future disciplinary writing will have similar purposes (e.g., reporting information), writing processes (e.g., writing up section by section), and conventions (e.g., passive voice, etc.). Allen and Cora, on the other hand, demonstrated beginning stages of expansive imaginings of their fields as they through the course (and after) they used writing studies concepts to recognize the scope and impact of disciplinary and professional writing in a much more substantive way.

This final chapter explores the theoretical, administrative, and pedagogical implications of understanding the role of enculturation in writing transfer. In many ways, this chapter is both a response to current scholarship that addresses writing contexts beyond the first year (e.g. Dan Frazier's "First Steps Beyond First Year: Coaching Transfer After FYC" (2011), a theorization of potential vertical writing curricula, and a call for further attention to the time and experiences that occur between when students take their general education writing courses and when they next encounter any real substantive forms of writing. In this chapter, I attempt to think critically about (a) the value that post--first-year writing instruction can have on students' long-term writing development, (b) pedagogical and curricular practices that can facilitate this growth in enculturative ability, and (c) what needs to happen for students between writing courses, or as it has been called before, the "writing gap" that occurs between a writing course and their next substantive engagement with writing.

Writing Transfer and Writing Pedagogy

Transfer research has highlighted a problem for the field of writing studies and for the courses that it offers undergraduate students. On the one hand, findings have been mixed regarding the writing knowledge and strategies that students report to use in writing contexts that follow the completion of a general education writing course. It would seem, then, that generalizable writing strategies are not “transferred” to writing tasks and contexts as frequently and as readily as we would like. This lack of transfer has been seen from a number of different vantage points and has been responded to in a number of different manners.

From one perspective, we can see Elizabeth Wardle’s metaphor of the apples being turned into apple pie. The writing knowledge and strategies have potentially already been mutated by students as they engage in new writing tasks. As researchers, what we seek to find transferred cannot be seen, as the skills and strategies have been re-shaped for new purposes. From another perspective, the writing tasks that students engage with after their writing course (if they exist at all) do not provide our students proper affordances to make use of what they have learned within our writing courses. Bergmann and Zepernick’s (2007) findings highlight this perspective well when they reported that students did not find value in using extensive revision strategies on writing tasks as disciplinary writing assignments were not sufficiently robust enough for them to use those strategies.

While dismal to some, these earlier findings from new transfer research actually highlight a promising capacity for deft decision making related to disciplinary writing tasks. It is not that they *can’t*, but that they have evaluated the affordances and demands of the new writing tasks and have *chosen not to* draw from what they have learned in their general education writing courses. In fact, students believe (whether accurate or not) that these new writing tasks do not require them to consciously use the deeper writing knowledge and strategies in order to be

successful in writing tasks outside of their writing classrooms. In many ways, they are right. Other studies, such as Lindenman's (2015) "Inventing Metagenres" and Blythe and Gonzales' (2016) "Coordinating and Transfer Across the Metagenre of Secondary Research," have suggested that students do in fact forge productive transfer links between writing tasks that enable them to successfully negotiate new writing demands. Both studies suggested that students do in fact draw productively from prior writing knowledge and experiences, but they "need the space to look more closely and the freedom to see their texts through their own eyes" (Lindenman, n.p.). And, perhaps more importantly, the strategies they draw from and the spaces in which they do so are often not necessarily rooted in our general education writing classrooms. Blythe and Gonzales more specifically claimed that students did not see the FYW classroom as a "milestone" or as a space that was critically different in terms of thinking about writing. Instead, they saw their FYW class as a "continuation ... in the development of their writing related knowledge" (p. 624). Thus, their students, much like many other students that we encounter saw FYW "as another course in which they wrote to please their instructors, or to simply 'do school'" (p. 626).

The findings presented in this study demonstrated similar positions related to transfer and the teaching of writing. As I discussed in Chapter 4, students (a) frequently saw their mid-level writing class as a continuation of the types of writing instruction that they had received prior to the course, and (b) were not offered sufficient opportunities to use their newly acquired writing-related knowledge and strategies in new writing situations. What then are we to do?

In response to the thinking and findings coming from studies of transfer, researchers and teachers of writing have continued to critically engage with how we "teach for transfer." Much of this work has argued for re-thinking the content of our writing courses (particularly FYW).

Downs and Wardle have argued for focusing on writing as the content of our writing courses (WAW), whereas Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak have suggested a Teaching for Transfer approach (TFT) that introduces students to key writing studies concepts in conjunction with reflective writing. Arguably, the goals of these pedagogical approaches is to introduce student students to new ways of thinking about writing and themselves as writers, and to provide them with the analytic skill sets to successfully engage with writing as they move through the diverse contexts of their undergraduate coursework. As we cannot predict what types of writing students will encounter, and under what conditions, these approaches provide students with the tools to address a wide-range of writing tasks with a theoretically-informed lens from writing studies. While potentially renovating day-to-day operations of our writing classroom, do these pedagogical approaches actually impact students after they leave our writing classrooms and, eventually, lead to positive transfer into new writing tasks. Moreover, these pedagogical revisions have been primarily isolated to the first-year course. How do we encourage students to continue their long-term writing development beyond their first year courses, and as they progress into more discipline-specific writing contexts?

Implications for Writing Courses Beyond the First Year

While my primary objective for this project was to begin to understand what types of prior disciplinary experiences our students brought to a mid-level writing class, and how those experiences impact beliefs about writing and their expectations (and values) for general education writing courses – which I hope I have at least started an initial understanding toward this relationship. A second motivation for me was to better understand the value that a mid-level writing course could have on student writing development. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, over 40% of 4-year universities offer a mid-level writing course, but our field has yet to really

theorize the value that these mid-level writing courses can have on long-term student writing development, nor have they properly addressed how to position these courses effectively within extended writing sequences within students' general education requirements.

The Role of the Mid-Level Writing Course

Our field has long known, perhaps too implicitly at times, that student writing development does not end after their first-year writing course. Never is this idea clearer than during the moments of critical transition as students begin to write in disciplinary genres, for disciplinary audiences. While some writing pedagogies have attempted to invigorate the FYC course by offering students with the analytic and metacognitive tools that they might need to become rhetorically flexible writers¹² – to be able to address new and ever more complicated writing tasks within their disciplines and in writing contexts that students and teachers cannot even predict that they will find themselves. As encouraging as these approaches have been, at best, these pedagogies can perhaps only begin to provide students with the concepts and strategies necessary for long-term success, and, at worst, have little impact on student development, as the concepts and strategies are potentially only suited for certain types of students who bring in the rich writing experiences needed for successful uptake of these ideas (Frazier, 2010).

For instance, in Frazier's 2010 exploratory study, "First Steps Beyond First Year," he outlined an argument that proposes the use of "third spaces" (Writing Studios and Writing Centers) after the first-year course, which would provide students additional instruction in writing studies concepts (discourse community, genre, reflection, etc.). "Alternative teaching spaces offer students an opportunity to 'connect the dots' and expand their conceptual writing

¹² Two obvious examples of this are Downs and Wardle's Writing About Writing approach and, more recently, Yancey, Taczak and Robertson's Teaching for Transfer approach.

maps when they are both developmentally and strategically ready. Students can be helped to ‘make the leap’ from what they’re doing in one form or rhetorical arena to another and appreciate every time they make such a leap, they are transforming their writing topography” (p. 53). Frazier’s suggestions are both powerful and timely, though they are relegated to supporting students’ broader rhetorical flexibility and their ability to transition *between* various disciplinary contexts after they leave FYC.

The data findings from my study suggest thinking about post-FYC in a slightly different way. The implications of Frazier’s study connect rather directly to my theorization of broad academic enculturation (outlined in Chapter Two), as distinct from discipline-specific enculturation - the focus of my study. Whereas Frazier’s thinking helps us conceptualize when students might make the most productive use of writing studies concepts to facilitate writing transfer outside of FYC, the goal of my study was to determine the role of a mid-level writing course as students begin their journey into disciplinary writing contexts.

In short, what my study had attempted to show is that the writing classroom can be a valuable space in which students can potentially continue their process of enculturation in a critical and reflective way. Expanding a students’ sense of disciplinary imagination, punctuated by their expanded awareness of genres and genre conventions, is potentially just as valuable to long-term student writing development as the learning of specific writing strategies – particularly if this pedagogy is aligned with additional writing practice and support from WAC/WID courses.

A WAW-oriented, mid-level writing classroom does provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their current understandings of the roles, activities, and writing practices of their disciplines, and to engage in writing tasks that allow them to explore previously unimagined ways of engaging with their discipline. Theoretically speaking, if we extend Frazier’s

claim to disciplinary contexts, we could begin to imagine the role of mid-level writing courses as spaces where students can draw from and reflect on their prior disciplinary experiences using the concepts from writing studies – either for the first time, or as a secondary engagement – to develop a more nuanced disciplinary “writing topographies” (Frazier). The data represented in this study suggest the validity of this type of course conceptualization.

We see the beginning elements of enculturative expansion happening in Cora’s experiences in her mid-level writing class. While she was able to make strong expansive moves during her mid-level writing course, it is perhaps only because she was introduced to this broadening of disciplinary activities during her Intro to World Dance course. She was primed to continue this work of enculturative expansion during the semester - the same might be said of Sara, whose very future relied on her crossing the boundaries between medicine, psychology, and law. Other students were not primed. They remained guarders of their disciplinary boundaries and held firm to their beliefs that general writing strategies were suitable for all disciplinary writing tasks. They assumed that the underlying genre conventions and strategies that worked for their limited genre repertoires would be appropriate and beneficial as they encountered disciplinary and professional writing tasks in the future. Additionally, Allen demonstrated how a mid-level writing course, which explicitly introduced him to discourse community, genre, and reflection, could shift the ways in which they conceptualized their chosen disciplines and, to some degree, the writing that happens within it.

Yet, perhaps one of the broad limitations of a WAW-based pedagogy (of which both Frazier’s and my own study explore) is the lack of practice in disciplinary genres (in effect the WAW classroom focuses on an analytic process for engaging with new genres). Extrapolating from the data findings of this study, combining WAW- and WAC-pedagogies in a vertical

writing curriculum seems to be a fruitful endeavor for mid-level writing classrooms. Blending student reflection on their enculturative process, their understandings about disciplinary roles, purposes, and writing tasks, and what they know about the writing process when engaged in these practices with projects that investigate peripheral roles, purposes, and writing practices would expand students “topographies” of the field and its writing practices. But, then also providing opportunities to practice these newly discovered genres, and critically reflecting on how these genres and their conventions reflect underlying values and expectations of the field might lead students to more productive writing engagements that would transfer into future disciplinary writing contexts. Thus, theorizing the mid-level writing classroom within the larger context of a vertical writing curriculum needs to be continued.

Conceptualizing a Vertical Writing Curriculum Informed by Enculturation

One of the benefits of a vertical writing curriculum is that we have the potential to address different critical transitions for students at key moments of their undergraduate experience. What I argue on a conceptual level is that FYW and the mid-level course might both teach the threshold concepts of writing studies (DC, genre, and reflective activities) in order to promote the two different types of enculturative processes that I discussed in Chapter 2: broad academic enculturation (BAE) and discipline-specific enculturation.

Theoretically speaking, FYW courses could draw from the ideas of broad academic enculturation to introduce students to the ideas that writing is socio-rhetorical and that academic writing varies based on context. Courses designed with BAE in mind would provide students with the analytic tools to engage with various writing tasks during their first few years of undergraduate course work and to help them develop writing strategies that cut across all of

these domains and writing tasks (something along the lines of metagenres (Carter, 2010; and in fact, Blythe and Gonzales (2016)).

As students progress into their majors they will need critical help 1.) addressing discipline specific writing tasks, but also 2.) help expanding their sense of what writing tasks are present in the field – expanding their genre repertoires beyond just the genres that they may encounter in school and classroom writing for their majors – which, as Melzer found may have limited purposes (informing was the dominant) and limited audiences (instructor as reader). In tandem with the expansive work that WAC researchers are trying to do within the disciplines, we as writing instructors can provide spaces that help students expand their understanding of what professionals in the field actually do and how this links up with writing. Additionally, these findings can also work in conjunction with the WI – but we need to help revise WI courses to do more than just writing to learn concepts and writing to inform. They should build off this disciplinary expansion and use their field-based expertise to help students understand further the underlying epistemological assumptions connected to these diverse genres.

Beyond just implementation, what my project findings also suggest is that the timing of this type of course is crucial. We need to determine where students are within their process of disciplinary enculturation, to determine where the critical transitions are into field-based experiences and writing, and determine the time in which to offer a course that provides students with a meta-language to think about and conceptualize field based activities and writing.

Administrative Suggestions

When should students take a mid-level writing class that (re)introduces them to core writing studies concepts? Based on the findings reported in Chapter Four, the time in which students take this kind of mid-level writing course could have drastic impacts on what the

students see as the objectives of the course, what the students find valuable during the semester, and, ultimately, what they choose to transfer from the course to writing contexts after.

On one end of the spectrum, students with fewer enculturative experiences, particularly with less experience dealing with real-world genres and writing situations, demonstrated less value in the core writing concepts, and instead focused on lower-order writing strategies. The learning of concepts such as discourse community, genre, and strategies for reflection seemed to have little impact on their understanding of disciplinary writing or the genres and writing contexts that they would encounter in their disciplinary/professional life after the course. After the course they continued to conflate strategies used in classroom genres with the strategies needed for successful engagement with real-world writing practices, and continued to focus on the main purpose for writing as the accurate representation of stabilized, domain-specific knowledge. The reason for this continuation could be based on just a lack of disciplinary experience, or in the fact that they were not given ample opportunity to make use of these concepts in new, sustained writing tasks after the semester. Nevertheless, in the end, it is questionable whether or not the mid-level class was valuable in their long-term, disciplinary writing development.

On the other end of the spectrum, the one student who came to the writing classroom with a tremendous amount of disciplinary experience and, moreover, a focus on enculturative progress focused on the active bridging of knowledge domains and disciplinary practice demonstrated incredibly high levels of value related to the core writing concepts. Yet, because she had progressed so far into her discipline (and had few courses left to take), she too was not offered adequate opportunity to make use of these new concepts and strategies. While her conceptualization of disciplinary writing was changed in some ways, she wasn't able to

demonstrate this change in actual writing tasks. In the coming years, as she transitions into Law School, she could, potentially, make strong use of these strategies, but as of the end of this study, those claims are inconclusive.

At both ends of the spectrum, the role of a mid-level writing course that provides ample opportunity to learn concepts such as discourse community and genre, and to reflect on their experiences in order to re-think disciplinary writing is of questionable value. However, in the middle-range of the spectrum, we can envision real potential for fostering writing growth and transfer.

Administratively, positioning this course at the proper time is important, but encounters difficult roadblocks. First, it is very difficult to determine how far along in the enculturative process our students are. It would take tremendous time and resources to track these student experiences. We could inform advising teams about the importance of determining what types of experiences that students have had before enrolling in the mid-level course, and leave it to student self-select for when they choose to enroll in the course. Alternatively, it might be safe to assume that taking this kind of mid-level course during first and final year of coursework does not promote the same kinds of writing development and transfer that happens during middle years of undergraduate experience. Knowing this at least limits the timeframe in which students should take this course.

Preliminary Pedagogical Suggestions

According to the National Census of Writing, more than 50% of reporting institutions require writing courses beyond the first year (n=341), and more than 40% of reporting 4-year institutions specifically require mid-level writing courses (n=121). While little is known about the pedagogy involved in these settings, the prevalence of this course at institutions across the

US tells us that many departments and programs are already positioned to assist students to critically reflect on prior experience and develop expanded imaginations about the landscape of their fields and the writing practices involved in disciplinary activity. However, what we need to think about are the kinds of pedagogies and/or assignment sequences can promote this type of critical engagement during a mid-level writing course.

While there are a number of courses being developed at both the FYC and upper level composition courses, many of the assignments for them are only superficially connected to disciplinary enculturation. The findings in this study suggest that students who have at least some enculturative experience – particularly first-hand experience with disciplinary genres and situations – reported the ideas of discourse community and genre as particularly useful in helping them to re-conceptualize their discipline and the role of writing within it.

As this study was more of a “what is” study, rather than a “what works” study, I do not have direct data that discusses the success of any particular pedagogical practice. Instructors at my study site incorporated assignments and reflective prompts that involved explicit instruction in discourse community, genre, and reflection (as per departmental suggestions). The depth and the degree to which these concepts were addressed is unknown, as are the individual strengths of each instructor. Nevertheless, each of the five focal students were enrolled in a range of sections, representing both approaches and a range of instructor experience. While further research must be done to see what kinds of assignments and approaches help facilitate the most productive changes in disciplinary writing beliefs and values, based on my findings, at least some explicit instruction on genre and discourse community, coupled with reflective assignments can help students begin to critically engage with their own enculturative experience.

- a. Assignments that promote reflection on the field and conceptions of students' own perspectives of their disciplinary progress.
- b. Assignments that encourage expansive understandings of the field (increased imagination) through assignments which have students explicitly engage with the concepts of discourse community and genre.

It should also be noted that while reflective engagement with disciplinary beliefs and values should be encouraged and taught toward, the data analyzed for this project (as well as findings from similarly focused projects), suggests that this the third pathway (“reflective practice”) might be rare. This view of the enculturative process *can* happen during undergraduate course work, but perhaps only at advanced stages and in conjunction with reinforcement from real-world engagements in professional and disciplinary contexts. It is quite reasonable to think that more often than not mid-level writing instructors might encounter content-oriented and practice-oriented students in our classrooms, and thus, a focus on expanding student understanding of the roles and activities involved in their chosen disciplines might be a more achievable end¹³.

Again, however, this pedagogical work cannot be the sole responsibility of general education writing programs. Rather, WAC/WID scholars must continue their valuable work to help disciplinary faculty develop writing assignments with their courses that provide students with writing tasks that echo the robust purposes, audiences, and conventions of real-world disciplinary writing. Doing so would help students hone their theories of disciplinary writing,

¹³ As part of another project that I am involved in (the Writing Transfer Project), learning modules are being developed that aim to guide students through the components of “genre” in an explicit and metacognitive way. While the success of these modules have yet to be fully implemented (they will be tested out during the fall 2016 semester), developing instruction tools such as these can help instructors who are not as experienced with these core writing studies concepts to still provide valuable classroom engagement.

theories that deeply impacted what students valued in the writing assignments seen in the mid-level course of this study.

Directions for Future Investigation

Expanding the study in number to check for validity

The data collected and represented in this study was meant to provide the field of writing studies and transfer research with information about the types of disciplinary experiences that students bring with them to the writing classroom. Because this study was designed to collect a somewhat robust understanding of student experiences, beliefs, and values, I was only able to collect data from a limited number of students. As such, this data can only serve as a snapshot of what is. With such small number of participants, we can only see limited trends in student writing development at one institution. With this limitation in mind, I suggest ways in which we can extend the findings from this study to establish larger trends in student disciplinary writing development and to test for validity the enculturative model that I outlined in this study.

- 1.) *Developing a study to see if other prior experiences can impact disciplinary enculturation, and to test to see if the three pathways of enculturation are found in a larger dataset or if other pathways are found.*
- 2.) *Testing these findings in another context.* The study site was a large mid-western research university that draws from a very specific population. Beyond developing a study with a larger number of participants, a study that looks at other student populations might produce drastically different student experiences with disciplinary writing and different beliefs and values related to writing courses. While I believe that my students represented a wide range of experiences and backgrounds, a follow-up or comparative study might provide interesting data on the key concerns of this study.

Beyond developing a larger study, which would allow testing and potential extension of the categories developed in the findings in this current study, I am also interested in testing these findings against actual samples of student writing throughout the semester and after. As my study focused on student beliefs and values, actual writing performance was not my central concern. Toward the beginning of the study, I discussed how my categories of enculturation were not meant to report any sense of accuracy about disciplinary epistemologies, activities, and writing practices. This was not to say that evaluating accuracy is not valuable, merely outside the scope of this study. If a study were to be conducted that collected live writing samples and had students identify the ways in which they were using the writing concepts and strategies during and after the course, even more could be tracked about student writing development in relation to enculturative experiences.

Finally, the findings of my study begin to tell us much about the relationship between student experience and writing development. As indicated by the conversation in this chapter, my data only provided some information about what occurs after the end of Intermediate Writing. Further research should be done on what happens to students between their writing courses and sustained writing tasks. Additionally, many of our students take a FYC course and then do not encounter another sustained writing task for sometimes several years. Adding in a mid-level writing course, as discussed above, could help students to engage with writing in a more continuous way throughout their undergraduate curriculum, but more needs to be known about what happens between writing courses (e.g., FYC and a mid-level course) so that we can develop pedagogy that really connects with their experiences, beliefs, and values, and position the timing of the mid-level course at the most productive point in their undergraduate curriculum.

Furthermore, as indicated in the pedagogy section above, this study was not meant to test any particular pedagogical approach. While both WAW and WAC approaches were represented in the student population, it is still unclear as to what effect each approach had on student development and even more unclear as to what types of assignments and conversations would be most beneficial toward not only expanding students' imaginations of their chosen discipline, but also more directly beneficial to their actual writing practices. A follow-up study to this project would be to ask "what works" questions, investigating further whether or not explicit instruction in the concepts are necessary for this kind of student growth, exactly what concepts from writing studies impact student perceptions, and the kinds of assignments that get students to critically reflect on prior experience and begin to reconceptualize their own beliefs about disciplinary writing – or as Downs and Robertson (2015) suggested, help to shape "the writer's personal theory of writing – their conceptions of what happens when they write, what ought to be happening, why that does or does not happen" (p. 110).

APPENDIX A: Entrance Survey

Name: _____ Wayne State Access ID (XXYYYY): _____

Age: _____

Year (select one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Major: _____ Minor (if applicable): _____

Have you ever switched majors? Y N

What is your intended profession? _____

Do you know anyone that is in a similar field or major? Y N

If so, who?

What courses have you taken in your major? (please list them)

If you have a minor, what courses have you taken in this minor? (please list them)

Have you ever had an internship or job relevant to your major area of study? Y N

Did you take ENG 1020 (Introductory College Writing) at Wayne State? Y N

If so, when did you take ENG 1020? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very connect and one being not connected at all), going into ENG 3010, how “connected” do you feel to your chosen major or profession?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very familiar and one being not familiar at all), how familiar are you with the writing practices of your major?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very confident and one being not confident at all), how confident do you feel writing for your major courses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very relevant and one being not relevant at all), how relevant do you think ENG 3010 is to learning how to write for your major courses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Using the same scale, how relevant do you think ENG 3010 is to learning how to write for your non-major courses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

For learning how to write for situations after college (i.e. professional writing or public writing)?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX B: Exit Survey

Name: _____ Wayne State Access ID (XXYYYY): _____

Age: _____

Year (select one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Major: _____ Minor (if applicable): _____

Has your major changed since entering into ENG 3010? Y N

What is your intended profession? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very connect and one being not connected at all), going into ENG 3010, how “connected” do you feel to your chosen major or profession?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very familiar and one being not familiar at all), how familiar are you with the writing practices of your major?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very confident and one being not confident at all), how confident do you feel writing for your major courses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being very relevant and one being not relevant at all), how relevant do you think ENG 3010 is to learning how to write for your major courses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Using the same scale, how relevant do you think ENG 3010 is to learning how to write for your non-major courses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

For learning how to write for situations after college (i.e. professional writing or public writing)?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX C: Interview #1

Student Interview #1: Student demographic and investment in major courses

- 1.) What is your year and major?
- 2.) Why did you choose _____ as your major?
- 3.) What influenced this choice?
 - a. When did you decide that this was the field you wanted to pursue?
 - i. Were/Are you considering any other field or major other than this one?
 - b. What kind of job do you want to have after completing your degree?
 - i. How important is a college education in becoming a _____?
- 4.) How many courses have you taken in your major?
 - a. What courses were these?
 - i. How well did you do in these courses?
 - b. What types of writing are you asked to do in these courses?
 - c. How much time do you spend on these assignments (compared to your other courses)?
 - d. What “writing process” do you use when completing these types of assignments?
 - i. Why?
- 5.) Do you know any information about your major or profession?
 - a. If so, what do you know?
- 6.) How much writing do you think you will have to do in your future career?
 - a. Why do you believe this?
 - b. Where did you learn about what kinds of writing you’ll have to do in your future career?
- 7.) How familiar are you with the professional genres of your field or potential profession?
 - a. List them for me.
- 8.) Have you ever had an internship or a job that was relevant to your field of study?
 - a. Have you been able to utilize that experience in a class for your major or for an assignment in that class?
 - i. How?
 - b. How about in your writing classes?
- 9.) Going into ENG 3010 how “connected” do you feel to your chosen major or profession?
 - a. What makes you feel this way?
 - b. What have you done, if anything, to become a member of this profession?
 - c. What qualities or skills do you think you must have to succeed in your chosen field/profession?

Part #2: Student Writing knowledge and perceived role of writing instruction

- 10.) Think about the kinds of writing you do in the classes you've taken at WSU. Can you describe the writing that you've done?
 - a. What kind of writing is most difficult for you?
 - b. What is it that makes it difficult?

- 11.) Can you describe your writing instruction in ENG 1020?
 - c. What kinds of assignments were taught there?
 - d. How does this type of instruction compare to your current ENG 3010?
 - e. Did the kinds of assignments required in ENG 1020 help you with the ones required in ENG 3010? How?
 - f. What skills did you learn in your ENG 1020 class that were particularly helpful to you in your ENG 3010 class?

- 12.) What do you think the purpose of ENG 3010 is?
 - a. What assignments are relevant to your major/field of study?
 - b. Do you think that taking ENG 3010 will help you become a member of your profession?
 - c. How so?

APPENDIX D: Interview #2

Interview- Part 1:

Script: Today I am going to ask you a few questions about two important ideas for my research: enculturation and transfer. While both of these terms might be somewhat unfamiliar to you, throughout our interview today, I hope that you can think about these terms in relation to your own experiences in ENG 3010 and other courses you have taken at Wayne State.

Enculturation is the process that someone undergoes when then enter into a new discourse community. They move from “novice” to “expert” as they learn how this new community operates (for instance learning their genres, objectives, and members roles). You may have actually read Gee in your 3010 class. He talks about how people sometimes have trouble ‘enculturating’ as they move between Discourses.

Have you ever experienced this movement from novice to expert before? Where?

How did you feel during the first few weeks of class during ENG 3010?
 What was your experience with the readings? Were they difficult? Were they easy?
 Why do you think so?

How did you feel as the semester progressed? Did the readings, assignments, discussions become easier? Why?

How do these experiences compare when you enter into one of your major courses?
 When you enter into a non-major (i.e. gen ed course)?

Transfer Questions

Teachers in see what they call the "box under the bed" syndrome when they ask students to recall in one class information they've learned in a different class. They find that students metaphorically put what they've learned each semester in a box under the bed instead of trying to make connections and see how things learned in previous classes apply in other situations. We're trying to find out if students ever have "box under the bed" syndrome with skills or knowledge gained in writing classes. First of all, do you think this is an accurate metaphor?

How easy is it for you to use what you've learned in a writing class in another class or another writing situation?

What kinds of knowledge do you decide to “keep” vs. “stick under the bed”? Why?

What kinds of knowledge do you decide to toss under the bed? Why?

Did your ENG 1020/3010 courses at Wayne State University teach you skills that allow you to keep the knowledge and use it other contexts? If so, what was it?

[mention a few of the student's enculturative components]

In thinking about these experiences, what knowledge or skills did you see as important for successfully completing some of the writing tasks in ENG 3010? How did you use them to complete assignments in 3010?

Think back to a time when you used something you learned in a writing class in another situation. What was it that you used?

Why was it useful?

Can you describe the learning environment of ENG 3010?

Can you describe a course that would most help you be successful in writing in your future coursework and career?

How was ENG 3010 similar to the ideal course? How was it different?

Open-ended Interview – Part II

Script: In this open-ended second part of the interview, we'll be looking at one of your recent papers that you wrote for ENG 3010, which I asked you to bring with you today. I'm going to ask you to walk through the paper, explaining what you did and where, and what knowledge you drew upon when writing the paper.

- 1) Can you describe the assignment? What type of assignment was it?
- 2) What were its topic, purpose, and audience?
- 3) What challenges did you have when approaching this assignment?
- 4) What do you think went well with this paper?
- 5) What skills/strategies did you bring to this paper when writing?
- 6) What skills/strategies did you need to learn new when writing?
- 7) Can you point to specific things that you learned in your ENG 1020 course that helped you write this paper? If so, what are they? If not, why not?
- 8) Can you point out specific things that you learned in your ENG 3010 course that helped you write this paper? If so, what are they? If not, why not?
- 9) On a scale of 1-5, how motivated did you feel in writing this paper?
- 10) On a scale of 1-5, how successful did you feel this paper was?

APPENDIX E: Interview #3

Interview- Part 1:

General Writing Questions

1. What is your major and year?
2. In which semester did you take ENG 3010?
3. What other coursework are you taking? Took last semester?
 - 3a. How much writing did you have to do in that coursework?
4. How much writing do you think you are going to have to do in your future career?
 - 4a. Why do you believe this?
 - 4b. Where did you learn about what kinds of writing you'll have to do in your future career?
 - 4c. How does this opinion compare to when you finished ENG 3010?
5. Think about the kinds of writing you've done since ENG 3010 at WSU (i.e. writing in courses, personal, public, or professional contexts). Can you describe the writing that you've done?
 - 5a. What kind of writing is now most difficult for you?
 - 5b. What is it that makes it difficult?
6. Can you describe your writing instruction in ENG 3010?
 - 6a. What kinds of assignments were taught there?
 - 6b. How did this type of instruction compare to ENG 1020?
 - 6c. Did the kinds of assignments required in ENG 3010 help you with the ones required of you in later courses? How?
 - 6d. What skills did you learn in your ENG 1020/3010 courses are particularly helpful to you in your current courses?

Transfer Questions

Teachers in see what they call the "box under the bed" syndrome when they ask students to recall in one class information they've learned in a different class. They find that students metaphorically put what they've learned each semester in a box under the bed instead of trying to make connections and see how things learned in previous classes apply in other situations. We're trying to find out if students ever have "box under the bed" syndrome with skills or knowledge gained in writing classes. First of all, do you think this is an accurate metaphor?

How easy is it for you to use what you've learned in a writing class in another class or another writing situation?

What kinds of knowledge do you decide to “keep” vs. “stick under the bed”? Why?

What kinds of knowledge do you decide to toss under the bed? Why?

Did your ENG 1020/3010 courses at Wayne State University teach you skills that allow you to keep the knowledge and use it in future situations? If so, what was it?

Think back to a time when you used something you learned in a writing class in another situation. What was it that you used?

Why was it useful?

Can you describe a course that would most help you be successful in writing in your future coursework and career?

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ABSTRACT

**THE ROLE OF ENCULTURATION IN STUDENT WRITING-RELATED BELIEFS,
VALUES, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR TRANSFER**

by

JOSEPH PASZEK

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Advisor: Dr. Gwen Gorzelsky

Major: English (Rhetoric and Composition)

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

This dissertation investigates the impact that prior disciplinary experiences can have on students' beliefs about disciplinary writing, and their perceptions of the value and objectives of a general education, mid-level writing course.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Joseph Paszek is the Writing Center Coordinator at the University of Detroit Mercy where he also teaches Academic Writing. In the Fall of 2016, he will move into the position of Assistant Professor of English at the University of Detroit Mercy, taking on the role of the Director of the Writing Program and Director of the Writing Center. Joseph is also one of the researchers for the Writing Transfer Project, a multi-institutional group investigating long-term, student writing development at the college level. Together with the group, he has written several forthcoming chapters and articles that present mixed-methods findings on various factors related to writing transfer including metacognition, genre awareness, dispositions, and prior knowledge. Individually, he has presented at CCCC, NCTE, MLA, WPA, and IWAC, and continues to investigate issues related to disciplinary writing development and curricular change.