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The Great Divide: The Perceptions and Dynamics of the Faculty and Staff Professional Relationship

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THE GREAT DIVIDE: THE PERCEPTIONS AND DYNAMICS OF THE FACULTY AND STAFF PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP

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THE GREAT DIVIDE: THE PERCEPTIONS AND DYNAMICS OF THE FACULTY AND STAFF PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP

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I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Nick; my mom, and, my dad – the first Dr. Skaggs.
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After 23 consecutive years of education, the list of people who deserve recognition extends past the total number of pages for this dissertation. I would never have seen the end to this journey without the support of my committee members, friends, family, and husband.

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The college community is built with several necessary components. When considering the faces of a college campus one visualizes the administration, faculty, staff, and students. Through these roles, each serves a function impacting the mission of the institution. Utilizing qualitative methods of interviews, observations, and document analysis this study examined the dynamics and interactions of two roles on a community college campus. The research sought to understand the perceptions of faculty and staff regarding one another and the ultimate impact on the community college campus culture. The data revealed a gap not only exists in the available literature on the faculty and staff divide, but also within the campus community. The concept of faculty governance impacts the overall voice of staff on the campus as staff indicate feeling silenced and undervalued. Faculty perceive staff as bound to the campus by their role, in that the job is only capable of being completed on a standard work schedule in a specified office. Overall, both faculty and staff recognize the impact of organizational structure of the campus; however, faculty and staff disagree on the means of approaching the disconnect.

Keywords: faculty, staff, perceptions, community college, organizational communication, identity
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Community colleges provide educational opportunities to a unique market of students. In order to provide these academic opportunities, many roles, policies, and structures must be in place (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Two roles that impact higher education include the faculty who provide instruction and the professional staff who provide support services, e.g., involving financial aid and admissions. The following study seeks to understand the perceptions of faculty and professional staff toward one another and the dynamics of the professional relationship between these two key roles, specifically within the community college context. First, the background of the problems facing faculty and professional will be examined. Second, the statement of the problem will clearly identify the focus of the study. Third, the purpose of the study will detail the research questions guiding the process. The final portion of the chapter provides a brief discussion of the significance of the study.

Background of the Problem

Higher education utilizes industry-specific language to identify roles, policies, and standards. The arbitrary language perpetuates the campus structure, as faculty, staff, and administrator labels provide an easy system to identify an individual’s primary job responsibility. Faculty, staff, and administrator labels give consistent structure for higher education institutions to delineate between role responsibilities; they also serve as a means for maintaining order for campus governance, as faculty titles provide the historical control of the institution (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Each role is an aspect of the college structure that impacts the overall health and success of the institution. The impact may emerge while directly interacting with students, the ultimate product of a
higher education institution, or indirectly. Each role provides a valuable contribution to the success of the college. Faculty, staff, and administrators work collaboratively to improve the outcomes and future of the institution.

Upon obtaining employment at an institution of higher education, the employee inherits a label based upon the primary job function: faculty or staff. For example, those involved in the classroom as teachers would qualify as faculty. The definition of staff ranges, as the variety of positions includes custodial staff to administration. In order to further understand the roles of the members of an institution, members the staff identity separates into administration, professional staff, and support staff. Professional staff include academic advisors, business officers, student affairs assistants, marketing coordinators, admissions representatives, etc. Support staff include positions such as maintenance and custodial employees. Administrators, for the purpose of this research, serve as leaders of departments or divisions; administrator titles include those such as department head, associate/assistant dean, vice president, provost, chief academic officer, president, and chancellor.

The following section will focus on the relationship between of faculty and professional staff. These two groups partake in the most direct contact with students, and both manage a direct connection to campus activities and initiatives through committee involvement. As the members of these groups notably impact the students’ interactions with the educational environment, it provides an opportunity for administrators to improve the dynamic relationship between the core groups. Direct contact with students, particularly with faculty, often arises as a key indicator for student success (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). Also, as campuses develop improvement policies, such as the
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) required Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) process, faculty and professional staff work collaboratively to identify solutions for student and institutional success (SACSCOC, 2014). As campuses strive to provide high quality educational opportunities, the two groups, faculty and professional staff, must understand perceptions of one another and identify how these perceptions may impact the professional relationship.

As stated previously, each role delivers a benefit to the campus community. Throughout literature, several research studies on the identities of faculty provide an understanding if the faculty perspective (Bess, 1992; Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Bode, 1996; Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Lieff et al., 2012; Menges & Associates, 1999; Tierney & Rhoads, 1994). The quantity of literature on faculty development significantly overshadows the research available on staff identity (Carpenter, 2009). As contributors to bodies of research often fall under the definition of faculty seeking further levels of education, enhancing the field or for publication, the quantity of research pertaining to the faculty perspective is understandable. A small number of research studies discuss the transition of a staff member to a faculty role. None of the identified research discusses the transition from faculty to professional staff. Through the research that discusses the transition process, limited intergroup dynamics are identified within the two groups. Minimal research examines the differing perceptions of faculty and staff roles toward one another.

Within the realm of academic research, numerous studies exist that examine organizational culture. The impact of an organization’s value system and mission is vital for the success of the institution (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In examining the success of
the professional relationships of faculty and staff, the research must take into consideration the context of the relationship and the identities. Higher education consists of a variety of organizational structures (i.e., community college, private two- and four-year, and public and private four-year institutions). Nevertheless, for the purpose of this project, the faculty and staff perceptions and professional relationship have been limited to public two-year community colleges. Community college systems provide communities with educational opportunities for personal growth and career advancement, which may be out of reach through other more traditional means (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Professional relationships not only require an understanding of the context - in this case, community colleges - but also require an understanding and appreciation of the perspectives that different backgrounds and experiences bring to the discussion. According to the Orbe (1998) Co-cultural Theory, faculty and professional staff are identified as subgroups, subcultures, or co-cultures. These terms share the same meaning and can be used interchangeably. Members of a community college campus, faculty, staff, and administrators follow the same mission and value system. However, depending upon one’s role - faculty or professional staff - members of the same community college culture may possess different perspectives of the mission and value system.

Orbe’s (1998) Co-cultural Theory supports the foundation of this study as the purpose of the research is to identify how the two subgroups perceive one another as well as how the ideals of the opposite subgroup may impact the development and maintenance of professional relationships. The structure of higher education institutions
is historically built upon the separation of faculty and professional staff for the purpose of faculty governance (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). The level of separation between the two subgroups may impact the professional relationships of faculty and staff. The level of separation has yet to be clearly identified due to lack of research. One available publication from the University of California includes a completed task force report guided to better understand the relationship between faculty and professional staff, finding “the issue of civility continu[ing] to surface as a key concern among staff” (University of California, 1999, p.7).

**Statement of the Problem**

Institutions of higher education continually seek a process of improvement and reflection. As guided by the accreditation process and the expectations of administrators, faculty and professional staff often work collaboratively to improve the institution when called upon by the administration. While research on the development of faculty and staff identity exists, little can be found on the collaborative professional relationships of these two key co-cultures. As the professional relationship is a well-defined necessity for campus improvement and success, completed research can guide a more fluid understanding of how the co-cultural groups perceive one another and how the interworking of these perceptions may impact the development and maintenance of professional relationships.

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of faculty and staff toward one another and to understand how these perceptions impact professional relationships. The following questions will guide this research:
RQ1: How do professional staff perceive faculty?

RQ2: How do faculty perceive professional staff?

RQ3: How do the perceptions that faculty and professional staff hold regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges?

**Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study includes two key components: (1) understanding perceptions of group membership role, and (2) the impact of perceptions on the professional relationship. To understand the professional relationship, the study first seeks to understand how faculty perceive professional staff, and how professional staff perceive faculty. Second, faculty and professional staff collaborations can provide a college campus with valuable programs, solutions, and innovative idea generation. Therefore, understanding the dynamics of the relationship among the subcultures would allow the college campuses to understand the impact of perceptions on the professional relationship among faculty and professional staff. Partnership initiatives between the co-cultures provide positive implications for the future (Price, 2008). The development of student success initiatives fostered through collaborative discussion demonstrates the powerful impact of these professional relationships. Throughout literature, little exists to improve or simply understand the professional relationships between faculty and professional staff. Rather, research describes the careful planning and uncomfortable conversations that identify the purpose and role of the co-cultures in order to avoid concerns of lacking civility (Bess, 1992; University of California, 1999).
Operational Definitions

Community College: Any institution regionally accredited to award the Associate’s in Arts or the Associates in Science as its highest degree (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Faculty: [community college] Employees typically holding a master’s degree or have equivalent experience in the occupations they teach. Their primary responsibility is to teach (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Faculty Workload: “The hours spent in the classroom each week times the number of students enrolled, occasionally with a nod to committee service” (Cohen & Brawer, 2008, p.91).

Professional Staff (Also referred to as staff): “Employees serving in roles to positively support student development” (Cohen & Brawer, 2008, p. 219).

Identity: “The set of stable ideas a person has about who he or she is; also known as self-concept” (Floyd, 2011, p. 72).

Professional Identity: In this study, the concept of professional identity is principally understood as a tool through which individuals make sense of themselves in relation to contexts and other people (Coldron & Smith, 1999).

Organizational Culture: “The pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 1984, p.3).

Collaboration: Numerous attributes, such as collegiality, respect, and trust, are needed for collaboration to be effective. These attributes contribute to collaborative
activities, such as shared thinking, shared planning, and shared creation of integrated instruction. Two enablers and inhibitors, time and administrative support, are identified from the literature and discussed in relation to collaboration (Montiel-Overall, 2005).

Perception: The “process in which individuals actively process the world around them to assign personal and understood meanings to these experiences” (Muabane & Oudstrohoom, 2011, p. 298).

Conclusion

The success of faculty and professional staff partnerships is demonstrated through increases in student success (University of California, 1999). With each successful initiative, the focus falls on the development of bridges between faculty and professional staff to foster a context that supports willing collaboration. Chapter II will discuss several key foundational aspects to understand the identities of faculty and staff, higher education organizational culture, definition and impact of perception, and the theoretical framework of co-cultural theory.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to examine the faculty perceptions of professional staff, the professional staff perceptions of faculty, and how these perceptions impact the working relationship between them. This chapter includes discussions on four areas key to understanding the historical and theoretical foundations of the research: (1) identity of faculty and staff, (2) organizational culture, (3) perception, and (4) co-cultural theory.

Identity Development within Professional Roles

Research on identity development reaches to a variety of research fields, including education, sociology, psychology, communication, and anthropology. Identities develop on an individual level throughout life experiences and in consideration of personal values. One’s identity frames how the individual views experiences, filters information, and presents himself or herself (Gee, 2001; Lieff et al., 2012).

Personal and professional identities do not necessarily align. Professional identities become associated with the mission and values of the organization. These values may appear in print or spoken (this includes a printed mission statement), but they are most often based upon the perceived values of the organization. Higher education identities, while conscious of the modern environment, often stand strongly grounded in academic traditions. This academic tradition, not only includes the structure of higher education, but also includes the varying fields of study (Harris, 2005). Identity development occurs on an individual level through life experiences and personal values. Those who provide service to postsecondary education will engage in different experiences based upon their role (i.e., faculty, staff, or administration), thus developing different professional identities. The following section will discuss faculty and staff
identities. First, it will provide an examination through the available literature on faculty identity development and how faculty identity varies within the context of community colleges. Second, the discussion will shift to a focus on staff identity development, primarily focusing on the lack of data in this area.

**Faculty Identity Development.**

“[E]litism and power” (p. 424) frame the historical perspective of the academic identity (Harris, 2005). Academic identity ties not only into the dynamics of the institution, but also into the associated discipline, the historical implication of faculty identity (Marchese, 1992). Academic professionals respect key values across the history of academic research. Bowen and Schuster (1986) identified three key values on which faculty from a range of disciplines agreed as core cultural values: pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, autonomy (academic freedom), and collegiality. Faculty value academic freedom in relation to job satisfaction. This autonomy directly relates to the needs of the classroom, specifically course development and classroom management. Faculty autonomy contributes to the learning environment developed by the faculty member for the purpose of the discipline and the individual teacher’s persona (Becher, 1987).

Faculty members actively engage in teaching, advising, research, civic outreach, campus and community leadership, and management roles (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006). Faculty roles differ based on numerous factors, primarily the nature of the higher education institution. For research institutions, faculty engage in more research projects and seek publication opportunities to meet the multifaceted purpose of the institution. Community college faculty, in comparison, focus on teaching, advising, and civic
outreach. The core of the faculty role, on a definitional level, requires faculty members to serve as experts within an academic field. Tierney and Rhoads (1994) concluded that the key aspects of faculty identity tie diverse disciplines together, stating, “[w]hile faculty may be quite diverse across institutional type and discipline, they nonetheless perform many similar tasks, share common values and beliefs, and identify with one another as colleagues” (p. 11). Therefore, while differences may exist among faculty due to discipline or other variables, the experience of serving in the role of faculty creates a connection the group strives to protect (Austin, 1990; Menges & Associates, 1999). This protection requires a level of collegiality - the professional connection between faculty, regardless of discipline.

Bess (1992) stated: “despite some tactic appreciation for collegiality, most working faculty don’t even know what it is” (p. 1). In defining the term collegiality, Menges and associates (1999) referred to two key aspects: (1) maintaining order and structure, and (2) good will among colleagues. While often associated with the level of friendliness, collegiality only indicates a level of equality among peers. In the workplace context of collegial relationships, Menges and associates found that 34% of participants indicated no off-campus friendships with coworkers. The majority only indicated one to three collegial relationships translating into off-campus connections, demonstrating that collegial connections do not equate friendships. Bode (1996) discovered five themes of faculty collegiality: level of involvement, reciprocity of interactions, types of support, sense of community, and formality of interactions. This equality and support demonstrates a need for solidarity between faculty to maintain a culture of order and academic structure (Bess, 1992). These concerns persist throughout research,
particularly when discussing faculty governance in the structure of higher educational institutions (Cohen, Brawer & Associates, 1994; Flanigan, 1994).

Lieff et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative research study to understand the way in which faculty developed their academic identities. Throughout the research, methods of data collection included focus groups, along with collection of reflection journals. Through the data analysis process of thematic coding, the researchers identified three key constructs in which faculty members develop academic identity: personal, relational, and contextual. Personally, faculty develop identity based upon the perception of personal abilities and previous experience. For example, faculty will reflect upon positive outcomes in the classroom to further develop strategies for student learning and engagement. Second, on a relational level, faculty with a strong sense of campus belonging and ability to share and develop ideas strengthened the development of academic identity. Through the final construct, contextually, faculty build an academic identity around the environment of the campus (i.e., culture against change). Campus belonging and support of colleagues increases through the purposeful assignment of offices, which encourages academic dialogue and enhances the overall workplace temperature that impacts job satisfaction.

Chung et al. (2010) examined job satisfaction with instructional faculty compared to clinical faculty. However, both subgroups identified key tenets of shared satisfaction – primarily autonomy. The other factors for job satisfaction were departmental leadership and achievement of career expectations. Additional research supports the concerns of autonomy, furthering knowledge, collegiality, and civic service
The concepts of faculty identity do not cease in research that identifies core values and job satisfaction, but also the modern day tasks of faculty members.

As history provides an understanding of the academic foundations of the faculty identity, current work demands define the role with increasing expectations. In two separate studies, Finkelstein (2001) and Billot (2006) examined the job duties of modern faculty. Finkelstein quantified the average hourly work week for faculty to be 50-60 hours per week. The evolution of the faculty role continues to involve more managerial related tasks and does not appear to be effectively documented in the written job duties (Billot, 2006). Further, the 50-hour work week has persisted throughout the past 25 years of research (Finkelstein, Seal, & Schuster, 1998). The excessive number of hours demanded toward teaching expectations allows little room for additional programming or initiatives. The increased demands on faculty have created a tension among the ranks relative to protecting their historically grounded identity.

In conjunction with job duties, faculty participate in annual reviews for promotion in relation to the appropriate job duties defined by the institution. The review process differs according to institutional policies and purpose. Many faculty note the review process to be more cumbersome and bureaucratic than positive and beneficial (Menges & Associates, 1999). The amount of time utilized to organize and prepare years worth of work for little to no constructive feedback is a ritual often identified as a necessary evil throughout faculty culture to advance one’s career.

In consideration of the frustration and laborious efforts to maneuver the promotion process, faculty see instruction as the primary responsibility of their role. The tension continues to develop, as the purpose of the faculty position faces growing
managerial demands, increasing uncertainty for a once highly-defined role within higher education (Billot, 2006). Faculty identity remains cloaked in historical structure and faculty governance. The development of a faculty member’s identity, while dependent upon the individual, often will demonstrate shared key foundations such as autonomy and value of instruction (Lewis & Altback, 1996). The nature of the institution in which the faculty possesses membership also will impact the development of professional identity. As this research emphasizes community college faculty, the following will examine research particular to community college faculty and identity development.

**Faculty at a Community College**

As discussed, the characteristics of the higher education institution in which a faculty member holds employment impacts the development of a faculty identity. Community college faculty focus primarily on teaching and external service within the community. Faculty do not face restrictions for contributing to academic research, but the faculty member does not necessarily acquire a reward through this practice. Cohen and Brawer (2008) noted: “no one speaks of the community college professor’s research load” (p. 91). Faculty on a community college campus typically teach 15 to 17 credit hours per semester, maintain office hours, and provide other services to the institution in the manner of committee work and academic advising. Most faculty at the community college level possess a master’s degree in their field (or possess equivalent experience for those within the field of technical education). Faculty holding a Ph.D. may face the challenging perception of desiring to engage more in research, which does not align with the focus and purpose of community colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).
While community college faculty rank as some of the most satisfied employees of higher education, stress still invades the working conditions. In examining new faculty working in a community college, the initial stress of the first year of employment resulted from teaching responsibilities. After three years of employment, the stress levels continued to increase for teaching responsibilities and increased significantly in terms of committee work (Menges & Associates, 1999). Faculty members manage expectations to maintain developed courses and engage more actively in campus service, with less time committed to course development due to the increased level of committee work. Faculty often add working hours to their week in order to effectively teach and provide these committee services (Levin, 2012).

Additionally, the student population of a community college involves a higher level of non-traditional students (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). In a singular classroom on a community college campus, one may find high school dual-credit students, traditional students, and non-traditional students within the same course section. While this scenario possibly presents itself on other campuses, it is an outlier; it serves as the norm for community colleges. The student base of community colleges experiences the impacts of increased student demands outside of the classroom, such as workload and/or caring for dependents (Cohen, Brawer, & Associates, 1994; Levin, 2012). The student population also faces large developmental needs. Therefore, the student population often impacts the development of community college faculty identity in connection with the academic achievement of students, finding satisfaction with smaller steps toward academic progress. The nature of the work, the student population, and the mission of
the institution differs from that of a four-year institution, impacting the characteristics of
the organization’s culture, definition, and development of identity roles.

The increased recognition of the value of soft skills on employment needs
impacts the awareness of the necessity of incorporating liberal arts/general education
courses within vocational/technical programs. Within the community college system,
many institutions incorporate technical education programs in the available curriculum
for certificate and degree completion. However, while the formerly separate systems
(community college and vocational education) now reside under the same umbrella, the
values of the faculty differ based upon several factors related to identity. While technical
faculty also value key tenets of academic freedom and collegiality, the level of education
required, needs for student success, and pedagogy for instruction provide a variance in
identity development (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Technical education faculty value the
experiences of lab time versus a lecture hall – the standard of the general education
classroom. The primary variation within general education and technical faculty does
not include the pedagogy or the variance in educational achievement of the instructor
(versus experiential training). The primary impact on identity development for technical
faculty is the direct line between the faculty member and the student to the student’s
future career field. Technical faculty must work diligently with industry representatives
to prepare students for realistic career-ready scenarios and also to connect the graduates
of the technical program to employers (Bekale Nze & Ginestie, 2012).

Staff Identity

In comparison to the plethora of research available on faculty identity, the voice
of the staff perspective appears less frequently, leaving the perspective much quieter.
Researchers within any field of academic research predominantly hold the role of faculty, leaving the staff perspectives naturally limited (Carpenter, 2009). Historically, the development of staff professionals is marked in negative connotations. One of the historical models for staff defines the role as one which serves the institution as a regulator or repressor. The concept of professional staff came into being primarily to assist the institution in regulating student behavior (O’Banion, 1971). This concern for student behavior management extended to the need of maintaining institutional structures. The influx of students attending college expanded the need for admissions, advising, financial aid, judicial affairs, bookstores, and other student support services (Schuh, Jones, Harper, & Associates, 2011).

Staff members within an institution of higher education serve in a variety of departments, from within the worlds of academic and student affairs, maintenance, information technology, and other necessary departments, to develop a functioning educational system. The diversity in professional development and educational attainment of staff impacts development of identities (Ahren, 2008). The primary focus of the current research study limits the scope of staff to those who directly interact with students in means outside of classroom instruction, including areas such as admissions, financial aid, tutoring, and library services.

Research indicates a struggle for student affairs professionals to agree upon the roles and functions of the profession, thus contributing to the challenge of understanding professional staff identity (Schuh et al., 2011). However, with the rise in developing student affairs services, research does can be found relative to the day-to-day activities and values of staff (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1999).
Kuh et al. (1999) identified student affairs staff as a response of higher education institutions to meet the demands of the ever-diversifying student populations (i.e., academic preparation, traditional student versus non-traditional). The role of the student affairs staff, according to the text, is vague: to “deal with students’ out-of-class lives” (p. 170). This includes managing students throughout the “academic, social, emotional and physical difficulty” (p. 170) of higher education and supporting students in addressing these difficulties through “managing responsibility, taking risks, and learning about themselves” (p. 170). In order to accomplish the purpose of the student affairs staff role (regardless of department), the work hours often are non-traditional and typically above the average 40-hour work week. Finally, student affairs staff also strive to encourage students to engage actively in the educational process in order to maximize the academic and social benefits of the college experience.

King (2012) discussed the knowledge of professional staff with a great level of aptitude for student development, appreciation for the student backgrounds, and the impact of the campus culture on student success. The college culture continues to develop, and student affairs staff seek additional pathways to manage partnerships with academic affairs (including faculty). Student affairs staff also may serve the institution in the role of liaison connecting students and faculty, as well as connecting the students to the institution. Student affairs staff encourage students to question campus policies when not in the best interest of the student (Sandeen & Barr, 2006). The need to examine campus policies exists in considering the development of the campus community, which is continually evolving to meet the needs of an ever-changing student population and global community. Staff rarely feel a level of appropriate power to
initiate these changes. Staff members encounter students who have been impacted by archaic policies that provide the primary means of accomplishing change outside of faculty demands, and student pressures to change policy for the best interest of student success.

**Staff at a Community College**

Research on the staff identity, particularly in a community college context, is rare. In fact, a primary text on community colleges provides a detailed understanding of the role, attitudes, and identities of faculty. Conversely, when transitioning to discussions of professional staff within the community college environment, they include a limited and superficial layer of content, including the definitional and economic value of the departments in which staff work, but no discussion on the perspectives of staff in terms of attitudes and identities (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Duggan (2008) examined professional staff within the community college setting. Within the research on gender variations, the researcher identified key tenants about the staff identity on a community college campus. First, of the 342 female staff participants, 50.9% responded to being close friends with faculty. A total of 271 female professional staff responded to the item, “My values match my institutions,” with 65.2% in agreement. The male professional staff differed in their responses to a lesser degree. Of the 114 males responding to the item on friendships with faculty, only 47.8% reported affirmatively. The agreeable responses on matching personal values to those of the institution also were less than female staff; of the 89 male participants, only 52.8% agreed with the statement.
The field of student affairs research offers support for the value of the services provided to the institution. Little exists to provide an understanding of professional staff identity in a comparable manner to the available research on faculty identity. The lack of clear research opens a niche within the realm of enhancing the academic literature, thus allowing for a better understanding of the key role of professional staff in institutions of higher education.

**Faculty and Staff Identities**

Faculty and staff professional identities differ based upon a myriad of factors, from the historical development to institutional expectations. The primary motivator of either group should center on the institution's mission and vision statement. Even when considering the dynamics of the institutions, the cultural and identity variations impact the perception of how to achieve the mission and vision of the institutions. When actively engaged toward achieving the mission of the institution, the core values of the groups change based upon their roles. Within the group membership, one will assimilate with the values, rites, rituals, and behaviors, as illustrated in the mental models (Figure 1). The models provide a clear illustration of the co-cultures at play. While items may overlap throughout the models, key values vary. The variance of values indicates a cultural difference between the two groups, as each perceives values and approaches the institutional mission in a different manner.
Figure 1. Student affairs and faculty mental models of learning (Kuh, Douglas, Lund, & Ramin-Gyumek, 1994, p. 70-7)
Organizational Culture: The Playground of the Professional Relationship

In addition to understanding the historic implications of faculty and staff identity, one also must consider the organizational structure and culture to comprehend the nature of the professional relationship between faculty and staff. Higher education possesses a reputation known for innovation and if not more so, for appealing to the traditions of history -- including identities and roles of faculty and staff. Organizational culture also impacts the development of potential relationships between faculty and staff based upon the structure and support (i.e., policies) of the institution. The following sections seek to provide a general understanding of higher education and organizational culture in terms of (1) defining organizational culture, (2) subgroups within organizational cultures, (3) the impact of communication within organizational culture, and (4) the rites and rituals of culture.

Defining Organizational Culture

The development of institutions of higher education is steeped in history. Throughout the development of each institution, the values, beliefs, and customs of higher education and the culturally-specific details of the institutions become ingrained in day-to-day operations (Kuh et al., 1999). While providing a skeleton of values to uphold, cultures tend to fragment throughout the many subgroups within a campus community. Faculty, staff, students, and administrators will each engage in the campus environment and value systems differently (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). These segments of the campus culture support one another as interdependent groups that rely on the existence of one another to maintain. Fragmented groups within healthy campus cultures will uphold similar core values of the institution (i.e., research v. instruction) (Kuh et al.,
Weak view values due in vastly different ways to lack of buy-in and shared values (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). The impact and development of an organization’s culture reflect the leadership, vision, mission, and direction of all stakeholders. Schein (1992) defined organizational culture as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 12)

Thus, the organizational culture builds throughout the history of the institution as it adapts and critically to evaluate policies, barriers, and successes. Throughout the process of organizational development, the means by which adaptation and problem solving occur transforms the culture of the institution transforms based upon the pattern of accepted behaviors and actions (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). As the values develop throughout the process, an organizational culture is identified through rituals, roles, and artifacts. The cultural tenets then spread to new members to maintain the organization’s culture through communication and/or demonstrations (Schein, 1992).

Cultures experience a set of values, beliefs, and norms (codes), utilize understood rules and patterns of communication and behavior (conversation), and share a common identity and shared experiences (community). As organizations grow with new members, the rules of behavior transfer through proactive communication from experienced members and also through the personal experiences of the new member (Martin & Siehl, 1983). Strong cultures experience increased strength in supporting the
institution’s mission, contributing up to an additional 10 hours of production. In comparison, weak cultures with little communication and understanding of the culture’s organization leave stakeholders spending valuable time researching the rules and expectations of the organization, especially in the decision-making process, rather than focusing on productive contributions to the organization (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). This demonstrates the need for subgroups to support the institution’s mission, if for nothing more than increased productivity.

**Subcultures**

Throughout the development of cultures, subcultures emerge. Subcultures, by nature of the definition, include cultures within a culture. For example, each college campus relies on a culture of the institution to function. Though at a deeper level, groups of individuals who interact, experience, and communicate regularly begin to demonstrate a common orientation toward a goal or ideal. The subcultures may possess similar values as the primary culture; nevertheless, they will vary on attitudes and beliefs based upon the subgroups’ perceptions and experiences (Broom & Selznick, 1973; Lin & Hal, 2009).

Institutions will struggle to initiate change when they fail to understand specific values of a culture’s subgroups. Change within any organization requires an understanding of the culture in which the transformation will occur. Processing the alterations needed for the current educational climate requires critical analysis of the dynamics at play, including the process and those involved (Bell, 2010). Within institutions of higher education, a key concern of a campus-wide transformation includes the necessity of faculty buy-in (Cohen, Brawer, & Associates, 1994). Organizations
facing change strive to identify the best means to incorporate faculty support, in order to move the initiative forward. Faculty membership may impact the overall success of the initiative, which does not eliminate the potential impact of staff, administration, and students (Gano-Phillips & Barnett, 2008).

**Communication in Organizations**

Throughout any process within higher education, effective communication is pertinent to ensuring the completion of tasks and the quality of the outcomes. Committee roles that place faculty and staff in problem-solving or task-oriented dynamics require a level of expected communication. Within some institutions, the level of ineffective communication damages, not only the ability to complete the desired objective, but also negatively impacts the relationships (Gano-Phillips & Barnett, 2008). Consequently, examination of positive examples of effective communication between faculty and staff can influence the greater development of the institution. Through communication, Colby-Sawyer College recognized “richer” dialogue across campus and provided “greater ownership of the college’s learning outcomes” (p. 28) from both parties (Davis, Hanson, & Muyskens, 2008). Discussions between faculty and advisors led to a more engaging and accepted liberal arts general education curriculum that gained support from faculty and staff.

In discussing the primary need of effective communication in developing and fostering cross-unit relationships, the methods and means of communication must undergo assessment. The messages must travel through a variety of channels (i.e. email, conference, newsletters, etc.) with clear, audience appropriate language. Within higher education, jargon muffles the messages from within the system to outside constituents.
The misinterpretation of language can exist between campus units (Davis et al., 2008). Not only does higher education drown in jargon, but the timelines for communication are strained due to the differing contracts of faculty and staff members. Faculty members who entertain a 10-month contract often become disconnected from the communication flow (Mitchell, 2004).

Kuh et al. (1999) discussed good communities as encompassing several key aspects, one being communication. The communities that strive to develop strong communication, typically through face-to-face interactions, share information efficiently and support foundational cultural values. A culture cannot exhibit cohesion and support a shared culture (another key aspect of a “good” community) without well-defined opportunities to communicate, exchanging ideas and expressing values, and fellowship through shared identity.

**Rites and Rituals**

Rites and rituals play vital roles within an organization’s culture; both serve as symbolic actions to allow organizations to grow, develop, and secure cultural rules and expectations. Rituals within organizations can include simple processes of how to engage in the day-to-day aspects of the job requirements, such as the methods of preparing a college course and developing the class policies, academic expectations, and assignments. During the initial stages of becoming a faculty member, mentors guide the new faculty through the process of course development and implementation of policy. The lack of mentorships can negatively impact the new member’s development into the institution’s culture. Rituals communicate campus values, maintain agreed upon patterns of behavior, and demonstrate a level of satisfaction with the organizational culture (Kuh
& Whitt, 1988). Another means of organizational rituals includes celebrations to recognize achievements of stakeholders, which involves not only the celebrations of employees, but also commencement ceremonies steeped in historical tradition. An example of cultural rites includes social events primarily geared toward an audience (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The rites and rituals, all significant, speak to the nature of the organization’s culture. The level to which an organization structures and strives to improve rituals for the purpose of an improved organizational culture impacts the success of the institution (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). Higher education institutions encounter varieties of stereotypical cultural expectations. From party central to academic “nerdom,” the culture of higher education institutions has changed throughout popular media. Kezar, Gallant, and Lester (2011) discuss the cultural expectations that continue beyond the media spotlight, but also with faculty expectations: “[f]aculty and staff are drawn to campus employment because they believe the academy provides opportunities to debate interesting ideas” (p. 139). The information available on staff identity contradicts the concept of freely debating ideas, while faculty would supports the claim.

In order to understand the dynamics of the co-cultures of faculty and staff, it is imperative to comprehend the concepts of organizational culture, change, communication, and rituals of organizations, specifically within the realm of higher education.

**Organizational Culture and Higher Education**

In order to demonstrate the impact of the organizational culture on the policies pertaining to faculty and staff, the following research should be considered. Consistent with other known variances among higher education institutions, policies differ based
upon the institution’s purpose, mission, and vision (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). Policies will continue to differ based upon specific institutions and departments. At large, within the culture of higher education institutions, the dominant group identifies as faculty members through the academic governance of the institution (Cohen, Brawer, & Associates, 1996). Faculty possess a right to vote in faculty senate, to control curriculum, to require extensive persuasion to build faculty buy-in, to serve on hiring committees, and to be involved in any decisions that may impact faculty life (i.e. changing the withdrawal policy or academic calendar) (Carpenter, 2009). Academic research is plentiful on the power and focus on faculty within campus policies and structure reaches academic research, limiting the amount of research from or on the staff perspective.

Menges and associates (1999) described an analysis of organizational policies that spread across the faculty spectrum throughout a variety of campus structures. These policies include hiring, evaluation, award, tenure, merit pay, and development. Each policy can demonstrate a level of cultural values of the institution. For example, community colleges focus on instruction that typically requires potential faculty to present a teaching demonstration as part of the interview process. The hiring policy for research-focused institutions may replace the teaching demonstration with a presentation on an applicant's research goals and/or previous work (Jones & Froom, 1994). The promotion process identifies key areas for continued success throughout the institution's hierarchy. The promotion process clearly allows faculty to proceed upward within the academic organization is evident throughout research and organizational policies. At the community college level, Menges and associates discussed the policies to involve
“faculty receiv[ing] feedback every semester through student evaluation forms and every year through discussions with peers” (p. 280). These discussions of evaluation provide fodder for the promotion documentation, thus guiding faculty through the process. Regardless of the nature of the institution, the policies clearly detail the steps for promotion of faculty.

Staff advancement varies based upon institutional policies as well. The path to promotion, in contrast to the faculty, becomes increasingly more complex. Staff positions do not include a clear process for promotion. Rather, staff members must seek promotion through open positions, for which they compete with outside candidates. These open positions provide a step up the organizational ladder. Their availability occurs with the creation of a new position, but most frequently after the firing, retirement, or stepping down of another colleague – at times staff may feel the promotion process fosters a system of favoritism rather than an objective system (Menges & Associates, 1999).

The organization’s culture, through values, beliefs, rites, and rituals, impacts the structure of higher education. Historically, identities of elite faculty and academic governance provided the foundation for higher education organizational culture (Austin, 1990; Harris, 2005). Due to the nature of organizational culture, an institution’s mission can alter the environment of the campus. Thus, the following section will examine more closely the community college organizational culture.

**Community College Organizational Culture**

Community colleges, by definition, serve a broad and ever-changing pathway to meet the needs of the communities inhabited by these institutions (Cohen & Brawer,
The current research highlights community colleges, in which the context of the culture is vital to developing a foundation for interpreting the factors that impact the faculty and staff professional relationship. Community colleges thrive off the employment needs of the community, demanding collaboration and change. Within these changes, a constant culture emerges to maintain the processes, procedures, values, beliefs, and other cultural cues. Levin (1997) detailed four dominant cultures of a community college: traditional service, hierarchical, and business. These four cultures may coexist within one campus; however, one will provide a dominant force for guiding the campus behavior.

Traditional culture focuses on the historical role of an institution of higher education, to share intellectual knowledge through educational opportunities. For community colleges, the focus extends to preparing students for the workforce or initiating students toward transferring to a four-year institution. Traditional cultures prosper in academic governance and value the hierarchy of the staff, faculty, and administration in accordance with the historical foundations of faculty governance. However, the traditional culture often can sway into the realm of political control that is not focused on academics or student success.

The service culture concentrates on the institution’s mission and vision for the individuals it serves -- students. Service cultures, first and foremost, identify the key needs of students. Thus, with a holistic view of student needs, the service culture includes a large population of student affairs staff. The service culture views education as more than the dissemination of knowledge, with the potential to break poverty cycles or enhance the overall quality of life.
The hierarchical perspective frames community colleges as opportunities for second chances or open doors to those who otherwise could not afford the opportunity. The educational process allows for transformation through flexible course access, modalities, providing programs to quickly meet community needs, and heavy emphasis on learner needs.

Finally, the business culture typically builds out of economic survival to balance human resources and financial limitations. Throughout the development of survival strategies, many community colleges have been inundated with corporate collegial concepts for management, administration, partnerships, and development strategies. Due to the community colleges’ need to quickly adapt to the demands of the community workforce, the logistics and strategies of closing and opening programs to meet these needs build into the business culture of the institution.

Berquist and Pawlak (2008) identified six cultural frameworks for understanding a college environment: collegial, managerial, developmental, advocacy, virtual, and tangible. While campuses may include multiples or all of the frameworks, campuses tend to identify more with one than another. The managerial culture most frequently relates to the community college campus in terms of the purpose and mission of the institution. A managerial culture centers on efficiency and effectiveness and includes a large focus on available financial and human resources. While seemingly disconnected from the needs of students, the purpose of the managerial culture is effective at meeting the dynamic and quickly changing needs of the community workforce, ultimately offering students a pathway to educational attainment and career access.
Functions of a community college vary, to include a potpourri of expectations. Due to the comprehensive structure of modern community colleges, these institutions of higher education provide direct support for the communities they serve. As job market needs change, community colleges face the call to provide academic support and training to meet new workforce demands. Community colleges, not only prepare students for vocational (entry-level, technical career) education, but offer students well-defined academic transfer programs for continuing education at a four-year institution (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Finally, community colleges support continuing education, adult education, developmental education, and community outreach. As a result of the numerous functions of the community college, the student populations mirror the diversity of services and functions. The diverse structure of the community college population varies, it is based upon the percentage of non-traditional students versus that of a traditional four-year institution.

The structure of a community college also varies based upon the governmental structure that supports the institution. Two-year colleges obtain support through statewide systems (such as Kentucky Community and Technical College System, Florida Community College System, Ivy Tech Community College [Indiana]) or backed through a partner university (Florida Community College System, 2014; Ivy Tech Community College, 2014; Kentucky Community & Technical System, 2014). The inner structure of the community college builds upon the academic departments of the institution, such as math, science, humanities, or allied health.

Subsequently, through the development of departmental focus, faculty often become associated with a significant level of governing power. This power is recognized
by administrators to the degree of strategic control through placing faculty from separate departments in office suites to dilute the congregate power of departmental coup (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). In addition to the power of faculty, student support services note the importance of connecting faculty to potential projects, in order for the initiative to be successful (Dassance, 1994). According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), faculty governance involves “governance of higher education institutions traditionally has been a shared responsibility by faculty, administrators, and trustees” (n.p). The definition excludes staff from the decision-making process which the AAUP details as the importance of faculty involvement in personnel (including administrators), budgets, and policies (American Association of University Professors, 2014). The National Education Association (NEA) briefly addressed staff within the governance process yet, it identifies the primary parties involved in community college governance as faculty and administration. The NEA continued the explanation of governance in detail for the faculty role in the decision-making process, justifying the process with increased faculty morale (NEA, 2014). Further, the community college context faces the impact of decisions from state agencies and commissions. The implementation and/or reaction to the suggestions of the agencies and commissions must undergo appropriate discussions with campus faculty (NEA, 2014).

McCormick and Meiners (1989) examined the role of faculty decision making on the performance of the institution and found as the faculty participation increased, the level of institutional performance decreased. To further the development of the research, Brown (1999) examined the impact of faculty participation on university performance. Brown separated the decision that faculty possessed a voice. When faculty participate in
decisions of an academic nature, such as promotions, research standards, and curriculum, the performance of the institution increased. When participating in decisions in the realm of administration (such as budgets), the performance of the institution decreased. The research lacks the longevity to command a cause and effect outcome, but the findings do allow for a pause in the implementation of faculty governance.

Shared governance involves two conflicting definitions. In older literature, shared governance refers to the shared power of decision making between faculty and administration. As conditions change in higher education, shared governance expands to include campus staff in the decision-making process. The existence of conflicting definitions creates conflict within the governance structure at institutions of higher education relative to practicing shared governance. Staff who wish to contribute to the decision-making process, aware of shared governance in more modern terms, face frustrations in contexts that abide by the traditional ideology of the term (Brown, 2000).

The purpose of the current research project is to understand the perceptions of faculty toward professional staff, professional staff toward faculty, and how this may impact their professional relationship. Previous sections developed a foundation to understand the identities of faculty and staff, as well as a grasp of the organizational culture of the community college institutions. The next section will examine the concept of perception, along with the already existing knowledge on how these perceptions ignited a silent clash of values within higher education.
Perception

Perception is defined as a “process in which individuals actively process the world around them to assign personal and understood meanings to these experiences” (Muabane & Oudstrooom, 2011, p. 298). Perception develops through active communication, as well as predictive assumptions as to the way in which one may act or communicate. Through the development of perceptions and the basis of cultural values and personal beliefs, individuals and groups may assimilate with those culturally founded perceptions. Individuals can deviate from these culturally developed perceptions and vary from the dominant cultural group. Human behavior is innately individual due to the unique experiences, situations, values, personalities, and emotional values through which people attribute and frame the world. The process of developing perceptions extends through three phases. The first is sensory stimulation. When encountered by a member of a co-culture, the individual will connect the current encounter to one of the past and may or may not influence the present interaction. The second phase of the perception process organizes the stimulus and reaction in terms that make sense to the individual. The final step requires individuals to interpret the stimulus from beginning to end and potentially expressing (verbally or nonverbally) relative to the stimuli. Additional factors can influence the development of perceptions. Habits and history form a foundation for the way in which interactions and stimuli should be perceived. The motivation to attend to perception development or changing perception can be low. When motivation within an individual ranks high, those who value partnerships will seek out faculty and staff partnership opportunities, unlike those with
low motivation. Finally, specializations in organizations can instantaneously associate stimuli with individuals, predisposing them to particular perceptions (Otara, 2011).

Perceptions expand into numerous areas of research interests. Perception impacts one’s view of the world, while the culture and experiences shape the perceptions. Even the necessary skill of communication becomes impacted by perception (Williams & Garret, 2012). Perception research within the realm of higher education historically focused on gender and race. For example, perceptions of women in the workplace who were labeled as gossips were then identified as women who needed to maintain control of power (Farley, Timme, & Hart, 2010). However, with the limited views of perception, the research provides data to support a different experience of higher education for these groups and co-cultures (Ponjuan, Conley, & Trower, 2011).

In examining the many facets of higher education, researchers tested the perceptions of faculty and staff toward specific areas. For example, when considering the perceptions of disability workplace issues, Shigaki, Anderson, Howard, Henson, and Gregg (2012) found a shared understanding between faculty and staff on key areas of disability awareness and policies. Nevertheless, while perceptions can be similar between faculty and staff, often due to differing viewpoints, perceptions differ. According to per Mitchell’s (2004) self-reported case study, role confusion led to a complication of human resources documentation and work status. As an HR director indicated in e-mail correspondence, the faculty member continued “teaching.” The director failed to acknowledge the additional work the faculty member contributed to the campus community through administrative duties, community and campus outreach, and research. An analysis of the rhetoric also could provide an example of misunderstanding.
the staff member’s purpose in presenting the information as fragmented or a failure to understand the dynamic importance of the holistic view of the faculty position.

**The Clash of Power and Values**

While the need for student support services is clearly documented throughout research, Schuh et al. (2011) found faculty questioning the contribution of professional staff to the success of the campus. However, research provides data to support successful faculty and staff partnerships, despite these conflicting identities and values. In contrast to Schuh et al. (2011), Kuh et al., 1999) reported that, while faculty quickly boast about strong student affairs staff, the same faculty members know little as to how the department/s function or the exact impact of the accomplishments of the student affairs staff. Therefore, with the praise (and accompanied misunderstanding), the lines dividing faculty and staff become continually grayer. Roles, such as curriculum development, are assigned to staff members who may have no classroom experience (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006). The instructional purpose of the job under the guidance of a staff member clouds the division of duties that were once clearly articulated through the power structure of post-secondary education.

As referenced in Magolda and Magolda (2012), the clash between faculty and staff extends through historical and philosophical perspectives. Robert Hutchins and John Dewey provided insight into the dichotomous perspectives of the role of higher education. Hutchins focused the higher educational experience on the intellect and academic development of students. Dewey, in contrast, described the higher education experience as a holistic learning experience (Magolda & Magolda).
Faculty and staff demonstrated a concern for “civility” (p. 7) among relationships between faculty and staff through the report provided by the University of California (University of California, 1999). Schein (1992) discussed internal integration of cultures in terms of defining the boundaries of the group to include the “in and out” groups based upon an agreed criteria list. The integration process also includes the distribution of power, reward and punishment, and ideology. These concepts already negatively impact the continuation of the faculty and staff groups that deter positive solutions and campus improvements. Interpersonal conflict also implicates an additional barrier to addressing the faculty and staff clash of civility. Spratlen (1995) addressed conflict in a university setting and found that 38% of professional staff reported mistreatment, while only 11% of faculty reported mistreatment. Faculty also reported a proportionally less amount of verbal harassment than professional staff. Professional staff identified graduate students “who had previously observed their major professor mistreat the staff person” (n.p.) as a frequent offender of verbal harassment. In a case study on power and misunderstanding of job duties, Mitchell (2004) detailed a concern of “over-bureaucratization that has become so much a part of academia [that it] serves to undercut a culture of collegiality” (p. 8). Through a perfect storm of bureaucratic policies, power, control, and academia, the faculty member battled through a cycle of stress and unnecessary (and unwritten) steps to regain employment status. Additionally, it is likely to see a clash brewing when researchers identify potential pitfalls of research to indicate staff’s general intellectual inability to complete a questionnaire versus any consideration of the validity of the survey tool (Thomas, 2004).
Love, Kuh, MacKay, and Hardy (1993) identified key foundational dichotomies between faculty and staff. Many faculty members enter the higher education workforce for the highly prized trait of autonomy, a historically well-documented characteristic of the faculty title. Student affairs professionals value collaboration. As faculty enter the workforce and seek autonomy, student affairs employees enter the workforce seeking cooperative endeavors for student success. The contrast alone provides a significant foundation for clash between the two groups, with each ultimately striving for student success. Consequently, with the varying views of the purpose of the institution, the definition of student success would differ between the two groups: knowledge versus development (Ahren, 2008). These dichotomies support the roadblocks of internal integration, as faculty and staff continue to persist with the archaic boundaries of groups, governance policies substantiating faculty power over staff, and the reward system favoring faculty success and career advancement (Schein, 1992). Additionally, while student success is an understood mission of higher education institutions, the groups perceive the means to address student success differently separated by the ideologies of student success.

Elementary changes toward campus cohesion can easily be dissuaded due to the attitudes of each group. Faculty, valuing autonomy, work independently and with little oversight, while staff tend to encourage more group collaboration (Ahren, 2008). Regardless of the independent values, the groups function in interdependent relationships to provide students with an effective and successful route through the educational process. From the initial decision of applying to a college throughout the
academic process and to graduation, students work with and rely on faculty and staff to maneuver successfully (Schein, 1992).

Higher education breathes life into the language within itself. The myriad of acronyms and campus-specific policies requires faculty and staff to share information with other institutions for translation. The jargon-heavy culture does not allow for effective communication with outsiders to higher education, or even within the institution. On the contrary, the shared language, albeit complex, does not limit itself to damaging those relationships; it also impacts the effectiveness of the communication between faculty and staff. When finding common ground, within or outside of higher education, faculty and staff can begin to work towards shared initiatives and values through a common language (Schein, 1992). Open campus groups (i.e., reading groups, grassroots issues, open forums, etc.) allow for students, staff, and faculty to interact intellectually (Kezar et al., 2011). Rather, when transitioning to the concern of collaborating through job responsibilities, the stresses and barriers increase and require more time, thought, and guidance for a successful partnership (Price, 2008).

The University of California published a report on the “Task Force on Faculty/Staff Partnership” in 1999. The intercollegiate group worked to identify positive working relationships between faculty and staff by highlighting best practices of collaboration, providing direct paths to solving conflicts between the two groups, increasing communication between faculty and staff, fostering an appreciation of the differences of the roles, educating one another on the purpose of particular departments and positions, and addressing campus policies that may negatively impact the faculty and staff relationship. With an increased level of concern for the upcoming budget
restraints and more responsibilities mounting with the same (or lesser) employee base, the administration recognized a need for partnerships to develop between the two employee groups, also acknowledging a need to identify clear paths of communication and conflict management for the success of this transition to partnership (University of California, 1999). As the program developed, a 2004 follow-up report identified continuing efforts to commend a well-developed faculty and staff partnership, including award programs; employee retention committees; shared campus responsibilities (i.e., voting rights for budgetary concerns); mentorships; and increased access to committee work for staff. Throughout the focus, little research for best practices developed outside of the institution. The initiative allowed for more partnerships to develop across campus, with an increased level of participation to provide services and problem-solving efforts for the participating campuses (Task Force Report, 2004).

Higher education institutions develop organizational structures that separate student affairs (staff) and academic affairs (faculty). Consequently, do to the separation, the two groups develop differing views of the student affairs process. Cross (1996) described the change metaphorically through lenses, stating that student affairs staff viewed the student population through bifocal glasses. The bifocals allow the staff to see, not only the individual student, but also the student population at large. For faculty, Cross described the experience as tunnel vision, focusing on the individual course sessions and excluding what faculty would include as “auxiliary information,” such as additional course work, daily responsibilities, social pressures, etc. (p. 5). Alternatively, much emphasis is placed within the community college system upon recognizing the impact of work and familial demands on student success. Faculty and student services
each provide roles that could greatly benefit one another through well-developed partnerships (Price, 2008).

The organizational structure of an institution disintegrates potentially successful collaborations. The symbolic separation of the two groups (faculty and staff) on the organizational chart communicates a need for separation in day-to-day operations. These structural barriers are not limited to the cultural perception of separation, but also are limited to departmental artifacts such as departmental branding. Additionally, the clear dissection of human resources also leads to concern for accepting potential failure or success (Schroeder, Minor, & Tarkow, 1999). Faculty and staff partnerships must manipulate a system of misaligned expectations: working hours, hierarchy of supervisors, and job duties for successful collaboration (Ahren, 2011).

Merging academic affairs units (faculty) with student affairs units (staff) provides an opportunity for significant cultural transformation within an institution. The cross-unit fusion can enhance the learning experience for students. Developing such a fusion requires extensive planning to be successful in current organizational culture climates. According to Price (2008), two key factors indicate the success of a merger. First, all members must willingly detach from the historically defined roles of the faculty and professional staff. Second, each group must willingly accept new personal views on the process and purpose of the institution that develop throughout the process. Included in the willingness to accept the newly emerging roles, administration also must follow suit to support the merger of these two cultures. Administrators must willingly seek to support collaborative decisions, even with a level of risk, to further develop the new cultural dynamic of the cultural groups (Schroeder et al., 1999). Researchers provide
further understanding within both the student and academic affairs dichotomies, as multitudes of reports suggest the blatant positive impact for student learning outcomes when the co-cultures of faculty and staff work in partnership to engage students in a holistic learning experience (Magolda & Magolda, 2012).

Partnerships between faculty and staff possess the capability of success when attempted by institutions of higher education. Due to the complex nature of organizational structure in higher education institutions and the historical backgrounds supporting current cultural norms, the partnership efforts are thwarted by misaligned group values and communication strategies (Schuh & Whitt, 1999). Successful partnerships demonstrate the ability of the groups to work together and provide innovative outcomes. The efforts often are overlooked by the procedural success of cultural overcoming.

As mentioned previously, research on faculty identity and perceptions dominant academic publications. The dominance of research also is found in the organizational structure that supports faculty governance in the face of research, showing the successful impact of shared efforts (Harris, 2005). Co-cultural theory developed by Mark Orbe (1998) examined the communication behaviors between dominant and co-cultural groups. The final section of this chapter transitions from previous literature to the theoretical framework.

**Conceptual Framework: Co-cultural Theory**

The following section includes the identification of the tenets of the theoretical framework of co-cultural theory through four key areas. Co-cultural theory is built upon the foundations of muted group and standpoint theories. Therefore, the first area for
discussion will seek to develop an understanding of these foundational theories. The second and final area will discuss the core components of co-cultural theory.

**Foundational Theory: Standpoint Theory**

Typically associated with feminist research, standpoint theory developed from the work of the German philosopher Hegel (Miller, 2005). Hegel utilized the example of the master and the slave to demonstrate the impact of perception. While these two individuals experience the same time and spatial context, they possess different views of the world around them based upon experiences within the assigned role (Griffin, 2009). Karl Marx later utilized the core concept of role experiences to analyze the class system (Miller, 2005). As feminist scholars recognized the development of Marxist theory, the concept was adapted to consider gender differences. However, feminist scholars believed that the Marxist theory failed to change the position of women within the class system, as altered by Hartsock (1997):

> Despite the fact that he recognized that the situation of women was less than satisfactory, that bourgeois marriage was a form of prostitution, that widows were part of the lowest layer of the reserve army of the unemployed, he lost track of women’s labor in reproducing the working class. And so at the heart of his theory – the theory of how surplus value is produced and extracted – women are not present. (p. 99)

Seeing a gap in the development of understanding the impact of one’s role in society, standpoint theory was created. The creation of the theory sought to provide a means to interpret the role of women in contributing to society and to identify the differences in world view between gender groups (Wood, 1993).
The theory initially received criticism due to the concern that the theory would ultimately lead to an epidemic of stereotyping all women in the same manner based upon their gender. However, many seek the theory as an epistemological position. Hirschmann (2004) argued that the experience shapes the outcome of one’s world view; with endless combinations of experiences, standpoint theory only seeks to identify the value in those experiences and how those experiences shape one’s perspective. Orbe (1998) noted that members of the same group also may possess different standpoints based upon the complexity of life experiences. For example, gender would separate a population into two groups. The delineation could further extend to age groups, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or a myriad of other potential factors.

**Foundational Theory: Muted Group Theory**

Anthropologists strive to understand different cultures through the process of ethnographic research. However, Shirley and Edwin Ardener identified an overwhelming number of male voices being included in the research analysis, and little representation from minority groups such as women and children (Ardener, E. 1975; Ardener, S. 1978). Therefore, as cultures are described through academic findings to understand an entire culture, the information only represented one subgroup of the culture, adult males. The research included a gap, missing the data from the muted group. The developers of muted group theory posited two causes for this occurrence. First, researchers in the field were primarily white males, who were accustomed to speaking with other adult males. E. Ardener (1975) stated, “If the men appear ‘articulate’ compared with the women, it is a case of like speaking” (p. 2). Second, S. Ardener (1978) suggested that the women of the cultures do speak. The words
“continually fall upon deaf ears” (p. 20) which may equate to silence. Through the unbalanced development of research from one perspective and the lack of listening to the perspectives of the subgroups (or co-cultures), muted group theory describes a cycle of being unaware to perspectives, while also contributing to the silence of a group (Miller, 2005).

Kramarae (1978, 1981) further developed muted group theory to expand the feminist theoretical perspective. Kramarae (1981) provided three assumptions that are key to the feminist understanding of muted group theory. First, due to the differing experiences of women and men, their perspectives also will vary. Second, as men hold the role of the dominant gender within most societal groups, this view often will be described more favorably as the preferred system. Finally, to function in society, women must meet the expectations of the male world view (Griffin, 2009; Miller, 2005).

However, throughout the understanding of muted groups, one must recognize the ability to move out of a muted group. The position in a muted group can be accepted, reinforced by the interactions with others, or challenged (Orbe, 1998).

Co-cultural Theory

Mark Orbe (1996), a communication theorist, examined the concepts detailed in standpoint and muted group theories and began to consider that these similar implications to other groups were overshadowed by the dominant group. Initially, Orbe examined the literature available on African American communication patterns, identifying a lack of available research. Orbe encapsulated the value of standpoint and muted group theory for providing a theoretical framework applicable to African
Americans “as another oppressed group” (p. 68) comparative to women (Orbe, 1996). Later, Orbe (1998) expanded the research to other co-cultural groups.

Co-cultural theory provides a framework for understanding communication between co-cultures. The model provides 9 different communication orientations and 26 communication practices. The orientations are identified by comparing one’s communication approach and the preferred outcome of the individual. The practices, also referred to as tactics, are used to approach a co-cultural situation based upon one’s orientation. Finally, Orbe (1998) identified four additional factors that impact the process of adapting orientations.

One’s co-cultural communication orientation includes the consideration of two factors: preferred outcome and communication approach. When considering one’s preferred outcome, the individual takes into consideration the short- and long-term impacts of the communication event. Preferred outcomes fall within three categories: assimilation, accommodation, and separation. When an individual seeks the outcome of assimilation, the goal becomes to eradicate differences between the co-cultures, even if this results in the loss of personal identity. In Orbe’s (1996) research on African American culture, one individual commented:

I think for some of us there is a specific tendency to turn our radios down [when playing music associated with African American culture], take up golf, and other things like that to say that “Oh, ok, I fit in. I’m like one of you guys now.” (p. 165)

The second potential preferred outcome of accommodation seeks to utilize the benefits of available multifaceted strengths from co-cultures (Orbe, 1998). However, in
the process of blending the available strengths, differences often are stifled. Those
guided toward an accommodation outcome work with other accommodation outcome
oriented co-cultures or dominant group members to impact the organization’s culture.
The goal of this effort is to provide a culturally rich environment that is comfortable for
dominant and co-cultural groups. The final alternative is separation. Those who value
separation seek to “create and maintain separate group identities outside or within
dominant structures” (Orbe, 1998, p. 245). Separation may be selected through concern
for the identity of the co-cultural group. In some circumstances, the reality of the
situation leads one to realize the futility of trying to assimilate or accommodate.

The second factor to identify one’s communication orientation relies on one’s
communication approach. In terms of communication on a co-cultural level, the
approaches include nonassertive, assertive, or aggressive behaviors. Nonassertive
behaviors typically include nonconfrontational efforts. The behavior should not be
confused with weakness. In certain situations, the use of nonconfrontational efforts is
strategic. Assertive communication behaviors utilize the knowledge of one’s needs in
comparison to others’ needs. Aggressive behaviors include confrontation, attacks, or
self-promotion. However, regardless of one’s chosen communication approach, the
dominant or co-cultural group may perceive the behavior differently. An assertive act
from either the dominant or co-cultural group may mistakenly be perceived as
aggressive (Orbe, 1998).

Through the understanding of preferred outcomes and communication
approaches, Orbe (1998) developed nine general orientations and tactics utilized for
these orientations. A list of the 9 orientations and 26 associated tactics are provided in Table 1.

Four primary factors are identified as impacting that the orientation is utilized: perceived costs and rewards, field of experience, abilities, and situational context. Each analyzes these factors differently. The following examines the four factors that impact the decision-making process in selecting a communication orientation.

First, when individuals consider the perceived costs and rewards of an interaction, risks exist for direct and indirect consequences. In a communication event between two co-cultural groups, positive outcomes could include more effective decision making, social networking, clarity of one’s role, and career advancement (Orbe, 1998). Just as one may benefit from a positive outcome, issues may arise. For example, co-cultural groups communicating with the dominant group may feel suppressed, feel the interactions are only surface-level, or experience levels of stress or social isolation.

Second, field of experience takes into consideration the “sum of life experience” (Orbe, 1998, p. 263). In approaching various situations, one will rely on previous experience to guide future selection of communication orientations. The experience does not need to come from within the same organizational culture; rather, the experience can come from past experiences from within or outside the dominant culture. The consequences (positive and problematic) impact the future behaviors based upon the previously experienced outcomes.

The third factor of abilities refers to one’s capability to use the various co-cultural communication tactics. An individual may recognize that the situation requires a certain tactic to be most successful. Based upon one’s known ability, this may not be
plausible. The delineation between the known appropriate response and one’s level of abilities to adapt may impact the communication event. For example, in approaching a conflict situation, an individual may avoid the situation versus assertively resolving the issue. Varying personalities may face a reverse scenario -- those who tend to utilize aggressive tactics may find nonassertive tactics to be a challenge.

Finally, the situational context provides a broad term to describe a complex list of variables. The situational context includes the variety of factors impacting organizational environments, such as organizational politics, management styles, climate, and norms (Orbe, 1998). These factors have a significant impact on one’s decision toward a communication orientation.
Table 1

*Orientations and Tactics/Practices of the Co-Cultural Theory communication model (Orbe, 1998)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonassertive assimilation</td>
<td>Emphasizing commonalities</td>
<td>Focusing on human similarities, while downplaying or ignoring co-cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing positive face</td>
<td>Assuming a gracious communicator stance, in which one is more considerate, polite, and attentive to dominant group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Censoring self</td>
<td>Remaining silent when comments from dominant group members are inappropriate, indirectly insulting, or highly offensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Averting controversy</td>
<td>Averting communication away from controversial or potentially dangerous subject areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive assimilation</td>
<td>Extensive preparation</td>
<td>Engaging in an extensive amount of detailed (mental/concrete) ground work prior to interactions with dominant group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overcompensating</td>
<td>Conscious attempts -- consistently enacted in response to a pervasive fear of discrimination to become a superstar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manipulating stereotypes</td>
<td>Conforming to commonly accepted beliefs about group members as a strategic means to exploit them for personal gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>Striking a covert or overt arrangement with dominant group members in which both parties agree to ignore co-cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive assimilation</td>
<td>Dissociating</td>
<td>Making a concerted effort to elude any connection with behaviors typically associated with one’s co-cultural group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table 1 Continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mirroring</td>
<td>Adopting dominant group codes in an attempt to make one’s co-cultural identity more (or totally) invisible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic distancing</td>
<td>Avoiding any association with other co-cultural group members in attempts to be perceived as a distinct individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridiculing self</td>
<td>Invoking or participating in discourse, either passively or actively, which is demeaning to co-cultural group members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonassertive accommodation</td>
<td>Increasing visibility</td>
<td>Covertly yet strategically maintaining a co-cultural presence within dominant structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dispelling stereotypes</td>
<td>Myths of generalized group characteristics and behaviors are countered through the process of just being one’s self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive accommodation</td>
<td>Communicating self</td>
<td>Interacting with dominant group members in an authentic, open, and genuine manner; used by those with strong self-concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intragroup networking</td>
<td>Identifying and working with other co-cultural group members who share common philosophies, convictions, and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using liaisons</td>
<td>Identifying specific dominant group members who can be trusted for support, guidance, and assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educating others</td>
<td>Taking the role of teacher in co-cultural interactions; enlightening dominant group members of co-cultural norms, values, and so forth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive accommodation</td>
<td>Confronting</td>
<td>Using the necessary aggressive methods, including ones that seemingly violate the rights of others, to assert one’s voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table 1 Continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gaining advantage</td>
<td>Inserting references to co-cultural oppression as a means to provoke dominant group relations and gain advantage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonassertive</td>
<td>Avoiding</td>
<td>Maintaining a distance from dominant group members; refraining from activities and/or locations where interaction is likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separation</td>
<td>Maintaining barriers</td>
<td>Imposing, through the use of verbal and nonverbal cues, a psychological distance from dominant group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive separation</td>
<td>Exemplifying strength</td>
<td>Promoting the recognition of co-cultural group strengths, past accomplishments, and contributions to society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Embracing stereotypes</td>
<td>Applying a negotiated reading to dominant group perceptions and merging them into a positive co-cultural self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive separation</td>
<td>Attacking</td>
<td>Inflicting psychological pain through personal attacks on dominant group members’ self-concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabotaging others</td>
<td>Undermining the ability of dominant group members to take full advantage of their privilege inherent in dominant structures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Co-cultural theory examines the interaction of co-cultural group/s with the dominant culture, stemming from the work of anthropological, communication, and feminist theorists to develop an understanding of how these perspectives can impact across the gamut of groups with power differentials. The use of co-cultural theory allows, not only for an application to the identification of co-cultures and dominant groups, but also for an understanding of how these groups communicate to work in professional environments.

Within this chapter, literature on faculty and staff identity, organizational culture, perception, and co-cultural theory was provided. Utilizing an understanding of these key topics in relation to the community college context, one can better value the perceptions of these groups. Chapter III will discuss the research methodology for the study, built upon the key findings of previous research to further the understanding of this dynamic and valuable relationship.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The University of California’s (1999) task force report on the relationship between faculty and staff provided a key understanding to the dynamics of the complexities of this vital relationship. Other research identified the value of collaboration between faculty and staff on student learning outcomes. A significant portion of the research is allotted to strategies of engaging faculty in the process. Research within higher education and student affairs even encouraged student affairs staff to reach out to faculty (Peltier, 2014). With the value of collaborative projects well known, this study examined the perceptions of faculty and staff toward one another and understand how these perceptions impact professional relationships. The identified research questions include:

RQ1: How do professional staff perceive faculty?

RQ2: How do faculty perceive professional staff?

RQ3: How do the perceptions that faculty and professional staff hold regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges?

The research design utilized a qualitative approach that engaged in interviews, document analysis, and site observations. The following section reviews the foundations of qualitative research and the theoretical framework for the study prior to addressing the specifics of the data collection and analysis process.

Qualitative Research

Initially, the utilization of quantitative methods in the form of a survey was considered for the ease of data collection and analysis. The concepts of perception, identity, and cultural impact are multifaceted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher
felt the survey would fail to provide the same quality of data necessary to understand the complex connection between the key aspects of the research purpose. The interpretive paradigm defines the ontological and epistemology of the research perspective that believes reality is socially constructed. The concept of a socially constructed reality requires the development of one’s worldview and perspective to be built upon the interactions of the individual with the surrounding context. Thus, to gain knowledge about the situation or context, a researcher must be immersed into the social setting and engage in the rites and rituals of the culture (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Lindolf and Taylor (2002) noted that qualitative research:

- seeks to preserve and analyze the situated form, content, and experience of social action, rather than subject it mathematical or other formal transformations. (p. 18)

Qualitative research includes a wide variety of perspectives and ideologies. One research perspective is critical theory, which examines the dynamics of relationships between groups, including power struggles. Qualitative researchers grounded in critical theory, not only examine and analyze the social situation, but they also impact a potential change (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Qualitative research is far from linear; the process for developing a research plan often is revised to react to the demands of the social environment about which the researcher studies. The research process meets the demands of the complex and rich data available in the environment. With the knowledge of the fluidity of qualitative research, grounding the research project in a theoretical perspective frames the development of data collection and analysis (Miles &
The following section will examine the theoretical framework, participant selection, and data analysis structure.

**Theoretical Framework**

Built upon the foundations of standpoint and muted group theories, co-cultural theory originally began as a means to understand communication practices of racial groups and later transformed to examine the communication practices of organizations. Co-cultures include a dominant group and group/s that struggle to bring their voice (or perspective) to the forefront. The theory assists in the “identification and explication of the communication practices of co-cultural groups” (Orbe, 1998, p.110). Co-cultural theory also allows for the dynamic understanding of the way in which a dominant culture communicates with those who lack power, and vice versa.

Table 2

**Select Communication Practices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Censoring self</td>
<td>Remaining silent when comments from dominant group members are inappropriate, indirectly insulting, or highly offensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive preparation</td>
<td>Engaging in an extensive amount of detailed (mental/concrete) ground work prior to interactions with dominant group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intragroup networking</td>
<td>Identifying and working with other co-cultural group members who share common philosophies, convictions, and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining barriers</td>
<td>Imposing, through the use of verbal and nonverbal cues, a psychological distance from dominant group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embracing stereotypes</td>
<td>Applying a negotiated reading to dominant group perceptions and merging them into a positive co-cultural self-concept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: For complete listing, refer to Chapter II, Table 1, (Orbe, 1998).*

In developing the theory, Orbe (1998) provided 9 communication orientations and 26 communication practices as the components of co-cultural theory. To see an exhaustive list and descriptions of the orientations and practices, refer to Table 1 located
in Chapter II). One's orientation is based upon the preferred outcome of the communication encounter and communication approach. The communication approach and preferred outcome will vary depending upon the context of the communication event, the individual/s included in the event and the consequences for future interactions.

**Research Orientation**

This research served in three roles in higher education -- formerly as a student and academic advisor, and currently as a faculty member. When higher education was experienced as a student, the experience was highly superficial in comparison to the inner access as a professional staff and faculty member. The researcher attended a two-year community college prior to transferring to a four-year private liberal arts college. Conversations as a student with employees at each institution occurred primarily with the instructors; the conversations rarely included staff members. Conversations were held with professional staff at the community college as in preparation for transferring to a four-year institution. In one particular instance (at the four-year private institution), a staff member discussed frustrations with faculty in reference to a capstone project. The staff member stated: faculty will (paraphrasing) behave in ways that detriment students for the purpose of campus politics or proving a philosophical point. Years later employment was obtained within higher education, and the variations in attitudes and perspectives were recognized -- this now guides the inquiry of the current study.

In transitioning into the higher educational workforce, this researcher’s first full-time role was serving as an academic advisor, classified as professional staff, at a four-year public institution on a regional campus. In this role, interactions were primarily
with students and professional staff. Communication with faculty within the university was limited to course policies (i.e., attendance, withdraw, etc.), but more often was with faculty from other institutions to seek copies of syllabi for transfer articulation. While serving as an academic advisor, the following statement was often heard: “faculty never do anything,” referencing a perceived lack of involvement with the institution and the role of teaching. Lazy, disengaged, political, childish, and unavailable also persisted in the description and discussions of faculty within the reach of the institution.

During the transition to the role of faculty at a new institution, a two-year community college, this researcher was surrounded by the professional network of the academic advising position as the institutions reside in the same community. The professional staff connections continued to use the same negative descriptive language in defining faculty. The argument against faculty included a revision: “faculty never do anything, well not you of course,” referring to the transition in professional identity and now labeled as an enemy. Ironically, transitioning into the faculty networks, similar statements continued, but with a twist: "staff never do anything." This brought about the realization of two things: (1) The researcher was the "enemy" of the academic advising professional network, and (2) the miscommunication existed on both sides of higher education roles and disconcerting. Considering these statements, it was recognized that, if everyone (faculty and staff) “never does anything,” institutions of higher education are doing a wonderful job of functioning.

Considering the unique role of transitioning from staff to faculty, the identities, beliefs, and attitudes of both key groups are appreciated. As an academic advisor, certain times during the academic calendar are more demanding than others. When registration
nears for the fall and spring semesters, the number of hours in a day fail to meet the
demand. Throughout the remaining time in the semester, the researcher recruited
students, provided academic advising for transfer students to plan ahead, and contributed
to several committee projects. Currently in a faculty position, course development and
teaching courses identifies a small percentage of the demands from the job description.
Outside of instruction, responsibilities include for several committees, participating in
community service, volunteering to assist during events at the college, advising a roster
of advisors, attending professional development, and frequently communicating and
interacting with students outside of the classroom. Both positions demand high levels of
engagement, attention to detail, care for the mission of the institution, and a recognition
that salary pay is in the best interests of the institution. Higher education institutions at
large appear to fail to understand the value of collaborative relationships between faculty
and staff. Rather than reconsidering the structure of modern institutions, colleges and
universities appeal to the fallacy of tradition. The time, effort, and expenditures utilized
to placate the collaboration in the current environment are required, but should be
unnecessary. Administrators should seek research opportunities to eradicate the
segregation of these key stakeholders and to utilize the educated individuals in faculty
and staff positions to advance the institution.

Due to the varying perspectives, this researcher must take under advisement the
bias that may be held on the following research. While having personal experience as
both faculty and staff, this research is not a personal case study. Rather, it explored the
perspective of individuals currently serving in a faculty or staff position at a two-year
community college. In order to monitor the potential for bias, was maintained
throughout the process, which was later reviewed for potential bias. Participants were also allowed to review the transcript of the interviews.

**Rationale for Single Site Case Study**

Data collection was limited to a singular institution for the purpose of a detailed approach and the impact on a culture. The focus was to examine the relationships between faculty and professional staff perceptions on a community college campus. The selected institution, therefore, needed to meet certain desirable traits. First, it needed to be a community college that confers associates degrees or less. The selected college also was large enough to require faculty and staff interaction. Thus, the campus also served a substantial population of students, greater than 1,000 per semester. At the time of data collection, the institution employed greater than 75 faculty and 75 staff and offered technical programs, along with general education coursework that contributes to a campus rich in diverse perspectives. Finally, the institution was accredited by a reputable agency that governs student learning outcomes, campus enhancement, facilities, and faculty credentials.

**Description of the Selected Institution**

Wisteria Community and Technical College (WCTC) serves a multi-county region in the Midwest. The institution confers Associate of Arts and Science degrees (referred to as transfer degrees) and Associates of Applied Science degrees (referred to as technical degrees). As with many community and technical colleges, this institution is a member of a statewide college system. Thus, the campus is supported by an overarching system, yet has the ability to work independently of sister institutions. According to a report provided by Human Resources, WCTC employed a total of 218
full-time employees: 106 staff (80 professional staff); 93 faculty (11 allied health, 33 technical education, and 49 general education); and 17 with an administrative title. The college operates on three campuses; the main campus serves the majority of the student population and offers general education courses and technical programs, and is home to student services (i.e., bookstore, financial aid, admissions, etc.) and library services. The main campus also houses the greatest number of faculty and staff and is home to the campus administrative leadership. The south campus offers additional technical programs, as well as the organization’s human resources and payroll departments. The north campus houses the adult education program and additional technical programs. The north and south campuses do not adjoin the main campus, and instead vehicle transportation is available to reasonably maneuver between campuses.

The historical development of the institution is relatively young, founded less than 30 years ago. Within the faculty and staff ranks, members of the campus community who were present during founding day continue to serve the institution, providing a unique opportunity to understand the faculty and staff relationship dynamic over the lifetime of the institution.

**Recruitment and Selection of Participants**

While the campus community includes a vast number of roles, the purpose of this interpretive study was to examine the perceptions of faculty toward staff, staff toward faculty, and how these perceptions impact the community college culture. Therefore, the selection of participants was limited to achieve the focused results. The key roles for the investigation included full-time employees who served the institution as
professional staff or as faculty. The following defines the criteria and limitations of participants.

Faculty

WCTC serves a diverse student population, including those who are seeking a two-year associate’s degree, planning to transfer to a four-year institution or pursuing an allied health or technical degree. Thus, with the diverse population of student goals, the faculty are equally as diverse. Participants in the study may be general education, technical, or allied health faculty. Regardless of the focus of the curricular content, faculty serve the institution in the primary role of instruction of students. However, based upon the discipline, faculty utilize instructional time differently. Allied health faculty must consider the balance of instructional lecture time with the balance of practical and clinical experience (Chung et al., 2010). Technical faculty balance the need for lectures that relay material, with required lab time for the purpose of accreditation. General education faculty often experience less time with students and typically battle a less obvious connection to the career choice of students. Some members of the campus community possess the title of faculty; however, they do not serve in an instructional role. None of these members were selected for the study, as all participants were required to have a direct connection to student interaction. Two faculty participated in the pilot study: one from an allied health program and the other from a technical program. Faculty participating in the study included three technical faculty and four general education faculty.
Table 3

Participant Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name (Pseudonym)</th>
<th>Division/Department</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Staff</td>
<td>Staff1</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff2</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff3</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff4</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff 5</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff 6</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff 7</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>StaffP1</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>5 Years of Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Faculty1</td>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty2</td>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty3</td>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty4</td>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>5 Years or Under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty5</td>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty6</td>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty7</td>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FacultyP1</td>
<td>Allied Health</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FacultyP2</td>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>6 Years or Over</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Staff

As defined by Cohen and Brawer (2008), professional staff includes employees serving in roles to positively support student development. Thus, it is arguable to state that all members of the campus community support student development. In order to clarify the criteria for participation, those considered professional staff for this purpose research included staff who work in student or academic affairs with direct student contact. These roles and departments include, but are not necessarily limited to admissions, academic advising, bookstore, career services, financial aid, library services, student records, student success (retention), transitional education, and tutoring. The definition excludes custodial, maintenance, information technology, and administrative roles. One professional staff member participated in the pilot. Professional staff included two division assistants, three student affairs staff, and two academic affairs staff.
Campus Representation

In considering the purposeful selection of participants to better gain an understanding of the WCTC campus culture, the department to faculty and staff members represented was considered. Departments represented in the research include admissions, financial aid, allied health, science and mathematics, liberal arts, and technical education programs. Other departments also participated; however, the nature of the position and department title would impact the confidentiality of the participant and are, therefore, not included in the list.

Years of Service

The fluidity of culture can change over time. This led to an additional layer of specificity for participation. Faculty and professional staff included in the study were, not only considered based upon the department or division the employee represented, but also the years of service to WCTC. Faculty and professional staff fell into one of the two categories for years of service to the institution: five or less years or six or more years. Six of the nine faculty have worked for WCTC for five years or less. Four of the eight professional staff have worked for WCTC for six or more years.

Data Collection Process

This single case study included semi-structured interviews as the primary means of gathering initial data. Through the data collection process, participants provided the researcher with documents and opportunities for observation. The following sections detail the data collection process.

Selecting and Inviting Participants

To accomplish the selection of participants, the following steps were taken:
1. Obtained a list of faculty and staff
2. Identified faculty and staff title and discipline/department
3. Identified years of service to the institution for each employee
4. Removed support staff and administrators from the list of potential staff participants

A list of faculty and staff was provided by the Human Resource Department of the institution. The list included the names of the employees, titles, department or discipline, years of service to WCTC, and job classification (faculty or staff). The list was reviewed, and staff members who worked in departments focusing on maintenance, custodial services, and information technology were removed. Staff who held titles that implied high levels of student interaction remained in the participant pool, including admissions, bookstore, business office, career services, enrollment, financial aid, library services, student records, and tutoring. While support staff roles are vital to the success of a college campus, they were not pertinent to the current study.

After revision of once the list of faculty and professional staff to exclude administration and support staff, an initial six faculty and six staff were identified to be invited to participate in the research project. The faculty and staff selection was purposeful in an attempt to diversify the sample by department/discipline. For example, rather than including only English faculty, the purposeful selection process allowed for the faculty sample to include a variety of disciplines from general education and technical education perspectives.

Three initial participants, one staff and two faculty, served in the pilot study to examine the effectiveness and clarity of the interview protocol. Utilizing the originally
developed interview questions, the first two participants responded in the same interview context and invitation as the future participants. At the conclusion of the interviews, the researcher reviewed the purpose of the study and the experience of the interviewee to clarify, revise, delete, and add questions to the interview protocol. The interview protocol was revised between the second and third pilot interview. After completion of the third interview, the protocol was clear and provided a distinct connection to the purpose of the research. The revised protocol was submitted to the IRB for review and approval, after which the remaining interviews were completed.

5. Contacted six faculty and six professional staff from a variety of disciplines/departments in an attempt to diversify the sample considering the range of service parameters (three to five years and under; three to over five years)

6. Initialized scheduling of interviews

Upon identification of a purposeful sample of participants, emails were sent to the individuals to (a) inform them on the purpose of the research project; (b) describe their potential role in the project, including information on anonymity; and (c) invite the individual to participate in the process. The script for the email can be found in Appendix C. As selected members of the campus community agreed to participate scheduling of interview sessions was begun.

**Interviews**

Interviews were completed utilizing a revised interview protocol after completion of the pilot study. Interviews were conducted with 14 total participants: 7 faculty and 7 professional staff. According to Patton (1990), "[t]he purpose of
interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective" (p. 196). In seeking to understand the perceptions of faculty and staff, researchers use interviews to allow for a rich understanding of the participant's responses. Interviews were semi-structured, which were defined by Merriam (2009) as:

…the largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact working nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time. This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic (p. 90).

During the development of an interview protocol, the researcher reserved the option to add or retract questions based upon the participant’s background with the institution or the direction of the content provided by the participant. All interviews were recorded with an audio recorder for later transcription; which all participants were aware of prior to beginning the interview process.

**Interview Protocol**

An interview protocol was developed and pilot tested during three initial interviews with two faculty and one staff member. The interviews were completed in the same context as the selected site to ensure that the interpretation of the questions would be the same for the culture involved in the research. After completing the first and second interviews, the results were reviewed with the pilot participants in connection with the purpose of the research. With the assistance of the participants, consideration of the theoretical framework, and purpose of the study, the interview protocol was revised prior to the third pilot interview. The revised protocol was used for the pilot interview,
and the results were found to be more in aligned with the theoretical framework and purpose of the research.

Table 4

*Interview Protocol and Theoretical Framework*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Co-cultural Theory Communication Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the difference of faculty and professional staff to someone from outside higher education?</td>
<td>Communicating Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, how would you define your role at the college?</td>
<td>Communicating Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever felt you had to defend your role or (role) in general on or off campus?</td>
<td>Communicating Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially, do you find yourself spending more time with faculty or staff?</td>
<td>Intragroup networking, Avoiding, Increase visibility, Maintaining barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the committee structure on campus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever had to build a team of campus employees to complete a task?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about a time you have worked with (opposite role), and it was a positive experience.</td>
<td>Stereotypes, Educating others, Dispelling stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about a time you have worked with (opposite role), and it was a negative experience.</td>
<td>Stereotypes, Educating others, Dispelling stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any (opposite role) whose job duties you feel you do not understand?</td>
<td>Maintaining barriers, avoiding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel faculty and professional staff have equivalent power to change (or resist change) for campus policies and procedures?</td>
<td>Stereotypes, Communicating self, Increase visibility, Educating others, Averting controversy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel expectations are the same on campus for faculty and professional staff?</td>
<td>Maintaining barriers, Educating others, Increasing visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of campus policies, are there differences between how faculty and staff are treated?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the relationship between faculty and staff on campus?</td>
<td>Communicating self, Educating others, Developing positive face, Mirroring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been in a conversation with (same) and felt you had to change the topic of conversation because (opposite) approached the group?</td>
<td>Avoiding, Maintaining barriers, Intragroup networking, Mirroring, Averting controversy, Censoring self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table 4 Continues)
Table 4 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Co-cultural Theory Communication Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever corrected the mistake of the (opposite) in front of other colleagues?</td>
<td>Developing a positive face, Censoring self, Sabotage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the divide between faculty and staff exist, is that something you believe should be changed?</td>
<td>All practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informed Consent

Prior to scheduling the interviews, participants were given access to the informed consent documentation via the invitational email. The document was reviewed prior to the interviews ensuring the participants understood the scope and protections within the study. Each participant was aware that participation in the study was voluntary; the participant may not directly benefit from the research, although others may benefit from the findings; deciding to leave the study would not cause harm or penalty to the participant; and the participant was free to withdraw from the study without risk to the relationship between the participant and the researcher. Participants were asked to sign the consent form in order to participate in the research project.

Saturation of Data

The interview process continued until saturation was reached, which occurs when no additional themes or findings are being identified (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). With the concept of saturation, a set number of participants cannot be identified prior to gathering research. The priority is to gather rich data that accomplishes the goal of the research in order to understand the research focus. Therefore, the process of recruiting participants and conducting interviews continued until saturation was met.
7. Identified point of research saturation; if not found, begin recruiting additional participants individually from the lists of faculty and professional staff until saturation was met.

In qualitative research, the concern for data analysis is to reach saturation, which occurs when the researcher continues to unearth the same themes, with no new information emerging. As a result, conclusions can be identified. Six faculty and six staff were contacted to participate in the research. After completion the interviews, it was felt that more information was needed to reach saturation. Thus, one additional faculty and staff interview was conducted. The study concluded with a total of seven faculty and seven staff participating in the interview process. With the inclusion of a pilot study, nine faculty and eight staff were interviewed. This research sought to explore a phenomenon within the culture of a community college with rich data to support the use of a small participant sample (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

**Reflexive Journal**

Throughout the research process a reflexive journal was maintained for two purposes. The first purpose was to monitor for potential personal bias as the researcher had a direct connection to the roles being examined. The second was to note personal observations made by the researcher during the interview process, notes of the conversation around the dissertation topic, and as a central location for the on-site observations and review of documents.

**On-site Observations and Documents**

Throughout the interview process, participants discussed documents such as sign-in sheets at meetings and the system-wide policy handbook. In addition to the
documents discussed, participants also directed the researcher to observe situations such as campus-wide meetings. When making observations, the researcher kept field notes that documented the events and provided context and rich, descriptive data for purposes of analysis. Observations also allowed for the triangulation of the findings of the interviews with the documents, reflection journal, and observations. Observations included attendance at meetings with both faculty and professional staff, including committee meetings and campus-wide assemblies. Documents provided by the participants included rules to understand faculty governance and sign-in sheets at professional development sessions.

**Follow-up Questions**

Throughout the data analysis process follow-up questions were necessary to understand the complexities of the faculty and professional staff relationship. The questions were reactions to the initial findings of the interviews and were sent electronically and to the participants for voluntary completion. A reminder of the informed consent was included.

8. Upon collection of the interview, observation, document analysis and follow-up questions, the data analysis process continued and is detailed in the following sections.

**Data Confidentiality**

Any information gathered throughout the study that identified a participant was kept confidential. The data were stored on a password protected laptop computer owned and viewed only by the researcher. Audio files were also stored on the computer and were heard by only the researcher and an electronic transcription company that signed a
non-disclosure agreement. Participants were not personally identified in the written materials, and any connection to the participant was excluded from the data. While the results of the study may be published, the names and connections to the participants and the institution will remain confidential. Materials will remain in a locked office for three years prior to being deleted.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was primarily guided by the scheduled interviews. In the qualitative process, data collection will innately be ongoing and dynamic. Merriam (2009) discussed the value and necessity of data collection and analysis from the beginning of the process in the form of continual and ongoing analysis.

The data from the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and were sent to an online transcription service with an agreed upon non-disclosure contract (Appendix H). The transcripts were reviewed by the researcher, and any content that could identify a participant was excluded, including names, departments, or specific projects. The neutralized transcript was sent to the participant for the purpose of a member check. Participants were advised to check for accuracy of interpretations, rather than grammar or other linguistic concerns. Once transcripts were approved, the data was added to the completed data for analysis.

The data from the interviews, in concert with the observations and reflexive journal, were analyzed to answer the research questions through a method of constant comparison. In using this method, Owen (1984) provided three criteria for identifying themes: repetition, recurrence, and forcefulness. Repetition refers to the use of the same
language throughout the data. Recurrence is similar to repetition but identifies the recurrence of an idea. Finally, forcefulness refers to the level of emphasis, such as pauses or levels of enthusiasm. During this stage of analysis, printed copies of the transcript were used with a two-inch margin to indicate repetition, recurrence, and forcefulness. After utilizing Owen’s criteria to analyze the data, a review of the analysis continued using Creswell’s (2012) open, axial, and selective coding methods to foster an understanding of the data. First, open coding was utilized to sort the data into categories that were relevant to the study. This was completed using Microsoft Excel which allowed each code to occupy a spreadsheet to organize the data. Next, axial coding identified key interrelationships and connectivity of the codes found in the open coding process. This phase was completed through a review of the data available on the spreadsheet and the creation of a new document to better define and interpret the results. Finally, selective coding methods were utilized to form the participants’ stories in connection with the theoretical framework (Creswell, 2012). Throughout the process, the use of the constant comparison method allowed for continual reflection on the data, while formulating the categories for coding during the interview process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

**Reliability and Validity**

The value of research is limited to the specificity of the study, ethics of the process, and the trustworthiness of the results (Merriam, 2009). The researcher’s intent was to ethically conduct and present the data collection and analysis process.

**Validity**
Validity is the connection between the research findings and the reality of the situation (Merriam, 2009). As the truth to a reality is socially constructed and based upon perceptions, member checks and observations of the context provide a level of corroborating evidence from various sources to ensure the accuracy of the collection and interpretation of the themes (Creswell, 2012; Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). Each participant was asked to review the transcript for appropriate interpretation of the interview. The follow-up questions were asked of participants to check the perceptions of the co-cultures outside of the interview process. In addition to member checks of the interview process and initial findings, Chapter IV was reviewed by a faculty and staff member. These checks, along with the researcher’s experience and observations allowed for a strong connection between the findings of this study and the reality of the current perceptions and impact on organizational culture.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the ability to replicate the study and obtain similar results (Simon, 2011). However, it is noted throughout qualitative research that the replication of studies is near to impossible based upon the rich data and culturally specific purpose of the inquiry. Merriam (2009) argued that the most valid question within interpretive research is “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (p. 211). The researcher provided rich descriptions of the context and key quotes from participants to support the development of the themes based upon the data collected.

Transferability

Qualitative research is not used for the purpose of generalizable data. However, the field of qualitative research provides an opportunity to develop theory and models to
transfer into another context. The single site case study approach for the study limits the cultural implications to that of the institution. Implicating the same methodology on a campus different in mission or size could alter the outcomes. However, some of these findings could be rediscovered in other institutions.

**Summary of Research Activity**

A summary of the research activities for this study is provided in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Research Activity Summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification of general topics of interests</td>
<td>The research experienced multiple roles within the higher educational structure: student, staff, and faculty. The process of transitioning through the different roles of higher resulted in an examination of examine the perceptions of faculty and staff and the impact of the perceptions on the culture of the institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the literature</td>
<td>A review of the literature found articles connected to the topic of power in the higher educational realm, ultimately leading to articles focusing on faculty identity and faculty governance. The researcher struggled with finding appropriate articles that discussed the identity of professional staff in the academic environment. This can be attributed to the nature of academic research being controlled primarily by faculty or the overall misunderstanding of staff impact on the college structure. Other research areas include perception and organizational culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the research questions</td>
<td>In collaboration with the advisor and dissertation committee, the researcher drafted initial questions that were revised to clearly articulate the goal of the researcher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision to use qualitative methods</td>
<td>The researcher initially considered the use of quantitative methods in the form of a survey for ease of data collection and analysis. The concept of perception is complex, and the researcher felt the survey would fail to provide the same quality of data necessary to understand the complex connection between perceptions, identity, and organizational culture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Table 5 Continues)*
**Table 5 Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limiting to a singular site</td>
<td>The data collection was limited to a singular institution for the purpose of a detailed approach and the impact on a culture. Future research should expand the exploration into other types of institutions and a larger quantity of sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of the theoretical framework</td>
<td>In order to develop a methodology and to follow interview protocols, the researcher examined cultural and organizational theories that spoke to the conflicts and collaboration of sub-groups, thus, leading to M. Orbe’s Co-Cultural Theory (1998).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Methodology</td>
<td>The development of the methodology rose from examining the work of another research within higher education; particularly those detailing more politically charged topics. Researchers in the field primarily utilized qualitative methods to understand the complexity of the situation. Thus, the methodology is founded upon key work of Strauss &amp; Corbin (1998) and Creswell (2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of institution</td>
<td>The campus used for the research possessed several key desirable traits of the researcher. First, the institution served a substantial population of students. Second, the institution employed over 75 faculty and staff (in each category). Third, the institution is a two-year community college only awarding associate degrees or less. Fourth, the institution serves both general education and technical students, requiring both technical and general education faculty. Finally, the institution is accredited by a reputable agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial contact with the participating institution</td>
<td>Initial contact with the institution was made with the key supervisors of professional staff and faculty, both holding the title of Vice President. After reviewing the purpose of the project with the leaders of the student and academic affairs departments the researcher was advised by the campus leadership to complete the institution’s internal IRB paperwork to present to the campus President (Appendix A).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative approval from campus leadership</td>
<td>With the support of the Vice Presidents, the internal IRB form was completed and submitted to the campus President approval. The form was left with the President to review and was signed indicating approval to conduct research within the institution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Table 5 Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completion of IRB training</td>
<td>As required by the research institution (Western Kentucky University), the IRB training was completed in a timely manner. Certificates for completion were included in the IRB application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application to and approval from the Institutional Review Board</td>
<td>First, the IRB form was completed for the hosting institution (Western Kentucky University) in partnership with the researcher’s chair. This includes the certification of training for both the researcher and the chair. After approval from WKU IRB, the note of approval from WKU was sent along with the institution’s IRB form to the research site’s IRB department. Approval for the study was granted by both agencies. (Appendix A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining documents from the participating institution</td>
<td>Upon approval from the IRB and dissertation committee to proceed, the researcher contacted the participating institution’s Human Resources department to obtain a list of current employees, including: names, year of initial employment, title, and department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying potential participants</td>
<td>The participants for the study are limited to faculty with the primary role is instruction and professional staff. The definition of professional staff limits the participation to staff who regularly interact with students in roles such as academic advising, financial aid, admissions, counseling, etc. The criteria limits the inclusion of administrators, including anyone with the title of associate dean or higher. The criteria also excludes the participation of staff who do not regularly interact with the students which include maintenance, custodial, IT, and human resource staff. The list provided from Human Resources was reviewed by the researcher and those who do not meet the qualifications of the study were deleted from the list.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### (Table 5 Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection of participants: Range of campus departments and divisions</td>
<td>Stratified purposeful sampling was utilized to select participants. This process was used for the purpose of selecting members of the campus community from a variety of divisions and departments. For example, a random draw of faculty may pull a dominant number of participants from the math department and no faculty from the humanities division. Thus, the purposeful selection of participants allowed for a more equitable representation of campus departments and divisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline for invitations to participate</td>
<td>Considering the demands of the semester schedule, the researcher examined the time frame most likely to allow participants to accept the invitation. As the researcher possesses experience as faculty and professional staff, the time frame after the first two weeks of the semester and before the first major break was identified as the opportune time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitation for participation</td>
<td>Participants were invited to participate in the study [via email from the researcher]. Included in the email was an explanation of the study. Attached to the email, participants were given an informed consent documentation and the interview questions for full understanding of the scope of the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling of interviews</td>
<td>As potential participants replied, dates and times were coordinated. The location of the interview varied. Primarily faculty participants were interviewed in their offices, while staff came to the researcher’s office. The choice of staff to come to the researcher’s office typically was indicative of the open office environment of their desks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with faculty and professional staff</td>
<td>The interviews were maintained by appointments. As the researcher approached each interview, the participants were reminded of the informed consent and asked to sign a form agreeing to participate. The researcher also described the interview and transcription process. All interviews were recorded for later transcription. The researcher also took notes to identify questions that would later need revisions to protect the participant’s identity. Notes also included reminders of tone of voice and general observations of the researcher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 5 Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional interviews scheduled</td>
<td>As the research persisted, some suggestions were made by participants to extend invitations to other members of the campus community. These participants were invited to schedule an interview. One participant declined; one of the suggested campus members agreed to the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of participants: Years of service to the institution</td>
<td>In addition to including participants in a variety of campus departments, the researcher also desired to gain perspectives based upon the years of service to the institution. Therefore, the participant list was also divided by employees working at the institution for five years or less and six years or longer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitation for participation</td>
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</table>

**Table 5 Continues**
(Table 5 Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-interview reflexive journal</td>
<td>After each interview, the researcher noted any initial reactions to the participants' statements and commentary which occurred after the official interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-Up questions</td>
<td>Upon completion of the interview process, the researcher asked reactionary questions to other members of the faculty and staff co-cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcriptions</td>
<td>The interviews were recorded. After the interviews were recorded the researcher transcribed some of the interviews and later included the support of an electronic transcription service with appropriate non-disclosure agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of participant identity</td>
<td>After transcribing the interviews, the researcher went back through the transcript to neutralize comments that could identify the institution or the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member checks</td>
<td>Once neutralized, the transcripts were sent to the participants for the purpose of assuring the written transcript captured the meaning and perspective of the participant. Participants could not alter their statement or correct grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site observations and documents</td>
<td>As guided by the participants, the examination of campus documents and meetings were included in the process. Participants provided forms, handbooks, and specific meeting locations for the purpose of “seeing the divide” on campus. These are included in the data analysis portion as artifacts and rituals that contribute to the impact of the perceptions on the campus culture. The researcher was mindful about noting these occurrences and included these in the reflection journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data coding</td>
<td>First, the data coding process recommended by Creswell (2012) was utilized. Reading the transcripts for initial impressions and continuing to compare the interviews to the incoming interview and observation data. Specific text segments were marked with a code to identify initial themes emerging throughout the data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme presentation</td>
<td>Following the identification of themes, the researcher began the process of writing a report to support these themes in the case study. Support primarily comes from the transcripts of the interviews, but also includes the follow-up questions and content of the reflection journal (including observations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and recommendation</td>
<td>The researcher concluded the research project by offering recommendations to the field of research, the institution itself, and the overall summary of the findings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of faculty and professional staff toward one another and how their perceptions impact the culture of a community college campus. The data gathered was derived from the primary source of 17 semi-structured interviews conducted on two of the three campuses of the institution. The data extends to include the responses of five follow-up open-ended questions delivered via email, the researcher’s observations, and document analysis. The review of the literature, methodology, and data collection support the following research focus:

RQ1: How do professional staff perceive faculty?

RQ2: How do faculty perceive professional staff?

RQ3: How do the perceptions that faculty and professional staff hold regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges?

This chapter (a) describes individuals who participated in the study, (b) identifies the roles and perceptions of faculty and professional staff, and (c) discusses the five themes. The five themes are: staff perceptions, expectations, and uncertainties of faculty; faculty perceptions, expectations, and uncertainties of staff; rank and elitism; invisible impact – the silencing of staff; and organizational influences. The results were grounded in the experiences of participants and were supported by quotes from the interview experience. In addition to the primary source of data (semi-structured interviews), support for themes was also developed from secondary sources including follow-up responses (FUR), observations, and document analysis.
Description of Participants

Table 6

Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender/Years of Service</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Years and Under</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Years and Over</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

Educational Achievement of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
<th>Number of Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Graduate Work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Hours Above Master’s</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participants in the research project were full-time employees of Wisteria Community and Technical College (WCTC) and served the organization as either faculty or professional staff and is a two-year public community and technical college. WCTC is one community and technical college in the system. Community college systems serve a large geographical area and utilize some level of individuality in terms of programmatic offerings; however, the system governs the majority of the institutional policies. Thus, several other campuses throughout the statewide system share the same policies and procedures discussed throughout the results. For the purpose of this study, faculty were defined as members of WCTC with the primary job responsibility of teaching. Professional staff were defined as employees who serve the institution in a departmental
role with significant student interaction, not including instruction. The study (from the pilot study to follow-up questions) included 10 professional staff and 12 faculty members. Five of the staff members have worked for WCTC for five years or less. Seven of the 12 faculty members have worked for WCTC for six years or more. All participants are identified with a code for faculty or staff and accompanied with a number if interviewed, or “FUR” to indicate the data was a follow-up response to an open-ended follow-up survey. For example, staff1 is a staff member interview, faculty4 is a faculty member interview, staffFUR is a staff member’s anonymous response to the open-ended follow-up questions, and facultyFUR is a faculty member’s anonymous response to the open-ended follow-up questions.

Nine of the 10 professional staff and 10 of the 12 faculty were female. The majority of the contributors were Caucasian (20), with the inclusion of one Native American and one African American. The dominance of Caucasian participants is reflective of the campus makeup – WCTC is 95.6% Caucasian, 3.3% African American, and .2% Native American (provided by the WCTC system wide fact book).

Participants also provided levels of educational achievement. The summary of educational achievement can be found in Table 7. Within the field of technical education, work experience weighs heavily to support the teaching credentials of the faculty member. Eighty percent of the professional staff and 81% of faculty have earned a Master’s degree or higher. Ten percent of professional staff and 27% of faculty hold an Associate’s degree or lower.

Departments represented throughout the data collection process include a variety of areas throughout the college campus. However, due to the size of several of the staff
departments, identification of the department would violate the non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements. Professional staff include both student and academic affairs, faculty participants serve the institution in allied health, technical, and general education departments.

**Theme Identification**

After a thorough review of the transcripts; completion open, axial, and selective coding; examination of documents; and detailing observations, five themes emerged. As data were reviewed, key phrases and shared language were grouped into categories that initially included additional areas such as power, voice, and uncertainty. However, as data were compared from the interviews with the observations and institutional documents, the codes found in the open coding process connected (axial coding) to five overarching themes. Thus, the following first examines the theme that answered Research Question One (How do professional staff perceive faculty?); the staff’s perceptions; uncertainties; and expectations of faculty. Second, a review is provided of the theme that provided a response to Research Question Two (How do faculty perceive professional staff?); the faculty’s perceptions; expectations; and uncertainties of staff. Third, the theme of rank and elitism of faculty over staff and within the faculty ranks is discussed, as this theme builds an understanding of the faculty and staff professional relationship (Research Questions One and Two). Fourth, the data is provided that answered Research Question Three (How do the perceptions of faculty and professional staff hold of one another impact the culture of community colleges?), the invisible impact. The theme details the muted voice and stifled actions of staff in the face of faculty rank. Finally, in addition to answering Research Question Three, the chapter
concludes with the theme surrounding the organizational structures and functions that persist in contributing to the existence of the gap.

Findings Related to Research Question One

The first research question states: How do professional staff perceive faculty? The following sections examine the perceptions of faculty from the perspective of professional staff via an examination of the faculty’s self-analysis of identity in connection to the perceptions of professional staff within the same college culture.

Theme One: Staff Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties of Faculty

All participants were asked to describe the roles of faculty and staff as would be explained to individuals outside of higher education. Throughout the examination of the data, codes that were marked for the faculty identity primarily focused on the nature of teaching. Faculty described the multiple layers of the instructional role, detailing the number of job responsibilities that exceed the realm of teaching. Staff, while confident on the part of instruction as a part of in the job duties of faculty, were less confident in understanding the job duties outside of the classroom. Theme One identifies the staff perceptions of faculty, providing a response to Research Question One – How do professional staff perceive faculty? The process to identify the perceptions of professional staff regarding faculty first considered the identity of faculty in a self-analysis. The following provides a foundation to understand the faculty’s self-reported identity prior to a comparison of the faculty identity to the perceptions of professional staff regarding their faculty counterparts.

Faculty voice: A self-analysis. Faculty identified their primary responsibility as teaching. Faculty4 stated, “I would describe faculty as someone whose primary job is to
teach and be in the classroom.” The practice of instruction varies depending upon the content of curriculum. The time faculty spend with students in the classroom varies and is referred to as contact hours. General education faculty spend three contact hours per week with students for a total of 15 hours in a five-course teaching load. In comparison, technical and allied health faculty may have 20-30 contact hours per week due to the demands and expectations of the technical curriculum. Faculty7 discussed variations within the technical education field of expected contact hours. Regardless of the contact hours, it is clear that faculty value the primary duty of teaching. Despite the number of other demands on the faculty role, participants clearly indicated the significance of instruction as part of their professional identity: “[f]irst and foremost, the students are my number one responsibility, and that means if I have class time, I need to go to class and not that meeting” (faculty4). Other faculty contributed to the value of student connection and impact: “[m]y role at the college is to assist students in either defining or redefining their lives” (faculty1).

My role is as a faculty member -- although it doesn’t contain itself to the classroom -- I am not only an educator, but basically a cheerleader (for students).

I see my role as encouraging students. (faculty6)

The role of faculty is clearly not confined to teaching. Faculty quickly provide a list of other responsibilities: “[m]y job, on paper, is to teach [discipline]. Not on paper, it is to teach, recruit, run the [discipline] program, we’re evaluated by SACS and CPE, so we are submitting those reports…” (faculty3). The list of additional responsibilities outside of instruction includes maintaining office hours, advising, serving on multiple internal committees, participating in external community events, attending professional
development sessions, completing retention reports, attending recruitment events, answering emails, completing assessments, and participating in the promotion timeline.

Day-to-day, I will have two to three classes each meeting for an hour and fifteen minutes. Then, also answer a lot of emails which ranges from 20-80 a day (that need responses). Then we have grading and feedback for students. (faculty4).

Escalation of retention efforts and increased emphasis on recruiting were mentioned throughout the data collection process. Faculty3 discloses, “[f]aculty members are pushed, pushed, pushed to recruit, and it doesn’t matter what (pause), recruit, recruit, recruit… I worry about losing my job if I don’t recruit. If I don’t have students, I don’t have a job.” In addition to the demands of recruiting, the events are frequently after work hours, including the weekends and evenings as discussed by faculty7.

A value of autonomy granted to the faculty position was identified, which was exchanged for a perceived level of higher expectations. “Faculty have a little more freedom, but I think higher expectations – more workload to take home with them” (faculty2). Several faculty noted the unrealistic expectation of a 40-hour work week in relation to the expanding list of responsibilities. Faculty identified an unspoken expectation of the college that faculty should work on a “24/7” structure (facultyP2). “…they expect faculty to go home and work at night, grade at night, answer emails at night” (faculty5). Other faculty expressed similar frustrations: “I think you are expected to work overtime for free – I do not think it is possible to do this job on just a 9-5 schedule” (facultyP2). “Faculty, we’re required to work as long as it takes, nights, weekends, doing whatever it takes to get the job done. For me, that’s a huge expectation
differential” (faculty3). In observations made at WCTC, a visit to the campus on a Saturday found over 10 faculty and two administrators working within the buildings of the campus (observation). The following Saturday, the researcher again visited the campus again and witnessed similar levels of faculty activity on campus. While others may have been working off campus, the physical presence of weekend work was unexpected. With the extensive list of job duties, faculty often spend time on campus, but out of the office, maneuvering from classrooms to meetings due to the demands on time.

They [staff] come in at 8 and go to the desk, and they are chained to that desk. This can go both ways; they have to work their full shift and regardless of how busy they are, their supervisor may tell them it is 4:30 you go home now. . . Whereas faculty, you see happen a lot, faculty spend a lot of time grading at home, in the classroom teaching, but you know they can’t clock out at the end of the eight hour shift and go home. They have to keep working through the night. It is not unusual to get emails at 1 or 2 am in the morning that are working on committees with you because that is the only time they feel to have free time where they can actually focus on their duties. (facultyP2)

Due to the demands on time, faculty are aware of the perceptions of other groups (including staff) regarding faculty work ethic. “If a faculty member is not in their office, the perception is usually that they’re in a meeting – that is the positive, optimistic view…or it is that they’ve (faculty) already gone home and that they’re just one of the lazy faculty” (faculty4).
Institutionally, the faculty role is clearly defined in the bylaws of the system organization (document). The document details the primary role of instruction, internal service to the institution through committee work and event participation, external service to the community, active participation in professional development, and an emphasis on leadership – particularly as one progresses through the promotion hierarchy of faculty ranks from instructor to professor (approximately a 12-year process) (document).

This section allows for faculty to clearly articulate their professional identity. The faculty participants described in detail the job duties ascribed to their role on the campus and the associated institutional expectations. Research Question One asks, How do professional staff perceive faculty? With an understanding of the faculty identity within this campus, the following section transitions to an examination of the perceptions of the professional staff and a comparison of the perceptions to the identified professional identity.

**Staff perceptions of faculty.** With the firm understanding of the faculty identity, next the discussion transitions to an examination of the staff perceptions of their faculty counterparts. Staff agreed that the primary role of faculty is to provide education. Staff also understood that faculty are responsible for more than instruction. Staff recognized the impact of internal committee service and the time investment required for course development, grading, and promotion procedures. The definitions provided by staff of the faculty job duties were increased in detail, with an overall understanding of the descriptions faculty provided for the staff role. However, staff provided some
contradictory perceptions of faculty as being unavailable and failing to follow through with initiatives.

Staff noticed the unavailability of faculty and noted the variance of the expectation. “I feel like faculty don’t always have to be here. That’s an expectation – it’s OK, they aren’t here. Everyone assumes they’re doing something else (work related) and they probably are, but. . . It is not the same for staff” (staff5). While not offered as a criticism of faculty, staff also remarked on the flexibility of schedules, as staff work 8:00am – 4:30pm, and for faculty “It’s not a black eye if faculty come in at 8:30am or 9am” (staff7). For example, the WCTC academic affairs handbook notes that the standard office hours of a faculty member should meet the minimum range of 10-12 hours per week. Considering the average general education faculty is in the classroom for 15 contact hours weekly, this cumulates to 25-27 hours of “accountable” work hours. Staff, comparing to their personal experiences, identify with a more traditional 37.5-hour work week, an 8:00am – 4:30pm schedule.

In addition to the staff perceptions of faculty working hours, staff also perceived faculty as those who originate tasks or initiatives, but faculty are not engaged in the implementation process. Staff2 discussed this perception, “[f]aculty are expected to do things, but don’t always have to follow through.” This continued into other staff dialogue, “[t]here are a lot of initiatives that I know start with faculty members and just get pushed to staff, rightfully so or not, but that’s what happens. It’s okay -- we (faculty) had some ideas, now you (staff) make it work” (staff3). The perception of staff self-identifying as a “working class,” while faculty are a “thinking class” in the campus hierarchy, is discussed later in Theme Three, Rank and Elitism. However, it is clear in
the perceptions of staff regarding faculty that faculty think through the processes and move the implementation of the idea to staff.

**Role uncertainties about faculty.** Overall, little confusion exists about the primary role of faculty as educators. Several of the staff participants reported an understanding of the general job responsibilities of faculty (staffP1, staff1, staff3, staff5, and staff4). Yet, some confusion exists surrounding the additional duties of faculty, particularly when discussing faculty service to the community and the level of involvement required for the promotion process. Staff commented on the nature of the instructional duties and committee work; however, they did not understand the role in terms of the additional service outside of those two functions. Faculty noted times in which they felt they had to defend their position to staff members. The uncertainty of the additional duties outside of instruction and committee work (or the level of the demands) creates a disconnect between the reality of the responsibilities and the perception from professional staff. The defense behavior primarily fights the perception of faculty as being lazy due to the challenge experienced by staff when contacting faculty or attempting to coordinate projects. The quantity and diversity of tasks leave faculty forcibly more maneuverable, and not “chained to a desk,” as faculty describe of staff. Thus, as faculty maneuver campus to attend to the demands of the job, the negative perception of an empty office manifests into laziness or faculty being disengaged from the campus.

Mostly there's a concern of time, whenever there's disrespect between a staff member and a faculty member where they don't respect our time. Because they think that we have so much of it, or their perception of our duties is so lax that
they feel that we should be able to meet at any time. There are issues with scheduling that they might get frustrated if we don't go to meetings but if they are if they are in charge of a group and they always schedule meetings, during class time. I have to prioritize class over that meeting, no matter what the meeting is unless my supervisor tells me otherwise. (faculty4)

Therefore, as staff seek to communicate with faculty, a conflict arises when the desk-bound staff cannot access the faculty member via a phone call or visit to the faculty member’s office.

Potentially contributing to this frustration, WCTC discontinued the offering of general education courses on Fridays. While technical faculty continue to offer courses on a five-day schedule, the campus moved to the coordination committee meetings on Fridays. The development of the system initially was designed to reduce frustration in scheduling meetings across both sides of the college setting (student and academic affairs). However, the numerous meetings on Fridays overlapped, thus creating a new problem (observation). The system also failed to include the schedules and demands of technical faculty. Meetings, grading, advising, and student feedback are not necessarily included in the office hours of faculty. While overlap exists, meetings and other demands subsist outside of teaching, and office hours potentially causing a 50-60 hour work week to be perceived as a 25 hour work week – time that staff feel is “accountable” for faculty.

Summary of Theme One

Overall, staff perceived the role of faculty as directly related to the mission and product of the institution. They recognized the value of the faculty contribution.
However, they discussed unclear expectations of faculty on campus outside of instruction. While it is clear to staff that the faculty are expected to teach, duties outside of teaching are filled with ambiguity. The uncertainty of the job duties outside of instruction lead to uncertainty from staff as to the number of hours a faculty member works, as well as concerns for faculty accountability and accessibility.

**Findings Related to Research Question Two**

The second research questions states: How do faculty perceive professional staff? The following sections examine the perceptions of professional staff from the perspective of faculty via an examination of the staff’s self-analysis of identity in connection to the perceptions of faculty within the same college culture.

**Theme Two: Faculty Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties of Staff**

Theme two identifies the faculty perceptions of professional staff, providing a response to Research Question Two – How do faculty perceive professional staff? The process to identify faculty perceptions of professional staff first considered the identity of professional staff in a self-analysis. The following section provides a foundation to understand the professional staff’s self-reported identity prior to comparing the professional staff identity to the perceptions of faculty regarding their professional staff counterparts.

**Staff voice: Self-analysis.** Staff explained that the overarching definition of their role is vague, and specifics vary based upon the departmental goal. For example, an admissions and financial aid counselor seeks to assist students in entering college, as well as avoid potential barriers. However, one assist by developing strategies to address the financial demands of college, and the other strives to accurately complete
appropriate testing for course placement and academic planning. Both roles assist students, impact student success, and influence the overall nature of the institution. The day-to-day duties of the staff members largely fluctuate based upon department and job title. Thus, it is valid for faculty or other campus community members to misunderstand or be unclear as to job duties of staff. Staff self-identify, in a general sense, as in the role of supporting agents for the institution. “At WCTC, the faculty are the line employees and the staff are the support staff. We, staff, are here to support the faculty. . .” (StaffFUR). Staff also connected their role with student interactions and successful outcomes, including addressing concerns of students, maintaining a working knowledge of advising, assisting faculty, and managing potential barriers to student success.

Staff members indicated a customer service mentality within the expectations of the work environment. These expectations center on regular accessibility – primarily demonstrated in the working schedule. These campus employees noted an expectation for staff to work a standard 37.5-hour work week consisting of regular and clearly advertised availability. Primarily, these times range in the prototypical 8am – 4:30pm or 9am – 5pm. The level of availability extends to direct access. Both faculty and staff noted a “chained to the desk” work environment for staff. “Just because you are not sitting at your desk, doesn’t mean you’re not doing it (work), but I do think there’s an expectation of being visibly and physically present in a way that faculty aren’t really required to be” (staff7). The variation between the expectation of faculty and staff in the sense of office access clearly delineates the two roles in terms of function and bridging connections.
Staff members clearly delineated the concepts of “institutional support” with intellectual ability, as support does not eradicate intellect. It appears that the rank and educational barrier negatively impact the perception of the ability of professional staff. Staff struggle with a desire to prove a level of intellectual equality. Staff5 has completed graduate level course work: “I’ve had to defend it [my job], not extensively, but just that we’re important to faculty. It’s not necessarily the faculty that run everything.” The educational barrier and concept of rankism within the institution impact the personal identity of staff in terms of their relationships to the campus faculty.

**Educational divide: Staff comments.** The educational disconnect extends to the faculty perception of the level of education earned by professional staff. Several staff participants voiced a concern for faculty who fail to recognize levels of academic achievement. “People who are not in a staff role do not always understand what some staff do, what their backgrounds are, what their training is – that many [staff], many of them have master’s degrees, even doctorate degrees” (staff7). It appears, in a world focused on producing education, that the research indicates a failure to recognize internal academic achievements. At each graduation ceremony, faculty and staff who have completed educational degrees are recognized in the graduation program with additional verbal recognition during the ceremony (document). However, it appears that the knowledge of the degree fails to impact interactions. The staff recognized a need to “prove” to faculty that they are intellectually capable. “I have as much education as some of the faculty members and I am *not* (emphasis), treated as if I do – I am treated as if I am not as intelligent” (staff1).
The lack of equal educational appreciation crosses the boundaries of staff-based departments, “. . .in my situation and in several other staff members’ (situation), we’re just as educated, if not more educated than a lot of the faculty members on this campus” (staff3). The educational gap impacts the behavior and perceptions of faculty toward staff. “Many of the staff are more educated, more experienced, but the faculty look at staff as helpers” (staff4).

**Faculty perceptions of staff.** Faculty struggled to define the role of professional staff with the same level of specificity for which staff described the role of faculty. Overall, faculty identified staff as support to the main purpose of the institution: “support of the students, support of the administration, and support of the faculty” (faculty5). “Staff are more of our supporting personnel -- it ranges from office assistants to the President” (faculty7). Yet, while faculty identified the value of staff to the institution’s function, faculty perceived a level of disconnect between the professional staff and the educational process. One attribute of the disconnect extends from the perception of faculty regarding the staff work day. The faculty identified the staff mentality as an 8:00am – 4:30pm work day, whereas faculty identify their jobs as a 24/7 workload. “Professional staff, and this is not for all staff because there are some staff that go above and beyond and work longer hours than I could dream of, but in general I feel like that expectation for staff is to work from 8:00 to 4:30, go home, see you” (faculty3). An additional faculty member commented that this mentality may stem from the requests (or demands) of a supervisor:

They [staff] come in at 8 and go to the desk and they are chained to that desk. This can go both ways, they have to work their full shift and
regardless of how busy they are, their supervisor may tell them it is 4:30 you go home now. . . not all staff are not 9-5 people. There are some staff that are just fine with continuing to stay at work regardless. (facultyP2)

Even when defining the role of staff, faculty explained that staff work as “more of a 9-5, well-outlined position” (faculty2). The aspects of availability and access are recognized by faculty: “[staff] come in at 8 and go to the desk and they are chained to that desk” (facultyP2). The “chained to the desk” mentality extends into the development of the working relationship between faculty and staff. Rather, this adds to the disconnect, as faculty noted that working with other faculty is easier in terms of scheduling meetings. “We [faculty] are not chained to our desk as staff are” (faculty5).

Faculty also identified a behavioral impact of their perceptions of staff. When asked the question whether they had ever been in a conversation with other faculty and changed the topic when staff approached, the response was often affirmative. However, participants attributed the change of dialogue to selecting a new topic of conversation more appealing to a “mixed” audience. Faculty perceived staff as disinterested in classroom activities and pedagogy: “Most of the time when we change the conversation it's more because we don't want to bore the staff member if they aren't concerned about our teaching methods or those sorts of things” (faculty4). Thus, the conversation changed as a staff member entered the conversation. However, from the perspective of faculty the transition served to increase inclusion of the staff member to the conversation. “…I changed it [topic of conversation] because if they [staff] walked up, we might have been talking about something indigenous to the classroom and I just
didn’t want them to feel out of place” (faculty1). In a follow-up response, a faculty member noted: “I think they [staff] feel removed from the actual education of the students. The result is that they feel they do not impact the educational process” (facultyFUR). However, the behavior of faculty would indicate that the separation exceeds the physical distance between the staff and the classroom, but it is extended in the thoughts and actions of faculty changing the topics of conversation -- excluding information relevant to instruction.

The perceived educational disconnect extends to the faculty perception of professional staff’s educational attainment. With an overwhelming consensus of staff who recognized the educational barrier between faculty and staff follow-up questions were asked of faculty. In response, faculty confirmed the existence within their cultural group of those who look down on individuals [staff] with fewer [traditional] credentials (facultyFUR). In an examination of the demographic data, those participating in the study exhibited an extremely equal balance of educational achievement between faculty and staff participants. As seen in Table 7, seven professional staff and nine faculty participants brought a high level of academic achievements to the institution -- five faculty and three professional staff exceeding graduate course work past the Master’s degree level.

Misunderstanding the educational achievements of staff may contribute to the additional frustration within this campus group. Faculty, purposefully or otherwise, communicated a level of disvalue of the staff voice -- ultimately muting the voice of the professional staff and stifling knowledge and skills of proven staff members. Staff4 stated: “I am an ‘assistant’ in a lot of people’s eyes even though I drive a main process
for WCTC.” This frustration continues, as staff shared their need to explain their role to faculty, answering, “What do you even do?” (staffP1) or stating, “I am not just…” (staff5) in relation to their impact and role at the college. Clearly, staff meet the educational requirements of employment, and most exceed the minimum demands. This gap between the faculty expectations of degree attainment for staff requires professional staff to mentally process future interactions with faculty. The planning allows for staff to develop a means for proving one’s ability to contribute to the intellectual thought processes of the institution.

**Role uncertainties about staff.** Faculty admitted uncertainty regarding staff positions on campus, which range from a lack of comprehension of the day-to-day duties and include a failure to understand the necessity and number of positions. The role-based uncertainties mirror across campus sub-groups, both faculty and staff questioning similar concerns. Primarily, questioning justification of work load: “. . .if they can give one person an entire program to run, it seems like they can pare down some of the others [departments]” (faculty3). This sentiment was shared by another faculty member from the perspective of numerous staff working under the structure of one department: “[w]e have several employees in the [department] and I know on paper what their titles are, but I don’t understand what they do in the year – I envision a lot of down time” (faculty6).

Faculty also identified their responsibility in failing to understand the duties of professional staff. FacultyP2 stated: “Maybe I just misunderstand their job,” and faculty4 admitted: “that could be my ignorance [as to their duties].” Faculty noted that interacting with professional staff through committee work, or seeking out opportunities
to learn more about the campus infrastructure, often lessens the confusion and creates a greater appreciation of the work of professional staff.

**Summary of Role Perceptions**

From the staff perception of lazy faculty to faculty the envisioning down time of staff, the divide could stem from the lack of understanding the way in which members of the campus community work toward the ultimate mission of the institution. As one staff member stated: “I am treated as...what I am doing is not important, I am ‘just there’ in student services...which is kind of what the whole college is about.” Yet, faculty assumed that staff struggle with being disconnected from the mission of the institution. Faculty and staff both discuss the aspect of a gap:

I think, not everyone agrees with me (that the divide exist)...but, we are past the days of segregation – we should move past it. But as the institution we segregate employees – just my two cents, yes we segregate our faculty and staff. It is not that one is better than the other; we all have our own job. (facultyP2)

Although in a joking manner, faculty5 stated: “I don't really consider other people's job duties very much because it's not really any of my damn business.” This level of faculty autonomy appears synonymous with definition and expectations of faculty. A need exists for both faculty and staff to possess a mutual understanding of role function to better serve the students. One staff member described the gap between faculty and staff as the “faculty/staff continental divide” (staff4). In essence, while faculty and staff both emphasized the value and positive connections of the colleagues with whom they
proactively select to work, a level of skepticism exist within each role as to work ethic and expectations, particularly when comparing workloads.

Findings Related to Research Questions One and Two

The third theme, rank and elitism, supported the findings of Research Question One and Two, as the perceptions of faculty toward staff and staff toward faculty often balanced on these two concepts. Rank and elitism, historically founded in higher education organizational structures and governance often come into the discussion when addressing the faculty and staff relationship (University of California, 1999). The following section defines rank and elitism, describes how the participants relate to the concepts, and provides the participants’ connection to rank and elitism to the faculty and staff perceptions.

Theme Three: Rank and Elitism

The third theme, rank and elitism, examined the influences of the unspoken hierarchy between faculty and staff, also within the faculty co-culture. Rank refers to the concept of one group having a dominant voice, power, and control of institutional changes. Rank also allows for a deferment of certain tasks to the subordinate group. Elitism refers to the ownership of ranking system and perpetuating the dominant group’s rule over the subordinate group. Rankism was noted by participants as faculty having rank over staff throughout the following discussion of Theme Three. Rank also appears within the faculty subgroup. Faculty noted that the promotion process differentiates less experienced faculty with those who have served the institution longer creating a pecking order within the faculty culture. The unspoken value attributed to rank and elitism offers more data to understand the perceptions of faculty and professional staff.
One staff member described a past event in which the staff prepared to ascertain a campus resource, and a faculty member asked the staff what they were working on—the staff member responded with the plan. Scoffing, the faculty member responded: “You know there is a pecking order around here? If a faculty member wants that [resource] they will get it” (staffP1). Rank is not limited to the concept of, “faculty have rank over staff” (faculty7). In addition to faculty having rank over staff, a hierarchy exist within the faculty ranks. Two faculty participants who worked at the institution for five years or less discussed the hierarchy within faculty ranks. One participant stated: “I was seen as junior faculty. I was told by individuals on campus, that although I had years of experience…that I shouldn’t say anything” (faculty6). In addition to this comment, faculty1 added, “I try to be very cognizant of my place in the pecking order (laughs). I don’t mean it in a bad way, I just know.” The impact of the campus hierarchy does not only impact the faculty and staff relationship, it also impacts the communication and contributions within faculty politics. Staff recognized the hierarchy of faculty rank over staff as a motivating factor to decide against participating in certain situations. Yet, faculty identified rank and politics as validation for remaining silent in certain workplace conversations. As noted by facultyP2, “There are more politics in education than in politics.”

Primarily, the focus of elitism and rank falls onto the attitudes and behaviors of faculty. However, many of the participating faculty did not identify a level of individual concern within their personal working environment, as many mentioned selecting to work with faculty and staff who shared a similar mission, attitude, and work ethic. Faculty participants discussed the existence of an attitude of elitism. Faculty5: “I know
there are people on campus, who are faculty, who feel that they are superior to staff for reasons I do not understand.” Some faculty and staff limited the nature of the elitist attitudes to more experienced faculty. WCTC’s historical foundation exists upon a university system, potentially impacting the institution’s culture. FacultyP1: “I think sometimes, you have the older faculty that feel they are above the staff, when I say older I don’t necessarily mean age as I do experience – they feel they shouldn’t have to work with staff, as if it is beneath them.” Staff recognized the differences between the faculty attitudes from the perspective of experience within higher education. Staff6 provided:

They [faculty] seem real elitist to me. They are like – “we are faculty” and they come and go at will. They [more experienced faculty] have more of that university mindset. They just seem more elitist – “I come in, I teach my class, I go. I have summers off – don’t expect me to do something else, don’t look for me” [type of] faculty.

WCTC initiated as a branch from a university system. As the system grew, the university influence lessened prior to separating into two different institutions (document). The nature of the attitudes are indicated in staff interviews as several discussed the idea of knowing with whom they would be willing to work and the faculty they avoid. The elitist attitude influenced faculty and staff relationships, as staff indicated a level of fear of faculty. This impacts the perception of faculty, taking the concept of institutional support to a level that negatively impacts the professional relationships on campus. Faculty7 stated: “I think the professional staff are treated like they’re at everyone’s beck and call. They don’t get asked as much as they get told, to where faculty are asked.”
In the same vein as the educational misconception of staff, the educational barrier seemingly fosters a class system that labels employees in a synonymous nature. Faculty are to the thinking class, as professional staff are to the working class. Staff3: “I feel like there’s a perception of faculty, maybe, are the thinkers and staff members need to be the workers.” This idea develops into behaviors, as the institution recently processed several programs and initiatives to improve campus recruitment, admissions, and retention methods. The initial efforts would begin with thinking and critically analyzing the ideas of the campus community. The committees primarily included faculty, with some staff representation. As the process transitioned from thinking through ideas to implementation, the energy shifted from faculty to staff (observation). Staff3 identified those experiences and supported the thinking versus working class separation of role. The participant described the perceived attitude of faculty: “[i]t’s okay, ‘we [faculty] had some ideas and now you all [staff] make it work’”. The influence of the working class mentality stifles the actions and innovations of staff members. “We are just expected to implement policies or just go about [tasks], don’t think, don’t do this or that and I have met that – I have seen it when I have tried to do things that require research or thinking outside what I have been told to do – people question why I would do things outside of my job duties” (staff1).

While the commentary out of context can be perceived as a hostile and unwelcoming work environment, the near consensus of participants identified the working relationship between faculty and staff at WCTC as positive. However, the participants clearly framed the positive experience with the knowledge of those campus community members who disvalue the role and/or input of professional staff. Therefore,
the root of the concern diverges to potential perpetuations of the misaligned perceptions. The nature of the divide is noted by participants to be highlighted by certain members of the campus community. However, staff participants were quick to discuss the varied campus policies and overall structure that fosters the gap (discussed in Theme Five).

**Technical faculty perspective.** Three technical faculty participated in the research initiative ranging in service to the institution from under 5 years to over 15. However, while in separate interviews, all technical faculty supported the idea of eradicating the rankism that currently exists and refusing to participate in the role differentiation. The technical faculty noted that the structure of the organization and current culture separate the faculty and staff. The overall concern of technical faculty was the teamwork required to develop successful students.

. . .there should not be a difference between faculty and staff. The educational institutions that we work for love to put them in separate categories – we love to label. . .I can’t go teach in the classroom if there isn’t someone paying the light bill. We are all in this together, but people fail to remember that a lot of days. (facultyP2)

The technical faculty provided clear and enthusiastic support of a team mentality. The technical faculty, varying in department and division, centered on the valuable recognition of the skills of all team members. “We all work together. I can’t do my job without the staff, and a lot of times the staff people can’t necessarily do their job without the faculty. If we lose one, we are not going to have the other” (facultyP2). The sentiments are, not only united, but nearly identical: “We all have to work together. No one can do one job without the other. No one would be very efficient without the other.
It takes us all to get the job done” (faculty7). Not only do technical faculty recognize the value of the team approach to managing working relationships, but also as the institution faces amplified demands to increase recruitment and retention efforts:

Yes, because we all need to be on the same page if we’re going to have a successful institution and we all know budgets are down, numbers are down, woe is me, blah, blah, blah and if we’re going to change that, we all have to be on the same page, we all have to be willing to work together no matter what it takes. (faculty3)

Additionally, technical faculty stressed the necessity of better understanding the various roles and departments on campus. Faculty1 discussed the value of the technical faculty engaging and encouraging students in technical programs to seek out the value of general education courses: “I personally think that we need more interaction between the departments with faculty. I don’t think that we always appreciate what everyone else does.” The team mentality clearly resonated within the technical faculty and translated the team mindset to also include the necessity to eliminate gaps between faculty and staff, also between faculty in terms of rank and “sides of the academic world” (i.e., technical and general education).

Faculty in the study recognized that staff do not share the same power and voice as faculty. However, faculty were cautious to discriminate against the professional staff and their contributions to the campus, particularly technical faculty. However, staff provided clear examples of the impact of rank and elitism
on their perceptions of faculty. Staff perceived faculty as elitist in their attitudes toward the completion of certain tasks.

Findings Related to Themes Four and Five: Impact on Campus

Research Question Three asked, How do the perceptions that faculty and professional staff hold regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges? As the perceptions of faculty and professional staff are articulated above, the remaining themes examined the impact of the perceptual gap between faculty and staff on the organizational culture of the campus. Theme Four examined the muted voice of staff on the college campus culture. As the power is regularly shifted to faculty, staff often fail to contribute to dialogue, or faculty do not include the staff perspective. Theme Five detailed the organizational influences of developing and perpetuating the divide between faculty and staff.

Theme Four: Invisible Impact – Silencing Staff

Theme Four focused on the silenced perspective of professional staff on the campus community. Staff perceived the faculty actions as a means to eliminate staff from touching the final product of the institution, which is graduates. Prior to employment at WCTC, a faculty participant who worked as staff at another institution believed that “[f]aculty are expected to be seen and heard on campus. Staff, I feel, from the top down expected to be seen on campus, but not heard – they are expected to stay behind the curtain – in the land of Oz.” The participant went on to address concerns for the same attitudes at WCTC. As faculty empathize with the concerns of the muted voice of staff, the professional staff experience moments of being silenced. One participant stated: “I am supposed to take notes and not say anything – after I did [speak up], I was
told that my job was to take notes, not speak” (staff2). Faculty witness the experiences of staff being muted, creating a tone of invisibility, providing observations of staff being reminded of their silent role on campus. As noted in the following reflection, “…saying to staff that this is not a good idea or thank you for your input, but you are only staff and you don’t have any input – that is a faculty decision” (facultyP2). A nod to the educational barriers, faculty will silence staff in regard to institutional politics and misperceptions of staff. The level of silence persists through the levels of educated and experienced staff.

A large concern for staff falls on the invisibility of their educational achievements and work experience. As previously discussed, faculty perceived staff as less educated, and staff recognized the perception exists through personal experiences. Staff4 stated: “I am one of the most knowledgeable people here on (field of work), and I am never looked at like that – never.” The participant continued: “[i]t’s just insulting, anything I say is ignored. I can speak, free to speak, definitely. But, as soon as you want an answer, that person looks to another faculty and flat out says, ‘I want to go with you [the faculty].’” The frustrated tone was not limited to one participant, as several staff noted a level of irritation when attempting to impact campus policies or procedures, particularly when related to student success. One staff member described a meeting in which he/she was invited to participate in a planning session. The attendees of the meeting were selected based upon their expertise and realm of experience. However, the staff member described the tone of the meeting as clearly distancing the roles of the participants. Entering the meeting excited to contribute to an academic conversation, the staff member’s attitude was changed as the intent of staff exclusion was made clear by
faculty early in the discussions. Faculty members excluded the ideas voiced by staff and looked to the ideas of fellow faculty members. Ironically, the context of the conversation would find the staff members, on paper, more credible for the decisions (document). Frustrated: “After a certain point, I stopped giving advice or comments because they [faculty] didn’t care to hear it – I was just there to say ‘good job’” (staff1).

The impact of the faculty and professional staff disconnect extends into the rituals of the institution, “after graduation that is when faculty really come together to celebrate, like woo-hoo, we got another class through. I think that is when they think that is their big accomplishment as if staff really had nothing to do with it” (staff6). Faculty are required to attend the graduation ceremony, wear traditional regalia, and are included in the ceremony. Staff typically do not attend graduation, unless serving on the graduation committee, which is primarily sustained by staff to plan for the event and monitor the logistics at graduation (i.e., registering graduates, serving at the reception, etc.) StaffP1 commented: “the perception is that faculty do the bulk of the work within the educational world.” Faculty, by definition, provide the institution with instruction – the product of the college. However, WCTC employ 80 professional staff and 93 faculty (WCTC Factbook, n.d.), creating a larger staff to student ratio than faculty to student.

The consensus clearly recognizes a power variance between faculty and staff. For staff, the concept of power was laughable, as several laughed at the concept of possessing the power to impact policy or other changes within the institution. With great emphasis, staff stated that power on campus was primarily held by faculty. Faculty confirmed the power balance, but mostly with a level of humility and discomfort.
Table 8

*Responses to Question 10*

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<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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<td>No. I have seen it and witnessed it first-hand. Faculty, at least my observation, on campus especially some faculty, maybe tenured faculty, get to more freely speak than others. I have seen staff members try to speak or try to initiate change, and I have seen them spoken down to very harshly.</td>
<td>No. I am not 100% sure why. If I knew, I think it would be easier to be a catalyst for change. There is a definite distinction between faculty and staff and the roles. It is hard to articulate.</td>
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<td>Oh no, uh no. A lot of it defaults to the faculty. I know in the college assembly meetings, when they are voting, many times they will say the staff don’t vote because their vote doesn’t count. That is bad; it is like they don’t count. I think that is bad because they do count; they are just as important on this campus.</td>
<td>No (laughter). I think that, well one thing, is that faculty are able to vote and they are able to vote on things at college assembly as staff are not. I think there are specific staff quorums where staff can vote, but for the most part it is never the case. Faculty definitely have more power, if it was something that is exclusively related to the staff, like a registration issue or transcript, something like that, then only staff would connect there and would</td>
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<td>That is a good question. Policy change, it depends on the policy you’re talking about. If it’s smoking in the classroom, no e-cigarettes, it’s probably faculty, but then if it’s some kind of policy as far as maybe the way you report benefits on bereavement or something like that, faculty would probably edge staff out, but pretty close. I’m not trying to be evasive here. Like in a plant, you know who’s got the power, but here it seems to be much more and I know it’s not really simple to say this in a lot of circles - but there’s more of a democratic rule here.</td>
<td>No - Well because we don't really have a choice. We can say what we want, but they, Big Brother makes the decisions for that.</td>
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<td>Yes.</td>
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<td>When it comes to resisting change, I feel like staff can resist change more easily. I feel like faculty members are forced to change because “I guess we affect the bottom …” I feel like we’re told that we affect the bottom line more because we’re directly responsible for the students and how they come to campus, how they feel when they get here because we’re one-on-one with them so I feel like we’re forced to change whereas a lot of staff members I feel like still maintain the status quo because they don’t feel like they have to worry about losing their job or anything like that.</td>
<td>I’d say on an individual basis yes, but because the group of faculty is so much larger as a whole, I don’t feel like staff members probably are as powerful in terms of governance and change initiatives. Collectively we're not as powerful.</td>
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<th>Faculty</th>
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<td>For non-academic policies and procedures, possibly. But for academic policies and procedures, it pretty much falls on the faculty. That is the way this system is designed.</td>
<td>I don't. One of the reasons is I'll take for example the school calendar. See I can't vote which makes no sense to me, because that's fine if they want to start class four days after we get back, but from an admissions point of view and getting everybody ready to go in four days, we have begged them to not here necessarily, somewhere else, but just to push it back one more week.</td>
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That's a tough one because I think we all, both faculty and staff, have the flexibility of going to our supervisors and our leaders and voicing concerns. I don't think that our leadership has a preference of faculty and staff. I think if a faculty member walked in and complained about policies, that they would be taken just as seriously as a staff member who complained. I don't see any discrimination really. |

Absolutely not. |

No. Sometimes I don't feel that staff has as equal say as faculty does. In some situations that I've been in, it's pretty much been said that. |

I do not. I think it's literally the way the rules are written with what staff are not allowed to vote on. Very seldom are we allowed to vote on things in assembly. It's not subjective. It in the rules, there are a lot of things we can't do. |

A particular incident noted by a participant identified the degree of which the balance to power is culturally embedded to belong to faculty. A staff member reported attending a training session, at the direction of a supervisor, which was primarily guided toward faculty. Upon entering the meeting location, the administrative staff members leading the session reprimanded the staff member for attending because they “were not faculty.” The information was vital to the job of the staff member, the training was restricted based upon campus role, and the staff member was publically reprimanded.

**Theme Five: Organizational Influences**

The fifth theme focused on the organizational elements that influence the perpetuation of the faculty and staff separation: including the system policies such as promotion and performance evaluations, available benefits based upon employee status,
governance for decision making, and integration of collaborative tasks. The intergroup connections through committee meetings fail to support a social setting for intergroup relationships. Staff observed: “[i]f I were to look around at friendships and different professional relationships it is typically faculty within faculty and staff within staff.” The participant continued: “Crossover between faculty and staff is not frowned upon, but it is not natural. . .” The values of the two groups vary between academics and student services. While both strive for student success, the means of achieving this goal differs. Staff recognize the faculty perception of student services as hand holding or spoon feeding, whereas staff defend their role as supporting agents of student success – assisting in overcoming barriers.

Language of the organization also is impacted. Faculty and staff utilized phrases that spotlight the differences between the co-cultures. These phrases include: faculty buy-in, faculty decisions, that side of the world, faculty side, and staff side. While discussing the positive working environment, faculty and staff used language that separated the two groups, even in the frame of collaboration.

**Institutional and system policies.** The performance evaluation process allows WCTC employees to identify and report on goals for each academic year (document). While both faculty and staff complete the performance evaluation process, the outcomes of the paperwork drastically differ. Faculty complete the performance evaluation as a component of the promotion process. Faculty work on a three-three-six process, i.e., after three years of employment, the faculty member can submit for promotion to the next faculty rank. The promotion process moves forward again after three more years and finally, the terminal faculty rank after an additional six years of service. Staff, in
comparison, complete the performance evaluation form but do not enjoy the same structured promotion process. For the staff to move up the hierarchy, other employees must leave the institution, or a position must be created. Faculty3: “I never thought about the fact that staff members aren’t [eligible for the promotion process] someone mentioned, ‘Well, at least you get to apply for promotion,’ and that struck me because staff members really aren’t eligible to apply.” The process of promotion is laborious, according to faculty, wasting valuable time and resources. However, staff also struggle with the performance evaluations as the system for completing the process has been changed for the past three consecutive years (observation). The system of evaluation is altered and tested on staff prior to opening the new process to include faculty. The faculty and staff systems for performance evaluation vary, not only in the implementation, but in the reward. Faculty promotions lead to a system-wide pay band system for increased salary compensatory to the change in rank. Staff evaluations do not correlate with the promotion process; therefore, there is no monetary reward for meeting or exceeding workplace expectations.

**Human Resources.** Staff also noted that as to the nature of the roles, the benefits also differ. Benefits mentioned by participants included sick and vacation time and work from home policies. Staff indicate the lack of sick days for faculty, whereas staff accrue sick days monthly. However, staff also noted that if a faculty member is sick, they can set online assignments for students and not file a vacation day – this varies based upon supervisors and department expectations. Vacation days also were another area of differentiation. Faculty are allotted 22 days of vacation annually. Staff earn vacation time based upon the years of service to the institution, typically seven days for the first
year. While faculty are allotted more vacation days annually, these vacation days do not roll over to future years, and any unused time is lost. Staff accrue vacation time and unused time accumulates. Finally, staff indicated a level of differentiation in a work from home policy. Administration does not allow faculty or staff to work from home during the work day. Staff noted the general acceptance of faculty being allowed to work from home in certain situations. For example, over fall and spring break – if faculty are available via phone or email, they do not report to campus.

**Governance.** Governance is the structure in which decisions are made on a college campus, primarily referred to as faculty governance (Brown, 2000). Faculty and staff both reference the inability of staff to participate in the majority of the voting procedures. Staff1 voiced clear frustration in the silencing of staff at college-wide meetings, “You can’t vote, you are not a part of this – but we needed to be present…which makes absolutely no sense.” A recent vote on the institution’s academic calendar was mentioned by several faculty and staff participants as a valid case to support expanded voting rules. The calendar impacts the institution as a whole. Admissions, recruiting, course development, and other departments feel the impact of a change in the starting date of the semester or a shift in academic holidays. However, as the academic calendar is approved by the campus, only faculty are able to vote on the changes.

The inability to participate in a system of shared governance within the institution founded a large portion of the silencing of the staff perspective. Faculty and staff agreed that the current system at WCTC confuses the concept of collegiate collaboration. The professional staff attend monthly meetings along with faculty, yet
they are rarely allowed to participate in the voting process. Faculty4 discussed the governance process: “[w]hile I understand faculty governance, it is concerning that something like the academic calendar which does impact our admissions, our financial aid, our recruitment, our counseling, it impacts a lot of our staff members that we don’t credit them with a vote.” Faculty4 explained the historical foundations of faculty governance and, as did many participants, supported faculty governance in the curriculum-based decisions of the institution. Despite the protection of faculty governance for curriculum, the overall agreement of participants encouraged the development of more prototypical shared governance.

**Integrated Environments.** Faculty and staff noted that the nature of the job duties and demands impact the level of interaction with a member from the other co-culture. Staff7 provided a metaphor of the benefits of the intergroup actions:

> I would say it’s [higher education] like a sixth-grade dance with the boys on one side and the girls on one side. Once you have a chance to get to know someone, and the committees are a way to do that. Anytime I have served on a committee or I have been on a hiring committee, then it helps foster that relationship.

Several faculty and staff noted the value of committee work and special projects for bridging the connection between faculty and staff. Faculty, in particular, noted the value of intergroup interactions as a means of becoming more aware of the roles of staff within the campus community. Yet, the division between faculty and staff also is perceived within the committee structure. Staff4 discussed that the development of the committee structure often leans toward serving the needs of faculty promotion documentation,
versus the demands and expectations of the committee. Faculty who are pursuing promotion in the current two-year service of the committee often will lead the committee as a means to add institutional service to the promotion documentation. “The chair person [of the committee] is going to be a faculty member with a promotion notebook -- it usually has nothing to do with the mission of the committee” (staff4). During meetings, committee members will ask who is up for promotion as a factor in deciding the group’s leadership (observation). Taking into consideration the faculty bias, staff and faculty find benefits in the committee structure and other initiatives on campus that encourage the intergroup dialogue. “I just think the more you offer opportunities for faculty and staff to interact on common ground in fun ways, in professional ways. . . the more we can interact on a regular basis, the more I think you learn to appreciate and respect the other person for what they do” (staff7).

In addition to the intergroup work of committees and special projects, faculty and staff noted the nature of the facilities as a means of connecting with members of the other sub-group. The campus provides some areas of the campus where faculty and staff offices co-habitat, while other areas are strictly one or the other. Staff discussed the potential for more integrated working environments. Faculty valued the time to share in classroom successes and failures, which may not be conducive in an integrated office structure.

**Summary of Cultural Impact**

A gap exists between faculty and staff on the community college campus. The perceptions of faculty and professional staff clash, with the self-reported view of professional identities leaving a divide of misunderstanding. While participants noted an
overall positive working environment, they also provided the foundation for clearly recognizing misaligned views of the co-cultures. Those who identify the divide provide a variation of the segregation, ridding the divide of faculty and staff labels, but rather as campus employees who focus on students’ success and share a similar work ethic versus those who do not share those values or are difficult with whom to work. Faculty and staff alike stated, that when developing teams, the primary consideration is not faculty or staff status. Rather, the values taken under consideration are identifying campus employees who seek to enhance the educational experience for the growth of students and willingly work to collaborate on such efforts. The key then becomes eliminating those who fail to share the same dedication toward and/or definition of the goal. The divide, both from current organizational logistics and historical context, fosters attitudes that delineate collaborators from non-collaborators.

I think there’s a group of faculty members that are never going to associate with staff outside of what they’re required to do, but vice versa I feel that there’s a group of staff that are the exact same way, they wouldn’t even know where to start – how to find a faculty office. (staff3)

Faculty4 disclosed:

There are a lot of faculty members who I avoid, more than I try to go out and be proactive and get to know them. When I first started, I was much more proactive about trying to go talk to other faculty and get to know them. The longer I work here, the less I tend to do that and the more I only stick with the people who are positive and have a good attitude. . .
The delineation of power also fostered a level of skepticism and fear of faculty that staff members possess. Staff6 stated, “I think some of the staff are really afraid of the faculty.” The implication of the power differential and perceived value of faculty voice over staff creates an environment in which staff are more likely to suppress input, define their role as a “working class,” and express frustrations when their intellectual value is unappreciated. The power of faculty and the stated expectation of a silent staff narrows the diversity of the dialogue that exists within the campus structure. While the committee structure allows for opportunities to connect staff with faculty, the interaction does not require a value of the staff voice. One staff participant identified a committee that frequently engaged in discussions dominated by staff. During a particular discussion, a faculty member refused to participate in the initiative and walked out. Apprehension of retribution or failure of the project was a legitimate concern – the project has yet to be initiated on campus after a year of discussions (observation). While participants disclosed positive relationships, and some faculty refer to the power differential as non-existent, this counters the sentiments recorded in the researcher’s reflexive journal. After the interviews were completed, many participants debriefed concerns relative to the negative aspects of the faculty and staff relationship. As noted in the reflexive journal, participants described concerns for the institution’s culture – failing to value the diligent and quality work of professional staff. One participant worried that the institution will continue to lose excellent staff due to the failure of the institution to recognize their intellectual value.

The perceptions of faculty and professional staff impact the culture of the community college. These perceptions foster an environment that silences the perception
of professional staff through the exclusion of staff’s voice in standard committee meetings relative to the policies that dictate the governance of campus and excludes staff from participating in voting procedures.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided the results of the study from the data collected through the interviews, document analysis, and observations. The review provided an understanding of themes that answered the research questions. The following and final chapter utilizes the results detailed in Chapter IV in order to draw conclusions and provide recommendations. Chapter V will examine the limitations and suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER V: RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter develops the findings detailed in Chapter IV and further examines the results. The purpose of the study was to identify the role-based perceptions and to understand the impact of these perceptions have on a college culture. Three research questions framed the direction of the study:

RQ1: How do professional staff perceive faculty?

RQ2: How do faculty perceive professional staff?

RQ3: How do the perceptions that faculty and professional staff regard of one another impact the culture of community colleges?

Chapter V addresses the (a) summary of key findings, (b) limitations of the study, (c) and implications and recommendations for practice. The chapter concludes with (d) recommendations for future research.

Summary of Key Findings

Upon the examination of literature surrounding the faculty and staff professional relationship, a clear gap was noted in the dialogue concerning collaborative efforts. Projects were studied that requiring faculty and staff to work in tandem. However, the research focused on ways to manage the faculty and staff dynamic, not understanding the foundation of the clash between the groups. The body of research also found a strongly developed sense of the faculty roles, values, and beliefs. The same consideration for professional staff was not addressed in the available literature. As the recognition grew clear of a muted voice in the context of a dominant group, the co-cultural theory founded guiding principles for a theoretical framework research to explain the divide within a singular context (Orbe, 1998). Based on the results detailed
in Chapter IV, five themes appear to be significant in understanding the perceptions of faculty and professional staff, and the impact of these perceptions on the culture of the community college campus. The following themes emerged from the analysis of interviews, documents, and observations:

- Theme One: Staff Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties of Faculty
- Theme Two: Faculty Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties of Staff
- Theme Three: Rank and Elitism
- Theme Four: Invisible Impact – Silencing of Staff
- Theme Five: Organizational Influences

This chapter provides a review of each theme and its significance to scholarship. Themes One, Two, and Three provide a response to Research Question One (How do professional staff perceive faculty?) and Two (How do faculty perceive professional staff?). Themes Four and Five speak to the concerns of Research Question Three, How do the perceptions of faculty and professional staff hold regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges?

**RQ1: How do professional staff perceive faculty?**

**Theme One: Staff Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties of Faculty**

The outcome of Theme One (staff perceptions, expectations, and uncertainties of faculty) supports the answer to Research Question One: “How do professional staff perceive faculty?” Staff perceive faculty as educators who are not held accountable for time dedicated to the workplace and as employees who perpetuate the existing rankism and elitist attitudes. All participants were asked to provide an explanation, from their perspective, of their role to the institution. In the same vein, all participants also were
asked to define the roles of the alternative group. As professional staff were asked to
describe the role of faculty at the community college, they clearly articulated the
demands and responsibilities for faculty, leaving little to the unknown. The staff
perception of faculty serving the institution as instructional leaders and involved in
campus and community committees and events clearly connected the faculty definition
of their role with the perceptions of the staff. However, staff participants discussed a
level of unavailability, uncertainty to the accountability of faculty time, and lack of
connection between the faculty and the procedures of the institution. Faculty value the
autonomy and collegiality between faculty peers (Chung et al., 2010). This level of
autonomy and connection to faculty peers can contribute to the perception of disconnect
and unavailability, as faculty often are more connected with other members of their co-
culture.

Primarily, the perceptions of professional staff on faculty develop from a
comparison of expectations between two different employment structures. Staff
commented on the contrasting expectations between faculty and staff, particularly the
accountability of time and availability. Staff indicated that their role, access, and
availability are key factors to satisfactorily completing their job duties; this often leaves
staff static during the day within the office environment. Within student affairs, staff
struggle to agree upon their roles and functions; yet, when discussing the variances
between faculty and staff roles, identity creates a dichotomy (Schuh et al., 2011).
Faculty, in comparison, are required to note 10 to 12 office hours per week, indicating
the only time for faculty availability limited to those time frames (Cohen & Brawer,
2008). However, with the level of uncertainty and confusion of faculty expectations for
contributing to the campus community, faculty did not recognize the need to defend their role. Thus, the faculty rarely proactively communicate with staff as to the nature of their role at the institution. After conclusion of the interviews, faculty noted a recognition of negative attitudes from staff regarding faculty. The participants also negated the negative connotations of the staff perceptions of faculty based upon a personal understanding of their level of contributions to the campus. Finkelstein et al. (1998) found that the average faculty member worked 50 hours per week in order to accomplish the required duties associated with the position. The nature of the unwritten job duties expands throughout academic careers and is not detailed in the concept of instruction. Expanding the concept of instruction to detailing student interaction, developing courses, maintaining the course, providing quality student feedback, and providing engaging course lectures is assumed in the standard description of “instruction”; however, often it is forgotten by others, as it is not listed in the duties.

Additional requirements, such as service to the institution and the community, are vague and provide no concrete language for understanding (Billot, 2006).

Professional staff perceive faculty as instructors. However, professional staff perceive faculty as disconnected from the institution on a procedural level, using power to dictate the decisions prior to deferring the actions of implementing the decision to the staff. Professional staff perceive the organizational structure of the institution to favor faculty in terms of promotion, institutional governance, and job flexibility.

**RQ2: How do faculty perceive professional staff?**

**Theme Two: Faculty Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties of Staff**
Theme Two examined the tenants of the self-analysis of staff to faculty perceptions of professional staff to answer the research question, “How do faculty perceive professional staff?” Faculty perceive staff as a less educated, “working-class,” who serve the institution only during working hours (8:00am – 4:30pm). As previously mentioned, faculty discussed their role identity as a never-ending expectation to work for the institution. The 50-hour work week for faculty was noted throughout the interview process, and also was supported in the literature (Finkelstein et al., 1998). Faculty failed to clearly articulate the role of staff on the college campus outside of the concept of support. Ahren (2008) observed the diverse nature of the role of staff, complicating the development of a shared identity equivalent to faculty. Thus, the lack of a specific understanding of the staff role is limited to generalities (i.e., student support or out-of-class assistance).

While the need for student support services is clearly documented throughout research, Schuh et al. (2011) found that faculty questioned the contribution of professional staff to the success of the campus – a contradiction exists in research between faculty recognizing the need for staff in order for the institution to be successful and a lack of understanding of their roles (Kuh et al., 1999). In comparison to the role of faculty, staff roles are increasingly more diverse. As with the staff perspective of faculty, faculty compare the nature of their job duties to understand and explain the staff role. Faculty perceive the 8:00am to 4:30pm work schedule as a way of being free of work responsibilities outside of those hours, which faculty participants stated is not an aspect of the faculty role. This variation of perceived expectation also leads to a level of uncertainty between the work ethic of professional staff, as perceived by the faculty.
Faculty even indicated a concern of down time for professional staff during the ascribed working hours.

Faculty also perceived the connection between staff and education different than the way in which the staff define themselves. Faculty view staff as disconnected from the educational process of students and separate staff members’ educational achievements from workplace contributions. The faculty exclude staff, with good intentions, from pedagogical conversations. Kuh et al. (1999) recognized professional staff as a response to meet the increasing demands on the institution, including academic preparation, transitional education, and tutoring services. These staff positions, housed in an academic setting create a clash of need for inclusion in pedagogical dialogue. However, the faculty perception is that the staff’s primary role is to manage the “out-of-class” lives of students (p. 170).

Faculty also assumed that staff, on average, have earned an Associate’s degree. The average level of education between the participants of the study was nearly equal when comparing faculty and staff. The failed connection between staff and their educational achievements often creates a context in which staff strive to prove themselves. The level of over compensation leads to a frustration when contributions are not recognized, or attributed to the work of a faculty member, such as the experience of Staff4: “It’s really eye opening when you’re sitting at a meeting, and you've been working on a project for a year and a half and somebody stands up and takes all the credit for it.” Historically, faculty and staff have viewed the educational process different – faculty value the intellectual development, and staff focus on a more holistic learning experience (Magolda & Magolda, 2012). This area offers an opportunity for
future research, as little exists to understand the increasing educational achievements of staff and the potential impacts to any college campus culture. According to Cohen and Brawer (2008), faculty at a community college typically possess a Master’s degree in the teaching field for general education. Yet, the rise of student affairs Master’s degree programs has yet to be effectively considered as a change in the community college context.

Faculty perceive staff as support to the institution. As a supporting agent, faculty view see the value of staff to the community college environment. Remaining consistent with the conflicting research on faculty perceptions of staff, faculty also question the necessity of staff positions or general contributions of the staff role to the mission of the institution. It should be noted that faculty who participated in the research project were less vocal in voicing negative perceptions of faculty, versus the more candid expressions of discontent from staff.

**Theme Three: Rank and Elitism**

In examining the perceptions of faculty toward staff, and staff towards faculty – a clear theme of rank and elitism emerged. The identification of perceptions also provided an understanding of the hierarchical and rank-based values of the institution, supporting the answers for Research Questions One and Two. Professional staff provided experiences that detailed the extent to which faculty reminded staff of the organization’s hierarchy. Schein (1992) recognized the cultural boundaries of subgroups that clearly define in and out groups. These groups are developed with a shared understanding of the criteria for each group. Staff participants noted the overall interactions with faculty as positive. Yet, a group of faculty carry the elitist attitude and
impact the working relationship between faculty and staff at large. Faculty noted an 
attitude of their peers who expect staff to perform at the demands of faculty, versus 
collaborating with the staff members. Student affairs professionals highly value 
collaboration. As faculty enter the workforce and seek autonomy, student affairs 
employees enter the workforce and seek cooperative endeavors for student success 
(Love et al., 1993).

The ranking system also speaks to the faculty perceptions of staff. Several staff 
commented on the nature of faculty interactions that view staff as a “working class” and 
faculty as the thinkers of the campus. As faculty perceived staff to have less education, it 
is a logical step for faculty to control the development and structure of plan 
development. The University of California (1999) published a report on the faculty and 
staff partnership to improve the working relationship of the institution. The program was 
founded to increase communication and appreciation for each co-culture. In a follow-up 
report, the cross-department projects had increased, as well as overall participation 
(Council of University of California Staff Associates, 2004). However, many staff noted 
the expectation from the campus to implement the plans, with little help from the 
initiative’s developers.

Rank and elitism were impacted due to barriers maintained by faculty and staff. 
The small size of the campus made the elimination of access to the co-cultural groups 
implausible. Psychological barriers provided clear and directed strategies to delineate 
groups. The indications of a class system negatively impacted the interpersonal 
relationship between faculty and staff. Due to the complex nature of higher education 
institutions and historical backgrounds supporting current cultural norms, the partnership
efforts are thwarted by misaligned perspectives on a shared mission (Schuh & Witt, 1999). Regardless, the class system appears to be trumped by a different system. The underlying system of employees who value the mission of the institution and share a similar work ethic, versus those who are difficult with whom to work or only work for the salary. The intragroup system surpasses the cultural divide between faculty and staff and focuses on student success.

In an interesting conclusion, the technical faculty who participated in the study all connected the means of campus success to the contributions of all campus employees. Regardless of the broad range of employment with the institution, technical faculty refused to speak negatively of staff and, rather, offered solutions and suggestions to move the campus to a team mentality.

**Summary of Perceptions, Expectations, and Uncertainties**

Maubane and Oudstrhoorn (2011) defined the development of perceptions through active communicative events and predictive assumptions to others’ behaviors. The perceptions of lazy faculty and uneducated staff persist throughout the institution. Spratlen (1995) examined conflict in the university setting and found that 38% of professional staff reported mistreatment from faculty; only 11% of faculty reported mistreatment from staff. The nature of the perceptions are more complex than faculty regarding staff or staff regarding faculty. Rather, the implications of the perceptions extends to the recognition of both parties in understanding the presence of the stereotypes. Faculty and staff alike recognize stereotypes and perceptions about the dominant and co-cultural groups that exist within higher education and the studied campus. The faculty and staff divide clearly does exist. Mitchell (2004) testified in a
self-study relative to the impact of the disconnect between faculty and staff that creates added stress to the campus culture. From a misalignment of identities and perceptions, to skepticism, to questions of value, faculty and professional staff experience the community college culture in two different ways. In the initial development of co-cultural theory Orbe (1998) described that two individuals can experience the same day, place, and time; yet, based upon their group membership they can describe the tone of the day in drastically different language. Orbe provided the descriptive and emotionally charged example of a master and slave. The two individuals are on the same plantation, on the same day, at the same time; however, while both experience the same moment, group membership creates dramatically different perspectives. Clearly, the perceptions of faculty and staff vary when connecting the self-analysis to that of the perceptions of the other group. Thus, both groups perceive their counterparts as uncompleted images – missing key components to understanding the standpoint of the other. How do professional staff perceive faculty? Staff perceive faculty as unavailable, while failing to recognize the additional internal and external commitments to the institution required by the job description. How do faculty perceive professional staff? Faculty perceive staff as disconnected to the educational process, failing to recognize the academic component to many staff positions.

**RQ3: How do the perceptions of faculty and professional staff regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges?**

Themes Four and Five speak to the concerns of Research Question Three – the impact of the perceptions on the community college campus. In examining the gap between faculty and staff, a concern is the way in which these perceptions impact the
culture of the organization. The perceptions of the two co-cultures impact the culture of community colleges by the silencing of the staff and the structure and organization of the institution. For the purpose of this research, the organizational culture was a community and technical college. The community and technical college systems already face dynamic student populations, provide diverse academic programming, and pair general education and technical faculty within the same campus (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Thus, the complexity of the institution is innate, regardless of the faculty and staff component of the campus culture. Kotter and Heskett (1992) ascertained the development of an organization as it adapts to problem solving, agreeing upon a pattern of acceptable behaviors and actions. However, the perceptions of faculty and staff impacted the institution, as a disagreement is present relative to the contribution of campus members. Conversely, the nature of the organization’s institutional infrastructure also may contribute to the persistence of the divide. Strong cultures can see employees contributing 10 hours of additional productivity a week; however, weak cultures such as communication and understanding of roles leaves members researching rules and expectations and lowering productivity (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). The following section examines Theme Four, the invisible impact of staff on the college campus, and Theme Five, the influences of the organization on the divide.

**Theme Four: Invisible Impact – Silencing Staff**

Staff indicated, and faculty participants supported, feeling invisible in the campus structure. In a primary text on the community college structure, the staff identity was left silent (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). As chapters detailed the identity and needs of faculty, the content pertaining to staff focused on tasks rather than group identity.
Faculty participants noted that they witnessed events in which other faculty suppressed the input of staff, specifying the role of the participant as the primary concern of their contribution to the dialogue. Staff also note being reminded of the role’s unspoken rule – staff are to be present, but not heard. The invisibility impacts the level for which the staff feels valued in the mission of the institution. Staff, not only recognized the silencing through the governance and expectations of faculty, but also detailed experiences in which staff actively censored their voices. Power variations also feed off of the silencing of staff. Within the balance of power in the campus structure, faculty and staff agreed that the power on the campus belongs to the faculty. The University of California (1999) created a task force for faculty and staff partnerships and found a need to directly address civility. The nature of the relationship between faculty and staff often is narrowed to the impact of power on the limited contribution of staff to the dialogue. The perceptions of faculty and staff toward one another impact the culture of the campus, as the professional staff feel silenced based upon the well-defined hierarchy of the organization, perceived attitudes of faculty (working-class versus thinking-class mentality), and perceived lack of faculty accountability.

**Theme Five: Organizational Influences**

Several aspects of the institution’s structure were mentioned to remedy the characteristics of the faculty and staff divide. However, participants highlighted several aspects of the institution that perpetuate the divide. The promotion process, vacation and sick days, and governance clearly delineated the two roles; and many participants connected these institutional structures to the perpetuation of the divide. These policies – hiring, evaluation, award, tenure, merit pay, professional development – demonstrate a
level of variation based upon faculty or staff status. Faculty receive annual evaluations from administrators and semester evaluations from students, providing fodder for promotion. Staff typically experience annual evaluations; however, the evaluations do not connect to the clearly defined promotion structure for faculty. Staff advancement relies on the creation of new positions, the vacancy of a position, or leaving the institution to advance. The promotion process is noted as cumbersome by faculty, and the level of work involved in the promotion process does not outweigh the benefits (Menges & Associates, 1999). However, as noted by participants in the current study, at minimum, faculty have the option to participate in the promotion process.

Staff and faculty struggle with the concept of faculty-based governance policies for the majority of campus-wide voting decisions. All participants who commented on governance recognized the curriculum territory of faculty for decisions. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) defined governance as the “shared responsibility by faculty, administrators, and trustees,” (n.p) excluding staff. The concept of faculty governance is recognized by the NEA. The NEA briefly mentions staff; however, it focuses primarily on the inclusion of faculty in the decision-making process, classifying the inclusion as a means to increase faculty moral (AAUP, 2014). Other than curriculum, participants questioned the value versus the detriment of limiting the vote to one campus group. Collaborative tasks within the campus bring both positive and negative implications to the faculty and staff divide. While faculty and staff identify the collaborative efforts as a means of better understanding the roles of staff, the tasks also are perceived to serve the needs of the faculty. Staff claimed that the need for a faculty member to complete a promotion checklist would circumvent the purpose of the
committee to that of the mission of the institution. The structural implications of the campus, while providing access through attendance, only exemplify the level of the divide by silencing a group with extensive value. Staff pinpoint the concern for projects to be successful, adding that faculty must be included and supported in the initiative (Dassance, 1994). How do the perceptions that faculty and professional staff hold regarding one another impact the culture of community colleges? The perceptions of faculty and staff toward each other impacts the culture of the community college campus through the development and perpetuation of campus policies and organizational structure. While the historical foundation for faculty governance is well noted throughout research, it should be reconsidered in a time with an increasingly educated professional staff and intensified demands.

**Connection to Co-Cultural Theory**

Co-cultural theory frames the research in examining the interactions of a dominant group and co-cultures. As indicated, faculty serve as the dominant group of the campus hierarchy. Orbe (1998) developed 26 communication practices that describe the interworking of the co-cultures. Throughout the development of themes, several aspects of co-cultural theory support the understanding of faculty and staff. These communication practices include communicating self, avoiding, maintaining barriers, censoring self, overcompensating, intragroup networking, and emphasizing commonalities.

**Communicating Self**

Communicating self requires the co-cultural group member to authentically communicate with the dominant culture. The level of healthy interaction between faculty
and staff arises predominately from the staff who recognize the gap exists, and adapt their communication to influence the needs of the relationship. Staff communicate with a genuine drive to achieve the institution’s mission when recognizing a negative perception toward staff from faculty. “I think they [staff] focus more on processes and relationships within departments. I think through these, the staff mission is to have the college become more effective for student learning - our missions are the same” (staff4).

**Avoiding**

As noted, the faculty and staff seek out collaborative efforts. The team approach is valued among participants. The attitude and focus of campus members are the factors that most determine inclusion verses aversion. The practice of avoiding members of the dominant group extends to maneuvering to evade physical locations by the co-cultural group (Orbe, 1998). Faculty7 noted the avoidance between the faculty ranks: “Still in faculty meetings you'll see a majority of technical sits on one side, academic sits on the other. I would love to see that change, but as far as on our committees and sometimes in the committees, technical sitting on one side, academic is sitting on the other.” The researcher observed the “seating arrangement” at the college-wide meeting. However, while faculty7 did not believe the staff were separated, the researcher noted the staff sitting close together in smaller groups (observation).

**Maintaining Barriers**

Co-cultural groups also utilize interpersonal and psychological means to maintain barriers. “Typically, persons use interpersonal barriers to create and maintain a psychological distance when physical distance is impossible” (Orbe, 1998, p. 57). While a functional communication event, stating the specificity of the faculty vote in the
presence of staff, also verbalizes the pecking order. Other staff reference nonverbal behavior, such as the cliquish locations of faculty and staff at college-wide meetings.

**Censor Self**

Co-cultural groups often will silence their perspective and/or voice when they feel their contributions would only magnify the gap (Orbe, 1998). McClenny as cited in Orbe (1998) stated:

> When you disagree with someone else and your gut wants to “get them straight,” or “give them a piece of your mind, or “tell the son of a [expletive] off,” stop and think a minute, think about it and ask yourself, “what will I gain by arguing?” (p. 99)

This idea of “mental discipline” is demonstrated by the staff voice within the findings of this research. Staff articulated the clear expectation of considering the politics and hierarchy of the context before their decision to speak. However, faculty also voiced a similar social norm within the ranks of the faculty peers.

**Over Compensation**

Staff expressed a need to prove one’s self in order to balance the faculty perceptions faculty possess of staff as intellectually inferior. Faculty also recognized the desire of staff to prove themselves. “Co-cultural group members find themselves trying to be the exemplary team player” (Orbe, 1998, p. 71). The desire to get ahead, or simply be considered equal, is communicated frequently, as staff seek to obtain an equal level of appreciation for intellectual and academic achievements.
Intragroup Networking

The intragroup networking at WCTC can be observed in two formats. First, within the roles of staff and faculty, each indicated an increased ease of working with others from within the co-cultural group. As noted, faculty responsibilities require more movement to complete the task. Staff members primarily serve their role based upon the location of the department, binding them to the location of the office. The limited movement limits staff to available partners and collaborators. Second, two groups exist separate from the faculty and staff label. Many participants noted the value of faculty and staff who share a guiding framework of the institution’s mission and work diligently with a positive attitude. This creates an intragroup network of mission focused employees.

Emphasizing Commonalities

As demonstrated from the clear technical faculty perspective, “focus[ing] on human similarities while downplaying or ignoring co-cultural differences,” (Orbe, 1998, p. 58) provides a key point of discussion for WCTC’s organizational culture. Technical faculty emphatically emphasize the innate value of all team members within the college campus. Technical faculty agreed that power and hierarchy favor the dominant faculty group. Yet, the technical faculty nearly refused, in interviews, to speak of negative interactions or variations.

Limitations

Limitations occur within all research. The realm of qualitative research allows for fluidity and interpretation to better comprehend the complexity of dynamic situations. However, this fluidity limits the results of the research process. First, as
research bias can be managed through reflexive journaling and member checks, the ultimate interpretation is left to the researcher. The process was found to be difficult to separate personal experience from the data -- although, the struggle developed from the close parallels of personal experience. As with the nature of qualitative research, the direct connection to the concern of faculty and staff perceptions allows for a more intimate understanding of the data.

The research methods also create limitations to the study. First, as a case study, the results are exclusive to one institution. The limited view of the faculty and staff relationship limits the study’s outcomes and cannot be generalized to the faculty and staff relationship at large institutions within higher education. Second, the interview process created tension for some participants. While protected by the measures detailed in the informed consent, some participants asked that the recorder be turned off to clarify the individuals who would have access to the interview materials. After assuring confidentiality, some participants altered their demeanor. The nature of their response remained genuine, although the participants limited the specificity of the answer.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

The value of qualitative research is not for generalizability, as with quantitative research. The purpose of qualitative research is to understand and examine complex and dynamic relationships by gathering rich data for a detailed analysis. The research is limited by the nature of the methodology (case study) and limited number of participants. However, while the context limits the transferability of the results, the purpose and value of the research purpose and foundational understanding of the faculty and staff should be transferred to other campuses (i.e., four-year public, four-year
private, size of student population, etc.) and various campus structures (i.e., union versus non-union). The data from this study may allow individuals within higher education an initial understanding of the faculty and staff relationship outside of the basic knowledge the groups differ. Rather, it may instead allow some insight as to the complexities of the differences. Individuals serving in a leadership role within higher education may find these data valuable in managing the dynamics of the institution.

**Recommendations**

Both faculty and staff suffer from the damages and images of an invisible cloak of job responsibilities. For faculty, the cloak of invisibility hides the level of work involved in the job off site and after hours. For staff, the cloak blocks the faculty from seeing the day-to-day responsibilities of the position. Faculty and staff alike recognized the existence of the invisibility cloak and altered perceptions and communication to manage the unknown. Both groups must realize that the unknown does not equate stagnant contributions to the campus.

**Recommendations for systems.** As the nature of this case study focused on one campus, one must consider that the campus is one of a larger system. As a system-based community and technical college, each institution shares a common set of policies, values, and expectations. The impact of the organizational policies and structure was noted as a strong theme, impacting the culture of the campus and ultimately the faculty and staff relationship. With this finding, the system-wide administration should examine the implications of the current policies that are in place, as the educational achievements of staff change the landscape of the college campus, and the restricted budgets increase demands of all employees. Specifically, rules pertaining to the voting structure for
changes in academic policies should be revised to include the voices and concerns of staff that are impacted.

**Recommendations for community colleges.** Community colleges serve educational needs, such as technical education programs, general education transfer, and associate degree attainment. The core of the community college mission is to provide educational opportunities at an affordable tuition cost. As the demands increase for more services, increased course modality, and expanded outreach, faculty and staff face an increasing workload. Community colleges must recognize the potential impact of the delineation of employees when facing such increases in responsibilities. Clearly communicating the necessary tasks for the institution to be successful, with the campus community at large, can impact the understanding of each member’s contribution to the growth and improvement of the institution.

**Recommendations for faculty.** Primarily, faculty should take into consideration the value of professional staff to the infrastructure of the institution and seek out opportunities for personal growth and development by attempting to understand the roles of staff. While not all staff members directly impact students, the lack of knowledge of staff roles and job duties may cause the faculty member to fail to recognize an available service for students. For example, financial aid is known for direct interaction with students. Fundraising (or advancement) offices are not known for direct student interactions. Yet, most provide support services (such as emergency loan programs) for community college students. Faculty describe their personal roles on campus as diverse and hectic. Within the structure of the system, opportunities exist for *intracampus* networking that could prove highly valuable to the success of the students and improve
the perception of staff. Faculty also need to recognize the value of the staff perspective and actively seek to include the perspective of staff in dialogue within campus-wide conversations. It is imperative for faculty to recognize the campus perception of placating the attitudes of “elitist faculty” and to denounce the need for such behavior in order to encourage a more inclusive environment.

**Recommendations for staff.** Staff should discuss the expectations and demands of the faculty role. As discussed, many faculty noted the pressure to be continually available beyond the range of the standard working hours. The perceptions that staff possess of the lax faculty workload may be eradicated when examining a more holistic image of the unwritten contract between faculty and the institution, rather than only the information available via office hours and course schedules. Additionally, staff should confidently contribute to campus discussions with the same regard to politics as faculty when invited to participate in collaborative efforts. Staff members, particularly those with higher levels of educational attainment and/or experience, provide a unique and diverse perspective to the view of student success.

**Recommendations for campus leadership.** The balance between history and innovation is a tight line, with strongly held values toward tradition in higher education. Campus administration should examine the means with which to raise the voice of staff within the campus culture. The inclusion of staff in the committee structure and campus-wide meetings is only as valid to the campus community as it is perceived valuable by the administration. It was clear that the negative impact of the faculty and staff divide is often magnified by the impact of a loud, negative minority. The tone and commentary of study participants referenced the influence and spread of small groups of negativity.
While the overall attitudes of the faculty and staff relationship are positive, the influx of negative attitudes can leave an impression on perceptions. While faculty and staff noted various human resource policies, both groups noted the positive and negative aspects of the variations and did not see a reason to change the policy. Rather, the structure of the performance evaluations and promotion process is one to which staff should be more exposed, and leadership should examine a means to reward staff for exemplary work for the campus. The lack of recognition and rewards is costing the institution valuable employees.

**Future Research**

Future research should continue the process of informational inquiry in order to improve the working relationships between faculty and staff. As the complexities of higher education increase and pressures originate from multiplying sources, successful institutions will be those that value the voices that support the mission of the institution – rather than limiting the guiding voices to that of one group. To further develop this research, future endeavors should (a) spread to different campus structures such as four-year public and private institutions union versus non-union and Ivy League versus state institutions. Future research should also (b) extend into the realm of quantitative research methods in an attempt to provide more generalizable data. It is apparent from the few case studies that exist on the faculty and professional staff gap that the disconnect is not limited to specific campuses or institutions. The research should (c) include the impact of the institution’s leadership. The nature of the style of leadership should be examined in relation to the perceptions of employees. Finally, the research should (d) examine the impact of the changing educational demographics of the
community college professional staff. As graduate-level educational attainment increases, research should examine the impact of the change on the college culture and the faculty and staff relationship.

**Conclusion**

While faculty and staff describe the working environment as positive, pockets of doubt and uncertainty cloud their relationship. The dynamic collaborations between the dominant and co-culture demonstrate a clear value to partnerships, although the attitudes, values, and means of implementation differ, which causes a gap. Research recognizes the gap; however, rather than attempting to better understand the development of the divide, research seeks only to provide directions for addressing faculty hesitations in working with staff. The purpose of this research was to identify the faculty perceptions of staff, staff perceptions of faculty, and the way in which these perceptions impact the community college culture. Faculty and staff both fail to understand the contribution of each group to the success of the institution. The institution does not operate on the delineation between faculty and staff alone. The culture of the campus drives employees to seek out mission-driven colleagues with strong work ethics. Future studies should further this area of research in order to foster a culture that values the input of mission-driven employees and eradicates the division based upon role label.
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APPENDIX A: IRB Applications

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: The Great Divide: The perceptions and dynamics of the faculty and staff professional relationship

Investigator: Meredith Skaggs, Educational Leadership & Administration, 2703145687
Dr. Aaron Higbee Department: Counseling and Student Affairs Phone: 745-8649

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign on the last page of this form in the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You should be given a copy of this form to keep.

Nature and Purpose of the Project: The nature of this project is to develop an introductory understanding of the perceptions of faculty and staff on a community college campus. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of faculty and staff towards one another and understand how these perceptions impact professional relationships, particularly on a community college campus.

Explanation of Procedures: Participants will be invited to participate via e-mail invitation. Participants will be able to view interview protocol prior to the interview session. The interview session will be scheduled in an agreed upon location by the interviewer and participant. Prior to beginning the interview, the participant will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire. The interview will be approximately one hour in length and will be recorded. The names of the participants will be known only to the investigator and a code will be dedicated to the participant.

Discomfort and Risks: Participants may feel discomfort discussing potentially politically charged content if campus culture. Participants are encouraged to share freely due to the protection of confidentiality; however, the investigator recognizes these potential concerns.

Benefits: Participation in the research project may encourage future conversations to overcome the perception gap between faculty and staff.

Confidentiality: The identity of the participants will be protected by not publishing the names of the participants and instead applying a code (Faculty, Staff) to the participant. Any other identifying information, such as key departmental tasks or name of the department will also be shielded to protect the identity of the participant.
Refusal/Withdrawal: Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

__________________________________________    ________________________
Signature of Participant                        Date

__________________________________________    ________________________
Witness                                          Date

*I agree to be audio/video recorded for this research. (Initial here) _______

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT
THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY
THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Paul Morey, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-2139

[Stamp: WKU IRB 14-087
Approval: 9/18/2014
End Date: 1/31/2015
Original: 6/23/2014]
Hello [Name],

I am Meredith Skaggs, and I am in the process of completing my dissertation at Western Kentucky University. In this process, I am gathering research to better understand the perceptions faculty have of professional staff, professional staff have of faculty, and the dynamics of the professional relationships between these key roles on a college campus.

I am contacting you to invite you to participate in the research project. The process of participating includes a one-hour face-to-face interview. All participants will be given a pseudonym to protect identity. If you are willing to participate in the research project, please respond with an available time to complete the interview. The location of the interview can be at your office, my office (ACA 110G), or another agreed upon location.

Thank you for your consideration,

Meredith L. Skaggs
APPENDIX C: Original Protocol

Faculty & Staff Cultures:
Interview Protocol

Name: ____________________________ Date: __________________

Introduction
Thank you for taking the time to meet with me again. I will be recording and transcribing our interview into notes for my dissertation. I will be sharing the interpretations with you and ask you to review my interpretations. It is important that I reflect in my writing what you mean. The transcription will have uh’s and um’s included in it, but those will be taken out of any quotes used for the paper.

What I am interested in finding out in this study is, first, about the culture of faculty and staff. I am also interested in how staff/faculty perceive faculty/staff. You’ve had a chance to review the questions I am going to ask you today. I really want to know your perspective, so please feel free to discuss your views. I may ask follow-up questions to clarify what you mean to make sure I understand. At no point will your identity be revealed in the published research. Are you ready to start?

First, to confirm are you faculty or staff?

And, are you a full-time employee of the institution?

1. How would you describe the difference of faculty and professional staff to someone from outside higher education?
   a. Key Duties?
   b. Expectations?

2. Socially, do you find yourself spending more time with faculty or staff?
   a. What contributes to the balance of faculty and professional staff in social settings?

3. Do you feel there are barriers which keep faculty and staff from working together on projects?
   a. Have you ever been excluded from participation because you are faculty/staff?
   b. Coordinating schedules?
   c. Attitudes?

4. Tell me about a time you have worked with (opposite role) and it was positive.
5. What about the opposite? A time working with (opposite role) and it was negative.
6. Do you find it easier to work with faculty or professional staff?
   a. Are there benefits to working with the other?

7. Do you feel as if you understand what most faculty are responsible for in terms of job duties?
   a. Anything you feel you do not understand?

8. Do you feel as if you understand what most professional staff are responsible for in terms of job duties?
a. Anything you feel you do not understand?
9. Do you feel faculty and professional staff have equivalent power to change (or resist change) for campus policies and procedures?
10. Do you feel expectations are the same on campus for faculty and professional staff?
   a. What are the differences?
APPENDIX D: Revised Interview Protocol

**Revisions:** Based upon the initial interview results, the interview protocol was revised to the following.

**Faculty & Staff Cultures:**

**Interview Protocol**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: ____________________________________</th>
<th>Date: ____________________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me again. I will be recording and transcribing our interview into notes for my dissertation. I will be sharing the interpretations with you and ask you to review my interpretations. It is important that I reflect in my writing what you mean. The transcription will have uh’s and um’s included in it, but those will be taken out of any quotes used for the paper.

What I am interested in finding out in this study is, first, about the culture of faculty and staff. I am also interested in how staff/faculty perceive faculty/staff. You’ve had a chance to review the questions I am going to ask you today. I really want to know your perspective, so please feel free to discuss your views. I may ask follow-up questions to clarify what you mean to make sure I understand. At no point will your identity be revealed in the published research. Are you ready to start?

First, to confirm are you faculty or staff?

And, are you a full-time employee of the institution?

1. How would you describe the difference of faculty and professional staff to someone from outside higher education?
   a. Key Duties?
2. Overall, how would you define your role at the college?
3. Have you ever felt you had to defend your role, or (role) in general on or off campus?
   a. Explain.
4. Socially, do you find yourself spending more time with faculty or staff?
   a. What contributes to the balance of faculty and professional staff in social settings?
5. Describe the committee structure on campus.
6. Have you ever had to build a team of campus employees to complete a task?
   a. How did you select your team members?
7. Tell me about a time you have worked with (opposite role) and it was positive.
8. What about the opposite? A time working with (opposite role) and it was negative.
9. Are there any (opposite role) whose job duties you don’t understand?
   a. Overall, Do you feel as if you understand what most (opposite role) are responsible for in terms of job duties?
10. Do you feel faculty and professional staff have equivalent power to change (or resist change) for campus policies and procedures?
11. Do you feel expectations are the same on campus for faculty and professional staff?
   a. What are the differences?
12. In terms of campus policies, are there differences between how faculty and staff are treated?
   a. Promotion?
13. How would you describe the relationship between faculty and staff on campus?
   a. Can you provide me an example?
   b. Overall, is it negative or positive?
14. Have you ever been in a conversation with (same) and you felt you had to change the topic of conversation because (opposite) approached the group?
15. Have you ever wanted to contribute to a conversation within the work environment, but felt it was not your place to speak up?
   a. Or you did speak up and you were reprimanded?
16. Have you ever corrected the mistake of the (opposite) in front of other colleagues?
17. If the divide between faculty and staff exist, is that something you believe should be changed?
APPENDIX E: Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire
The following information will not be included as a portion of your individual response. The purpose of the demographic questionnaire is to describe the characteristics of the interviewees as a collective group.

1. How long have you worked at this institution?
   Less than 1-3
   4-6
   7-9
   10-12
   13-15
   16+

2. What department/division do you work with?
   Admissions
   Allied Health
   Financial Aid
   Technology
   Humanities
   Social & Behavioral Science
   Science
   Math
   Technical Program
   Other academic affairs: __________
   Other student affairs: __________

3. Gender: Male or Female

4. Ethnicity (Select One)
   _____ HISPANIC: A person who identifies with or is of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin.
   _____ NON-HISPANIC Any possible options not covered in the above category.
   _____ UNKNOWN A person who cannot or refuses to declare ethnicity.

5. Race (Select One)
   _____ WHITE A person having origins in or who identifies with any of the original Caucasian peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.
______ BLACK A person having origins in or who identifies with any of the black racial groups of Africa.

______ NATIVE AMERICAL/ESKIMO/ALEUT A person having origins in or who identifies with any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

______ ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER A person having origins in or who identifies with any of the original oriental peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. Includes Hawaii, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.

______ OTHER Any possible options not covered in the above categories. Includes patients who cite more than one race.

______ UNKNOWN A person who cannot or refuses to declare race.
APPENDIX F: Informed Consent Document

Project Title: The Great Divide: The perceptions and dynamics of the faculty and staff professional relationship

Investigator: Meredith Skaggs, Educational Leadership & Administration, 2703145687

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project.

The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask him/her any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign on the last page of this form in the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You should be given a copy of this form to keep.

1. **Nature and Purpose of the Project:**
   a. The nature of this project is to develop an introductory understanding of the perceptions of faculty and staff on a community college campus.
   b. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of faculty and staff toward one another and understand how these perceptions impact professional relationships, particularly on a community college campus.

2. **Explanation of Procedures:**
   a. Participants will be invited to participate via e-mail invitation. Participants will be able to view interview protocol prior to the interview session. The interview session will be scheduled in an agreed upon location by the interviewer and participant. Prior to beginning the interview, the participant will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire. The interview will be approximately one hour in length and will be recorded. The names of the participants will be known only to the investigator and a code will be dedicated to the participant.

3. **Discomfort and Risks:**
   a. Participants may feel discomfort discussing potentially politically charged content of campus culture. Participants are encouraged to share freely due to the protection of confidentiality. The investigator recognizes
these potential concerns.

4. **Benefits:**
   a. Participation in the research project may encourage future conversations to overcome the perception gap between faculty and staff.

5. **Confidentiality:**
   a. The identity of the participants will be protected by not publishing the names of the participants and instead applying a code (Faculty1, Staff1) to the participant. Any other identifying information, such as key departmental tasks or name of the department, will also be shielded to protect the identity of the participant.

6. **Refusal/Withdrawal:**

   Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

   (consent form continued)

   *You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.*

   ____________________________________________  ________________
   Signature of Participant                      Date

   ____________________________________________  ________________
   Witness                                     Date

   **THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

   Paul Mooney, Human Protections Administrator
   TELEPHONE: (270) 745-2129
APPENDIX G: Non-Disclosure Agreement from Transcription Agency

CLIENT NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

This CLIENT NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT, effective as of the date last set forth below (this “Agreement”), between the undersigned actual or potential Client (“Client”) and Rev.com, Inc. (“Rev.com”) is made to confirm the understanding and agreement of the parties hereto with respect to certain proprietary information being provided to Rev.com for the purpose of performing transcription, transcription, video captions and other document related services (the “Rev.com Services”). In consideration for the mutual agreements contained herein and the other provisions of this Agreement, the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. Scope of Confidential Information

1.1. “Confidential Information” means, subject to the exceptions set forth in Section 1.2 hereof, any documents or other text supplied by Client to Rev.com for the purpose of performing the Rev.com Services.

1.2. Confidential Information does not include information that (i) was available to Rev.com prior to disclosure of such information by Client and free of any confidentiality obligation in favor of Client known to Rev.com at the time of disclosure; (ii) is made available to Rev.com from a third party not known by Rev.com at the time of such availability to be subject to a confidentiality obligation in favor of Client; (iii) is made available to third parties by Client without restriction on the disclosure of such information; (iv) is or becomes available in the public other than as a result of disclosure by Rev.com prohibited by this Agreement; or (v) is developed independently by Rev.com or Rev.com’s directors, officers, members, partners, employees, consultants, contractors, agents, representatives or affiliated entities (collectively, “Associated Persons”).

2. Use and Disclosure of Confidential Information

2.1. Rev.com will keep secret and will not disclose to anyone any of the Confidential Information, other than furnishing the Confidential Information to Associated Persons, provided that such Associated Persons are bound by agreements respecting confidentiality. Rev.com will not use any of the Confidential Information for any purpose other than performing the Rev.com Services on Client’s behalf. Rev.com will use reasonable care and adequate measures to protect the security of the Confidential Information and to attempt to prevent any Confidential Information from being disclosed or otherwise made available to unauthorized persons or used in violation of the foregoing.

2.2. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, Rev.com is free to make, and this Agreement does not restrict disclosure of any Confidential Information in a judicial, legislative or administrative investigation or proceeding or to a government or other regulatory agency; provided that, if permitted by law, Rev.com provides to Client prior notice of the intended disclosure and permits Client to intervene therein to protect its interests in the Confidential Information, and cooperate and assist Client in seeking to obtain such protection.

3. Certain Rights and Limitations

3.1. All Confidential Information will remain the property of Client.

3.2. This Agreement imposes no obligations on either party to purchase, sell, license, transfer or otherwise transact in any products, services or technology.

4. Termination

4.1. Upon Client’s written request, Rev.com agrees to use good faith efforts to return promptly to Client any Confidential Information that is in writing and in the possession of Rev.com and to certify the return or destruction of all Confidential Information; provided that Rev.com may retain a summary description of Confidential Information for archival purposes.

4.2. The rights and obligations of the parties hereto contained in Sections 2 (Use and Disclosure of Confidential Information) (subject to Section 2.1), 3 (Certain Rights and Limitations), 4 (Termination), and 5 (Miscellaneous) will survive the return of any tangible embodiments of Confidential Information and any termination of this Agreement.

5. Miscellaneous

5.1. Client and Rev.com are independent contractors and will so represent themselves in all regards. Nothing in this Agreement will be construed to make either party the agent or legal representative of the other or to make the parties partners or joint venturers, and neither party may bind the other in any way. This Agreement will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of California governing such agreements, without regard to conflicts-of-law principles. The sole and exclusive jurisdiction and venue for any litigation arising out of this Agreement shall be an appropriate federal or state court located in the State of California, and the parties agree not to raise, and waive, any objections or defenses based upon venue or forum non conveniens. This Agreement (together with any
agreement for the Rev.com Services) contains the complete and exclusive agreement of the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings with respect thereto, whether written or oral, express or implied. If any provision of this Agreement is held invalid, illegal or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such will not affect any other provision of this Agreement, which will remain in full force and effect. No amendment or alteration of the terms of this Agreement will be effective unless made in writing and executed by both parties hereto. A failure or delay in exercising any right in respect to this Agreement will not be presumed to operate as a waiver, and a single or partial exercise of any right will not be presumed to preclude any subsequent or further exercise of that right or the exercise of any other right. Any modification or waiver of any provision of this Agreement will not be effective unless made in writing. Any such waiver will be effective only in the specific instance and for the purpose given.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed below by their duly authorized signatories.

CLIENT

Print Name: ________________________

By: ________________________________

Name: ______________________________

Title: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Address for notices to Client:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

REV.COM, INC.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

By: ________________________________

Name: Cheryl Brown

Title: Account Manager

Date: 9/17/14

Address for notices to Rev.com, Inc.: 251 Kearny St. Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94108
APPENDIX H: Follow-Up Questions

Q1 Informed Consent Document

Q2 Which best describes your primary duties at the institution?
   Professional Staff
   Faculty

Q3 For faculty, are you in a technical program or general education?
   Technical
   General Education

Q4 For staff, are you in student affairs or academic affairs?
   Student Affairs
   Academic Affairs

Q5 Many faculty admit to not understanding the duties of professional staff. What factors do you feel contribute to the misunderstanding of job duties?

Q6 Some professional staff do not believe they have power to impact change on the campus. What factors do you feel contribute to professional staff believing they do not have the power for campus change?

Q7 On average, what level of education do the professional staff possess at this institution?

Q8 Some staff feel their opinions are not respected by faculty - what factors do you feel contributes to staff feeling as if their opinions are less valued?

Q9 If the administration is looking to make a change to campus policy or procedure, what are the key steps taken to initiate the change? Please explain.

Q10 Faculty governance is the concept most colleges and universities are built upon for decision making leaving the majority of decision making to faculty. How does this impact this institution? Should there be more staff voice in the decision making process?

Q11 Are there any aspects of this institution (including policy and procedures) you think would be different if the staff voice was more included?
Q12 Demographic Information: Please provide the following demographic information
  Gender
  How long have you worked here?
  Highest Level of Education
  Race
  Department/Division