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A Phenomenological Exploration of the Pre-Tenure Track Faculty Experience at Comprehensive Universities

Chelsea Waugaman

Clemson University, clwaugaman@yahoo.com

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF THE PRE-TENURE TRACK
FACULTY EXPERIENCE AT COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Educational Leadership

by
Chelsea Waugaman
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Accepted by:
Dr. Pamela A. Havice, Committee Chair
Dr. Michelle Boettcher
Dr. Edna Martinez
Dr. Robin Phelps-Ward

ABSTRACT

The tenure process for faculty at all types of higher education institutions and in all disciplines is oftentimes ambiguous (O'Meara, 2011; O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). This is especially true in the understudied comprehensive university, which has experienced significant individual and system-based change over the last 30 years (Youn & Price, 2009). Faculty have struggled to understand ever-changing tenure expectations, dictated by internal and external pressures upon their institutions (Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000; Youn & Price, 2009).

The purpose of this research study was to explore what pre-tenure faculty experienced as they navigated the tenure track process at comprehensive universities. To investigate this topic, during the 2017-2018 academic year, I employed a hermeneutic phenomenological analysis of data collected from nine pre-tenure or recently tenured higher education/student affairs faculty members. I organized the themes from that data within a conceptual framework of faculty contexts that started from the individual micro-level, advanced to the institutional and disciplinary meso level, and concluded with a more global abstract macro level (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; Melguizo & Strober, 2007; Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004). Six themes emerged at the micro level: faculty career motivations, year one experiences, the intersections of identities and tenure, frustrations and anxiety about tenure, satisfaction with the tenure process, and feeling secure with themselves as comprehensive university faculty. At the meso level, participant narratives revealed several institutional aspects played key roles in their successful tenure experience: institutional colleague and leadership support, campus politics and leadership

challenges at institutions, external support in the field, graduate program influence, discipline involvement, and striving tendencies. At the macro level, participants at institutions adopting striving tendencies for rank advancement and increased research productivity witnessed how certain faculty knowers and forms of knowledge were privileged.

Examples of human and social/social network capital (Perna, 2005) were present within the participant narratives. Those examples played a key role in participants' individual micro and institutional/disciplinary meso faculty contexts. The contexts influenced participants' success on the tenure track. Participant narratives in this research reinforced the idea that one's motivation and perspectives about comprehensive university tenure play a key role in determining one's success at achieving tenure. The narratives also reinforced that comprehensive university faculty have received and should continue to receive significant support from tenured and senior faculty, peer faculty, and graduate program faculty at the institutional and disciplinary levels. Communities of support are necessary for a faculty member's tenure success. With that said, there is also much to uncover about this population of faculty, so the roadmap of research on this topic is wide and prime with future possibilities.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family: my dad, Charles; my mom, Janet; my sister, Gretchen, my brother, Craig, my sister-in-law, Viviana; and my nephews, Ethan and Jacob. Thank you for always supporting my hopes and dreams. From day one you laid the foundation upon which Dr. Chelsea was built.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 of this dissertation provides an introduction to this research study. The chapter includes background information about the literature on this topic, states the significance of the research, the problem this dissertation addressed, the research purpose, and guiding research questions. There is an overview of the assumptions, delimitations, and biases of the study. At the end of the chapter there is a list of definitions to help operationalize the terms used throughout this study.

Background of the Study

The body of literature on the tenure process in higher education is deep and broad regarding implications for faculty workload expectations. The field of higher education as a whole understands of the core triad of faculty work expectations: research, teaching, and service at research-intensive institutions. While that is valuable context for understanding faculty experiences, the narrative of the tenure track faculty at comprehensive universities has been largely overlooked. At a time when public, political, and institutional questions are emerging around faculty roles, it is imperative this issue be examined. Comprehensive universities as an institutional type are understudied compared to other institutions, and even less is known about the tenure process at those universities. In addition, this institutional type has experienced a period of significant institutional change in the last 30 years (Youn & Price, 2009), so the

current story of the tenure track faculty member at comprehensive universities needs to be told.

Definition of Comprehensive Universities

According to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, as of 2015 there were over 1,000 public and nonprofit institutions classified as master's colleges and universities. That institutional classification is the operational classification of comprehensive universities for this research project. Comprehensive universities originated from a variety of institutional types including teaching colleges, technical schools, municipal schools sponsored by civic associations, and liberal arts colleges (Clark, 1987; Greene, O'Connor, Good, Ledford, Peel, & Zhang, 2008; Henderson & Buchanan, 2007; Youn & Price, 2009). Currently, master's colleges and universities are defined as institutions conferring at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees each year (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2016).

Thirty years ago comprehensive universities were characterized by a strong, local commitment to teaching (Henderson & Buchanan, 2007). The focus on teaching has continued over time. The U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (2003) shared the self-reported time comprehensive faculty members spend on their profession. The data revealed faculty spent almost two-thirds of their time in teaching activities, one tenth of their time on research, and the remainder on service, administration, and consulting duties.

History of Tenure at Comprehensive Universities

Thirty years ago tenure expectations at comprehensive universities mirrored the tenure expectations of liberal arts college productivity. In the liberal arts college faculty model, teaching responsibilities had the highest priority (Henderson & Buchanan, 2007). Over time, however, comprehensive universities began to place more value on the importance of research and professional service as key components in the tenure process (Chain & Burton, 1995). Dey, Milem, and Berger (1997) reported between the 1970s and 1990s all types of colleges and universities reported greater emphasis on research productivity. That trend was especially pronounced for members of the comprehensive university, as the importance of teaching, while still significant, was waning in favor of conducting research (Youn & Price, 2009). In the early 2000s, comprehensive university faculty reported greater research productivity and greater pressure to conduct research than they did in prior decades (Youn & Price, 2009).

Finnegan (1993) provided a generational overview of the faculty experience at comprehensive universities. Participants ranged in experience from newly minted junior faculty to full professors with more than 20 years of experience. Those with 20 or more years of experience, hired before 1971 (the “Boomers,” as Finnegan named them), were hired when teaching was most valued, curriculum development was important, and institutional service was expected. The next generation, with 10-20 years of experience, hired between 1972 and 1982 (the “Brahmins”), saw a greater shift in institutional priority toward research. They had reward systems focused on fostering effective teaching, but acknowledged scholarship and rewarded scholarly endeavors through

course releases. This focus was different from what faculty had expected upon entrance into the professoriate. The youngest faculty, those hired after 1982 and before the study was completed in 1993 (the “Proteans”), were hired for their teaching and research potential. In addition, reward systems separated teaching, research, and service. Institutional leaders stressed teaching at the faculty member’s recruitment, yet demanded more after they were hired (Finnegan, 1993).

Tenure Priorities and Preparation

What does the changing role of comprehensive universities and comprehensive faculty expectations mean for faculty at this institutional type? In brief, early career faculty experience confusion and increasing levels of stress, across institutional types (Greene, O’Connor, Good, Ledford, Peel, & Zhang, 2008; Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000; Sorcinelli, 2000). New comprehensive university faculty have found it difficult to form a common understanding about their profession and the purpose of the institution (Youn & Price, 2009). The fact that comprehensive universities serve a diverse range of students means institutions face multiple goals. As a result faculty are encouraged to pursue multiple directions in their faculty work (Schneider & Deane, 2014).

When considering the experiences of early career faculty, it is also important to examine individual factors that influence the faculty experience. For example, how graduate students are socialized to the professoriate, the experiences of striving priorities within universities, and isomorphic tendencies in comprehensive universities. All of these factors contribute to and have a direct impact on the tenure track faculty experience. With regards to graduate student socialization, faculty are often trained at research-

intensive universities. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education classifies those types of institutions as universities that award at least 20 doctoral degrees with moderate to high research activity expectations (2016). As a result of research-focused socialization, graduate students are sometimes led to believe that legitimate academic careers can only take place at Research I institutions (Terosky & Gonzales, 2016).

A discussion about comprehensive university tenure would be incomplete without including the pursuit of prestige at comprehensive universities. The literature has reported findings about institutional striving, which occurs when a college or university is in pursuit of prestige within the academic hierarchy (O'Meara, 2007). Prestige is commonly referred to as national peer academic reputations and institutional rank advancement within external national ranking systems (O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011).

Comprehensive universities sometimes strive to be ranked among doctoral degree-granting institution peers and to imitate them through institutional isomorphic tendencies. Institutions experience isomorphism when they mimic other institutions' environmental conditions and motives (DiMaggio & Power, 1983; Wesse, 2012). The leadership decisions that seek to achieve that goal have a direct impact on faculty work. That impact can be seen whenever an institution mimics peer institutions by changing its tenure practices to align more with expectations at major research universities. These striving tendencies legitimize knowers and the knowledge produced at those institutions (Gonzales, 2014; Henderson, 2009, 2011; Youn & Price, 2009).

Wright and colleagues (2004) labeled comprehensive universities as the “greediest” of institutions (Wright, Howery, Assar, McKinney, Kain, Glass, Kramer, Atkinson, 2004, p. 149), since their demands for teaching mirrored those for baccalaureate institutions, yet they have an emphasis on research at a greater level than their liberal arts peers. According to Henderson (2007), tenure track faculty at comprehensive universities have had more difficult adjustments in their early careers than faculty at research and bachelor’s degree granting institutions. The reason, Henderson stated, was that research and bachelor’s degree granting institutions have a clearer mission and narrower definition of faculty work.

Significance of the Research

As a whole, comprehensive universities are one of the least studied institutional types (Youn & Price, 2009). There is a need for more recent inquiry into the tenure system at comprehensive universities, especially as it has changed in the last 15 years. Recent studies have focused only on faculty in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Youn & Price, 2009). There is also scant qualitative research on this topic, with the majority of published studies using quantitative survey methods. Qualitative research could explore the lived experiences of comprehensive university faculty and illuminate the faculty members’ roles and plans for achieving tenure. Gonzales and Rincones (2011) noted there is limited information about how faculty in general understand their place in the university and how they foster a space for their scholarship. This dissertation research has built upon the emerging body of literature on comprehensive university tenure and helped to fill the gaps present in the scholarly discourse on comprehensive university tenure.

Problem and Purpose Statements

Tenure for faculty is oftentimes characterized as an ambiguous process, across institutional types and throughout all academic disciplines (O'Meara, 2011; O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). Faculty struggle to understand ever-changing expectations and institutional definitions, dictated by internal and external pressures upon their institutions (Rice et al., 2000; Youn & Price, 2009).

While scholars within the field have an established understanding of tenure expectations at high-research institutions, that is not the case at comprehensive universities. Comprehensive universities and their tenure systems are understudied (Finnegan, 1991; Grubb & Lazerson, 2005; Youn & Price, 2009). Comprehensive universities also have a broad mission and diverse institutional history, which means that faculty in those settings have an even less defined road before them as they secure tenure (Youn & Price, 2009). That confusion can cause anxiety and stress among the professoriate and, thereby, negatively influence student learning conditions (Rice et al., 2008). Furthermore, disciplines such as education and sociology have been categorized with relative dispersed knowledge bases. The departments that house them are more likely to experience dissension and disagreement over criteria for faculty advancement (Hearn & Anderson, 2002). Tenure track faculty in those contexts need a support for navigating those ambiguous and stressful promotion and tenure processes. The purpose of this research was to explore what pre-tenure faculty in those dispersed knowledge based disciplines experienced and how they successfully navigated the tenure track process at comprehensive universities.

Research Question

This research study was guided by one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure?

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Biases of the Study

This research project used a hermeneutic phenomenological research design. Phenomenological research is a type of qualitative research. Qualitative research is interpretative, meaning the researcher explores participants' experiences with a phenomenon (Langdridge, 2007). In this research study, all participants were experiencing the phenomena of the tenure system in higher education/student affairs academic programs at comprehensive universities. As such, the themes and conclusions from this study are not expected to be generalizable to any other faculty populations, institutional types, or even fields outside of higher education/student affairs. In addition, since much of the data came from participant interviews I operated under the assumption participants would be engaged in the process and would be truthful in telling their narratives. Prior to conducting the interviews, I did not know the backgrounds of my participants, so I needed to trust they were candid with me. I discovered through interviews that all faculty in my study were forthcoming with the challenges they faced and institutional cultures they witnessed. Because they were so candid with me when

they were not required to do so I assumed everything they told me was truthful. All participants actively told their stories and most provided detailed timelines with corresponding journaling notes. That candid information provided windows into their experiences. I also received promotion and tenure documents that helped to triangulate what participants said their institutions expected of them during the tenure process.

I recognize biases exist in any research endeavor, however I took action to minimize researcher bias as I gathered data, conducted my interviews, and coded and analyzed responses. My own biases came from the exposure I have had to faculty work through my own family connections, professional settings at both community colleges and four-year research universities, and from my role models and mentors. Prior to conducting this study, I had only been exposed to the educational settings of community colleges, baccalaureate-focused liberal arts colleges, and highest research activity doctoral universities. As a result, I was a relative outsider, unfamiliar with comprehensive universities, however, I had met a handful of faculty in my discipline who worked as faculty members for comprehensive universities. I assumed that comprehensive universities were a marriage of the undergraduate programs I had witnessed and the major research universities I attended as a graduate student. I also only understood the faculty context through reading the existing literature on tenure track faculty in higher education, which paints faculty experiences in a negative light. I expected to see the same outcomes in my research, but I knew that I needed to be open-minded to capture exactly what the participant narratives were, not what I expected them to be. In order to ensure I understood faculty experiences at comprehensive universities I used a researcher

journal to identify my perceptions and initial understandings of the faculty experience. Additional steps to aid in the trustworthiness of my research are referenced in Chapter 3 as part of the methods and research protocol.

Key Terms Defined

The following set of operational definitions of are important terms used throughout this dissertation.

- Comprehensive Universities – A university with the Carnegie Classification of “Master’s Colleges and Universities,” which means these institutions confer at least 50 master’s degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2016).
- Early Career Faculty – Faculty members who are in their pre-tenure probationary period before being offered a permanent employment contract in the form of tenured associate professorship (Foote, 2010).
- Faculty Macro Contexts – The global elements of capitalism and neoliberalism forcing institutions of higher education to operate with market-like behaviors (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004).
- Faculty Meso Contexts – The behaviors within a faculty member’s discipline, university, and department that legitimize and incentivize tenure track faculty work (Hart & Metcalf, 2010; O’Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008).
- Faculty Micro Contexts – Individual faculty demographics, motivations, and decisions influencing a faculty member’s decisions regarding their promotion and tenure experiences (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011).

- Human Capital – Professional productivity that determines an individual’s labor market status, represented most often by one’s quality of education, one’s ability to move across the country, one’s motivation and intensity of work, and one’s emotional and physical health (Becker 1993; Polacheck, 1977).
- Institutional Striving – A college or university in the pursuit of prestige within the academic hierarchy (O’Meara, 2007). Prestige refers to national peer academic reputations and institutional rank advancement within external national ranking systems (O’Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011).
- Isomorphism – When institutions with similar environmental conditions and motives mimic each other (DiMaggio & Power, 1983; Wesse, 2012).
- Knowers – Faculty members who hold and who produce knowledge (Gonzales & Waugaman, 2016).
- Knowledge – Information, insights, and experiences that help people navigate the world, build solutions to problems, resolve conflicts, or advance in some manner (Gonzales & Waugaman, 2016).
- Mission Creep – Efforts by universities to revise their mission statements and adopt more research-focused orientations with the hopes of changing institutional classifications and enhancing prestige (Gonzales, 2013).
- Phenomenology – A type of research methodology describing the common lived experiences and viewpoints of several participants with respect to a given phenomenon (Cohen & Omery, 1994; Creswell, 2007).

- Social and Social Network Capital –The investment faculty members have made in human and other forms of capital, institutional resources, or support (Lin, 2001a; Portes, 1998).
- Structural Capital – The prestige and value placed upon faculty members’ institutional appointment, academic discipline, and role within their institutions (Smart, 1991).
- Successful Progress Toward Achieving Tenure – When faculty have: a) earned tenure or b) received positive feedback from dossier reviews leading them to feel secure that earning tenure would be likely in the future.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the literature on the tenure system within comprehensive universities. In addition, the chapter contained a brief overview of the significance of this research topic, the problem this research addressed, the research purpose, and guiding research questions. The chapter concluded with an overview of the assumptions, delimitations, and biases of the study and an overview of key concepts operationalizing the terms used throughout this research. The following chapter contains a more detailed literature review about comprehensive universities, the theoretical concepts behind my conceptual framework and theoretical framework, and the research questions guiding this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter summarized literature relevant to the tenure track faculty experience at comprehensive universities. I have summarized definitions of a comprehensive university and explained my study's definition. I provided historical context for the comprehensive university and a summary of the tenure process at those institutions. I discussed the challenges of tenure for early career faculty, in general, and those specifically at comprehensive universities. I highlighted key experiences of faculty on the tenure track. I have introduced and explained the theoretical concepts behind my conceptual framework and theoretical framework.

The purpose of this research was to explore how pre-tenure faculty experience and navigate the tenure track process at comprehensive universities. This research study was guided by one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure?

Background

Faculty have characterized the promotion and tenure process as ambiguous and confusing (O'Meara, 2011; O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). Pre-tenured faculty

struggle to understand ever-changing expectations, dictated by internal and external pressures upon their institutions (Rice et al., 2000; Youn & Price, 2009). While scholars within the field have an established understanding of tenure expectations at high-research institutions, that is not the case at comprehensive universities. Comprehensive universities and their tenure systems are understudied (Finnegan, 1991; Grubb & Lazerson, 2005; Youn & Price, 2009). The understudied nature of comprehensive universities is interesting, given it is the place where faculty are most likely to secure faculty teaching appointments (Nerad & Cerny, 1999). In addition, this institutional type has experienced a period of institutional change in the last 30 years (Youn & Price, 2009). That change has significantly complicated faculty expectations and the legitimization of knowledge and knowers within that institutional type.

The purpose of this literature review was to synthesize the most relevant literature about the context of tenure at comprehensive universities and the implications at comprehensives impacting tenure track faculty members. What appears below is a summary of the most recent, most widely-cited literature on the comprehensive university experience. The literature review starts with a definition of the comprehensive university, a brief history of the institutional type, a historical overview of tenure expectations at comprehensive universities, the implications of tenure across institutional types, institutional and individual factors that must be considered when examining faculty tenure track process, and early career faculty tenure track support systems.

What is a Comprehensive University?

The public or private comprehensive university goes by many names, including state comprehensive university, master's institution, and regional university. With each name comes a different set of academic nuances. Those nuances led Dalbey (1995) to characterize all comprehensive universities as “more akin to a herd than to a single beast, for, while we share many characteristics, we have a great many differences as well” (p. 14). Fortunately, or unfortunately, for emerging researchers studying this institutional type, there is no simple way to capture a widely-accepted, unchanging definition to classify comprehensive universities across indicators such as degree offerings, enrollment patterns, or state-based locations (Schneider & Deane, 2014). The heterogeneous nature of this institutional setting is one reason comprehensive university faculty may struggle with understanding their role and their unique contributions to the field of higher education. Researchers studying comprehensive universities also need to be sure their operational definition is consistent with previously published literature. There is a way to objectively classify comprehensives and allow for the more nuanced explanation of their missions and role in the community. The following sections served as two elements of the operational definition of comprehensive universities for this study.

Carnegie Classification Definition

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education categorizes Title IV eligible, degree-granting U.S. colleges and universities represented in the National Center for Education Statistics. Carnegie classifies four-year institutions as one of four groups:

- a. Research universities awarding 20 or more types of doctoral degrees each year, with three tiers of research productivity;
- b. Master's colleges and universities conferring at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees a year, with three tiers to indicate the size of those academic programs;
- c. Baccalaureate colleges awarding 50 percent of their degrees at the undergraduate level with fewer than 50 master's degrees or 20 doctoral degrees on an annual basis; and
- d. Special focus four-year universities awarding a high concentration of degrees each year in one field or a set of related fields (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2016).

The Mission of Comprehensive Universities

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) was founded by a group of comprehensive universities and is most often associated with representing the interests of comprehensive universities (Fryar, 2014). The AASCU has defined comprehensive universities in their membership as “colleges, universities, and systems whose members share a learning- and teaching-centered culture, a historic commitment to underserved populations, and a dedication to research and creativity that advances their regions’ economic progress and cultural development” (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, n.d., para 4). This helpful institutional definition is broad but also nuanced for exploring the characteristics and institutional missions and purposes that make public and private comprehensive universities unique.

For the purposes of this research study, another more quantitative part of the working definition of a comprehensive university was an institution that follows Henderson's (2007) classification: universities awarding bachelor's, master's, and a limited number of doctorate degrees. More specifically, a comprehensive university is a university with the Carnegie Classification of "Master's Colleges and Universities," which means these institutions confer at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees per year (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2016).

Comprehensive University Statistics, Degree Offerings, Curricula

According to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, in 2015 there were more than 1,000 public and nonprofit colleges and universities considered master's colleges and universities (Baker, Terosky, & Martinez, 2017), which is the operational classification of comprehensive universities for this research project. This list contains both public and private institutions and for-profit and not-for-profit institutions (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2016).

The National Center for Education Statistics in 2003 reported that comprehensive universities employed a third of the entire full-time faculty at four-year universities. (Baker et al., 2017). In the fall of 2009, Gump (2012) calculated there were 118,823 full-time faculty members at public comprehensive universities. He used a National Education Center for Education Statistics data source from 2006 and Gump also determined 70% of those faculty members held doctorates, comparable to 73% at public

research institutions. Fifty-four percent of full-time faculty at state comprehensives held tenure in the 2009-10 academic year (Gump, 2012).

Henderson (2007) reported comprehensive universities ranged in size from 3,000-15,000 students. Those enrollments typically positioned these institution types as mid-sized colleges and universities with small, but variable, class sizes. Fryar (2014) noted comprehensive universities educate close to 70 percent of the undergraduate students enrolled in the United States higher education offerings. These statistics illustrated the important role comprehensive universities play in educating undergraduate students. The numbers are further evidence researchers need to study the experiences of comprehensive universities. Because faculty conditions shape student learning conditions, studying faculty within the comprehensive university sector is important, as well.

In terms of curricula, what distinguishes comprehensive universities from most other institutional types is they promote applied curricula, applied service, and applied research while also being identified as “teaching institutions” (Henderson, 2007, p. 90). This means faculty at these institutions have a greater teaching load and/or a higher number of students. Across the “herd,” to use Dalbey (1995)’s metaphor, comprehensive universities award primarily bachelor’s and master’s degrees, with a limited number of doctorate degrees. Those degrees are most often in applied, job-preparation fields such as education and business. More recently, degree offerings are have expanded into technology and health sciences fields (Cruz, Ellern, Ford, Moss, & White, 2013; Henderson, 2007).

Faculty at comprehensive universities may be expected to teach six to eight courses each academic year (Greene et al., 2008). Additionally, faculty and students tend to be engaged in more regional scholarship, including consulting, cultural activities, and economic development. Along those regionally-focused lines, comprehensive institutions are also characterized with a historical tendency of strong community support (Henderson, 2007). For the purposes of this study, it is important to have an understanding of the comprehensive institutional context before exploring the experiences of faculty in these settings.

A Brief History on the Comprehensive University

Beyond understanding the enrollment and other institutional profile information, it is important to understand the history of the comprehensive university and how that history informs this study. Unfortunately, a complete, detailed history on the comprehensive university has not been developed (Henderson, 2007). What is known is comprehensive institutions originated from a variety of institutional types including teaching colleges, technical schools, municipal schools sponsored by civic associations, private two- or four-year religiously-sponsored colleges, branch campuses of major research universities, and liberal arts colleges (Youn & Price, 2009). As those institutions grew, so did their programmatic offerings (Greene, et al., 2008; Henderson & Buchanan, 2007). After World War II, and especially in the late 1950s and early 1960s, state comprehensive colleges quadrupled in size to a total enrollment of 1.3 million students. The steady rate of growth of these institutions was spurred in part by a greater focus on teacher education, student deferments to avoid the draft, and federal efforts to

increase access to higher education (Youn & Price, 2009). When state colleges expanded their missions in the 1970s and 1980s, institutions welcomed new students who were more likely to be first-generation, academically or culturally underprepared, and minority students (Henderson, 2007).

The historical evolution from teachers' colleges to state and regional comprehensive universities was driven by a number of factors: greater pressure by regional communities to offer a broader curriculum, the pursuit of prestige when teaching-focused curricula was considered low status, and a commitment to greater access for students (Henderson, 2007). Comprehensive universities have also been committed to a historical mission of student access and providing educational opportunities to underserved students in higher education. Their mission statements often focus on teacher effectiveness and student interaction (Henderson, 2007). For the purposes of this study, it is important to recognize the historical missions of comprehensive universities, to see how they shaped contemporary actions at comprehensive universities.

The Tenure Process at Comprehensives

Tenure at Comprehensives: The Past.

Thirty years ago, comprehensive universities mirrored the tenure expectations of liberal arts college productivity. Liberal arts college faculty productivity places highest priority for faculty work on teaching (Henderson & Buchannan, 2007). Over time, comprehensive universities began to place more value on the importance of research and professional service as key components in the tenure process (Chain & Burton, 1995).

Dey, Milem, and Berger (1997) reported between the 1970s and 1990s all types of colleges and universities reported greater emphasis on research productivity. That trend was especially pronounced for members of the comprehensive university, as the importance of teaching, while still significant, was waning in favor of conducting research (Youn & Price, 2009). While teaching continues to be a key component in the tenure process, the importance of that criterion has lessened since the late 1990s in favor of research production (Greene et al., 2008; Young & Price, 2009).

Finnegan (1993) chronicled the evolution of the faculty tenure experience, highlighting three generational experiences at two comprehensive universities. Those generations included The “Boomers,” hired before 1971, the “Brahmins,” hired between 1972 and 1982, and “Proteans,” hired after 1982. For the Boomers, teaching was most valued, curriculum development was important, and institutional service was expected. For the Brahmin generation, there was a shift in institutional priority toward research productivity. One institution in the study had leaders who negotiated with the faculty body to require faculty to demonstrate an evidence of scholarship. This research expectation was different from what faculty had expected when hired. Faculty followed suit, having been socialized in graduate school to engage in scholarship. Institutional leaders developed reward systems, and while those systems continued to focus on fostering effective teaching, they included an opportunity to acknowledge scholarship and reward scholarly endeavors through course releases. More than the previous faculty generations, Proteans entered the profession with an active publication record and commitment to the institution. Like Brahmins, Protean faculty were hired for their

teaching and research potential. Institutional leaders and tenure reward systems stressed a commitment to teaching during the faculty onboarding process, however they stressed more research productivity and service expectations after the faculty appointment and during the tenure process (Finnegan, 1993).

Implications of Tenure

Challenges of All Early Career Faculty

Across all institutional types, the process of tenure is demanding, requiring faculty to balance workload expectations with personal and/or family expectations. Faculty are expected to engage in a combination of research, teaching, and/or service throughout their pre-tenure timeframe (Greene et al., 2008). Rice and colleagues (2000) conducted a longitudinal study of early career faculty and determined tenure track faculty often lacked a sense of community and collegiality in their workplace. In addition, they found faculty were confused about the tenure system, how it worked, and the expectations necessary for securing tenure. They also concluded faculty lived an unbalanced life and reported a sense of isolation and dysfunctional incivility.

Sorcinelli (1992) discovered over a third of early career faculty experienced high levels of stress during the first year of their faculty appointment. That number climbed in the subsequent years, leading to a climax of dissatisfaction just prior to achieving tenure. Those findings are important because faculty experience common challenges, regardless of institutional type. What may change with different institutional types is the degree to which faculty engage in different aspects of research, teaching, and service (Sorcinelli, 1992).

Challenges of Early Career Faculty at Comprehensive Institutions

What do the mission, history, and tenure expectations at comprehensive universities mean for tenure track faculty? Early career faculty experience confusion and increasing levels of stress, regardless of institutional type (Greene et al., 2008; Sorcinelli, 2000). New faculty find it difficult to form a common understanding about their profession and the purpose of the institution. The fact that comprehensive universities serve a diverse range of students and institutional identities means institutions face multiple goals. Faculty are encouraged to pursue multiple directions in their faculty work. For instance, faculty are encouraged to prioritize teaching and invest time in instruction and class preparation. At the same time, they are asked to secure large grants and research projects, all of which take a considerable amount of time (Schneider & Deane, 2014).

The tenure track pressure is unique at comprehensive universities, where expectations can shift mid-stream after faculty are hired as teaching-focused faculty members (Henderson, 2011). Comprehensive universities have been characterized as greedy institutions since they ask faculty to maintain research agendas similar to doctoral-granting universities and yet have teaching loads similar to baccalaureate institutions. Comprehensive universities earned that moniker because the demands for teaching mirror those for liberal arts colleges, yet faculty are under greater pressure to produce research (Wright et al., 2004).

According to Henderson (2007), comprehensive university faculty experienced role conflict and were less happy in their faculty roles. They also had more difficult

adjustments in their early careers than faculty at research and liberal arts institutions, which have a clearer mission and narrow definition of faculty work. While these negative experiences are not meant to detract anyone from considering this institutional type for possible careers, it is interesting the literature characterizes the comprehensive university in this manner. In order to understand if the same sentiment is true with today's comprehensive university faculty, it is important to recognize what previous early career faculty have reported about their lived conditions.

Faculty Experience Through the Tenure Process

When considering the faculty tenure experience at comprehensive universities, several over-arching concepts about faculty tenure should be considered: graduate student socialization to the tenure track professoriate, the pursuit of prestige, and mission creep at comprehensive universities. All of these factors contribute to and have a direct impact on the tenure track faculty experience.

Graduate Student Socialization to the Tenure Track Professoriate

With regards to graduate student socialization, the literature reports faculty are often educated at Research I institutions, and as a result, graduate students are often socialized to believe legitimate academic careers can only take place at Research I institutions (Terosky & Gonzales, 2016).

The Pursuit of Prestige

The literature has reported findings about institutional striving, which occurs when a college or university is in pursuit of prestige within the academic hierarchy (O'Meara, 2007). Prestige is commonly referred to as a university's academic reputation

in comparison to other national peer institutions. Prestige also involves a university's institutional rank advancement within external national ranking systems (O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011).

Comprehensive universities strive to be ranked among doctoral-granting institution peers and to imitate them through institutional isomorphic tendencies. Isomorphism occurs when institutions with similar environmental conditions and motives mimic each other (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983 Wesse, 2012). This has a direct impact on faculty work whenever an institution mimics peer institutions by changing its tenure practices to more align with expectations at major research universities. These striving tendencies legitimize knowers and the knowledge produced at those institutions (Gonzales, 2014; Henderson, 2009, 2011; Youn & Price, 2009).

Mission Creep at Comprehensive Universities

Institutional change, also referred to as mission creep, has been taking place at comprehensive universities for decades (Gonzales, 2012). Mission creep involves an institution changing its status, which is most often associated with an institution changing its research classification. Universities seek to improve their status by increasing their research productivity and publishing activities, which can result in increased institutional operational costs, inefficient program replication, a shift away from vocational programs, and limited access to higher education (Gonzales, 2012). Comprehensive universities are typically focused on the applied fields and are committed to promoting student access to higher education (Henderson, 2007). In addition, faculty at teaching-focused institutions such as comprehensive universities can find it difficult to achieve research parity with

doctoral-granting institutions (Henderson, 2009). Toutkoushian, Porter, Danielson and Hollis (2003) determined faculty at research-intensive doctoral universities published at 20 times the rate of comparable faculty at comprehensive institutions. The question becomes, then, can a faculty member maintain a research agenda at the level of a doctoral university while also remaining committed to the teaching and student-focused mission of the comprehensive university?

Early Career Faculty Tenure Track Support Systems

The broad literature on tenure, which includes all institutional types in its implications and recommendations, has produced preliminary recommendations for departmental and institutional practices to ease the confusion and burden on faculty during the pre-tenure process. Sorcinelli (2000) summarized several principles academic leaders should adopt to support early career faculty. Sorcinelli recommended: a) institutions clearly communicate tenure expectations with guidelines for the tenure process, b) academic leadership provide annual evaluations on tenure progress, c) senior faculty mentor junior faculty on relevant academic qualifications, d) institutions support undergraduate and graduate-level teaching, and e) institutions develop policies to support scholarly development. Given faculty face significant challenges in their first years in the academy, how can these resources be best nurtured and utilized to support faculty during challenging times? Where do they appear in the faculty contexts? I organized my dissertation study to examine the faculty experience from the individual to the global perspective. I also determined the resources of support that exist at all of those three levels. The following section defines that organizational approach.

Faculty Environment Contexts Shaping the Tenure Process

Researchers have explored how different contexts influence faculty behavior. These studies have found faculty behavior is determined, in part, by contexts at the global, disciplinary, institutional, departmental, and individual levels (Gappa, Austin & Trice, 2007; Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011; O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). These researchers' individual, localized, and global approaches to academic work served as an organizational framework for how this study explored the multiple layers of the faculty experience. A description of each context follows.

The Global Macro Level Faculty Context

Rhoades and Slaughter (2004) provided a succinct depiction of the global, macro contexts of faculty experiences, focusing on the elements of capitalism within the field of higher education. They posited faculty knowledge and the learning environment operate within academic capitalism. Broadly defined, academic capitalism is the “involvement of colleges and faculty in market-like behaviors” (p. 37). Federal and state initiatives such as federal financial aid policies, patent law, and information technology law commodify the university experience. As a result, an institution adopts business practices to be economically competitive to survive and expands institutional managerial techniques to manage faculty work. Gonzales and Rincones (2011) noted free-market capitalistic tendencies, also referred to as neoliberalism, operate upon institutions. In doing so, those tendencies remove faculty members' abilities to act independently and make their own decisions. That outcome results in the “weakening of faculty governance, retrenchment,

and the marketization of knowledge” (p. 66). An understanding of the global forces that impact faculty work is important because the macro context impacts a faculty members’ localized disciplinary context (the meso level), which directly impacts their individual micro experience.

The Localized Meso Level Faculty Context

At a more localized, meso level, the faculty experience can be captured within the confines of individual universities and specialized disciplines. Broadly, faculty members’ disciplines have direct influences on their experiences in working toward and achieving tenure and later serving as tenured members of the academy. An example of influence occurs when a discipline’s top-tiered journals, publication outlets, and associations legitimize knowledge, knowers, and knowledge production within the academy. Given faculty reward systems value top-tier, impactful research journals (Hart & Metcalf, 2010), a faculty member’s discipline can dictate the length and legitimacy of one’s career.

The literature has also revealed faculty work is a direct outcome of university behaviors, reflected most often in faculty reward systems. Within the confines of academic reward systems, faculty determine the degree to which they focus on research, teaching, service, and other faculty responsibilities. The literature on tenure has provided clear evidence the degree to which faculty engage in these responsibilities is cultivated at the departmental level and reinforced or contradicted through promotion systems at the university-level (Fairweather, 1996; 2005; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Melguizo & Strober, 2007; O’Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). Given that fact, the meso level

has a direct impact on a faculty member's individual micro experience. For the purposes of my study, an understanding of the meso-level faculty context is important so that one can recognize how the global context impacts the meso context, and how the meso context is manifested in an individual faculty member's narrative within the micro-level context.

The Individual Micro Level Faculty Context

The passion faculty members hold for their chosen profession is often an intrinsic, individualized one. For this reason, the individual context of the faculty member serves as the micro level in this conceptual framework: the individual characteristics, motivations, and decisions of the faculty member. Faculty have a personal connection to the construction of their subject-matter knowledge (Neumann, 2009). As a result, they are invested in their work, and that investment is influenced by and influences the character of the meso-level institution. Because those individual micro and institutional meso contexts influence each other in this manner, tensions can erupt (Lindholm, 2003). Gonzales and Rincones (2011) explained when pre-tenured faculty are personally connected to their work at such a deep level "they are unlikely to easily yield to organizational mandates that undermine what they see as the purposes of their work" (p. 67). The individual contexts and experiences are central components to the faculty story. This contextual plan tells the faculty story at all levels, individual to global, and it is important to know what happens at the individual level to determine the building blocks of faculty narratives. The results of my study have illuminated what takes place during a

faculty member's tenure track journey at comprehensive universities. Each faculty context has played a role in that narrative.

Faculty Capital in the Tenure Process

Perna (2005) argued positive outcomes in the tenure and promotion process were directly related to one's possession of three forms of capital: human, structural, and social and social network capital. The results of Perna's study explained how women and minoritized faculty of color, without these forms of capital, have different and less successful faculty labor market outcomes in the tenure system. My study focused on Perna's theoretical approach but used a different lens to explain tenure outcomes. Rather than identify and explain negative tenure cases, I used this framework to explain how faculty possessing this capital succeeded in the tenure system.

Perna is not the first theorist to identify forms of capital. Pierre Bourdieu is one foundational scholar who is often cited by contemporary capital theorists (see Allen, 2006; Yosso, 2005). Bourdieu (1971, 1973) argued that the high socioeconomic status found in the middle and upper classes is valuable capital necessary for success in a hierarchical society. Individuals can possess this capital at birth, if their families possess that capital, but they could also acquire it through formal education. Yosso (2005), a contemporary theorist of Perna, expanded Bourdieu's theory. Yosso's theory highlighted aspects of community cultural wealth and the cultural capital different racial and ethnic groups possess, including aspirational, familial, navigational, resistant, and linguistic capital. For studies that examine the experiences of racially minoritized faculty members, Yosso's community cultural wealth framework would be an important layer to

unpack. For the purposes of this research, however, I am utilizing Perna's three-level capital framework.

Perna (2005)'s first form of capital, human capital, is closely associated with a faculty member's success in the academic labor market (Becker, 1962). Faculty success is closely linked to faculty productivity. Several factors influence success and productivity, including the quality of one's educational background, one's ability to move across the country for employment opportunities, one's motivation and intensity of work, and one's emotional and physical health (Becker 1993; Polacheck, 1977).

The second form of capital, structural capital, is the prestige and value placed upon faculty members' institutional appointment, academic discipline, and role within their institutions (Smart, 1991). Thirdly, social capital and social network capital are the investment faculty members have made in human and other forms of capital, institutional resources, or support (Lin, 2001a; Portes, 1998). These two forms of capital are closely linked with Perna's research and considered as one category of capital within this study. Examples of this capital appear when individuals form relationships with others and serve in social network and social structures. Lin 2001(b) noted faculty possess this capital specifically within promotion and tenure experiences when they receive endorsement and certification of their qualifications and when they receive emotional support and recognition from others. Faculty also possess this capital when they have information and knowledge about practices within their institution, when they understand expectations and opportunities, and when they have influence on and relationships with key decision makers at their institution. For the purposes of this research project, I

utilized these three forms of capital a framework to help me interpret meaning from the participants' promotion and tenure success.

Conclusion

The purpose of my research study was to explore how pre-tenure faculty experience and navigate the tenure track process at comprehensive universities. This research study has been guided by one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure?

The previous chapter provided a literature review about comprehensive universities and the tenure systems operating within that institutional type and throughout higher education. The basis for the present study was reviewed and the foundational elements of the research study's questions were provided. The following chapter contains a summary of the hermeneutic phenomenological research design and the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, which served as the research method basis for this research project.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to explore how pre-tenure faculty experienced and navigated the tenure track process at comprehensive universities. This research study was guided by one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure?

To answer these questions, I employed a hermeneutic phenomenological research design. This chapter provides a detailed summary of the research design, sampling methods, data collection and analyses process. I explain in detail the conceptual frameworks that shaped my data collection and analysis. I also explain my researcher positionality and the trustworthiness measures used to support the confidence in my findings.

Epistemological Underpinnings in this Research Project

This research study was driven by the epistemological considerations of postmodernism as defined by Bredo (2006). Postmodernism operates from the perspective one must be cautious of meta-narratives. According to Bredo, a meta-narrative is “any account that attempts to encompass other accounts to become the single way things are. Any claim to have found the ultimate foundation for inquiry” (p. 19). These statements mean one space or one narrative cannot capture the full perspective of

all contexts surrounding truth. There is no one all-encompassing truth because not all epistemologies and sources of truth are considered equal. Some truths are dominant and some truths are absent from the dominant narrative (Bredo, 2006). True reality is the sum of all experiences and truth is relative and socially constructed (Crotty, 1998). Postmodernism and constructivism align perfectly with the theoretical foundations driving phenomenology. The reason is that this research design seeks to understand unheard voices as a researcher uncovers the rich, lived experience of a given phenomenon (Creswell, 2009).

Phenomenological Research

A researcher's purpose when conducting a phenomenological inquiry is to understand the lived experiences and viewpoints of a given phenomenon (Cohen & Omery, 1994). All phenomenological research centers on the core scope of intentionality, someone's direct awareness or consciousness of an object or event. Phenomenology describes what all participants have in common, as they experience something (Creswell, 2007). In the case of this research, my phenomenological investigation focused on how faculty members successfully navigated the pre-tenure process at comprehensive universities.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

The hermeneutic approach to phenomenology research follows the work of philosopher Van Manen (1990). In its most simplistic sense, Van Manen's approach involves the interpretation of texts with a focus on the language of the text under analysis and the individual nature of the author or speaker delivering the text (Van Manen, 1990).

In this form of phenomenology, researchers write a description of the phenomenon while explaining their relationship to the topic. They focus on understanding the meaning of an experience while utilizing greater interpretive engagement with the data than one would see with descriptive phenomenology (Langdridge, 2007). Hermeneutic phenomenology is a process where the researcher mediates between different meanings to uncover the meaning of the lived experiences of participants (Creswell, 2007). The hermeneutic circle is a key theoretical component of this form of phenomenology. Within that circle, there is a relationship between one part (one interview) and the whole (the research project/phenomenon under investigation). In order to understand the whole one must look at the parts that make it up (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2009).

Research Questions

This study has sought to answer one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure?

Conceptual Frameworks

This study explored two areas of inquiry: the lived experiences of tenure track faculty at comprehensive universities and how these faculty had successful progress toward or awarding of tenure. To do so, I utilized two different frameworks. First, with the lived experiences I combined several conceptual frameworks that structured faculty

contexts at the micro, meso, and macro levels (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011, O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). Secondly, to explain tenure success, I utilized Perna's (2005) framework that synthesized and explained how pre-tenure faculty utilize human capital, structural capital, and social and social network capital.

Conceptual Framework: Faculty Contexts

My conceptual framework of faculty contexts served as the foundation for the interview protocol and data analysis. Faculty work is determined, in part, by contexts at the global, disciplinary, institutional, and individual levels (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011, O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). No one researcher has examined faculty contexts from all of those levels, global (meso), disciplinary and institutional (meso), as well as the individual (micro). Each level and context is characterized and labeled differently. As a result, I have synthesized and combined all of those approaches into an interconnected conceptual model of academic faculty contexts. That model serves as the conceptual framework for this research study. The conceptual framework approaches the faculty experience from an individual to a global perspective. I have mapped my interview protocol questions to each of these macro, meso, and micro faculty contexts. See Appendix A for that matrix.

My conceptual framework starts at the global, macro level. That level is abstract and encompasses the way that faculty knowledge and the learning environment operate within academic capitalism. Academic capitalism is the "involvement of colleges and faculty in market-like behaviors" (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004, p. 37). Free-market

capitalist tendencies, neoliberalism, also operate upon institutions and remove faculty members' ability to act independently and make their own decisions. At the middle, meso level, the faculty experience takes place within the confines of individual universities and specialized disciplines. At the individual, micro level, a faculty member's individual characteristics, motivations, and decisions shape their experiences as a member of the academy. Overall, the results of this research project illuminated how individual faculty understood the ways their personal characteristics, institution/discipline, and broader global forces influenced their promotion and tenure experiences. Figure 3.1 below visually represents those three faculty contexts and includes notations for this study's second conceptual framework: forms of capital that influence promotion and tenure outcomes. That second conceptual framework is explained in the next section.

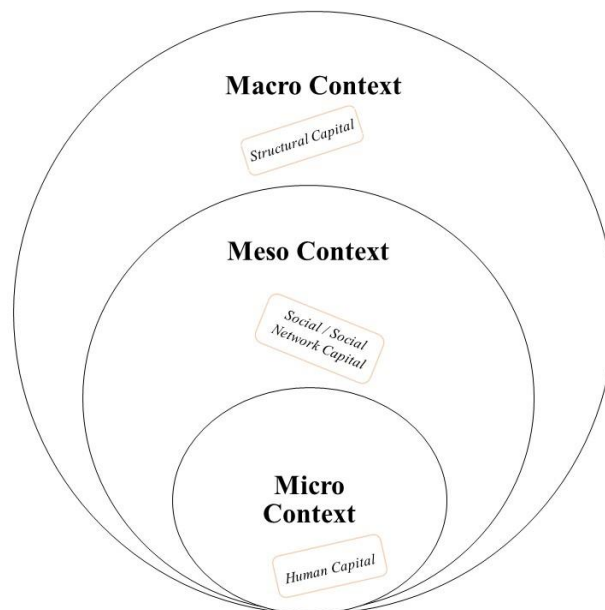


Figure 3.1: Conceptual frameworks guiding this study: Faculty contexts and forms of capital influencing promotion and tenure

Conceptual Framework: Human, Structural, and Social/Social Network Capital

To explain success in the tenure process I utilized a theoretical framework once used by Perna (2005). Within that framework, positive outcomes in tenure and promotion are directly related to one's possession of three forms of capital: human, structural, and social and social network capital. Perna explained how women and minoritized faculty of color, without these forms of capital, have different and less successful faculty labor market outcomes in the tenure system. My study used a different lens to explain tenure outcomes. Most of the literature on comprehensive university tenure portrays faculty experiences as a challenging ordeal, yet in my study participants shared positive experiences working toward and achieving tenure. As a result, the inquiry shifted from explaining how the absence of something, such as capital, detracts from successful tenure experiences to another more positive perspective. I used Perna's framework to explain how faculty possessing this capital had successful progress toward or awarding of tenure.

Perna's first form of capital, human capital, is closely associated with a faculty member's success in the academic labor market (Becker, 1962). Faculty success is closely linked to faculty productivity, and several factors influence success and productivity, including the quality of one's educational background, one's ability to move across the country for employment opportunities, one's motivation and intensity of work, and one's emotional and physical health (Becker 1993; Polacheck, 1977).

The second form of capital, structural capital, is the prestige and value placed upon faculty members' institutional appointment, academic discipline, and role within

their institutions (Smart, 1991). Social capital and social network capital, closely linked within Perna's study and considered as one category of capital within this study, are the investment faculty members have made in human and other forms of capital, institutional resources, or support (Lin, 2001a; Portes, 1998). Examples of this capital appear when individuals form relationships with others and serve in social networks and social structures. Lin (2001b) noted faculty possess this capital within promotion and tenure experiences when they receive endorsement and certification of their qualifications and when they receive emotional support and recognition from others. Faculty also possess this capital when they have information and knowledge about practices within their institution, when they understand expectations and opportunities, and when they have influence on and relationships with key decision makers at their institution. For the purposes of this research project, these three forms of capital serve as a framework to help with the interpretation of promotion and tenure success.

IRB

Prior to data collection, I received Clemson University's Institutional Review Board approval for this study (see Appendix B). Within those IRB documents I identified how I would protect the anonymity of my participants through the use of pseudonyms and careful contextual descriptions. I also outlined how I would preserve and store the data.

Sampling Method

Phenomenological research generally involves purposive sampling. This study utilized criterion-based purposive sampling, where cases are included in inquiry that meet

important predetermined criteria (Patton, 1990). I utilized this technique to identify nine faculty at comprehensive universities who met my project criteria explained below.

Disciplinary Characteristics for Inclusion

Disciplines producing research grounded in diverse epistemological foundations are oftentimes associated with an ambiguous tenure system, since the determination of legitimate research has multiple forms (Fairweather, 1993). Disciplines and academic departments are also categorized into two forms of paradigm development: 1) codified and systematically delivered knowledge bases (chemistry, engineering) and 2) relatively dispersed knowledge bases (sociology, education). Not only do high-consensus fields tend to have more stable funding and greater resources, but they are less likely to experience dissension and disagreement over criteria for faculty advancement (Hearn & Anderson, 2002). In practice, this means promotion and tenure committees within more dispersed knowledge-based departments could have a variety of reactions to a pre-tenured faculty member's dossier. This can lead to ambiguity and stress on the part of faculty members in the tenure process (Hearn & Anderson, 2002). Given that ambiguity, I focused my research efforts on faculty within a relatively dispersed knowledge discipline of higher education and students affairs, which is my field of study as well. I chose to study my own discipline for a couple of reasons. I knew I would have a common language and disciplinary understanding of the faculty involved and because I have relationships with faculty across the country from my national disciplinary service activities that were helpful in recruiting participants.

Institutional Characteristics for Participant Inclusion

To properly capture the higher education and student affairs pre-tenured faculty experience at comprehensive universities I developed a working definition for comprehensive universities. Comprehensive universities were Master's Colleges and Universities within the Carnegie Classification System. To qualify within that university classification, institutions must have conferred at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2016).

Individual Characteristics for Participant Inclusion

As I was identifying participants prior to participant request outreach, I determined that the ideal characteristics for inclusion would be full-time faculty members who were either tenured within the last academic year or those who had completed at least three years of full-time tenure track experience. I also wanted participants who did not hold any other part-time or full-time administrative appointment outside of being a tenure track faculty member.

Process for Participant Identification, Selection

I used an ASHE-member dataset prepared by Eliason, Cochran, Waugaman, Lewis, Jackson, and LaRiviere (2015) to determine which higher education/student affairs disciplinary programs met my definition of comprehensive universities. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education provided a downloadable dataset of all universities that fell within their master's colleges and universities classification. I cross-referenced that dataset with the dataset Eliason et al. (2015) used in

a previous research project. At the start of the 2017-2018 academic year, I then visited those higher education/student affairs program websites or college website directories to determine which pre-tenure or recently-tenured faculty were currently employed at those institutions and, if available, the number of years they had worked for their institution. I compiled a dataset of those individuals who met all of the criteria for my study and had a list of 35 faculty. Those faculty members were in the first wave of recruitment e-mails that I sent. Appendix C has the recruitment email.

Participant Details

All faculty participants in this study were full-time faculty who were either tenured within the last academic year or had received positive feedback from academic administrators on their successful progress toward earning tenure. All but two of the pre-tenured faculty had fewer than six years of teaching experience as a full-time, tenure track, university faculty member but more than three years of experience at the same comprehensive university. The only exception to this rule was Aiden. He had just completed his first year at a comprehensive university, third year overall as a faculty member, with the previous two years at a doctoral-classified university. Aiden mentioned the research university operated just like a comprehensive university. He was also considering submitting an early application for tenure. Aiden had a wealth of experience and context, so I included him in my study as a near-tenure faculty member.

None of the participants had any other current part-time or full-time administrative appointment outside of their academic department. Three participants I interviewed self-identified with male biological sex characteristics, and five participants

identified as female. One participant did not specify a biological sex. All participants self-identified as White/Caucasian. Participants lived in a variety of locations around the United States including the Northeast, Southeast, and Midwest. Participants' years of comprehensive university experience prior to the 2017-2018 academic year ranged from one to six years. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education groups comprehensive universities within three tiers: smaller, medium, and larger ones. All but one of the participants worked for comprehensive universities within the larger tier. The one different participant worked for an institution from the medium-level category. See Table 3.1 for demographic information such as sex, race, and pseudonym. The table also contains participants' geographic location in the United States, their years of experience as a comprehensive university faculty member, their title and pre- or post-tenure status, and the classification size of their institution within the Carnegie Master's Colleges and Universities sector.

Table 3.1

Participant Information

Participant Pseudonym	Sex	Race	Region of Country (in United States)	Years of Comprehensive University Faculty Experience	Title	Carnegie Classification Size (within Master's Colleges and Universities)
Aiden	Did not specify	White/Caucasian	South Atlantic	1	Assistant	Larger Program
Marc	Male	White/Caucasian	South Atlantic	3	Assistant	Larger Program
Jessica	Female	White/Caucasian	South Atlantic	4	Assistant	Larger Program
Hannah	Female	White/Caucasian	Midwest	4	Assistant	Larger Program
Nathan	Male	White/Caucasian	South Atlantic	4	Assistant	Larger Program
Laura	Female	White/Caucasian	Mid-Atlantic	5	Associate (tenured, pursuing promotion)	Larger Program
Michael	Male	White/Caucasian	South Atlantic	5	Associate (promoted, pursuing tenure)	Larger Program
Samantha	Female	White/Caucasian	Northeast	6	Associate	Medium Program
Melissa	Female	White/Caucasian	Midwest	6	Associate	Larger Program

Phenomenological Data Collection

Data for this project came from multiple sources, including demographic questionnaires, in-depth interviews, participant timeline reflections, and participants' institutional promotion and tenure handbooks. Information about each type of data source follows below.

Demographic Questionnaire

Phenomenological research seeks to achieve maximum variability among participants (Langdridge, 2007). Researchers must be strategic about which participants make up their small participant sample. To ensure I had participants with a variety of backgrounds and demographic characteristics, I required all participants to complete a demographic survey. That survey data provided me with additional background information to ensure their narratives related to and expanded upon what other members provided in my study. Through that survey, participants provided their name of their universities, their titles, and their sex. They provided background information including their previous faculty experiences and where they completed their graduate work. They also shared their e-mail, phone number, and video conference username. Appendix D has the full text of the demographic questionnaire.

Timeline Reflections and Tenure Evaluation Criteria Guidelines

Document analysis is the systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed or electronic material. The purpose of document analysis is to elicit meaning and a better understanding of empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009). Before conducting the interviews,

I collected tenure track timelines where I asked participants to note important milestones and moments that stood out to them during their pre-tenure experience or within a year or two after receiving tenure at their institution. Participants created timelines of their earliest memories of their faculty experience and how they understood the tenure process from those early days until the time of their interview. If they had the time, participants were invited to journal or develop reflective notes as to why those moments were significant. That information was important for guiding and prompting the participants to share stories and highlights from their tenure experiences during the semi-structured interviews. The depth of information provided in those journals varied with each participant. Participants provided me with their timelines prior to or immediately after our interview discussions. I included those journal submissions in my analysis along with my interview transcripts to understand the most salient themes related to participants' experiences. The in-depth timelines contained additional information we did not completely touch upon during the interviews, so the information was valuable data for data analysis and the results section. See Appendix E for the milestone timeline and reflection protocol.

Seven participants were able to share their departmental and university tenure guideline documents. Those guideline documents took many forms but ultimately provided important promotion and tenure review committee documents effective for the 2017-2018 academic year. I gathered this type of data to triangulate and support any participant statements about faculty productivity expectations (Koro-Ljungberg, 2016).

They also provided foundational information for understanding tenure expectations at comprehensives. .

Semi-Structured Interviews

Like many phenomenological research projects, my data came primarily from 60-120-minute semi-structured interviews (Langdridge, 2007) throughout the fall 2017 semester. My conceptual framework of faculty contexts served as the basis for the categories of questions. I asked participants personal-focused questions such as why they decided to become a faculty member and what challenges they faced as pre-tenure faculty as they understood their roles at their universities. Looking at the faculty members' localized context, I asked participants questions such as what their thoughts were about their tenure expectations, what their department or university communicated to them about the expectations for tenure, and if they were able to take advantage of support programs, services, mentors, peer supports, or other resources to support their journeys as faculty members. See Appendix A for a table where I mapped my interview protocol to my conceptual framework. Within those interviews, participants unpacked the faculty tenure experience within each of those micro-to-macro contexts. The interviews also allowed me to establish rapport with participants. I needed to establish that rapport so participants would feel comfortable sharing their personal truths about the tenure process and then participating in additional member checking activities after the interview (Glesne, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Trustworthiness Measures

One of the objectives of rigorous qualitative research is trustworthiness. One can bolster the trustworthiness of a study by collecting data in a variety of ways and from multiple sources (Creswell, 2007). My multiple sources of data included data analysis from different documents and semi-structured interviews. I used several methods of validation, which included member checking, triangulation of data, clarifying researcher bias, and the use of thick, rich descriptions. In the following section I explain how I used each method.

Member Checking

The first method I utilized to fortify the trustworthiness of this study was member checking. Member checking occurs when a researcher shares data, preliminary codes or themes, and/or interpretations with participants involved in the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). After each interview was transcribed participants reviewed their transcripts and determined if the information accurately reflected their responses. All participants confirmed what I had collected was consistent with the questions I asked and the answers they provided. They also identified details for me to consider removing or further anonymizing to protect their identities in the field of higher education/student affairs.

Peer Reviewer

The second method I used to support trustworthiness was peer debriefing. This is the action of discussing analysis techniques, findings, and conclusions with a peer who is not directly involved with this research study who can provide an outside perspective (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). I asked a Ph.D.-prepared professional who had completed

qualitative courses and taught graduate-level introductory research methods courses to review a redacted transcript and confirm if her coding and theming sequence conclusions matched my own. Her insights provided a secondary perspective on how accurately I had understood the most important elements of each study participants' tenure track experiences.

Triangulation of Data

The trustworthiness of a study is further supported when triangulation of ideas takes place. Triangulation occurs when a researcher consults a variety of viewpoints simultaneously. Examples of this method are using multiple data sources, methods, or theoretical foundations (Koro-Ljungberg, 2016). In my study, I gathered evidence from interviews, journal/reflection timeline submissions from participants, and promotion and tenure documents. By asking my participants to complete tenure timelines outside of our 60-90 minute-long interview sessions, I provided them with an opportunity to reflect upon their experiences as a faculty member. While doing so my participants had an opportunity to refer to any materials necessary to construct adequate narratives and stories, which verified the information they provide in their interviews. In addition, the promotion and tenure documents verified many of the observations participants noticed about the tenure process and their expectations for success in achieving tenure.

Clarifying Researcher Biases

Researcher bias exists in every type of study (Glesne, 2011). Van Manen (1990) noted researchers found maintaining a research journal helpful for recording insights, reflecting on existing and newly-forming knowledge, and identifying patterns. Through

my journal, I became more aware of my biases and how I have been socialized to think about the academic profession within a limited number of contexts, given I was educated or worked at community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and research/doctoral universities. Comprehensive universities have elements of all of those institutional types in their mission and demographics, but they are their own unique entity. I needed to evaluate those universities and think about them as if I was learning about the contexts of academia for the first time. To do so, I maintained a researcher journal where I wrote about my personal biases all throughout my data collection process.

Use of Thick, Rich Descriptions

Guba and Lincoln (1989) noted that the trustworthiness of a study is further bolstered by a researcher's efforts to promote the transferability of the findings. Consumers of this research assess the transferability of the findings by determining how similar the study site or participants are to their contexts. They are able to make that determination if a researcher provides a thick, rich description of the time period, location, context, and culture present within the participants and site(s). I provided as much contextual information as I could about each participant's observations, keeping in mind the necessity to protect their anonymity.

Phenomenological Data Analysis

Preparing the Data for Analysis

In the first stage of phenomenological analysis, the researcher expects to glean an overall understanding of what the data means. Researchers read documents and interview transcripts to understand the description of the experience revealed through the

data (Hycner, 1985). After I completed the interviews, I had each recording professionally transcribed and asked participants to review the transcripts to determine if the text accurately portrayed what they remembered providing. Participants also had an opportunity at that point to identify what part of the transcripts revealed unique elements of their story they would prefer were removed or spoken about in generic terms.

Once that was completed I read and re-read all of the interview transcripts, participants' journals, timelines, and other promotion and tenure materials to understand the tenure process experience for my participants (Smith, et al., 2009; Langdridge, 2007). All the while, I maintained a researcher journal (Van Manen, 1990) where I identified common narratives prior to coding. I also journaled about how the participant stories reflected and were different from the literature on comprehensive university tenure. Throughout that process, I discovered participants' stories were overwhelmingly positive and brought to light sources of support and intrinsic motivations that helped them to succeed at their institutions. As a result, I determined my secondary research question and wanted to know how faculty members managed successful progress toward achieving tenure. I felt that was an equally interesting aspect to my data collection and that area of inquiry deserved further investigation and reporting in this dissertation.

Identifying Meaning Units

In the second stage of analysis, I broke down the text into smaller, discrete units of meaning. Identifying those pieces of information is a necessary part of the hermeneutic circle of data analysis, where researchers disrupt the narrative flow of a piece of data to identify discrete chunks of information within it. The interview becomes

a set of parts (codes) which a researcher interprets and reorganizes into another new whole (the write up of the data analysis) (Smith, et al., 2009).

I had a variety of data sources for this research project and found most of my information from semi-structured interviews, transcripts and timeline reflections. I also received tenure evaluation criteria guidelines, which were helpful to read as I reviewed each transcript to get specific information about what the participant institutional leaders valued in terms of research, teaching, and service expectations. Those criteria guidelines reinforced and provided more detailed context with what the participants shared about their dossier review and evaluation feedback.

I engaged in this circular nature of data analysis first by grouping together similar meaning units to determine themes related to the phenomena of tenure at comprehensive universities (Langdridge, 2007). I used NVivoTM qualitative software as a technological tool to organize and categorize the data from my interview transcripts and other documents. I organized my coding and theming around the three faculty contexts within my conceptual framework: the individual micro context, institutional/disciplinary meso context, and global macro context. I further collapsed similar groupings of codes into even greater concepts within each faculty context. When all of those codes were organized under the context themes, I reviewed the codes to determine if they were examples of human, social/social network, and structural capital.

To make meaning of the collective research in my study, I grouped similar meaning units together to understand the phenomena of the comprehensive university tenure system. I was able to determine emergent themes for those groups. Appendix F is

a sample of the coding process, which illustrates how codes were grouped together to determine two themes within the micro context.

Synthesizing Meaning Units and Composite Descriptions

The last step involved synthesizing the individual meaning units to explain the consistent and similar elements of my participants' shared phenomenon: the higher education/student affairs tenure experience at comprehensive universities. I determined the common factors of the tenure process across my faculty narratives and wrote a composite description of the comprehensive university pre-tenure faculty experience (Langdridge, 2007), looking at experiences from the micro individual level, the institutional/disciplinary meso level, and the more global macro level. That information appears in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Researcher Positionality

For my research study, I interviewed nine pre-tenure or recently tenured early career faculty at comprehensive universities. I journaled about my perceptions and biases about faculty life at comprehensive universities and the faculty tenure system before, during, and after the data collection process. Prior to each interview and immediately after each interview I took stock in those journal entries about what I was learning from the data collection process, how the participant narratives reinforced and were different from what I had read in the literature about comprehensive university tenure, and what similarities I saw in the participant narratives.

Within reflective memo writing I reflected quite substantially on my own familial and professional relationships with faculty. I am privileged to have parents who worked

both tenure track and non-tenure track faculty positions at research universities when I was a young child. I attended a selective baccalaureate-classified liberal arts college as an undergraduate student. Afterward, I received my master's degree from a very-high research-intensive institution, and I am currently earning a Ph.D. from a newly classified very-high research-intensive university. In my graduate work, I have also been fortunate to be mentored and advised by nationally recognized tenure track faculty at doctoral research universities.

I worked for seven years following college in academic affairs at a community college. What I noticed as I was developing the initial ideas for this project was one particular institutional type was missing from any of my background: comprehensive universities. I had an understanding of associate's, bachelor's, and doctoral universities. Nevertheless, prior to undertaking this study I was personally unfamiliar with comprehensive universities. I was familiar with the Research I model of faculty work and understood the teaching-focused model of baccalaureate liberal arts colleges from my experiences as an undergraduate, but I did not know much about comprehensive universities prior to conducting this project. Prior to data collection, as I reviewed the literature on this topic, I kept assuming that comprehensive universities were simply a marriage of the undergraduate programs I had witnessed as a student/professional and the major research universities I attended as a graduate student. What I realized as I journaled about those perceptions during data collection was that comprehensive university experience is unlike any of those models, even in instances where comprehensive universities are undergoing mission change to a more research-intensive

classification. As a higher education scholar, I needed to recognize and appreciate that uniqueness.

Conclusion

I started this chapter by first discussing the epistemological considerations that underpinned my approach to research and knowledge, and I connected those considerations with the philosophical foundations of phenomenology. I also provided an overview of hermeneutic phenomenology, my research questions and conceptual frameworks, and my IRB process that shaped sampling method and my data collection/preservation plans. I explained the various measures I employed to bolster my findings' trustworthiness. I explained my data analysis process. I concluded the chapter with my researcher positionality statement.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter summarizes the most commonly expressed ideas and perceptions my study participants shared about their pre-tenure experiences at comprehensive universities. The study was guided by one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure?

To answer both of those research questions, I employed a hermeneutic phenomenological data analysis, where I read and reread transcripts and participant timelines and reflection journals to understand each faculty member's story. I identified units of meaning that I coded and clustered into similar codes and themes (Smith et al., 2009).

I organized all of my themes within my conceptual framework of faculty contexts, which started from the individual micro-level, advanced to the meso institutional and disciplinary level, and concluded with a more global abstract macro level. Thirteen themes emerged from this data. Six themes emerged at the micro level: faculty career motivations, year one experiences, the intersections of identities and tenure, frustrations and anxiety about tenure, satisfaction with the tenure process, and feeling secure with

themselves as comprehensive university faculty. At the meso level, participant narratives revealed six institutional aspects played key roles in their successful tenure experience and those themes were: institutional colleague and leadership support, campus politics and leadership challenges at institutions, external support in the field, graduate program influence, discipline involvement, and striving tendencies. At the macro level, participants at institutions adopting striving tendencies for rank advancement and increased research productivity the participants shared about the global, macro theme of witnessing how certain faculty knowers and forms of knowledge were privileged.

The following chapter contains an overview of the participant background characteristics, an explanation of the coding and theming surrounding this study's conceptual framework, and an in-depth explanation of each theme in the individual micro, institutional and disciplinary meso, and more global macro faculty contexts.

Description of Participants

With phenomenology, researchers strive to achieve maximum variation within their sample, which means participants share a common experience (or phenomenon) but have a wide variety of demographic characteristics (Langdrige, 2007). In the case of participants in my study, three participants self-identified with male biological sex characteristics and five participants identified as female. One participant did not specify a biological sex. All participants self-identified as White/Caucasian. In addition to demographic differences, participants came from different generations with five spending decades as student affairs administrators prior to their doctoral studies or faculty appointments while four participants were younger with fewer years of experience.

Three shared about being married and parents of young children whereas others were single.

While all of the participants had some form of teaching experience as adjuncts or doctoral teaching assistants prior to their faculty appointments, two worked as full-time faculty for research-focused institutions prior to coming to their comprehensive university campus. Four participants had strategically applied for and moved across the country for their comprehensive faculty appointments. Five participants chose this career as a means of accommodating a dual career relationship or without knowledge of the mission of comprehensive universities. Three of the participants worked for institutions and states that permitted faculty unionization, which shaped their faculty experiences. Two faculty members identified their institutions as striving universities, striving for a quality reputation in the region/state or striving to be classified as a higher research-producing doctoral institution in the future.

Even with all of these diverse backgrounds, every faculty member expressed commitment to the mission of comprehensive universities and passion for the teaching-focused faculty model. All participants had worked as administrators and practitioners in the field of higher education/student affairs, which helped them both to articulate the conditions around them and the role comprehensive universities played in the greater system of higher education. All participants had earned their doctoral degrees at research-intensive doctoral institutions, commonly referred to as R1 universities in the field of higher education/student affairs. Because of their backgrounds and expertise in the field of higher education, participants became research partners in interpreting and

situating their experiences within the broader themes emerging from this research and the literature on comprehensive university faculty tenure.

Explanation of Coding and Theming Surrounding Faculty Contexts

To make meaning of the themes that emerged from the research data and determine what early career faculty experience as they navigate the tenure pipeline, I have organized my explanation of their experiences in this chapter in a micro-meso-macro approach (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; Melguizo & Strober, 2007; Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004). I organized my themes starting first with the micro context, moving to the meso context, and concluding with the macro. I did that strategically because participants shared their stories in this manner during their interviews. They spoke first at length about their individual perspectives and then about the impact of their localized and disciplinary environments on their tenure experience. Only a handful of participants articulated aspects of the global macro level, so the short insights conclude this section.

In the themes that follow below, I first determine the individual context (the micro context) was critical in understanding how faculty develop a sense of identity and understanding. For example, what takes place, mentally, in their development as a faculty member? Faculty members' mental development shape the personal connection those faculty members have for their subject matter and teaching (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011). In this chapter I start at the individual, micro level, and I then determine how the surrounding institutional and disciplinary environment (the meso level) played key roles in participants' tenure experience, echoed in the literature on faculty contexts (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Melguizo & Strober, 2007; O'Meara, Terrosky, & Neumann,

2008). I conclude the results section with the global elements of academic capitalism and neoliberalism present in the participant narratives.

Six themes emerged at the micro level: faculty career motivations, year one experiences, the intersections of identities and tenure, frustrations and anxiety about tenure, satisfaction with the tenure process, and feeling secure with themselves as comprehensive university faculty. At the meso level, participant narratives revealed six institutional aspects played key roles in their successful tenure experience and those themes were: institutional colleague and leadership support, campus politics and leadership challenges at institutions, external support in the field, graduate program influence, discipline involvement, and striving tendencies. At the macro level, participants who shared their institutions were adopting striving tendencies for rank advancement and increased research productivity shared information about the more global, abstract concepts impacting their work: the macro conditions. Because their institutions were striving for ranking advancement, the participants shared about the theme of witnessing how certain faculty knowers and forms of knowledge were privileged.

Perna (2005) noted positive outcomes in tenure and promotion are related to one's access to three forms of capital: human, social and social network, and structural. To determine how these faculty members had successful progress toward or awarding of tenure, I organized and categorized my codes and responses as examples of each form of capital. Within this study, participants spoke about specific examples where social and social network capital as well as human capital were present in their lives. On a smaller

scale, occasional examples of structural capital were present. Table 4.1 contains a full list of all units of meaning and emergent themes across the faculty contexts: micro, meso, and macro. In the right-hand column, each code related to a particular form of capital is noted.

Table 4.1

Micro Context Coding Clusters of Meaning and Related Themes from Data

Coded Clusters	Theme and Example of Capital (noted below)	Forms of Capital Related to Positive Tenure Outcomes
Balance between teaching, research, service	<i>Faculty Career Motivations</i>	Human capital
More appealing than administrative positions		
Flexible schedule – work-life balance		
Accidental academic, HESA professional		
Natural inclination to teaching, high touch work		
Family academic role models		Soc. / Soc. Network Capital
Opportunity to pursue knowledge		
To manage dual career relationships (to be faculty in general and to work, specifically, for comprehensive university)		Human Capital
Aversion to publish or perish model of RI (comprehensive-specific motivation)		Human Capital
Wanted focus on teaching, liberal arts (comprehensive-specific motivation)		Human Capital
Family culture (comprehensive-specific motivation)		Human Capital
Need for social justice (comprehensive-specific motivation)		

Learning how to teach	<i>Year 1 Experiences – Learning the Ropes</i>	
Overwhelmed by whirlwind learning curve		
Adjusting to solitude of scholarly work		
Frustration with teaching – repetition		
Tenure progress is self-motivated		
Being a working parent	<i>The Intersection of Identities and Tenure</i>	
Gendered differences in service activities		
White privilege		Human Capital
Outspoken advocate personalities		Human Capital
Not exceptional but in right place at right time	<i>Frustrations and Anxiety about Tenure</i>	
Can't explain why hired, not measuring up to peers/new hires		
Always had to do more		
Never really arrived – ongoing process		
Feeling inferior to others		
Frustration over technology, dossier binder regulations		
Anger, resignation at need to prove worth		
Internalized anxiety		
Frustration about research		
Frustration about service		
Satisfaction with expectations	<i>Satisfaction with the Tenure Process</i>	
Feeling confident about tenure success, trusting the process		

Process is a series of hoops		
Means to achieve protection of academic freedom		
Exceeding expectations gives one freedom of choice		Human capital
Tenure aligns with mission and their motivations		
Manageable work expectations		
Not stretched too thin		
Exceeding promotion and tenure expectations, output of peers	<i>Feeling Secure with Themselves as Comprehensive University Faculty</i>	Human Capital
Hitting my stride		Human Capital
Feeling at peace with comprehensive university faculty life		Human Capital
Understanding campus operations		Human Capital
Program improvements		Human Capital
Success admin career to return to		Human Capital
Felt empowered during P&T experience		Human Capital
Age (experience) as positive aspect		Human Capital
Feeling good – general		Human Capital
Confident as self advocate		Human Capital
Teaching is most impactful work, not research		Human Capital
Enjoy opportunity to focus on research, teaching, service		Human Capital
Lifetime career		Human Capital
Can foster intentional relationships between students and faculty		Human Capital
Would lose ground if shift to R1		Human Capital

Comprehensive faculty model aligns with passions to be faculty		Human Capital
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Table 4.2

Meso Context Coding Clusters of Meaning and Related Themes from Data

Coded Clusters	Theme and Example of Capital (noted below)	Forms of Capital Related to Positive Tenure Outcomes
Institutional understanding of and continued commitment to mission	<i>Institutional Colleague and Leadership Support</i>	Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Colleagues want faculty to gain tenure		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Institutional faculty mentors – assigned		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Colleagues in department, university serve as source of support		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Student Affairs division collaborations		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Organic mentoring by tenured faculty, P&T committee		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Consistent, positive feedback from department		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Awards recognition from institution		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Institutional faculty development resources		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Institutional grant-funding for participant-led initiatives		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Chaired award-winning dissertation		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Department chair relationship importance (various reasons)		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Department chair feedback – annual reviews		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Personal mentorship, examples of advice		Soc./Soc. Network Capital

Dean, department chair standing up to academic leadership		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Consistent feedback		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Dean provides consistent feedback		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Dean broadens definition of P&T categories to reward efforts		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Dean embraces new ideas		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Dean provides informal mentoring		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Dean wants faculty to succeed		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Specific examples of transparency from department		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Consistent expectations, no changes mid-stream		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Trust the process		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Encouraging, consistent feedback, expectations from provost and president-levels		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Department chair changes	<i>Campus Politics and Leadership Challenges at Institutions</i>	
P&T review committee changes		
Expectations changed as a result or could change		
Overall changes to institutional mission, vibe		
Faculty turnover in department – challenge		
Lack of direct mentoring from department re faculty duties		
Tension of graduate program at undergrad-focused institution		
Bullying of junior faculty by senior faculty		
Dean leadership style mis-match		
Dean expressed sexism		
Dean did not acknowledge all work in P&T review		
Department, college collegiality – a game		

Navigating politics		
Awkward interactions with review committee		
Inconsistent procedures followed by provost		
External mentor – provided distance from campus	<i>External Support in Field</i>	Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Validated identity as comprehensive university faculty		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Faculty research collaborator provide support		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Colleagues at other institutions show support		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Twitter community of academics		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Graduate-level faculty served as role models	<i>Graduate Program Influence</i>	Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Graduate faculty mentors		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Dissertation chair influence		Human Capital
		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Graduate program reputation as capital		Human Capital
		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Graduate socialization to R1 model		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Grad student colleagues		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Comprehensives as hinterlands	<i>Discipline Involvement</i>	
Greater publication to publish in top-tier journals		
Publication in top-tier journal		Structural Capital
		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Professional development		Human Capital

		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
National association fortification		Soc./Soc. Network Capital
Lack of collegiality		
Research journal interactions		
Leadership unaware of comprehensive university mission	<i>Striving Tendencies</i>	
Enrollment growth, greater selectivity tensions		
Tenure as moving target		
More grant funding		
Top-tier journal emphasis		
Tension to be top-tier researcher and quality teacher and involved in service		
Increased expectations for research, beyond the minimum P&T criteria		
Increased accountability for excellence		
Backlash from faculty in general at university		
Increased research expectations without support		
Preserving identity as College of Education		
Priorities are in opposition to comprehensive mission		

Table 4.3

Macro Context Coding Clusters of Meaning and Related Themes from Data

Coded Clusters	Theme and Example of Capital (noted below)	Forms of Capital Related to Positive Tenure Outcomes
Identified as traditional researcher	<i>Privileging of Faculty Knowers and Knowledge Production</i>	Structural Capital
Privileging of knowledge		Structural Capital
Ranking influences		Structural Capital

Micro Context Themes

The themes below appeared almost chronologically as participants shared their narrative journey throughout the tenure process at comprehensive universities. They began with sharing their motivations and desires to be faculty, their experiences adjusting to their new career path, their frustrations with the tenure process, growing satisfaction with the tenure process, and a concluding resounding set of statements expressing confidence and wellbeing about their purpose and career path as comprehensive faculty. Participants stated they achieved a state of confidence and wellbeing over time as faculty members.

Faculty Career Motivations

With this theme, participants revealed why they chose to pursue faculty careers and specifically academic careers at comprehensive universities. Their motives varied, with some never intending as doctoral students to pursue faculty careers. These faculty

members did so as a means of accommodating a spouse/partner whose career relocated them near a university. Others made the conscious decision, while a graduate student or a mid-career professional, to pursue faculty careers. The participants who did this did so because they felt that career provided a more appealing alternative to senior student affairs officers and felt that being faculty provided work-life balance in a way administrative opportunities did not afford. Repeatedly, faculty shared they felt a natural tendency toward teaching. They gravitated toward the comprehensive university faculty model that focuses on undergraduate and graduate teaching. Faculty also mentioned they did not want to operate under the publish or perish mentality they personally witnessed from graduate program faculty mentors at research-intensive degree-granting doctoral universities or assumed was present within their RI peers.

Laura was a recently tenured faculty member who left a tenure track position at a research university to pursue a career path at a comprehensive university. She did so because she was committed to teaching and wanted an institution that valued that work. She stated:

I remember being at [her previous institution] and someone saying, “As long as your teaching evaluations are about a three, you’ll be good for tenure.” Three out of five. I thought, “We’re the college of education. Shouldn’t we do a little better than a three? I guess some of us need to work on this.” I just realized that my identity was very much around teaching...Around year three I was like, “I don’t think this is the kind of institution where I need to be.”

Year 1 Experiences: Learning the Ropes

Throughout their interviews and in their written journals, participants in this study shared what their life was like in their first full academic year as a faculty member at a comprehensive university. For those participants who started their faculty career at their comprehensive institution, the learning curve was incredibly steep. They were immediately expected to take part in research, teaching, and service responsibilities with their departments providing minimal onboarding or orientation.

Hannah, who had been a faculty member for three years at her comprehensive university, had worked previously as an administrator for a major research university. She shared her thoughts during her first year:

Just getting your classes ready, figuring out I'm at a new institution. Are the students going to like my teaching? What's it going to be like with the faculty? How am I going to start my research? What is my schedule going to look like? How is that different? I think there was just a lot of questions. I kind of heard about the faculty life, but being able to see it on a different scale, to just experience it. I think a lot of it were just questions, like What's the reaction going to be? Am I going to be good at this?" And then just going forward.

Responsibilities also increased for many of these participants throughout that year, as service and program coordination fell to them. The unstructured, individual-driven nature of their work as academics required they adjust their personality to embrace the solitary nature of research. The faculty also had to get used to the fact that their

academic administrators would not be determining how they met the benchmarks of tenure on a daily basis, just that they were meeting those benchmarks.

Marc, who was starting his fourth year as a faculty member at his university, captured how he adjusted to the faculty learning curve when he shared guidance he received from a faculty member in his doctoral program. Marc stated he was advised, “to write out a five-year plan, which is funny now in retrospect. I tried to do that exercise. I remember year after year, my goal was like, ‘Just don’t burn out.’ Figure out what the hell you’re doing and don’t burn out basically was my goal from year to year.”

While the comments above portray the onboarding of faculty at comprehensive universities, perhaps any type of university, as nebulous, what these quotes convey is that new faculty are uncertain about their role and need guidance along the way from the institutional colleagues.

The Intersection of Identities and Tenure

Several faculty, including Laura, a tenured sixth year faculty member; Samantha, a sixth year tenured and promoted faculty member; Aiden, a fourth year faculty member considering early application for tenure; and Michael, a sixth year promoted but still untenured faculty member, shared examples of how they repeatedly spoke up to institutional leaders whenever they recognized practices with which they disagreed. They became outspoken advocates for populations who shared their minoritized identities related to sex and sexual orientation. They spoke up when they recognized senior faculty bullied junior faculty within their department. Laura explained her experience when she said:

There are some people here [at her comprehensive university] that I think would describe me as confrontational or oppositional because I often, well before I had tenure, I often spoke up about things that were not right about the way we were doing things at [*Name of Institution*]. I'm very outspoken about supporting social justice issues including LGBTQ rights and abortion. And so there's this little tiny part of me that thought, "Oh, I wonder if that's going to come back to bite me," but it didn't. I mean it wasn't, and I asked people who were in the processes afterwards if it came up, and everybody said no. Nobody even mentioned it... I just decided that I wasn't going to be a different person in order to get tenure so it was going either have to be me getting tenure as who I am or I wouldn't get tenure.

Marc and Samantha acknowledged their White privilege as a means of supporting their outspoken nature and their successful tenure experience. For the cis-gendered women in this study, they noticed gendered differences in work expectations. For instance, Laura shared frustrations of sexism from her academic dean. Jessica, a young mother who had completed three years as a faculty member at her comprehensive university, noted she was more often asked to mentor and advise students informally than her male colleagues. Both of these examples show how womanhood played a key role in their faculty development.

Jessica reflected those ideas when she said:

As I look back I think, okay, was that just based on our natural strengths and interests? I'm likely to organize students in internship because I like that and I

like helping students figure out that process, or is it because we were playing male/female roles and I was more counselor? I had far more students coming to my office wanting to talk or seeking support or having breakdowns than he ever did. Is that our male/female roles? I don't want to make it all about that, but I have to recognize that that played into it. Am I more mom-like? Am I more emotionally available? Do I appear to care more? All of those things that he did. Looking back, I would say yes to all of those. Good or bad on the gender side, yes.

Frustrations and Anxiety about Tenure

While working towards tenure, faculty participants struggled with self-doubt and anxiety regarding their legitimacy as faculty members. Marc, Jessica, and Nathan mentioned feeling inadequate compared to high-achieving peers at their institutions or high-achieving new hires who had arrived after them. Jessica and Michael felt the need to overproduce in their academic work to prove themselves as legitimate academics, compared to their Research I faculty friends. Jessica characterized it best when she said:

Even when I started this tenure track position in 2014, I think that there's a little bit of an inferiority complex because the faculty members who were getting jobs at Research I, they're crazy published and we all know who they are and they're at really big schools. I felt like, "Oh, I'm at a school where my job isn't to get six publications in top tier journals every year." I felt like, "Am I less?" Just kind of this, like, "Sure, I'm a faculty member but I'm not a real faculty member because I'm not an R1."

As a result of completing the timeline contribution to this study, Michael had an opportunity to look back on his portfolio of work and realize the cycle of overproduction was his way of becoming established. He needed to realize for himself he “arrived,” so to speak, which was an ongoing process. In his timeline journal he wrote at the conclusion:

As I am writing my journal, I realized that there was a lot of reaffirmation or chipping away at imposter syndrome I didn’t realize I may have had. It appears, to me, that the tenure track process seems to be less about getting tenure as it is coming into one’s own as an “expert” and contributor to the university community.

In that journal statement and in his interview Michael mentioned characteristics of the imposter syndrome, where high-achievers believe they are frauds in their industries or accidental academics. On their campuses, though, no one ever expressed anything to participants to indicate others agreed with that characterization.

Samantha, Aiden, Hannah, and Marc expressed frustrations about procedures within the tenure system and what types of scholarship received greater weight than others. For example, with the area of service, Samantha and Aiden’s institutions both placed greater emphasis and value on institutional service in favor of leadership positions with national associations. Samantha and Aiden both valued those national professional development opportunities just as much if not more than university service. Samantha expressed her frustration for her undervalued national association appointment when she said:

Where I get puzzled and where I think we prioritize something that's silly is I really don't agree that the only service that should be considered valuable at [Name of Institution] is committee membership on faculty-centered committees... Part of our mission is supposed to be about contributing to the economic development of the local community. I do so many things in and around the area and nationally that I think should be considered service. I don't get credit for those in our tenure process. I mean I had it all on my CV, but I'm very sure that no one looked at that and said, "Wow...that's good." I think that makes us very small-minded and sort of unhealthily narrow in how we think about what service is.

For the tenured participants in the study, the last year of review was the most difficult. Samantha shared how she held anxiety about the process, simply because of the unknown nature of the decision. She had vastly exceeded the minimal expectations her university set for tenure, so while preparing her dossiers she thought she had everything sewn up. Just before the institution awarded her tenure she realized that she had been carrying around unidentified internal anxiety. She shared what happened when she was visiting her family for winter break during the decision-making time:

I said to mom, "I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to go home early. I need to meet with the president about my tenure case," and I burst into tears. That was the first time I realized that I had internalized anxiety about it. But I guess I had and wasn't fully aware of it, but I had for sure.

Laura shared that she felt unspoken anger about the need to prove her own worth.

She mentioned:

I've kept a pulse on my friends who are a couple years ahead of me, and apparently the year as you turn in your packet everybody's pretty angry. It seems like it. Everybody I've talked to is "Oh, yeah. I was so angry. This is stupid." Proving your worth shouldn't have to do a lot with anger, but I know some of it has to do with the stress of not knowing or the stress of this or that.

Laura's stressors were similar to Samantha's, but she and other participants also struggled with the technology needed to submit tenure dossier information and the restrictions the review committees placed on materials and other logistics. Laura was also unique in that her institution changed the electronic submission system in the middle of her tenure timeline. She felt different technology or a different process would have better streamlined the tenure review. She explained more about the electronic dossiers when she said:

You can basically put reports for each of your years, write your narrative, and then all of your evidence is there. This article that I just wrote and found out that it's gonna be in JCSD [the Journal of College Student Development], I go into the screen, I fill out a page and it's a whole page of stuff. What's the title, who are the authors, is it peer-reviewed? There are all these check boxes. Is this in a top tier journal? What tier is this? There are all these check boxes and it's a whole screen you fill out. And then you attach a PDF to it. Not fun, because everything is a screen. You basically end up, although you can attach your CV in this, you end up retyping your whole CV into screens, plus making PDFs of everything you put

and attaching them to those screens. This four-inch binder becomes twice as much work, which is fine I suppose if you start that with people who are starting out. So you can do that a little at a time. At year three at [*Name of Institution*] and year five here, they're, "Yeah, we're switching to this." It was super stressful, because how do you take this huge binder and then write a screen for every piece in there? I just think that who said that was a good idea? Who thought, "Oh, yes, this will be easy"? I've done that twice at universities. I think we're not being thoughtful about the time it takes to do that.

What the quotes above indicate is that faculty internalize the value of their work, often not recognizing the stressors associated with an identity connected to their professional status. They take issue with institutional practices and systems that detract from their overall goal of contributing to the global and institutional academic cultures. Those faculty cared about their work and wanted to do the best job possible.

Satisfaction with the Tenure Process

Even with those challenges, every participant in this study expressed a confidence they would achieve tenure eventually, or for the tenured participants they had achieved tenure with only minimal difficulty and anxiety. They were satisfied with the expectations or felt the work expectations were manageable and in line with what motivated them to become and remain a faculty member. The tone in their voices and in their words showcased the process was simply a means to an end. For example, Melissa stated:

I sort of look at life that way is that there's a series of things that we're going to go through and you go through them. There was no big celebration or event to celebrate [at the end]. It was just sort of like, "Do you want to go get ice cream?" That was pretty much how we celebrated it.

Additionally, Michael shared tenure was simply a method to give him and others at his institution the protection afforded by academic freedom. He stated:

I think for me, the whole tenure piece and finally being able to have academic freedom and being able to be myself without that worry I think is desirable.

Again, being able to teach a class and not have to worry about, "Oh my gosh, I got to make sure these students like me," isn't necessarily a concern. Still one that's important but it's not like, I could justify it.

Feeling Secure with Themselves as Comprehensive University Faculty

Repeatedly throughout the interviews, participants mentioned they had achieved a sense of peace with themselves, their work, and their identity as a comprehensive university faculty member. This feeling developed over time as they worked through their early years as a faculty member or after they received tenure. For the faculty who at first had held reservations about whether they were legitimate as academics at a comprehensive university compared to their more published research university peers, had changed their thoughts by this interview. They were confident in their abilities and confident in the reputation of the program built during their time at the university.

Jessica summarized that sentiment when she said:

I feel like it's getting there, so me personally, I finally found my stride with how to manage my classroom and my research and all my commitments...I kind of found my personal stride, as well as my professional stride. Some good things all came together here, and now, knock on wood, now that things are good, I hope things stay good, at least for a little while. No drama. It took three years, more than halfway through my tenure process, to finally feel good personally and professionally, and with the program, but it does. It feels good.

Relatedly, Jessica, Nathan, Samantha, and Melissa realized during their time as faculty the time they spent in the classroom was the most impactful way they could give back to the field and make a difference in the lives of their students. Nathan stated it best when he said:

My scholarship is fine, but... anyone in higher education that tells that they're doing this incredibly powerful and impactful work, if that's true, it's probably powerful and impactful for a certain set of people, but in the grand scheme of things none of us are curing cancer. None of us are putting people on other planets, none of us are, anyway. You know you kind of have to measure the value of our work and our scholarship, and kind of I don't know. Ways other than you might in any sort of science. So, I was interested in kind of a place where I can be valued as a teacher, valued through my work in the classroom. Where I could develop good relationships with students, where the idea of being kind of an expert locally would be valued and appreciated.

Furthermore, Jessica, Hannah, Laura, and Samantha mentioned they loved how the comprehensive faculty model of work aligned with their passions as faculty members. They felt so strongly committed to comprehensive university faculty work they could not picture themselves as faculty at any other kind of institution. They attributed those feelings to several personal aspects, including the fact they realized how much they had exceeded the promotion and tenure expectations of the institution and other institutional faculty colleagues. Jessica explained:

Now that I'm here, and I actually know what tenure is, and I know what's going on, I don't ever see myself being any other type of faculty member, other than at a comprehensive. In fact, I would probably see myself moving back into a practitioner role before I would be a faculty member at an R1. It's taken me a lot of time to say that, and admit that to myself, but I really love being a faculty member, a role that I never thought that I was gonna go into, and I really love the type of institution that I'm at. Yeah, want to stay in this type of role forever....As long as I'm a faculty member at a comprehensive, I see myself at 65 retiring from this job. In my mind I'm like, "Wow. I feel lucky that I started a tenure track role as a 31 year old and found the job that I want to retire in." I don't feel like many people in my generation, in our generation who identify as millennials, would ever say, at the age of 30 something, that they found the job they want to retire in.

The quotes within this theme and the faculty sentiments shared along these lines are an indication of how faculty can transform as they serve in their faculty appointments. Jessica, in particular, transformed the most from someone who doubted about the

legitimacy of faculty work but, at the time of the interview, had turned almost completely around and wanted to craft a career around that institutional type. Her story was not unique but illustrates how faculty can enter into a faculty appointment with specific perceptions about legitimate faculty careers.

The next section in this chapter will look at the themes related to the participants' meso-level context.

Meso Context Themes

The broader institutional and disciplinary community played a significant role in participants' narratives in this study. What follows is an explanation of the influences, both positive and negative, on their tenure experience, starting at the institution and working outward to the field. Five of the themes were: institutional colleague and leadership support, campus politics and leadership challenges at institutions, external support in the field, graduate program influence, and discipline involvement. Additionally, three participants, Michael, Marc, and Nathan, all reported elements of striving tendencies at their institutions. These striving elements introduced conditions not always occurring at the comprehensive experience. Those tendencies appear as their own theme about the influence of striving tendencies.

Institutional Colleague and Leadership Support

Though it appeared in different forms, every faculty participant mentioned receiving some form of support from institutional colleagues. This support was at the departmental, college, and institutional levels, including peers, deans, provosts, and presidents. Every participant had documents explaining the minimum research, teaching,

and service requirements necessary for earning departmental or college-support for tenure. Institutional leaders, for the most part, consistently reinforced the mission and undergraduate/teaching-focused nature of the comprehensive institution, which resulted in unchanging tenure policies and expectations throughout the participants' early years at the institution. Tenured, more senior departmental faculty provided mentorship of the tenure process and consistent positive feedback about faculty participants' tenure dossiers and progress to tenure.

Five participants, Jessica, Michael, Aiden, Hannah, and Laura, specifically stated their departments and promotion and tenure-determining faculty wanted them to achieve tenure. They saw the tenure committee's role not as a gate-keeper others had to satisfy to earn tenure, but as a committee whose role was to make sure their colleagues succeeded. Aiden articulated the perspective he held in that environment when he stated:

So I'm just doing my best and hoping for the best. But again, my sense is people want each other to get tenure. It seems very much ... In some respects, prove me wrong, not prove me right kind of thing. Like in a positive way. Like it's mine to lose, not mine to gain.

Jessica agreed saying:

They [her colleagues] want you to be tenured. They want you to be successful. I feel like I don't meet a lot of department heads or people who serve on that committee who are vindictive like, "Well, only the cream of the crop are gonna get tenure. Everyone else is gonna get fired." If you're doing your job well, and

your students like you, and you're a good team player, they want you to get tenure. They want to have a tenured faculty.

Departmental mentorship also took place through formal matching relationships and informal relationship building. Marc, Samantha, Melissa, Aiden, Hannah, and Nathan mentioned being assigned a tenured faculty member either within their departments or within the university who provided guidance on submitting dossiers and determining if they accomplished the tenure evaluation criteria. Samantha explained her process when she said:

Within about six months of arriving, new faculty are given what's called a faculty advocate. That person is your partner through the process from beginning to end. As I mentioned in my milestones, my original tenure advocate left, retired about three years into my time here, so I had to get a new one. But both of them were exceptional, and they really are asked to be and are point people through the entire fifth year process of preparing your dossier and getting all your materials together and positioning yourself in a particular way.

The department colleagues also supported participants through personal difficulties. Laura, Melissa, Aiden, and Hannah referred to them as "family," "community," "helpful" "colleagues," and "friends" often. Melissa articulated her sense of community when she said:

I was lucky that I was in a counseling department because we were very good about checking in with each other, checking on each other. Offering that support and so forth. I think that sort of solidified my relationship with the folks I was

working was that, no matter what happened, no matter if we disagreed in a faculty meeting that at the end of the day, if I needed somebody at 10:00 to just talk to, they were going to be there....Wednesday, we had our faculty meeting and three of the faculty were talking about their elderly parents and issues that they're dealing and it was one of those moments that I was like, "This is my community. These are the people who I go through my life events with."

More specifically within the department, the department chair played a significant role in participants' successful experience toward earning tenure. Jessica, Samantha, Melissa, Nathan, and Hannah mentioned how they completed annual tenure dossier reviews as part of the promotion and tenure process. In doing so they were provided with consistent feedback and mentorship, which helped them feel more confident about their upcoming tenure review experiences. Melissa summarized that growing sense of confidence when she said:

I'm in a fortunate situation where the chair of our department, each year he reviews our portfolio will say, "Here's where I think you're strong" ... By year three, he was like, "I don't have any feedback. Just keep doing what you're doing. Yeah and so it was like, "Okay, I'm on track." Now he'll stop by the door and he'll say, "Your portfolio looks great, keep doing what you're doing." Which is nice, because it's like, "Okay, Well, I've got this down. I haven't screwed up too horribly." (laughs)

At the dean level, Aiden, Michael, Samantha, and Nathan mentioned their college deans provided clear, consistent feedback and informal mentorship. They also echoed

sentiments shared by their institutional peers that they wanted faculty to be successful in the tenure system. Samantha mentioned:

Yeah. I never got a single bit of feedback from either my dean or my chair suggesting that I should do a single thing differently. Not a single thing. Not teaching, not research, not service, not volunteerism, nothing. So I just kind of felt like, “Okay. Well, I’m on the right track, and if I’m not, someone will tell me,” and no one ever did. So I just kind of kept doing what I thought was right, and it worked out fine.

Laura, Melissa, and Nathan worked at either striving institutions or universities that were considering adopting doctoral programs into their higher education/student affairs graduate curriculum. They mentioned appreciating efforts from their deans or department chairs who had questioned provosts and presidents’ efforts to increase productivity and doctoral expectations. Participants felt that those expectations were not in the best interest of their higher education/student affairs program, the College of Educations’ missions, or the university faculty as a whole. Nathan, who worked for a striving institution, mentioned:

Our new dean has even said to us as a faculty in the higher ed group that we’re doing too much. That we are publishing too much, and that we need to kind of collectively take our foot off the gas. Now, I think there’s some program development that he wants us to be doing too, so there’s that, because we kind of pushed back and said that if you want us to do these programmatic things what can we do less of. But he’s also said that his goal that he really wants everyone to

be tenured and it's not this sort of kind of Pollyanna thing that I support all of you. But he wants to make sure that the people that are hired are able to be successful. He's incredibly pro supporting faculty so I think he gets it.

Outside of their colleges, Jessica and Samantha mentioned their provosts or presidents provided encouraging consistent feedback about their accomplishments.

Samantha explained that senior leader relationship when she said:

I definitely got a lot of positive feedback when I met with the president about the fact that I publish as much as I do and that I'm involved in [*Name of Higher Education National Association*] and other organizations. He, unlike many presidents, he came up through a higher ed Ph.D. background, so he knows what all this stuff means. He was very complimentary and supportive. ... The minimum amount of time you can wait between tenure and full professor is three years. He said you should apply three years to the day, which I was flattered by. It actually hadn't occurred to me, but I guess I probably will based on what he said.

Faculty also mentioned receiving institutional grant funding or taking advantage of institution-wide faculty development resources. Michael, Jessica, Melissa, and Hannah mentioned receiving awards for teaching, service, or thesis advising. The participants were surprised by the recognitions but felt confirmation from students and colleagues of their quality work contributions. Jessica expanded:

I really thought I was doing a poor job and dropping the ball on all fronts, and then that was the semester that my students nominated me for ... It was basically an award for mentoring and advising graduate students, and I think that they saw,

hey, Jessica's trying really hard...I didn't even know I was being nominated for that award, but my department head and a bunch of my students nominated me, and then I won. It's basically the top graduate faculty award, and I got it. I was like, "Oh. I thought I was just dropping the ball and doing a horrible job, and my students and my boss actually think I'm doing great."

In addition, at the institutional level, Laura and Hannah both shared how their partnerships and collaborations with the divisions of student affairs on their campus helped them with their teaching and institutional networking. Laura explained one instance when she said:

The Student Affairs people that are really great at [*Name of Institution*] have been very supportive. Any time I have asked to do something with them, they've always shown up and done stuff. The director of residence life, I started teaching an assessment class. I'm like, "I don't want to just teach assessment. I want to do assessment. Would you pair with me? ... Can you just come in and tell my students stuff that you needed help with and then we'll go assess it for you?" ... He didn't just come in and do that. He came in and co-led a class, and then when we presented, he buys us a pizza. The people around me are great.

Campus Politics and Leadership Challenges at the Institutions

Participants were very candid in sharing the challenges they faced at their institutions as they worked as tenure track faculty. All participants taught in graduate-level higher education/student affairs programs and worked with either master's or, on a limited basis, doctoral students in other programs. As such, Marc, Laura, and Samantha

mentioned they sometimes experienced institutional tension when advocating for the needs of graduate students at undergraduate-centered universities. There was limited graduate program infrastructure and financial aid resources for graduate students, which made it difficult to recruit top student candidates and support existing students. Laura, who works for the smallest comprehensive university in this research study, one with a significant percentage of undergraduate students, expressed that frustration when she said:

A couple of dozen faculty here, I would say, are continually opposed to the fact that we have graduate programs, and so I think politically, the president has been careful about not calling us a master's comprehensive, even though I know very well that's what we are and most people.

Later in the interview Laura returned to the tension she felt as a graduate level faculty member at an undergraduate institution when she said:

When I came here, there were two grad programs. Now, there are six or seven, but at the time there were two. It really felt like very much kind of pushing a stone up hill to get any of the needs of graduate students that I teach met in a meaningful way. I didn't predict that or foresee that, so that was hard.

Marc shared his experience when he said:

There is no extra support [for graduate students] provided by the institution, we [the higher education/student affairs program faculty] provide it. We basically provide everything as a program to our students, marketing, recruitment. Our graduate school is tiny and doesn't have resources to really help us at the program

level. It means that to run the program, we are the whole show here. We don't have that much in the way of administrative support to make that happen....We are effectively running our own graduate assistantship process trying to match students with assistantships at the master's level even though they don't get tuition waivers. They just get a stipend for it. There's nobody else that's going to do it. There is no culture around graduate assistantships around campus.

Jessica and Melissa mentioned challenges they faced when faculty in their program left the institution or passed away and they needed to make adjustments to teaching and advising loads mid-stream in the tenure process. Melissa, whose colleague passed away, explained her emotions during that time of her life when she said

As I entered my second year, we were doing a program review and adding classes, removing classes, making those decisions, writing curriculum, developing syllabi, developing learning outcomes and things like that. In the process of that, my colleague died and so it was the end of January. We were into week three or four and having to sort of like in the middle of all this chaos of like, "What is next week going to look like? What is next week going to look like? Having to step up and teach additional classes, having to not only do our daily job but also to take care of our students who were going through that emotional piece as we were also going through the emotional piece of losing a colleague. That's where I'm like in student affairs we're really good about taking care of others, but we're horrible at taking care of ourselves.

Jessica and Michael mentioned personnel changed with their department chairs and promotion and tenure committees, resulting in questions of policy interpretations or overall changes to institutional mission in the case of striving universities. It should be noted, though, because the institutions had such specific evaluation criteria the anxiety was only minimal. Jessica mentioned how those changes affected her when she said:

It's not just this really clearly defined point system. There's the way that people feel about you who are voting in those rooms. Again, those people change every year. I don't even know who to impress. I'm just trying to impress everyone. It's a bit of a rat race of a game.

Laura also had some personality and leadership philosophy conflicts with her dean. She revealed that she considered this administrator to express sexist and bureaucratic tendencies that ran counter to her expectation of professionalism and academic freedom. Her institution decoupled the tenure and promotion process. While she admitted securing the tenure piece smoothly, the criteria for promotion was less defined and she did not receive it in her sixth year. That was a common occurrence on her campus, so she experienced no direct professional penalty, but she wondered if her relationship with her dean had anything to do with that. She explained that relationship when she said:

The promotion, I was very concerned about because I knew my dean didn't have a great view of me because of all this stuff that went down. He's kind of sexist and has said some very sexist things to me in the past. I'm not real good with that stuff. I am a very straightforward feminist ... I knew he didn't have the best view

of me because he is a very bureaucratic, I want to get things done. In some of these meetings I'm in with him, I'm like, "Do we think that's in the best interest of students?" And that's an affront to him. But that's my job, I think. If I think about while you're teaching NASPA and ACPA ethical principles, how can you not follow those things and act in the best interest of your students. He doesn't really love me so much, so I knew this was not going to go well, this promotion thing.

Later in the interview she returned to speak about her dean and said:

I believe in the collegium. I believe in the process of discussing ideas and things like that. He just wants to push them. I get that I'm a thorn in his side.

She mentioned that other faculty felt that the dean expressed sexist comments as well and she mentioned bringing a union rep to meet with him. She said:

It's been interesting because I think one of these meetings I ended up bringing a union rep. He said some more sexist things and she just took him down about five pegs and was yelling at him. I was just I'm just gonna sit here and be real calm about this, because that's not going to help the situation ... It was really interesting because I think he's finally starting to get some feedback. We just had our first College of Ed meeting and he said something really sexist in the meeting and then backed up off of it. I was like, "Maybe you're learning something. I would've liked to be your teacher, but I was untenured. Not promoted." When I get this promotion I'll be giving you some more direct feedback if you still do these things.

Jessica, Nathan, and Samantha mentioned issues of collegiality and confusing campus politics. Michael shared he observed faculty being bullied, in his opinion. They felt like they were playing games with relationships. Jessica summarized that game best when she said:

A vote no could be, maybe I'm not collegial, or I'm not a good team player, and someone on that committee thinks, "Sure she's met all the publications and sure she's met all the teaching requirements, but she's not good to be on a committee with, and therefore I don't think that she should receive tenure because," whatever reason. That's why it's a bit of a game because you have to make sure that the people on that committee like you, and you don't know who's gonna be on that committee because it changes every year, so you've just got to make sure that everybody likes you, everybody who's tenured at least likes you because they're voting on you....Anytime I sit on a committee, maybe it's silly of me, but the tenured people on that committee, I always do my best to try and impress them or communicate well with them. I try to do that with everyone, but especially with the tenured people because I know that there's a chance that they could be on my tenure review committee. Not only in my department, but my college. I want to have a good reputation.

All of these quotes and comments indicate, on an individual basis, that no institutional culture is perfect or ideal. All universities have challenges in one way or another.

External Support in Field

Outside their universities, faculty repeatedly mentioned individuals who supported them on their faculty journey. Jessica and Laura mentioned senior faculty in the field who helped them contextualize their experiences and verified their unique role at comprehensive universities. Jessica met her mentor through a national association junior faculty/senior faculty mentor match program. She appreciated the perspective that mentor provided, serving at another institution and experiencing the same challenges she faced juggling dual careers and work/life issues. This example reinforced the idea that important support exists or at least should exist throughout the discipline, not just at the institutional or departmental level. She explained her relationship with her mentor when she said:

Her [*Jessica's senior faculty mentor*] just being in existence was a complete game changer for me. I met her at NASPA, and ... we did a Skype call, but it was somewhere all toward that end of the school year, March, of my first year. I just remember having a Skype call with her and she was the one who was like, "Jessica, it really sounds like that you found your fit at a comprehensive. You should own that." I was doing this like, "I know I'm not at this major institution." She was like, "Can you stop doing that? You don't need to be at an R1 to be an awesome professor." She was the one that kind of helped me own the fact that, no being at a comprehensive is great. Own that and do that. ...Every time I emailed, and it wasn't a lot, but I'd just be like, "I need five minutes. I'm having a crisis situation," she'd be like, "Call me this afternoon." We would talk, and there was

something about that, that I was not getting at my own institution that just literally made all the difference in the world.

Michael, Hannah, and Nathan noted how research collaborators at other institutions helped them with publication production required by their promotion and tenure guidelines. Those individuals also helped reassure them of their ability to produce quality scholarship. Nathan mentioned how important those collaborations were when he said:

I've done a lot of collaborative work, a lot of work with other people. In part because, A, the loneliness of doing the writing is hard. B, finding the time to do writing and you're doing teaching and all this service is hard. I feel like, you know collaborative work, I don't want to say that it's always better work, but I think that it can yield better work.

Later in the interview Nathan returned to discussing the co-authors of his research projects and he said:

I would also say that the two people that I tend to write with the most, my colleague [*in the field at another institution*], and my colleague [*in his higher education/student affairs program at his institution*]. You know I have tremendous love and respect for both of them because I think they're both incredibly talented, but they also kind of put up with me and they kind of help me to kind of keep things real. That's just incredibly important. They've been more valuable kind of sources of mentoring and support for me than the person that I

might describe as, that I consider to be like my academic mentor from my doctoral program.

Marc also uniquely mentioned the use of social media to stay connected with his academic community. He explained:

As weird as that sounds, becoming involved on Twitter and meeting individuals through Twitter provided me with a community of other academics prior to me becoming involved in any of the associations. That's been really helpful. I would imagine that for other folks, that's the case as well.

Beyond research collaborations, Melissa, Aiden, and Hannah mentioned relationships they developed with peer faculty across the country who provided role models and colleagues who demystified the process of becoming faculty. Those peer faculty members also provided ideas for innovation. Aiden explained more when he said:

It's about finding those mentors or those colleagues or those helpers that can help you along the way, whether it be inside the institution or outside of it. Not to get tenure, but to do the things necessary to get tenure if that makes sense. I might call one person if I want a really innovative classroom activity that I'm trying to figure out, because I'm not very good at that, honestly. I know I need to do more of it, and I can get the baseline, but there's this one person I call who always just pushes me over the edge in terms of a wonderful idea. There's a different person I call for a research idea or to read a research proposal. So having those people I think is really helpful.

Graduate Program Influence

Marc, Hannah, Nathan, and Laura specifically stated their doctoral program community, dissertation chair, faculty mentors, and student colleagues, served as a network of support for them before and after they became faculty. Faculty were role models while the participants were doctoral students, encouraging their protégés to consider faculty careers and mentoring them through the application process.

Marc noted the reputation of his dissertation chair and the programmatic reputation of his doctoral program were significant assets for him to build connections and establish himself while seeking a faculty appointment. He also leaned on his faculty mentors for support during the faculty interview phase. He said:

Actually, [*his faculty mentor's name*] was one of the people that was instrumental in me getting this job. ... I had taken a class with her and so we had a connection that way. When I got notification that they wanted to interview me for this job, I reached out to her and I said, "I have never done a faculty interview before. I don't know how to prepare, I don't know what they're going to ask."

Hannah had similar support from faculty while she was a part-time student in her doctoral program, working full-time in student affairs. Her faculty gave her opportunities to gain the experience and preparation necessary to be successful as a faculty member. They also mentored her through the application process. Hannah said:

I first went in to getting a doctorate thinking that I was going to be a dean of students, and then as I got further along, I realized I didn't know if I really wanted that quality of life, where I would be on call a lot. Lots of student crisis, I didn't

know long term how I would be able to keep up that pace. The second thing is when I did some TA work or I did some guest lecturing; I really enjoyed that in the classroom. Then, I started asking [*doctoral faculty mentors*], “well, I think I want to transition to faculty. How would I make that happen?” That’s where I was able to get some TA experience, and also just kind of really learn from them what it was like, what I needed to do, how the faculty search was different from an administrative search. Just kind of pick their brains a lot on what that process and what that faculty life was like.

Participants from top-ranking doctoral programs noticed subtle messages from their graduate program faculty about their career choices. Participants were told that their academic pedigree equipped them with the ability to pursue Research I faculty opportunities, and they should be doing so. In Laura’s situation, she began her faculty career at a striving doctoral research university and concluded after three years she wanted a different lifestyle less focused on research production and more focused on classroom teaching. After consulting with her graduate program mentors she received strong messaging toward continuing at the research institutions. She decided, instead, to switch gears because she felt her own happiness was more important. In doing so Laura said:

I think we need to be careful as faculty members in doctoral programs not to decide where someone’s career should be. That move [*to her current institution*] was a stress for me because that wasn’t really what I was supposed to do. You’re supposed to get the R1 position and the brass ring of tenure and go be super

famous in your publications, because that's what you're trained to do at [*her doctoral program*]...I just realized that my life is more important. I'm not living your life. That was your choice. If I ever go back to teaching doctoral students again, I would be very careful around that.

Discipline Involvement

When examining the higher education/student affairs discipline as a whole, the influence of associations and journal boards plays an important role in legitimizing faculty expertise and helping pre-tenure faculty at all institutions earn tenure. Marc had a creative way to characterize how comprehensive universities operated as the "hinterlands" in the field. He continued by saying:

If you look at the editorial boards, if you look at the leadership roles of all the professional associations, that sort of thing, it's still largely populated by folks at the research institutions. If you did not establish those connections as a graduate student and you come to a regional comprehensive, it's really hard to stay in the mix.

Marc and Nathan also reiterated how difficult it can be to publish research in the publication outlets of those associations, especially top-tier, high-impact publications.

Nathan mentioned:

[*My institution*] is kind of putting more and more pressure on securing grants and doing scholarship that's pretty consistently in top tier journals. You know we don't have a ton of those in higher education and student affairs. We've got some, but you know because they're a bit limited and there are a lot of folks out

there who are trying to do faculty work in higher education/student affairs, you know it's just that much harder to get in.

Marc mentioned experiencing the pressure to publish and manuscript rejection from those top-tier journal outlets. Those experiences taught him how difficult it is to publish at that top-tier level, which was a significant factor to him as a brand new faculty member:

As a field, I think that there's been an explosion of graduate students, graduate programs, and faculty members. There hasn't been necessarily the same increase in publication outlets. I think for us compared to other education areas, the competition to land publications is so much more fierce. The expectations around quality are so much higher. That's a good thing on the one hand. On the other hand, it means that when I got here, I was not ... one of the milestones I was going to share with you is I think my first semester here, I was overwhelmed by the amount of rejection that I got for articles. ... As a graduate student, I'd throw something in there. If it got published, awesome. If not, whatever. The stakes were low, it didn't matter. In this job all of a sudden, it mattered and so I probably felt those rejections a little bit more. It became clear to me pretty quickly as I was getting those rejections that I had to up my game if I was going to be effective at getting my research published. I had to really reorient my approach.

Samantha and Michael, however, have held key leadership roles in national and regional associations. All participants had presented research at national association

conferences, which Nathan did acknowledge helped him feel a sense of belonging and acceptance in the field. Michael also noted:

Being a part of or being on this board of a professional organization always seemed so unachievable to me. Because just looking at those people, those that are there in their field, they're in the in-network, they're the ones that are part of everything. When I got elected to that board or even asked to serve, I thought that was very, like, "Okay, maybe I'm here now, maybe I'm starting to be a part of that group that can do something."

Several participants appreciated involvement in national association faculty development activities through the Association of the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Division J, and the Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA). Nathan mentioned:

I had a particular good experience one year when I had attended as one of the public policy fellows. That was a good ASHE because I got some connections and felt like I could participate and could be with and connect with people in kind of a respective manner.

These quotes reinforce the important role that one's discipline and various top-tier national associations play in validating faculty career legitimacy. They also provide a nuanced support system beyond the institutional boundaries.

Striving Tendencies

Striving tendencies and their unique aspects on the faculty experience were important factors in Marc and Nathan's narrative, and to a lesser extent in Michael's

experience. During their interviews Marc and Nathan identified their institution as “striving.” Their institutions experienced mission creep or ranking advancement and unique campus cultures were the result. Because that was such a unique situation, I separated much of Marc and Nathan’s observations about their institutions from the fully coded and themed research reported earlier. They characterized their institutions as experiencing significant enrollment growth and graduate program expansion, coupled with a desire to become a more selective public institution. Michael, though never stating he worked at a striving institution, noted his institution wanted to be well renowned (the best) and as a result faculty faced increased accountability for excellence.

Though Marc and Nathan had defined tenure criteria, they characterized their ideal dossiers for achieving tenure as a moving target. Their research expectations grew with each passing year, and they felt increased pressure across their institutions to bring in external grant funding. Marc explained the increasing expectations when he said:

I’m teaching a three, three load and I’m advising seven doctoral students who are in active writing phase and we’re getting messages from the chancellor wanting to know if we published anything in a top-tier journal recently, you can see that there’s some tensions at play there. Even if I wanted to really specialize in one thing, the way that the job is structured and the way that we’re rewarded doesn’t really allow for that type of activity.

Marc and Nathan also reported tension and personal conflict when faculty must be top-tier researchers while maintaining a personal or institutional commitment to providing quality instruction and service. Nathan expressed inner conflict when he said:

The messaging that I get from folks even now is try to kind of streamline your work on teaching. Kind of streamline and kind of reduce the amount of time you spend on grading. Try to you know just kind of reuse courses or reuse lesson plans from semester to the next. I'm only willing to kind of sacrifice so much currency, I guess, for the sake efficiency in any one given semester. Because I think taking the time to give detailed feedback is valuable to students. We tend to enroll a lot of students who may not be accepted at other programs elsewhere, because maybe their undergraduate academic preparation wasn't terribly rigorous, or they're kind of lacking in some skillsets...So you know we have a percentage of students who kind of require a bit more time and attention, and maybe some more hand holding. But with that being said that's where I really feel like I add value. So I often said, I think I make a much bigger difference and bigger impact with the work that I do in the classroom, with my teaching, then I ever will do with my scholarship.

The next section in this chapter will look at the themes related to the participants' macro-level context.

Macro Context Theme

Privileging of Faculty Knowers and Knowledge Production

On a more macro, global scale, global, systemic forces direct activity at the institutional as well as individual levels, which impact faculty work. Faculty knowledge and the learning environment within which faculty operate is driven by academic capitalism. Rhoads and Slaughter (2004) defined academic capitalism as “involvement

of colleges and faculty in market-like behaviors” (p. 37). In a Western capitalist society, as seen in the United States, examples can be found of those market behaviors. In this study, participants did not share as many insights into those global macro contexts. One reason for that may be because capitalistic tendencies in Western society are taken for granted as the standard norm of operations and thus are difficult to identify.

For this study, though, both Nathan and Marc, who worked at striving universities, mentioned global universal forces shaped and privileged certain kinds of knowers and knowledge production in the academy. Marc and Nathan identified their institutional leaders as ones committed to advancing the institutions in rank and research expertise. For example, leaders rewarded and praised faculty who published in top-tier journal outlets. Marc noted he was fortunate to be considered a “traditional outlet” researcher. He defined a traditional researcher as someone who engages in more empirical research work. He contrasted that work against faculty who produce more creative or community-engaged research, which is more often fostered at regionally-focused comprehensive universities. He noted that the system as a whole tends to privilege and reward certain types of research and knowledge, which he said is not always found at comprehensive universities. Marc reinforced this concept by saying:

In some ways, the type of research that we should be doing may not necessarily intersect with the type of research that gets published in those top-tier journals because it’s more action-oriented. It might be more community-engaged scholarship. I’ll give you another concrete example of how this might play out. I have a publication coming out shortly with graduate students that I’m very proud

of, but there are sections of that publication where the quality of the writing just isn't that good...I wanted to publish with graduate students. I wanted them to get that experience. As a teaching-oriented institution, I think that's important, but because of that, there is no way that that publication was going to land in a top-tier journal. There's an incompatibility there between the expectations that we and the message that we're getting from the institution about the type of work that we should be doing and what I think the type of research is that we should be doing that's more consistent with our mission.

The striving-related comments from this study indicate the faculty at those institutions can be keenly aware of injustices. The question one could consider in that environment is if comprehensive universities refocus their attention away from their original mission to gain admission to those publication outlets, what (or who) gets left out?

Examples of Capital within Positive Outcomes of Tenure

All faculty who participated in this study expressed overall satisfaction about their tenure experience and reported positive success at achieving tenure or felt confident in their abilities to eventually earn tenure. As a result, a secondary area of inquiry within this research project emerged during the data collection and analysis. I sought to determine how these faculty members managed successful progress toward achieving tenure. Perna (2005)'s framework of human, structural, and social/social network capital provided one possible answer. With regards to the participants of my study, when they expounded upon their pre-tenure experience, all spoke at length with multiple examples

of each form of capital. What follows below is a discussion of each form of capital and what it means for understanding faculty contexts.

Human Capital

Becker (1993) and Polachek (1977) identified human capital as one's professional productivity that determines an individual labor market status. That productivity is often recognized and shaped by one's quality of education, career mobility, motivation and intensity of work, and one's emotional and physical health. All participants shared their personal motivations to pursue faculty careers and careers at comprehensive universities. They also spoke of outperforming their peers and over-delivering on teaching, research, and service expectations required of them through their institutions' tenure criteria. They mentioned the capital and opportunities afforded to them from top-ranking doctoral programs and key professional development opportunities from national disciplines equipping them with knowledge and important networks. They also spoke of earning institutional awards, which validated their work. It is interesting that examples of human capital were most present in meaning units and themes within the micro faculty context.

Social and Social Network Capital

The most common form of capital was participants' social and social network capital, which Lin (2001a) and Portes (1998) defined as the investment faculty members have made in human and other forms of capital, institutional resources, or support. Participants in this study considered it critical to their success that they received institutional support and that they fostered relationships on their campuses and throughout the field of higher education/student affairs. That support and those

relationships came from a variety of sources, including departmental colleagues, tenured faculty across the university, student affairs divisional colleagues, peer faculty from other disciplines, department chairs, deans, and provosts. Mentors in the field, research collaborators, and graduate program faculty and former student colleagues also supported faculty during their pre-tenure time. Participants reinforced Perna's conclusion that relationships, which are examples of social and social network capital, contributed to their successful program toward achieving tenure (Perna, 2005). Examples of this capital were present throughout all of participants' institutional and disciplinary meso contexts.

Structural Capital

Structural capital is defined as the prestige and value placed upon faculty members' institutional appointment, academic discipline, and role with their institutions (Smart, 1991). This study focused on faculty who shared common institutional appointments and disciplines: comprehensive universities and the higher education/student affairs discipline. As a result, more structural capital comparisons that look at faculty experiences in aggregate, across institutions and across academic fields, cannot fully apply in this study. One can recognize examples of structural capital in this study's participant narratives when identifying how participants' higher education/student affairs graduate preparation programs compared to other graduate or undergraduate programs at individual institutions. Participants mentioned how they were able to grow their programs and improve the reputation of their programs across the country. As a result they attracted higher quality applicants and award-winning students who made even greater impacts on their campus communities. Participants also shared personal

successes at being published in a top-tier journals. Those publications were important assets in their tenure dossiers, especially when the tenured faculty in this study were compared to other peer faculty. Also, one participant, Marc, identified himself as a traditional, empirical researcher, which carried value when he attempted to be published in top-tier journal outlets. Structural capital, then, is present when one looks at faculty from a more global, national, higher education-system perspective. As a result, it is no surprise to see how examples of structural capital align with concepts already unpacked earlier in this dissertation within the macro, global faculty context.

Conclusion

This chapter contained a summary of the 13 most salient reported theme statements that emerged from participant interviews and timeline/reflective journal documents. The themes were couched within the individual micro, institutional/disciplinary meso, and global macro contexts shaping faculty experiences. Six themes emerged at the micro level: faculty career motivations, year one experiences, the intersections of identities and tenure, frustrations and anxiety about tenure, satisfaction with the tenure process, and feeling secure with themselves as comprehensive university faculty. At the meso level, participants' narratives revealed several institutional aspects played key roles in their successful tenure experience. Those six themes were institutional colleague and leadership support, campus politics and leadership challenges at institutions, external support in the field, graduate program influence, discipline involvement, and striving tendencies. At the macro level, participants who shared their institutions were adopting striving tendencies for rank

advancement and increased research productivity shared information about the more global, abstract concepts impacting their work. One macro theme emerged in how global forces shaped and privileged certain kinds of knowers and knowledge production in the academy. Within each of those contexts participants possessed specific forms of Perna's three-legged capital framework. The following chapter situates these findings within the current body of literature and the study's conceptual frameworks, discusses the inter-relationship of the theoretical models and its relationship to the results, provides implications for practice and future research, and discusses the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Previous chapters of this dissertation explored the literature surrounding comprehensive university tenure and early career faculty experiences, as well as the research methodology utilized in this study and the findings related to the study's conceptual frameworks. This research has sought to answer one primary research question and one secondary question. The primary research question was: What do early career faculty experience as they manage the pre-tenure to tenured academic pipeline in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities? The secondary question was: How do comprehensive university faculty members successfully manage progress toward achieving tenure? This chapter is an exploration of what the findings of this study mean, as the findings relate to the body of literature on comprehensive university faculty and the conceptual frameworks of this study. At the end I have provided ideas on how these findings can shape the future work of academic affairs practitioners and future scholars, and I also discussed the limitations of the study.

Findings Compared to Literature

The literature on comprehensive university tenure track faculty members paints a picture of faculty as stressed individuals, experiencing confusion about their roles at the institution and increasing tenure expectations (Green et al., 2008; Sorcinelli, 2002). Wright and colleagues (2004) portrayed tenure track faculty as individuals caught in a system with ever-increasing and almost unmanageable expectations for world-class research and high-impact teaching practices. Henderson (2007) posited these same

faculty members experience difficult adjustments and declining satisfaction with their work. The results in Chapter 4 clearly illustrate participants in this study did not report similar experiences to previously published data. There are several reasons why that may be the case. First, all of these faculty members teach in graduate-only higher education/student affairs academic programs and hold appointments in Colleges of Education. The realities of teaching and research look very different for individuals in the hard sciences compared to the social sciences (Hearn & Anderson, 2002). Participants also reported minimal expectations for procuring high-level grants, a function of both their discipline and perhaps an emphasis for Colleges of Education across the country.

Secondly, the faculty in this study did mention they were educated at research-intensive doctoral programs, and as such were conditioned to and had faculty role models who were comfortable engaging in intensive research experiences. They were used to balancing high demands with high quality research. In addition, with the exception of Laura, all other participants were new to comprehensive universities and relatively new to the world of academia with fewer than six years of experience as faculty members. One participant mentioned she knew of no other way to approach faculty life than to engage in the current level of research, teaching, and service she needed to do to successfully earn tenure.

Results in Relation to Conceptual Frameworks

This research project was developed around a two-part conceptual framework. The first component of the framework identified the global macro, institutional

disciplinary meso, and individual micro contexts that shape faculty work (Gappa, Austin & Trice, 2007; Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011; O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008). The second component of the framework explained how positive outcomes in the tenure and promotion process are related to one's possession of three forms of capital: human, structural, and social/social network (Perna, 2005).

My conceptual framework started at the global, macro level. The macro level can be recognized in how faculty knowledge and the learning environment operate within academic capitalism. Academic capitalism is the "involvement of colleges and faculty in market-like behaviors" (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004, p. 37). Free-market capitalist tendencies, neoliberalism, also operate upon institutions and remove faculty members' ability to act independently and make their own decisions. At the middle, meso, level the faculty experience takes place within the confines of individual universities and specialized disciplines (O'Meara, 2011). At the individual, micro level, a faculty member's individual characteristics, motivations, and decisions shape their experiences as a member of the academy (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011; Neumann, 2009).

Overall, the results of this research project illuminated how individual faculty understood the ways their personal characteristics, institution/discipline, and broader global forces influenced their promotion and tenure experiences. I received a significant amount of participant data about how they were shaped by individual micro and institutional/disciplinary meso contexts. Some participants also mentioned, to a smaller extent, how the global macro forces were present in their faculty experiences. What

follows below is an explanation of the findings within the macro-level, the meso-level, and the micro-level contexts.

The Macro Context

Participants' reflections indicated just how much external conditions at the macro and meso levels fortified or provided challenges for them in successfully earning tenure. At the macro level, Marc mentioned that researchers who complete community-based and more creative forms of research, most often found at comprehensive universities, are more likely to struggle to be accepted in the top-tier, most impactful global scholarly communities. He considered himself to be a "traditional" empirical researcher who does not have the same difficulty in demonstrating how he is a legitimate scholar compared to other comprehensive university faculty colleagues. As a result he believed he has a relatively more acceptable experience functioning and excelling at the macro level compared to other comprehensive university colleagues. This acceptance as a scholar was essential for his success because he worked at a striving university focused on rank advancement and improved institutional reputation-building. That university wanted its faculty to be published in top-tier outlets with a narrow definition of scholarship. What one can recognize from these results is that participants at striving comprehensive institutions are sometimes more keenly aware of the injustices present within the system of higher education. Those faculty members can do so because the system of higher education privileges certain kinds of knowledge production and the knowers who produce that knowledge (Lo, 2011).

The Meso Context

All faculty members in my study shared how their disciplines and respective university-based environments and reward systems influenced their ability to work toward and achieve tenure. Those meso-level institutional, discipline-wide, and personal/community interactions were overwhelmingly positive for these participants. At the meso level, participants found support from colleagues throughout their departments and universities, received encouraging feedback from academic leadership, turned to peer colleagues and senior faculty at other institutions for reassurance, and participated in association-sponsored professional development and scholarship dissemination (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011). All of those instances provided participants with the internal fortitude and credentials necessary to meet and oftentimes exceed their promotion and tenure criteria.

The meso-level contexts also provided their own challenges to the participants. These challenges were present when faculty were confronted with how to manage campus politics, changes in personnel at the department and promotion and tenure levels, and conflicts with senior academic leaders. Participants oftentimes characterized their graduate program mentors as strong sources of support in their pre-tenure pipeline. With that said, the participants also characterized those mentors as individuals who perpetuated a limited definition of academic legitimacy, a definition framed around the major Research I university model (Terosky & Gonzales, 2016).

Lastly, the striving tendencies present at the universities of three participants provided their own unique challenges. Those participants faced increased expectations

for research and a somewhat moving target for meeting tenure criteria (O'Meara, 2007). Relatedly, comprehensive university participants faced conflicts of interest between a historic institutional commitment to teaching students, which participants shared, and increased pressures to produce time-consuming, top-tier scholarship (Youn & Price, 2009). What this means for scholars examining the meso-level context for faculty is that the institution and disciplinary sector had the greatest, most direct influence on tenure track faculty (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011). These are the tangible conditions where faculty live. The personnel involved and the conditions present at the meso level contribute to and detract from a pre-tenured faculty member's success in the tenure system. The value and influence of the meso conditions cannot be overstated.

The Micro Context

Participants of this study were easily able to identify their own personal perspectives and determine how those ideas shaped their professional decisions as pre-tenure faculty (Neumann, 2009). These sentiments are exactly what one would expect to find at the micro-level faculty context. At that level, participants walked me through the evolution of their perspectives about faculty work, starting first with their motivations to become faculty and the passions they held for faculty work and life at comprehensive universities. They unpacked their perspectives during their early years on the tenure track and what they thought about their legitimacy as teaching-focused comprehensive university faculty. They also shared positive and negative perspectives held about the tenure process at their institutions. They summarized their current perspectives about themselves and noted how secure they felt within themselves about their identities as

comprehensive university faculty members. What does this mean for researchers? All of these micro-level insights are further examples of how faculty build close, personal connections to the construction of their identities as faculty and the construction of their subject matter knowledge. Scholars have noted those same conclusions about the micro context (O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008).

Capital and Positive Outcomes of Tenure

The participants in this study shared multiple examples of how they possessed and utilized three forms of capital in their successful progress toward achieving tenure: human capital, social and social network capital, and structural capital. Those forms of capital have been highlighted in research as being closely associated with positive tenure outcomes (Perna, 2005). This study's findings on capital are significant for tenure track faculty, especially faculty at comprehensive universities. Future tenure track faculty reading this dissertation have the examples of several successful comprehensive university tenure cases. As those faculty members review this research they can identify what forms of capital they would like to possess and utilize in their own tenure experiences. Senior faculty looking to mentor junior tenure track faculty can read the participant narratives and determine how they assist others in building that toolkit of capital.

The Inter-Relationship of Theoretical, Conceptual Frameworks

This research study operated from the perspective faculty are influenced by and influence multiple contexts. Those influences start at the greatest global macro context involving the system of higher education. The macro context shapes the external

institutional/disciplinary meso level, which shapes the individual micro level (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011).

The global macro level context shapes meso level contexts when institutional leadership decision-making is driven by leaders' desire to succeed in a neoliberal system and have their institutions be considered elite and renowned (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). That system operates and influences all comprehensive universities, but those at striving institutions are extra sensitive to knowing how the system privileges some institutions and faculty over others (O'Meara, 2007). That influence directly impacts faculty at the micro-level when leadership decisions shape their working conditions and the expectations placed on them for achieving tenure. These institutional influences can be considered positive and negative (Powell & Colyvas, 2008). Gonzales and Rincones (2011) noted that individual faculty members, by their presence in society and within the higher education community, have an influence on the conditions present within the meso context.

Within this study, participants mentioned how they have worked to change their institutional culture and specific institutional policies, thereby impacting their meso context. With regards to culture, Laura, Aiden, Samantha, and Michael spoke about their inherent inclinations to always speak up about a wide range of areas where they wanted institutional change. In addition, participants contributed to departmental supportive communities prior to achieving tenure, which resulted in positive relationship-building and informal mentorship from tenured faculty. For the already-tenured faculty Samantha, Laura, and Melissa, they had an impact on mentoring and supporting more junior-level

faculty at their institution and in the field. Others such as Hannah and Melissa (when she was pre-tenured) provided peer support to untenured faculty in their departments and across their universities.

Given that pre-tenured faculty do not have the protection and positional authority granted to them after achieving tenure, it is not outside the realm of possibility to recognize that they have minimal effect changing institutional policy, such as promotion and tenure procedures. As a result pre-tenured faculty may have limited, minimal influence on the meso level. The study participants in this research project operated as one might expect, reporting more often on how university colleagues and formal procedures influenced their tenure review process, rather than how the participants themselves shaped the tenure process. With that said, though, Jessica and Samantha noted they wanted to serve in the future on promotion and tenure committees to update tenure guidelines, which would improve the system and address any negative issues they faced. Participants' motivation to serve on those committees came directly from their micro-level experiences. The relationships participants developed, as a result of their contributions, were central to faculty success, and they wanted to pay it forward to future faculty.

The findings in this study suggest faculty context interactions become a loop. The meso context impacts the micro context, and when faculty have the agency and power to influence their surroundings the micro impacts the meso (Gonzales & Rincones, 2011). Figure 5.1 below represents how the narratives from this study illustrated the inter-related relationship among the macro, meso, and micro contexts and where examples of human,

social-social network, and structural capital appear most prominently within those contexts.

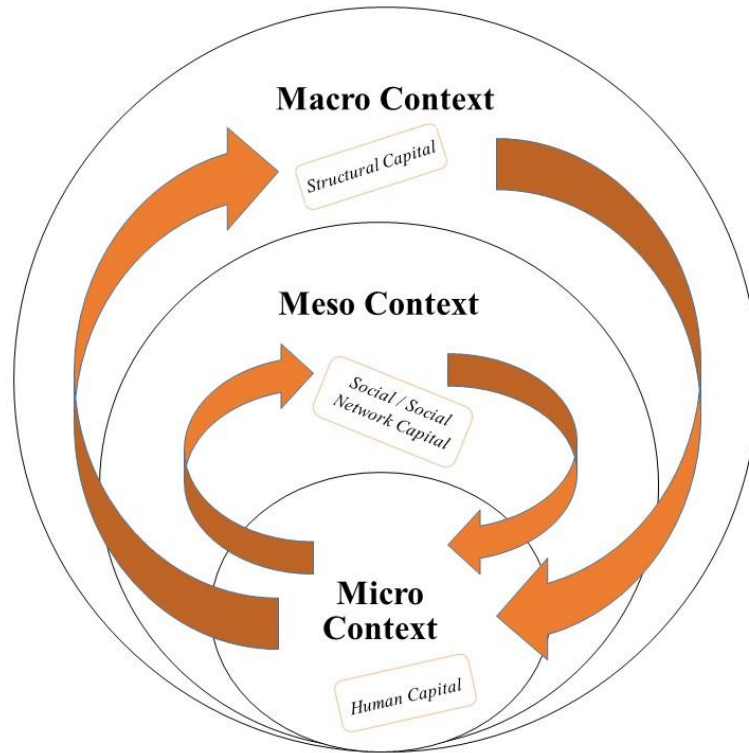


Figure 5.1: The interrelationship between faculty tenure-influencing contexts and capital frameworks for faculty

Recommendations for Practice

Participants of this study outlined several key elements of support during the tenure process that, if replicated and scaled to an institutional level could ensure a consistent, organized tenure system. All participants expressed gratitude for tenure criteria guidelines, which spelled out in quantifiable measures exactly what the minimal expectations were for achieving tenure. The specificity of those guidelines varied with each university, but faculty felt confident in what they needed to accomplish on an annual basis to meet and exceed research, teaching, and service expectations. The first

recommendation for practice would be institutions follow suit and provide as clear as possible guidelines for tenure success.

All participants noted they received significant support from departmental colleagues and institutional leadership. This support came in the form of formalized and informal mentorship. Another recommendation emerging from this study that institutions establish a departmental and institutional culture of faculty support regarding the tenure system. Individualized support should be tailored to the needs of individual faculty, so it may appear differently in different contexts and within different departments. University centers for teaching and learning can be a tremendous resource for pre-tenure faculty to engage in writing seminars, research forums, and other faculty-related professional development activities. Institutions should develop robust centers like this and encourage pre-tenure faculty to seek out professional development that helps with their tenure progress. Faculty relationships must also be developed between junior faculty and senior faculty. Those relationships can be developed through the establishment of paired, assigned mentorship or informal programs and networking resources throughout the institution. Junior faculty may also find it helpful to build informal relationships with one another within their departments and across their universities. Academic leaders could develop writing circles that faculty could join or provide an optional opportunity for faculty to be peer evaluators of faculty members' class sessions.

Department and dean leadership also provided consistent feedback to pre-tenure faculty on an annual basis as participants prepare tenure dossiers. Institutions sometimes utilize different models of dossier review, waiting until year three to provide any

feedback. All participants in this study received regular, annual reviews of their progress toward tenure. That feedback reinforced successful practices and helped participants feel secure in their actions as faculty members. Regular evaluations, especially on an annual basis, is another recommendation.

Participants said their doctorate graduate programs also provided significant resources and capital necessary for participants to secure faculty appointments and understand initial faculty expectations. Faculty were concerned, though, their mentors and previous student peers failed to appreciate the unique elements of working at a regional comprehensive university, such as the teaching and student-first emphasis. Mentors and peers had expressed to participants the epitome of faculty appointments could only be found at major Research I universities. Participants specifically cautioned mentors against socializing doctoral students and prospective faculty to that specific definition of faculty legitimacy. Participants in this study mentioned many were unfamiliar with the comprehensive university system and the role that faculty play in that environment. To educate future faculty about different appointment types, graduate program faculty should be sure to include readings and case studies from a variety of different institutions, include guest speakers in their classes from comprehensive universities. On an individual basis, advisors should be encouraging their advisees to pursue different faculty career paths, and the advisors should educate future faculty about the realities of the job market: that not all faculty appointments can be found at research universities. I recommend all of these actions as suggested changes for future doctoral socialization practices.

Recommendations for Future Research

The phenomenological nature of this research project allowed participants to deeply share their narratives. The first recommendation for future research is this study needs to be replicated and targeted to very specific populations of comprehensive university faculty. I believe it would be informative to examine the experiences of tenure track higher education/student affairs faculty during the first year of their faculty appointment, to see just how they adjusted to their new work expectations. Also, since this study did not include faculty of color, future research needs to include these faculty narratives. For example, what are experiences of faculty of color in the tenure process at comprehensive universities? Does the region of the country where the comprehensive institution is located influence that experience?

As part of the data collection for this study, promotion and tenure guidelines were gathered and reviewed for some participants. These documents were utilized as a way to triangulate the statements of participants. They also contained in-depth explanations of what types of scholarship are considered valid within departments with higher education/student affairs programs. A focused in-depth analysis of a wide selection of promotion and tenure documents from multiple disciplines and multiple institutions could reveal significant findings about the comprehensive university tenure process on a broader basis.

How faculty spend their time, in general and at comprehensive universities, is an interesting concept. Participants in this study revealed teaching responsibilities were primary expectations, and they mentioned teaching and mentoring students took up most

of their time as faculty. Those facts beg the question of how exactly comprehensive university faculty spend their time engaged in different sectors of faculty work: research, teaching, and service. Quantitative methods such as time diary data collections could provide a much more contemporary picture about how faculty spend their time at comprehensive universities.

The topic of striving institutions was one only explored on a limited basis in this study, given only two participants came from that type of university. The concept of striving institutions within comprehensive universities deserves more focused study. Researchers should consider exploring faculty perceptions at striving institutions through a cohort-based case study approach. With this type of study, one would interview pre-tenured faculty, tenured faculty seeking promotion to full professor, and full-professor faculty at a striving university to see how each generation of faculty uniquely responds to institutional academic change.

Limitations of Study

This study was not meant to capture the story of all pre-tenure faculty at comprehensive universities, or even the story of all graduate-level instructional faculty. Participants in this study came from higher education/student affairs academic programs, which are unique in nature given they do not have corresponding undergraduate degree offerings. Education and higher education/student affairs faculty have different expectations for grant funding and research outputs than other fields, so these narratives cannot be extrapolated to other fields of study.

This research also does not include negative tenure cases, stories where faculty have been denied tenure or have not made satisfactory progress on achieving tenure. Participants who volunteered to participate in this study were those who had earned tenure or were overwhelmingly positive that they would eventually do so. The overwhelmingly positive narratives could be a reflection of the fact participants self-selected to join this study and only did so because they had a positive story to share. Future research could investigate those negative experiences to see if any of this study's capital or faculty contexts were different or absent from their experiences.

As a result of the limitations noted above, this research is also not the narrative of every population of faculty in higher education. That fact is especially true, given that all participants self-identified as White/Caucasian. Some participants did, however, identify instances where their White privilege could have played a role in their successful faculty experience. Again, this is a reflection of who decided to join the study, and future research needs to include other minority faculty identities and narratives.

Conclusion

This chapter unpacked the findings of this study and discussed how they were similar to and different from the research findings already published about comprehensive university faculty. I provided an overview of how the findings related to the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Perna (2005)'s three forms of capital, primarily human and social/social network capital were present and played a key role in the individual micro and institutional/disciplinary meso faculty contexts. Participant narratives in this research reinforced the idea that one's motivation and perspectives

about comprehensive university tenure play a key role in determining one's success at achieving tenure. The narratives also reinforced that comprehensive university faculty have received and should continue to receive significant support from tenured and senior faculty, peer faculty, and graduate program faculty at the institutional and disciplinary levels. Communities of support are necessary for a faculty member's tenure success. However, there is also much we have yet to uncover about this population of faculty, so the roadmap of research on this topic is wide and prime with future possibilities.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Faculty Contexts and Interview Protocol

Faculty Contexts	Interview Questions
Micro-level Context (individual motivations)	Why did you decide to become a faculty member and why at a comprehensive university?
Micro-level Context (individual motivations)	What aspects of faculty work – i.e. research, teaching, service, mentoring – do you enjoy the most? Follow-Up: How does that preference influence the choices you make as you work to achieve tenure?
Micro-level Context (individual characteristics)	When you look at your academic year as a whole, how much of your time do you spend on research, teaching, service, mentoring? Have you noticed a change in the amount of time you devote to those aspects of your work responsibilities? If so, what has behind that change (expectations of you as a more seasoned pretenure faculty member, or is this an expectation for all faculty at your university, first years and others)?
Micro-level Context (individual characteristics)	What challenges did you face in that first year and in the years afterward as you understood your role at the university? How did you overcome them?
Meso-level Context (departments / institutions)	Prior to this interview you put together a timeline of your key tenure milestones and moments. Let's review each one and as we talk about them, why was each of them significant for you? Prompt at each milestone: at each point in the process, what were your thoughts about _____ university's tenure system?
Meso-level Context (departments / institutions)	What has your department and university communicated to you about what is expected from tenure track faculty? During your time as a faculty member at your university, has the

	<p>departmental or institutional conversation about tenure changed in any way?</p> <p>What are your thoughts about what they emphasize for tenure?</p> <p>Do you agree with the direction/emphasis for tenure?</p>
Meso-level Context (institutions)	<p>In the short period of time that you have been a faculty member at _____ university, have you been able to witness the institution changing in any way? e.g., its formal mission, its student population characteristics, its research productivity, its rankings advancement?</p>
Meso-level Context (departments / institutions / disciplines)	<p>When you think back on your year(s) as a tenure track faculty member, were you able to take advantage of any support programs, services, mentors, peer supports, or other resources to support your journey as a faculty member? What stands out to you as really impactful practices?</p> <p>What supports do you wish you had and why?</p>
Any	<p>As you were thinking about your tenure experiences in preparation for this interview, was there anything that you wanted to share that we have not talked about yet?</p>

Appendix B

IRB Approval for Study

Dear Dr. Havice,

The Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the protocol “The Tenure Track Process at Comprehensive Universities” using exempt review procedures and a **determination was made on May 30, 2017** that the proposed activities involving human participants qualify as **Exempt under category B2** in accordance with federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101.

No further action or IRB oversight of the protocol is required except in the following situations:

1. Substantial changes made to the protocol that could potentially change the review level. Researchers who modify the study purpose, study sample, or research methods and instruments in ways not covered by the exempt categories will need to submit an expedited or full board review application.
2. Occurrence of unanticipated problem or adverse event; any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects, complications, and/or adverse events must be reported to the Office of Research Compliance immediately.
3. Change in Principal Investigator (PI)

All research involving human participants must maintain an ethically appropriate standard, which serves to protect the rights and welfare of the participants. This involves obtaining informed consent and maintaining confidentiality of data. Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three (3) years after completion of the study.

The Clemson University IRB is committed to facilitating ethical research and protecting the rights of human subjects. Please contact us if you have any questions and use the IRB number and title when referencing the study in future correspondence.

Good luck with your study.

Best,

Amy Smitherman

IRB Coordinator

Office of Research Compliance, Clemson University

391 College Avenue, Suite 406K-1, Clemson, SC 29631

T: 864.656.6460

smithe3@clemson.edu

IRB Email: IRB@clemson.edu (send all new request to IRB inbox)

Website: <http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/>

Appendix C

Recruitment Materials

E-mail Invitation to Participate in a Research Study

Dear faculty member:

I am a doctoral candidate at Clemson University, under the supervision of Dr. Pam Havice, Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs. As part of my dissertation research at Clemson University I am seeking tenure track faculty at comprehensive universities to participate in a phenomenological research study. The purpose of this study is to explore the pretenure faculty experience in higher education/student affairs programs at comprehensive universities.

I am seeking participants willing to engage in a series of activities related to my research, including an individual semi-structured interview, a journal activity, a tenure timeline project, and, if possible, member checking regarding the accuracy of the transcript. I expect that the amount of time required for your participation would be approximately two hours total: an hour and half to prepare tenure timeline materials and then participate in an interview and 30 minutes for member checking. The interviews will be audio-recorded, however the taped interviews will be destroyed after three years.

There are no known risks associated with this research, however this research will hopefully provide the field of higher education with a greater sense of understanding about comprehensive university faculty experiences, challenges, and necessary support systems. On an individual basis, I hope all participants use their involvement as an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and develop a greater understanding of their tenure track journey.

Your privacy and confidentiality will be fully protected throughout this process. I will use pseudonyms to protect your identity from data collection to reporting. No identifiers will be included in the analysis and dissemination of this data.

If you are interested in participating please fill out the following interest form (LINK WILL APPEAR HERE, see text below), so I may know more about your background and experiences as a faculty member.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at cwaugam@clemson.edu.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Waugaman
Graduate Assistant
PhD Student, Educational Leadership - Higher Education
Clemson University, College of Education
Department of Educational & Organizational Leadership Development
308J Tillman Hall
Clemson, SC 29634
cwaugam@clemson.edu

Follow Up Emails

Thank you for your interest in participating in my dissertation study. Your interview has been scheduled for [insert date and time]. Please let me know if you are unable to commit to this time. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Waugaman
Graduate Assistant
PhD Student, Educational Leadership - Higher Education
Clemson University, College of Education
Department of Educational & Organizational Leadership Development
Clemson University
308J Tillman Hall
Clemson, SC 29634
cwaugam@clemson.edu

Appendix D

Online Background and Demographic Survey

Online Background and Demographic Survey

The Tenure Track Process at Comprehensive Universities

Name _____

University _____

Title _____

For how many years have you served as a tenure track faculty at your comprehensive university? _____

Briefly share any previous faculty experience you may have, including the number of years you served in a tenure track position (or positions) at other universities or any experience teaching in clinical/adjunct positions.

E-mail Address _____

Phone Number _____

Skype/Video Conferencing Username _____

Sex

- Male
- Female
- Prefer Not to Answer

Where did you complete your graduate work? _____

Appendix E

Tenure Milestone Timeline and Reflection Protocol/Guide for Participants

Prior to your interview, you are invited to outline a bulleted list of the key tenure progress milestones you remember throughout your time as a tenure track faculty member. We will discuss those milestones and experiences during your upcoming interview, so as you outline the key moments, please keep some written notes where you reflect on and document why each of those milestones was significant for you. Also please share with us in your notes what your thoughts were about achieving tenure.

As you write your timeline and written notes, should you refer to anyone at your institution or the institution itself, we will replace those names with pseudonyms to protect all of your identities.

Appendix F

Sample of Coding Process for Institutional Colleague and Leadership Support Theme

Select Codes	Framework	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
Institutional understanding of and continued commitment to mission	<p>Meso-Level Faculty Context</p> <p>Social/Social Network Capital</p>	<p>MELISSA:</p> <p>It's interesting because we've just had a new president who's now on his second year. Actually starting on his third year and we have a new provost and our provost, we actually had came to our faculty meeting this week and talked about how we've got to continue to downplay the comprehensive piece because we really want to emphasize our undergraduate population has declined quite a bit. We really want to push our bachelor's programs. They want to focus more on almost like you're at the baccalaureate classification than the Carnegie classifications, even though you're in the middle. ... Last year, there was a complete review of the entire institution where it was assessing every aspect of what we do, how we do it, looking at every academic program. From that they made recommendations to discontinue some of our programs, to add some new programs. Then, of course when the provost came and talked to us this week, he said we won't add new doctorates because that's not who we are. For us, we all sort of said that was good for us to hear because that meant that we were really preserving the identity</p>	<p>Not occurring at striving institutions</p> <p>Commitment to baccalaureate education or teaching-focused mission</p> <p>Directly related to and likely the cause of unchanging P&T criteria</p>

		of the institution.	
Colleagues want faculty to gain tenure		<p>MICHAEL:</p> <p>The only thing I know is just the perspective that I've heard from my other colleagues. It seems like it was less stressful. It seemed like there was more collegiality from my colleagues, that less people were out to get me, that it seemed like some of my other colleagues were going through at the Research Is. That there wasn't much gotcha there. Again, that's all from what I've heard from colleagues.</p> <p>AIDEN:</p> <p>So I'm just doing my best and hoping for the best. But again, my sense is people want each other to get tenure. It seems very much ... In some respects, prove me wrong, not prove me right kind of thing. Like in a positive way. Like it's mine to lose, not mine to gain.</p>	<p>Colleague job is not to be gatekeeper others have to satisfy to get tenure</p> <p>Security, empowerment</p>
Institutional faculty mentors – assigned		<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>I will say that so my faculty mentor in my department is particularly helpful to me and has been particularly helpful to me. You know, I kind of requested her to be my mentor, because she's someone I met as part of my interview process, she strike me as someone who didn't really mince words. So I felt that she was going to be honest with me and that's been the case. I've appreciated that. I think I sometimes kind of strike people as the kind person who kind of they</p>	<p>Truthful – quality of good assignment mentorship</p>

		<p>can't be honest with, but I really, really want people to kind of say this is what's really going on. Or this is reality, and so kind of get with it. So she's been very helpful</p> <p>HANNAH:</p> <p>I liked it because it put you with somebody outside of your department and I think that was good, because if you ever needed to talk about something in your department, and you wanted feedback, you had that opportunity. Usually that person was already tenured, and they could tell you about what that process was, and give you advice on research or other things, so I think that was helpful.</p>	Mentors outside department
Colleagues in department, university serve as source of support		<p>MELISSA:</p> <p>I was lucky that I was in a counseling department because we were very good about checking in with each other, checking on each other. Offering that support and so forth. I think that sort of solidified my relationship with the folks I was working was that, no matter what happened, no matter if we disagreed in a faculty meeting that at the end of the day, if I needed somebody at 10:00 to just talk to, they were going to be there.</p> <p>The person who I replaced, was still in the community so and my first year he came in to finish up some pieces that he had been working on. We</p>	Counseling, caring about faculty member as individual

		<p>would have weekly lunches and stuff like that. In fact, I'm going to [<i>colleague's</i>] house for dinner tonight, so I still stay in touch with him. He still keeps tabs on me, the president emeritus at least twice a week we would go and have lunch or coffee together and just sort talked about what's happening in the field, how do we maneuver through this, what do we need to tell our students. I mean it was just great to sort of just have that person.</p> <p>HANNAH:</p> <p>Here we're colleagues in our department, and that was very helpful. I think the other thing is also finding other faculty at the institution not necessarily in your discipline that you can bounce ideas off of. I think that was helpful for me in just making sense of the institution sometimes than just what was required.</p>	<p>Relationship building</p> <p>Advice – local, field</p> <p>Bouncing ideas, building relationships</p>
Student Affairs division collaborations		<p>LAURA:</p> <p>The student affairs people that are really great at [<i>Institution Name</i>] have been very supportive. Any time I have asked to do something with them, they've always shown up and done stuff. The director of residence life, I started teaching an assessment class. I'm, "I don't want to just teach assessment. I want to do assessment. Would you pair with me?" He's, "What do you mean?" I'm like, "Can you just come in and tell my students stuff that you needed help with and then we'll go assess it for you? I'm not</p>	<p>Guest speakers</p> <p>Practical application of</p>

		promising it's gonna be great, 'cause it's gonna be their first experience." He was like, "Yes." He didn't just come in and do that. He came in and co-led a class. And then when we presented, he buys us a pizza. The people around me are great.	theory Above and beyond
Organic mentoring by tenured faculty, P&T committee		MELISSA: The person whose position, I came after a retiring professor. He was very concerned about making sure that my success in the first year – that I was successful and that I was helped by him and by the other professor who was here at that time. We had a former president of the university who was teaching adjunct in our program and he was very intentional about what he would do to help me	Unassigned mentoring
Awards recognition from institution		JESSICA: I really thought I was doing a poor job and dropping the ball on all fronts, and then that was the semester that my students nominated me for ... It was basically an award for mentoring and advising graduate students, and I think that they saw, hey, Jessica's trying really hard...I didn't even know I was being nominated for that award, but my department head and a bunch of my students nominated me, and then I won. It's basically the top graduate faculty award, and I got it. I was like, "Oh. I thought I was just dropping the ball and doing a horrible job, and my students and my boss actually think I'm doing great."	Awards - positive reinforcement

Institutional faculty development resources		<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>We do a pretty exhausting and exhaustive three-day faculty orientation, it was fine. You know there have been some kind of learning communities, like our center for teaching excellence has book circles every semester. I've done a couple of those. One, which was helpful, was kind of helpful on pedagogy. Then one that was kind of maybe not as helpful. So probably less so institutionally speaking, you know it's gotten some kind of additional training on grants. Though, I really have not taken much time to kind of apply those lessons.</p> <p>You know the grant work that I've kind of done since I've gotten here have been more along the lines of looking at and identifying kind of sources of internal money and using those. So our college kind of does these seed grants, which have been really helpful for supporting research.</p>	<p>Institutional resources – orientation</p> <p>Faculty development</p> <p>Grant development</p>
Dean provides consistent feedback		<p>SAMANTHA:</p> <p>Yeah. I never got a single bit of feedback from either my dean or my chair suggesting that I should do a single thing differently. Not a single thing. Not teaching, not research, not service, not volunteerism, nothing. So I just kind of felt like, "Okay. Well, I'm on the right track, and if I'm not, someone will tell me," and no one ever did. So I just kind of kept doing what I thought was right, and it worked out fine.</p>	Dean confirmation

Dean embraces new ideas		<p>MELISSA:</p> <p>We had a rather challenging dean and so the new one is a very positive person and is sort of like, “Let’s make it happen,” whereas the old dean, she’d been in the role for several years, came out of elementary education and was very much like, “Well, how would this not work?” Which changes the dialogue from ‘how does this work?’ Which, I’m like, this is probably why the two of them worked together so well because he would say, “Well, here’s how it works and she’d say, here’s how it doesn’t,” but he’s like, “Go forward with this.” For us it’s been very positive in that he’s very supportive.</p>	<p>Leadership style of dean</p> <p>Influence of dean (outside of P&T)</p>
Dean broadens definition of P&T categories to reward efforts		<p>SAMANTHA:</p> <p>But the minute that our previous dean stepped down and then we got a new dean, which was the last, well, actually only the last year of my process. We had a year without a dean, so that was interesting. But the last year, with our new dean, she was adamant that everything we did in terms of program directorship would be on our dossiers and would be counted as significant “service” even though technically, the only service that’s valued here is committee work. But she said no. Put all your stuff in there. My advocate told me later that it was actually seen as an impressive addition to everything else that we had to do.</p>	<p>Leadership change at dean level</p> <p>Broadens definition of service – supports P&T</p>

Dean provides informal mentoring		<p>MICHAEL:</p> <p>After we meet with the dean and she'll let us know or she'll even say, "You know, I can see that this may be a problem here. Reframe it like this so it's not an issue," which was very helpful. Although it's been my experience that her feedback has been curtailed pending upon whether or not she likes you. I got off very, very, very easily. My wife got off very, very, very easily. Other colleagues who we know she does not get along with did not get off so easily. I don't know if it's a relationship thing. That's just kind of the perception that's there.</p>	<p>Informal support from dean</p> <p>Based on personal relationship – not universally dispensed</p>
Dean wants faculty to succeed		<p>AIDEN:</p> <p>I just met with her [<i>dean of college</i>] with a group of junior faculty last week. And she was saying the same kind of thing like we want you to get tenure. We want to be supportive. If you ever want to walk into my door, have me look at your CV, I'm happy to do that. If you want me to help you figure out how to write grants, I am happy to review grants with you. This is a dean of the college saying "I'll take individual time to do this ventureship." I think that speaks a lot of the support they want to go to that work.</p>	<p>Example of mentorship</p>
Dean, department chair standing up to academic leadership		<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>He [<i>dean of college</i>] is also someone who kind of pushes back on like what he sees is the chancellor's</p>	<p>Striving university</p>

		<p>vision of the university, and kind of says you know we kind of have to acknowledge the reality of where we're located and the resources that we have and who we are. You know the chancellor's vision, he just doesn't square with most of the realities, both kind of contextually speaking, but also politically speaking.</p>	Reinforces mission of comprehensive universities
Encouraging, consistent feedback, expectations from provost and president-levels		<p>JESSICA:</p> <p>At the university level, the provost's office has really outlined what they want in dossiers. Even though each department kind of requires different points, if you will, for different things, every person's dossier, from English to history to education, would all look the same and all kind of have the same components. Even though we have different requirements for maybe number of publications or tier of publication outlets, or maybe different tiers for teaching evaluations or things like that, that count, it's all packaged in the exact same way.</p> <p>SAMANTHA:</p> <p>I think that there is always ... I mean I definitely got a lot of positive feedback when I met with the president about the fact that I publish as much as I do and that I'm involved in [<i>Name of Higher Education National Association</i>] and other organizations. He, unlike many presidents, he came up through a higher ed Ph.D. background, so he knows what all this stuff means. He was very complimentary and supportive.</p>	<p>Unchanging feedback</p> <p>Expectations tailored to disciplines</p> <p>President-level support</p> <p>Acknowledge discipline contribution</p>

		He actually said to me you should apply ... The minimum amount of time you can wait between tenure and full professor is three years. He said you should apply three years to the day, which I was flattered by. It actually hadn't occurred to me, but I guess I probably will based on what he said.	Encourages future growth beyond tenure
Department chair feedback – annual reviews		MELISSA: I'm in a fortunate situation where the chair of our department, each year he reviews our portfolio will say, "Here's where I think you're strong. Here's where you ..." You know and by year three, he was like, "I don't have any feedback. Just keep doing what you're doing. Yeah and so it was like, "Okay, I'm on track." Now he'll stop by the door and and he'll say, "Your portfolio looks great, keep doing what you're doing." Which is nice, because it's like, "Okay, Well, I've got this down. I haven't screwed up too horribly." (laughs)	Positive, annual feedback
Department chair - Personal mentorship, examples of advice		LAURA: My department chair. He just stepped down. He teaches in our program. He's wonderful. When I was at [<i>previous faculty institution</i>] there was really no mentorship, so I came in as a person who had figured out a whole bunch of stuff myself. But he was really good about finding the holes, 'cause there were little holes here and there. And plugging in some stuff and helping me with a few things. He's really one of the best people on earth.	Vested interest Identifies areas to improve

		<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>The department chair that was hired, so the second one, was really wonderful and really helpful to me. Kind of teaching me and supporting my ability to say no, and kind of saying this is your life and this is your work and you have one of the things we have control over as faculty members is how we use our time. So you have the ability, you have the right to say no. That's just the message that I really wish more people along the way would have given. Because the expectation here really kind of seems to be that you're going to say yes to everything. Which means that you can't do anything well. That might drive me craziest of everything about being a faculty member, is that I kind of feel sometimes that I'm stretched too thin, everything feels mediocre.</p>	<p>Supporting workload</p> <p>Striving university – faculty must say yes to all requests</p>
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