

12-2017

Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty Experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual Development of Students

Darlene Carbajal

University of the Incarnate Word, dcarbaja@uiwtx.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/uiw_etds



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Carbajal, Darlene, "Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty Experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual Development of Students" (2017). *Theses & Dissertations*. 320.
https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/uiw_etds/320

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by The Athenaeum. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of The Athenaeum. For more information, please contact athenaeum@uiwtx.edu.

SPIRITUALITY IN A FAITH-BASED INSTITUTION: FACULTY EXPERIENCES OF
FACILITATING THE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

by

DARLENE CARBAJAL

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the University of the Incarnate Word
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

December 2017

Copyright by
Darlene Carbajal
2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dear Lord, thank you for making me the person that I am. You have made me unique. My love for you is everlasting. Thank you for hearing my prayers—for speaking and answering for me and for helping me finish the good work that you set out for me to do. You have made dreams come true! I cannot thank you enough. You have given me health, wisdom, and most of all, made me a good person. To God, Jesus, the Blessed Mother, Saints and angels, I honor you. At the perfect place and in the perfect time you made all things possible. Thank you for carrying me through and for bringing good people on my road of life. It has been a blessing to be in communion with you through this research process. Holy Spirit, thank you for enlightening and strengthening my mind. Your presence has given me the confidence and knowledge to see all things according to faith. I invite you to continue helping me grow in God's will.

To my dissertation chair, Dr. Sharon Herbers, my heartfelt love. Your willingness, expertise, and guidance made this dissertation possible. Thank you for believing in me, for reading and re-reading my work, and for mentoring me. The past four and a half years with you has been a beautiful and unexpected gift. I give you my deepest gratitude. You and I were meant to be. To my committee member, Dr. Alison Buck: your edits and suggestions strengthened this dissertation. Thank you for committing yourself to this research. To Sr. Martha Ann Kirk, my committee member, thank you for saying yes and taking this on—you are everywhere! It has been a joy to make you proud. Dr. Ozturgut and Dr. St. Clair: you are good examples of finding ways to develop the teacher-student relationship. Thank you for acknowledging me as an intellect and for reminding me that I've got this. To all of you: thank you for your willingness to

mentor me beyond this dissertation. Dr. Herbers, Dr. Buck, Paul Boyer, Achica “Sia” Fuamatala, and Bernadette Smyth, thank you for editing my work.

Thank you to my research participants. You have increased my understanding of spirituality and about what good teaching is. It was a blessing to meet each of you—your words, experiences, and belief in this topic made this dissertation fantastic! You are amazing educators!

To my students, who have inspired me and touched my heart more than you will ever know. You have been my breath of fresh air and have confirmed God’s will for me to work at this university. It has been an honor to learn and grow with you. Thank you for sharing your creative souls with me and for loving me dearly.

To the School of Media and Design, especially the Communication Arts Department, thank you for celebrating me and helping me feel valued. From graduate student to PhD candidate, we have come a long way! Dr. Sharon Welkey and Hank McDonnell: thank you for being gracious and for understanding the responsibility of this dissertation. I am thankful for the opportunities. Dr. Valerie Greenberg: you have always been a source of love and encouragement. Thank you for your friendship and for believing in me! The gift you gave me during the writing stage of this dissertation motivated me at a time of exhaustion. The words “Nevertheless, she persisted” were powerful!

To people at Alamo Heights Junior School, I love you all! Laura Ancira, Bob Haawk, Gaby Joseph, and Toni Gilbert, thank you for making my life easier. My accomplishments are a result of your kindness. Working at the Junior School was one of the greatest gifts of my life! Paul Boyer, I miss working with you! You are the love of my life. I am thankful for the blessing we had, especially since the dissertation consumed me at home. To each of you, including others, thank you for helping me see this through.

To my family, thank you for love and tradition. Mom and Dad, your visits from El Paso helped me and Christopher feel grounded as we pursued purpose and success. Thank you for spending time with us. To Alex and Rosie, it has been a blessing to have you in our lives. Rosie, thank you for your affection and interest in our lives. And thank you for taking care of our dad. Alex, thank you for helping me get started when I moved here. Christopher and I are honored to be part of the Gonzalez family. To Christopher and Troy, thank you for making San Antonio feel like home. Thank you for the encouragement and generosity especially at the start of my Bachelor's degree. Christopher, you are my best friend! Being your sister has been the greatest joy of my life!

To my sweet babies, Fifi, Lilly, Pepper, and Chico: it has been a joy to take care of you. You have my heart! Thank you for your companionship and endless love. You are the best kitties ever! To my best friend Michelle Ortega: you are my soul mate. Thank you for making me a better person. You were a true blessing, especially during this stressful time.

To Paul, I give you my deepest appreciation. Thank you for sticking with me and celebrating my achievements. Never forget that you are an answered prayer. This celebration and accomplishment is for you as well. Thank you for not giving up. Neither of us imagined the time constraints and stress that this dissertation would cause. Though difficult, thank you for believing in our love. You are the man of my dreams. Through an answered prayer God gave me more than I could have ever imagined. Thank you for supporting me in this process and for sharing your children and family with me—I am honored to know such wonderful and loving people. Jacob and Julianna, thank you for including me in your lives and loving me with pureness. It is a blessing to be in your lives. I love you so much! To Rebecca, your love for academia made us

the perfect fit. Thank you for celebrating my scholarship and for asking lots of questions. The five of us, along with Lilly, Chico, and Snowflake, are divinely connected.

To my mother, I appreciate and love you. Thank you for your sacrifices and for being a role model. The Mother Daughter Program was integral to the success of my education. It was powerful to see you present and lead with confidence.

To my grandmothers, your love has made me the luckiest little girl in the whole wide world. Being your granddaughter has brought joy to my life! Thank you for guiding me and for teaching me that there is a God. I feel your spirit in all that I do. Buelita, thank you for teaching me manners and for planting a seed of intellect. Grandma Serna and Grandma Gonzalez, you are everything to me. Thank you for teaching me how to pray. Grandma Gonzalez, you always said, “You call on my Lord and He will come.” You were right.

Grandma Serna, your spirit is strong! Thank you for continuing to take care of me and Christopher. We adore you. Grandma Gonzalez, thank you for teaching me right from wrong. You always knew what to say, and how to say it. Your words and mannerisms are in my heart and in my mind. Thank you for embracing me and Christopher with love and understanding. As you would say, “Mijita, May my Lord bless you and keep you; may He show His face upon you and give you strength, give you guidance, and make you a very happy girl. God bless you and the devil miss you. This viejita loves you very much. May my Lord grant me to see you again; the sooner the better. May you have a very safe trip wherever you go; that you never have an accident. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Darlene Carbajal

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to four women in my life: to my mother, my great grandmother Buelita, my Grandma Serna, and my Grandma Gonzalez. You inspired me and made me the person I am today.

SPIRITUALITY IN A FAITH-BASED INSTITUTION: FACULTY EXPERIENCES OF FACILITATING THE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

Darlene Carbajal

University of the Incarnate Word, 2017

Practices of spirituality, particularly amongst faculty who teach at faith-based institutions of higher education, are underexplored in the current body of literature. This qualitative study uses an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to examine faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members in a faith-based institution use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. Participants described spirituality as foundational to student wholeness and naturally emerging from scholarship, as an opportunity for students to increase self-awareness and to have respect, empathy, and compassion for others. Findings of this study identify how spirituality naturally works its way into the higher education environment, including both the university's involvement to facilitate spiritual development, and faculty involvement to support spiritual development through pedagogical approaches and through the teacher-student relationship. This study also makes the connection between faculty members' personal definitions of spirituality and how students are seen and treated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
CHAPTER 1. THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT	1
Context of the Study	3
Statement of Problem.....	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	7
Significance of the Study	8
Theoretical Framework of Study	8
Research Design.....	10
Background of the Researcher	12
Limitations of the Study.....	12
Biases and Assumptions	13
Definition of Terms.....	14
Transition Statement	14
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	15
How Spirituality is Conceptualized for this Study	15
Spirituality in Higher Education	25
Community—A Sense of Connectedness	67
Chapter Summary	73

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW (continued)

Transition Statement	75
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Research Design	76
-----------------------	----

Role of the Researcher	82
------------------------------	----

Site Selection	84
----------------------	----

Selection of Participants	84
---------------------------------	----

Protection of Human Subjects and Ethical Considerations	89
---	----

Data Collection	91
-----------------------	----

Data Analysis	198
---------------------	-----

Trustworthiness and Dependability	106
---	-----

Transition Statement	107
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS.....

Methodology Summary	108
---------------------------	-----

Research Findings	108
-------------------------	-----

Super-Ordinate Themes	114
-----------------------------	-----

Super-Ordinate Theme 1: University Mission Facilitates Spiritual Development	115
--	-----

Super-Ordinate Theme 2: Promoting Holistic Development.....	124
---	-----

Super-Ordinate Theme 3: Engaging in Critical Inquiry	130
--	-----

Super-Ordinate Theme 4: Challenging Students to See Themselves in New Ways	145
--	-----

Super-Ordinate Theme 5: Practices that Respect Student Choices	153
--	-----

Super-Ordinate Theme 6: Guiding Through Uncertainty	169
---	-----

Table of Contents—Continued

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS (continued)	
Chapter Summary	190
Transition Statement	193
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS	194
Introduction.....	194
Discussion of Major Findings.....	197
Conclusions.....	204
Limitations of the Study.....	209
Recommendations for Future Research	209
Recommendations for Action	212
Additional Contributions	214
REFERENCES	216
APPENDICES	220
Appendix A Invitation to Potential Participants	221
Appendix B Participant Consent Form.....	224
Appendix C Communication with Regard to Participation Part I	228
Appendix C Communication with Regard to Participation Part II.....	230
Appendix D Pre-Interview Questionnaire	231
Appendix E Interview Protocol	232
Appendix F Interview Guide	234
Appendix G IRB Approval	236
Appendix H IRB Amendment Revision Approval	237

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Demographics of Participants	109
2. University Mission Facilitates Spiritual Development	115
3. Promoting Holistic Development	124
4. Engaging in Critical Inquiry	130
5. Challenging Students to See Self in New Ways	145
6. Practices that Respect Student Choices	154
7. Guiding Through Uncertainty	169

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Conventional Pattern of Family's Faith Ethos.....	22
2. Wrong Map of Either-Or Thinking	34

Chapter 1. The Study of Spirituality in the College Environment

Spirituality in the college environment enhances the development of students' self-awareness, emphasizing personal qualities such as empathy, caring, and social responsibility (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2013). Students who have greater self-awareness are better able to resolve disconnections between beliefs and experiences and are better prepared to develop their own understanding of the world and how they fit in it.

Students change and evolve in development during the course of their college years, searching for understanding of the world and how they fit within it (Astin et al., 2011; Parks, 2011). However, providing students with opportunities to know themselves on a deeper level does not have to be separate from scholarship. The college environment offers a place of opportunity where students can be exposed to various belief systems, values, and ways of knowing. Faculty members, in particular, have the ability to help students develop their capacity for connectedness, responsiveness, and accountability, and to help them understand their uniqueness, experiences, who they are and who they will become (Astin et al., 2011; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006; Parks, 2011). This, in turn, helps students balance the *interior* and *exterior* aspects of their lives, fostering the formation of meaning making, awareness, and competence (Astin et al., 2011; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006; Parks, 2011). When students have a better understanding of their inner self, it is easier for them to communicate with others and develop healthier personal and professional relationships (Astin, et. al, 2011). As Parks (2011) explains, "Indeed, when self and world—even faith itself—are being recomposed, a network of belonging is crucial: friendships, a mentoring relationship, a sturdy community that can include, sustain, and even encourage constructive conflict—intellectual, emotional, and

spiritual” (p. 147). To help meet the spiritual needs of students, the role of faculty is critical. Astin et al. (2011) assert that “Faculty are powerful role models for students; not only are they the transmitters of knowledge and the facilitators of students’ search for understanding, but they are also adults who model behavior that students frequently embrace” (p. 133). According to Astin et al., faculty behaviors and attitudes have a direct effect on influencing students’ academic achievements and personal development. They can play a vital role in the higher education environment by promoting students’ spiritual development, specifically in areas of pedagogical design and in creating opportunity in the college environment for students to explore their inner selves (Lindholm, Millora, Schwartz, & Spinoso, 2011). To explore how faculty can assist students in the composition of meaning and purpose, this study explores approaches that faculty can use to facilitate students’ spiritual development.

As students figure out who they are and determine where they want to be and what they want to do, teachers serve as authority figures with the ability to help students make meaning (Parks, 2011). Students, particularly between the ages of eighteen and thirty-two, grapple with profound and often confounding questions—ones of meaning, purpose, and faith. According to Parks (2011), students between these ages search for answers to big questions that ultimately matter to them. Examples of these questions include: “Who am I and why am I here? Why is the world the way it is? How do I work for something when I don’t even know what it is?” (p. 178). Astin et al. (2011) found that, although many students are interested in attending to questions such as these, academic achievement and career preparation are often the goals of higher education, with moral development and interpersonal behaviors not always encouraged, leaving students with less opportunity to know themselves spiritually. Oftentimes, students in higher education are so stressed with the anxieties of academic responsibilities that they find little or no

time to engage in their spiritual development. The students in Astin et al.'s study reported that the time pressures of college are the greatest impediment to thoughtful exploration and self-reflection.

To assist students in their quest for meaning and purpose, teachers have the ability to provide a place and time for students to get in touch with their inner-selves. They have the ability to design lessons, create environments, and develop relationships that assist students in their spiritual development. When the exploration of spirituality is encouraged in college, students develop greater self-awareness and are able to learn through practices that support the development of critical thinking, compassion and empathetic connection; additionally, the practices support creativity and emotional balance (Astin et al, 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2013), qualities that benefit society. If institutions of higher education are to fully embrace students' spiritual development, significant numbers of faculty must buy into the benefits of holistic development and help students find time to explore the interiors of their lives (Astin et al., 2011).

Context of Study

The college environment is a place that fosters the possibility of critical thought, support, challenge, and inspiration (Parks, 2011). Post-secondary environments serve as places where students have the opportunity to develop their inner lives (Astin et al, 2011; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2003). Higher education is a place of opportunity to nurture the holistic development of students, both academically and introspectively. Putting more emphasis on students' inner development has enormous implications for how we approach student learning and development. According to Astin, et al., (2011), in most institutions today the primary focus is on what students do: how well they perform on classroom exercises and examinations, whether they follow the rules and

regulations, how many credits they receive, and so on. Nevertheless, there are many institutions involved in creating courses and co-curricular programs, and using strategies that enrich the students' spiritual journeys (Lindholm et al., 2011). More than 400 institutions responded to Lindholm et al.'s call to provide examples of how campuses are supporting students' spiritual development. According to Lindholm, et al. (2011), students are being engaged in opportunities to explore questions of meaning and purpose. Practices include involving students in "abroad, interdisciplinary coursework, leadership education, service learning, and forms of civic engagement" (p. 14).

Spirituality has a place in public or private institutions of higher education. A large part of this study is influenced by the research found in Astin, et al.'s book, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives* (2011). The book is based on a seven-year national study that was conducted by the UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute department to find "how students change during the college years and the role that college plays in facilitating the development of their spiritual qualities" (p. 1). In the longitudinal study, data was collected from 14,527 students attending 136 colleges and universities nationwide that represented "roughly equal numbers of institutions within each category of type (university, college), control (public, private nonsectarian, Catholic, other religious), selectivity, and geographic region" (p. 159). According to the research:

In many respects, the secular institution is the ideal place for students to explore their spiritual sides because, unlike many sectarian institutions, there is no official perspective or dogma when it comes to spiritual values or beliefs. Students are presumable free, if not encouraged, to explore and question their values and beliefs, no matter where such questioning might lead them. (p. 6)

Findings suggest that some students who attend religious colleges may experience spiritual struggle due to being in an environment where there are well-defined ideologies and expectations

that may hold differing perspectives than their own. Being in an environment where religious concepts are part of the academic experience may cause students to silence their spiritual struggles for fear of being misunderstood and feel like a minority in a pre-defined religious community (Bryant, 2008; Bryant & Astin, 2008).

Despite the type of institution, growing numbers of educators in higher education are interested in a more “holistic education” (Astin et al., p. 6), one that is committed to connecting the mind and spirit, calling for an education that allows for the exploration of self and of others (Astin, et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Zajonc, 2013).

As mentors, counselors, and professors, then, we can be supportive by listening, conceding the significance of the issue, and providing space for contemplation. Establishing a climate that validates and encourages self-expression begins with willingness on our part to be candid and open about our own struggles while we invite students to share theirs. (Bryant & Astin, 2008, p. 24)

Conversely, it should be noted that although students, specifically between the ages of eighteen and thirty-two, have big questions (Parks, 2011) and expect colleges to assist them in their spiritual quest (Astin et al., 2011), there are also some students who are not interested in spirituality, nor have the desire to search for meaning and purpose within the higher education setting. Astin et al. (2011) share the perspective of a student with whom engaging in spiritual development does not resonate:

I’ve kind of decided that I’m going to focus on school rather than myself. I think that with school comes learning and experiences that aren’t anticipated. I think that if I try and find spirituality and go and seek it out, like maybe I have been to find some greater meaning to my life and my purpose, that I’m going to spend so much time focused on that, and will be disappointed if I don’t find anything. (p. 33).

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, administered nationally by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA’s Graduate School of Education and Informational Studies, suggests that there is an increase in students who believe

that the importance of going to college is to get a better job and make more money. Their study found that “more students in 2012 believe that the current economic situation significantly affected their college choice” (p. 4), impacting students’ reasoning for going to school (Pryor, Eagan, Blake, Hurtado, Berdan, & Case, 2012). Given perspectives such as these, there are students who would say it is a waste of their money to attend to anything other than the academic, and that the purpose of higher education is to help them graduate and obtain a career in the vocation of their choice.

Faculty may also feel that spiritual issues have no place in higher education. While Astin et al. (2011) found that “colleges and universities are already deeply involved with students’ personal lives through such activities as academic advising, orientation . . . multicultural workshops . . . [that] touch on students’ purposes, hopes, dreams, aspirations, values, beliefs, and other ‘spiritual’ matters” (p.60), some faculty members felt that they should not concern themselves with helping to facilitate the spiritual growth of students because it is none of their business.

Statement of the Problem

Many students in higher education are not being encouraged to ask the big questions of life—the ones that awaken the spirit and attend to the deepest needs of the soul (Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2003). Whether it is acknowledged or not, spirituality is always present; it lives within every subject and every person, yet many people within higher education view spirituality as separate from the learning environment (Palmer, 1998). According to Palmer (1998) and Zajonc (2003), in order to help students address the big questions of life, practitioners of higher education need to stop thinking in terms of great divides—ones that place knowledge and truth on one end of education and spirituality on the other end. This either-or thinking

suggests that people, specifically teachers, have to believe in either truth of science or the moral dimensions of education (Zajonc, 2003). This presents a problem, specifically for students between the ages of eighteen and thirty-two who are most in need of figuring out direction in life—a time of forming critical thought, meaning, purpose, and faith (Parks, 2011). If higher education is going to educate the “whole person,” as it so often claims in institutional mission statements, and not only develop students’ cognitive capacities, but also attend to their emotional development, including their moral and character development (Astin et al., 2011, p. 138), a revolution in higher education is needed (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2003). If higher education fails to attend to the spiritual aspect of the student, it fails to attend to the whole person, ignoring the deepest values and issues of students’ lives. An education that fails to balance the interior and exterior qualities of life is one that leaves students with an unexamined life—a problem for the student and for anyone who interacts with students after they graduate (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Zajonc, 2003). According to Parks (2011), addressing the big questions of life is extremely difficult for students, who need help in the formation of meaning, purpose, and faith. Faculty, in particular, can assist students in their quest for meaning-making, encouraging them to address the real questions of life (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine faculty members’ attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members in a faith-based institution use to facilitate the spiritual development of students.

Research Questions

There are three overarching research questions in this study.

1. How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?
3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

Significance of Study

Past research indicates that there is value in discussing spirituality in the classroom. The primary reason for conducting this research was to explore this further. This study is primarily intended for faculty who wish to integrate pedagogical and mentoring approaches that serve to facilitate students' spiritual development. Research presented in this study is from an educational perspective rather than a theological perspective. The findings may increase understanding of spirituality and holistic education, specifically from faculty outside the department of religious studies. Although there may not be incompatibility in the languages used, this study contributes to existing literature by presenting research where spirituality is described from faculty across disciplines at a faith-based institution. The suggestions for practice can be especially important for those who wish to implement spirituality, separate from religion. Additionally, this study contributes to the gap in literature reviewed where there is more focus towards spirituality and the need to reform public education (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Zajonc, 2003). The findings of this study may have implications for understanding how faculty at faith-based institutions understand spirituality.

Theoretical Framework of Study

Parks' (2011) research provides a framework for this study. Much of Parks' work, found in her book *Big Questions Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for*

Meaning, Purpose, and Faith, focuses on community and helping emerging adults address big questions of life such as: “Where do I live? Whom do I live with? Where and with whom do I belong? What can I honor? What is worthy of shelter and protection? Where can I be creative and thrive” (p. 47). Expanding on the work of Erickson, Fowler, and Piaget’s developmental theories, Parks proposed a stage of development called “emerging adult,” which focuses on college students. According to Parks (2011), in the emerging adult stage, a large part of how a person perceives reality and makes meaning of it is dependent on forms of knowing (the relationship of self to authority), forms of dependence (relationships through which we discover and change our views) and forms of community (desire for sense of belonging).

Parks (2011) describes emerging adults as people between the ages of eighteen and thirty-two who are at a time of asking big questions, having worthy dreams, and composing meaning, purpose, and faith. Describing emerging adults, Parks asserts: “*Adult* connotes a sense of responsibility for one’s self and others—*emerging* connotes the exploratory, ambivalent, wary, tentative, and appropriately dependent quality that is characteristic of early adulthood” (p. 6). As stated in Parks’ research, emerging adults compose and recompose the images that make up their lives. They try to find meaning and purpose in their life, the world, and how they fit within it. Emerging adults try to find a sense of belonging.

According to Parks (2011), emerging adults seek recognition from adults outside of the parental realm, such as college teachers. The framework of this study alludes to five key gifts that good mentors provide to emerging adults in stewarding a promise of a worthy future: “*recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration*—[presented] in ways that are *accountable* to the life of the emerging adult” (p. 167). Parks’ research was selected as a framework for this study to better understand the role that faculty play in the lives of emerging adults, particularly

by exploring how faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating students' spiritual development and the pedagogical approaches that faculty use to support spiritual development.

Research Design

The research design used in this study was an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach. IPA research is interested in “the detailed examination of human lived experience” and ensures that participants can describe their experiences in detail (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 32). Qualitative methodology was used to analyze participant data and examine how participants facilitate the spiritual development of students.

Selection of participants. Selected using purposeful sampling were eight faculty from a faith-based institution in the southwestern region of the United States who reflected a variety of teaching disciplines in the humanities, arts, social sciences, education, mathematics, natural sciences, and health professions. Participants shared the same characteristic of teaching undergraduate students at the same university and were recipients of a specific faculty award. Award recipients are recognized by their colleagues as faculty who excel in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service, and also for inspiring and motivating people to live through the mission values of the university. The participants provided information-rich examples of integrating spirituality in a variety of teaching areas using diverse pedagogical approaches. Faculty are tenure and non-tenure rank. The criteria and reasoning for selecting the participants is outlined in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Data collection and analysis. The types of data collected were interviews and documents. Interview questions addressed the three research questions of the study, and the documents served as supporting descriptions to help understand participant experiences.

Spirituality derives from subsequent awareness, the human consciousness, and involves qualitative or affective experiences (Astin, 2004). Instrumental to this study was an awareness of assumptions that could impact the interpretation of the data. In addition to data that was collected during the interviews, throughout the analysis I kept a journal to bracket and suspend my presumptions. During the study, I was open to understanding the experiences from the views of participants. Specifically, with the topic of the study, it was important to select a research design that allowed me the opportunity to explore how the participants created meaning and interpreted spirituality in their teaching and mentoring experiences.

I used an IPA approach as the research design of this study. The inquiry ensured that participants were able to describe in detail what they had experienced and that I was able to engage in the process of the hermeneutic circle which allowed me the opportunity to disclose my assumptions to ensure that my inner voice was not overshadowing the meaning created by the participant (Smith et al., 2009). Given that the topic of spirituality is complex in its nature (Astin, et al., 2011), the approach also allowed me to explore the personal aspect and the in-relational aspect of the experience (Smith et al., 2009). The procedures for conducting an interpretive phenomenological research design are explained in detail within the methodology section of this study.

Setting. This study was conducted at a faith-based institution of higher education in the southwestern region of the United States. According to information provided on the university's website and to this study, the institution serves people of diverse backgrounds and is dedicated to providing students with a global perspective. The mission of the university includes a focus on helping students and faculty understand the importance of accepting others regardless of differences in faiths and beliefs and focuses on the importance of helping others through service.

Enrollment is made up of less than 10,000 students and offers undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs of study. The institution was selected because the mission of the university encourages faculty and students to engage in the spiritual development of the person.

Background of the Researcher

I am a doctoral student attending a private-religious institution of higher education with six years teaching experience as an adjunct professor. I also have ten years teaching experience in the K-12 public school system and this year became a full-time faculty member at an institution of higher education. I have a passion for teaching and learning and believe the teacher-student relationship to be of great value and importance, especially at a level of higher education. Assumptions of this study are largely related to the professional and personal involvement that I have with students and with being a student. Although the participants of this study and I share the commonality of teaching undergraduate students, I was cautious to focus on the participants' teaching experiences, and not my own. I describe this in more detail within the limitations and biases sections of this document.

Limitations of the study

Prior to conducting this study, I identified a predominate limitation of this study. This has to do with my positionality as a researcher. In this study, I served as insider and outsider to the setting and to the participants. In my position as an insider, the participants and myself shared teaching experience at the same institution. In my position as an outsider, I was not a full-time faculty member at the institution when the study was conducted. Therefore, there is a lot that I do not know about the role of being a full-time faculty member.

A big issue that I faced was how to frame the issue of positionality, protecting the setting and participants with consideration to keeping identifiable information as anonymous as possible

while at the same time providing enough information to build trustworthiness in the study. I decided to leave specific information about my affiliation to the institution out of the dissertation manuscript, but was transparent with the participants as to my background and affiliation to the research setting.

Delimitations. Whereas limitations are influences that the researcher cannot control, delimitations are choices made by the researcher. The delimitation of this study relates to the selection of participants. I purposefully selected participants from diverse disciplines who can help to best explore the central phenomenon. Participants from seven schools of the university were selected to serve as a voice that may not otherwise be heard. Selecting participants from different schools of the university provided a diverse look at the attitudes that faculty members have on the role of spirituality in higher education and of the pedagogical approaches they use to facilitate spiritual development across content areas.

Biases and Assumptions

Qualitative research is interpretive. Identifying biases is true of all qualitative approaches, but for IPA, the processes of bracketing are significant to the outcome of the study. Throughout the study my goal was to honor and respect each participant, in part by continuously being conscious of my personal biases. In Chapter 3 of this study I describe in detail the steps that I took to avoid passing judgment on participant experiences. Also in Chapter 3 of the dissertation, I describe how engaging in the hermeneutic circle (Smith et al., 2009) resulted in some of the assumptions of the study being wrong. It also explains how, in IPA, there is potential for new assumptions to arise. Having the opportunity to examine my experiences and bracket my assumptions and viewpoints (Merriam & Associates, 2002) made IPA an appropriate fit for the study.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to understand their use within the context of this study:

Spirituality: Spirituality is personal, transcendent, and introspective; there is no one definition of spirituality. The following description reflects the meaning as used in this study:

Spirituality has to do with the values we hold dear, our sense of who we are and where we come from, our beliefs about why we are here—the meaning and purpose that we see in our work and our life—and our sense of connectedness to one another and to the world around us. (Astin et. al., 2011, p. 4)

Religion: “An organized system of beliefs, ceremonies, and rules used to worship a god or a group of gods. . . . An interest, a belief, or an activity that is very important to a person or group” (Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, n.d.).

Faculty: Faculty are members of the institution who are afforded faculty status. Specific to this study, faculty are members of the institution who teach students and have responsibility for curriculum, the discipline, methods of instruction, and research (University Faculty Handbook). Interactions with students include aspects of student life and the educational process.

Transition Statement

Chapter 1 introduces the need to discover how faculty feel about the role of spirituality in higher education, and the research design used to address the research problem of this study.

Chapter 2 presents relevant literature that supports the research of this study.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to examine faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members in a faith-based institution use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. A particular interest is the exploration of how the heart and mind of the teacher and student are supported in higher education—creating the kind of community that helps teachers and students feel a sense of belonging and connectedness to self, to others, and to the world.

The review of literature is divided into four sections. The first section describes how spirituality is conceptualized for this study. The second section explores the role of spirituality in higher education, including institutional barriers. The third section addresses pedagogical approaches, spirituality, and disciplines. The final section explores community and its role in creating connectedness and belonging for students. The literature review includes sources on spiritual and faith development theories and pedagogical approaches for facilitating spiritual development.

How Spirituality is Conceptualized for This Study

The purpose of this section is to further describe spirituality, religion, and faith and how they are discussed in the context of this study. This section gives credit to those who influenced this study and aided the conceptualization of these ideas, helping to describe what is hard to define—the introspective elements of the heart, mind, and spirit. As Parker Palmer (2007) expresses, we are living in “the midst of a culture that devalues the inner life;” we must “find ways to protect and support the inner journey at the heart of authentic teaching, learning, and living” (p. ix).

Spirituality, teaching, and learning are not about dogma or indoctrination; rather, they are an invitation to include the inner self of the person within the academic environment. According to Palmer (1998), spirituality lives inside us and is always present; students are the future and will influence direction and decisions in our world; and “evoking the spirit” improves the quality of our lives.

Spirituality. Spirituality is personal and is experienced internally rather than externally; it relates to subjective awareness, the human consciousness, and involves qualitative or affective experiences (Astin, 2004). Helping students grow spiritually can take place in any college environment. Public, private, faith-based, or secular institutions of higher education can encourage spiritual development and create opportunities for students to attend to the inner dimensions of life that give it meaning and purpose (Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al., 2006; Lindholm, et al., 2011; Palmer, 2007; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Tolliver and Tisdell, 2006; Zajonc, 2003).

Spirituality is a multifaceted quality that involves asking the big questions of life. As Astin et al. (2011) state, it includes “a global worldview that transcends ethnocentrism and egocentrism; a sense of caring and compassion for others coupled with a lifestyle that includes service to others; and a capacity to maintain one’s sense of calm and centeredness, especially in times of stress” (p, 137). It is experienced through the realities one has, the events taking place in a person’s life, and can often involve events that are difficult to talk about or define, such as intuition, inspiration, or mystical experiences. Palmer (1998) describes spirituality in the following way:

By ‘spiritual’ I do not mean the creedal formations of any faith tradition. . . I mean the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and more trustworthy than our egos—with our souls, with one another, with the worlds of history and nature, with the invisible winds of the spirit, with the mystery of being alive. (p. 6)

There are many definitions to spirituality, partially because it is personal and experienced internally.

Tisdell (2003) describes spirituality as doing what you feel called to do, what gives life meaning. As Tisdell explains, this can be, for example, in the work that one does and in the choices that one makes intimately with lovers and friends. She refers to a “spiritual experience” as “an unexpected gift,” stating that spiritual experiences happen by surprise: “These moments of catching a glimpse of the wholeness of Life, the interconnectedness of all things, and the one’s more authentic self generally cannot be planned” (p. 35). Spirituality is experienced in the heart and mind; it serves as a guide for life choices and helps people make meaning of life experiences—it is a journey to wholeness. Tisdell makes “seven assumptions about the nature of spirituality in relation to education” (p. 28):

1. Spirituality and religion are not the same, but for many people they are interrelated.
2. Spirituality is an awareness and honoring of wholeness and the interconnectedness of all things through the mystery of what many I interviewed referred to as the Life-force, God, higher power, higher self, cosmic energy, Buddha nature, or Great Spirit.
3. Spirituality is fundamentally about meaning-making.
4. Spirituality is always present (though often unacknowledged) in the learning environment.
5. Spiritual development constitutes moving toward greater authenticity or to a more authentic self.
6. Spirituality is about how people construct knowledge through largely unconscious and symbolic processes often made more concrete in art forms such as music, art, image, symbol, and ritual which are manifested culturally.
7. Spiritual experiences most often happen by surprise. (pp. 28-29)

A focus of this study is to explore spirituality, its relevance to education and the benefits that students, community members of higher education, and society experience when students are afforded the opportunity to address big questions of life. In the following sections of this literature review, pedagogical approaches will be discussed. Tisdell (2003) describes this integration of spirituality and education as creating learning environments that allow students to

learn through the cognitive domain (academic readings and ideas), the affective domain (life experiences), and the symbolic domain (art, poetry, music, etc.), keeping in mind that whether a student experiences spiritual moments or not depends on the individual.

Religion. Religion is described by terms such as membership, rituals, prayer, doctrine, religious affiliation, religious ceremonies, religious teachings, religious faith, and religious services (Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al. 2006; Overstreet, 2010; Tisdell, 2003; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006). According to Astin and Lindholm (2011), religious commitment is described as an *internal* quality that can be measured through the characteristics of seeking to follow religious teachings in everyday life, feeling a connection with God or a Higher Power, feeling loved by God or a Higher Power, and believing that God or a Higher Power provides guidance, support, and strength. Religions are organized communities of faith, often with their own rules and expectations that determine how a person should live, behave, and think. Religious rituals and traditions often become part of the way a person reacts to sorrow or gives thanks. As described by Tisdell (2003), religious traditions and rituals take place in different forms. These include the way a baby is brought into the world, the way a person leaves the world, the way one weds and performs intimately with another, the sacred places one attends for worship, the way one views symbolic articles such as art, prayer, and music, or the memories one has often from childhood.

Culture—Images from the past. When describing what it means to be religious or spiritual, some people find themselves asserting an indisputable difference between spirituality and religion. For others, characteristics of religion and spirituality overlap. Tisdell (2003) describes this visually as “intersecting Venn diagrams”:

Where there is a religion sphere, and a spirituality sphere, and the two intersect when spiritual experiences happen in the context of one’s religious life or religious community. Yet, spiritual experiences often happen completely outside the context of a religious

tradition; similarly, there are many experiences of organized religion that have nothing to do with spirituality. (p. 30)

According to Tisdell's research, the way a person gives meaning to spirituality and religion is often defined by a person's lived experiences. This includes how a person constructs knowledge from symbolic phenomena of the past, such as from childhood memories. Tisdell describes the construction and deconstruction of knowledge as *culture*—the shared values, attitudes, beliefs, and ways of thinking within a social group that contribute to the uniqueness of one's spirituality. The way a person was raised and the experiences they have lived contribute to how a person constructs definitions and meanings, and to how they behave and think in the world.

Tisdell (2003), educator and researcher, speaks about teaching for cultural-relevant education grounded in spirituality. Cultural-relevant education is the notion that people define and construct knowledge through lived cultural experiences. Tisdell, using one of her teaching experiences in her Master's level course, "Spirituality and Culture in Adult Education", explains how, on the first day of class, she asked the fifteen students enrolled to participate in a class exercise to share their definitions of spirituality and religion (p.45). The students were of mixed descents: European, African American, Puerto Rican, Japanese, Native American, Catholic, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Unitarian, Buddhist, and of no religious affiliation. Tisdell asked students to examine and discuss how they constructed meaning and defined spirituality and religion. Many of the students defined spirituality and religion based on personal experiences (they had different experiences and different reasons for how they constructed the definitions). Examples include stories about life and death, the birth of a child, being present to miracles, experiences with sexuality and love, finding and feeling the emotions of a soul-mate, physical or physiological experiences of self or others, engaging in reflective activities through meditation, participating in ritual or religious services, going through life transitions, and having experiences

that caused them to find courage and take new action. The theme of their responses included the following: “At bottom, it seemed that spiritual experience was about *catching a glimpse* of an understanding of the wholeness and interconnectedness of all of life, and honoring that experience as sacred” (p. 48).

Tisdell’s (2003) work suggests that, to determine how spirituality is defined, a person must attend to the inner part of self and consider the cultural experiences that have shaped his or her thinking. Tisdell’s research on spirituality, higher education, and culture also considers the possibility for students to have a transformational experience during their college years, which relates to the inclusion of spiritual development within the academic experience in this study.

Faith. According to Fowler (1981), faith is what makes life worth living. It is how we make meaning, find purpose, and it includes where we find value. It involves where we go, what we do, and where we invest our deepest trust, loyalty, and commitment. Faith, as Fowler describes it, is not always expressed in a religious context, although it can be. Regardless of religious identity, or non-belief, as human beings we require meaning and need purpose. We share human concerns that includes the following:

We are concerned with how to put our lives together and with what will make life worth living. Moreover, we look for something to love that loves us, something to value that gives us value, something to honor and respect that has the power to sustain our being. (Fowler, 1981, p. 5)

Elaborating on the characteristics of faith, Fowler shares that faith includes “how we make our life wagers. It shapes the way we invest our deepest loves and or most costly loyalties” (p. 5). Faith is not a term that can defined through one statement, or set of statements. Nonetheless, experiences of faith include characteristics of being in times of need and in times of thanksgiving. Faith is experienced in our deepest despairs—when we feel guilt, when we feel grief, and when we are exposed to experiences that are too heavy to bear. Faith is where we love,

what we have confidence in, and where we find good and handle evil. Questions of faith are often about love and fear, hope and longing, joy and despair (Fowler, 1981). People experience faith in different ways and in different stages of their lives. Included in James Fowler's (1981) book, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, are questions designed to open discussion about faith in our lives:

1. What are you spending and being spent for? What commands and receives your best time, your best energy?
2. What causes, dreams, goals or institutions are you pouring out your life for?
3. As you live your life, what power or powers do you fear or dread? What power or powers do you rely on and trust?
4. To what or whom are you committed in life? In death?
5. With whom or what group do you share your most sacred and private hopes for your life and for the lives of those you love?
6. What *are* those most scared hopes, those most compelling goals and purposes in your life? (p. 3)

According to Parks (2011), every person has faith. Although faith is often linked with belief and religion, faith is a human phenomenon. It is "the activity of seeking and discovering meaning in the most comprehensive dimensions of our experience" (p. 10). Similarly, Fowler (1981) states that faith is universal and does not require religious or belief affiliation. Faith, as described by Parks, is a process of searching for meaning and for what is true and trustworthy. It is part of being human. According to Fowler, much of how we shape our responses, initiatives, and actions, and how we define *faith*, is influenced largely by family ethos, particularly from the relationship between parent and child. The perspectives that a parent or parents bring to the environment of the child become the values and powers that constitute meaning and ways of knowing. Children entering new environments emulate their parents' ways of seeing and being in the world. Fowler refers to this bond of mutual trust and respect, loyalty and dependability as a conventional pattern of faith.

Fowler (1981) describes the family structure as one that can be diagrammed on a triadic shape (see figure 1.1). On one end of the baseline of the triad there is *self* (s); on the other end are *others* (o), with whom one shares love, trust, and loyalty. The relationship that one (s) has with others (o) makes selfhood possible. At the top of the triad are *shared centers of value and power* (scvp). How a child or person makes meaning is largely defined through the stories, myths, values, images, symbols, traditions, and beliefs that reside in this place—the ones that have come from those before us. Fowler refers to this place as the ultimate environment, holding images that are imbedded in our conscious and the place that influences how one forms meaning and faith; this is our reality.

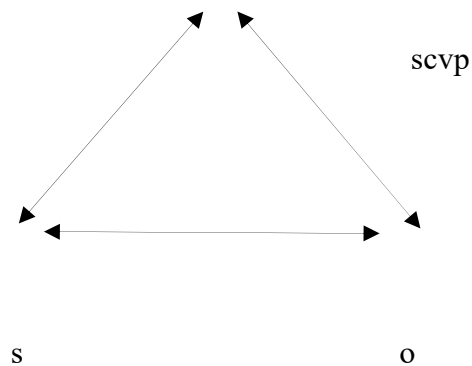


Figure 1. Conventional Pattern of Family's Faith Ethos. Fowler's (1981) diagram of the conventional pattern in a family. The (s) represents self, the (o) represents others, and the (scvp) represents the family's shared center(s) of value and power. Reproduced from "Conventional Pattern of Family's Faith Ethos" by J. W. Fowler, 1981, *Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*, p. 17.

Imagination. According to Fowler (1981) our way of knowing begins with images stored in the centers of our *shared centers of value and power* (powerful memories imbedded in our conscious that can often be remembered and re-remembered). He refers to this as "imaginal knowing." According to Fowler (1981) and Parks (2011), imagination is not make-believe or fantasy. "Rather, imagination is a powerful force underlying all knowing. In faith, imagination

composes comprehensive images of the ultimate conditions of existence” (Fowler, 1981, p. 30).

When we are asked what we think about something, we recall images that represent our deepest feelings, scanning and interrogating them as they appear (p. 27). Faith then, according to Fowler is an “active mode of knowing, of composing a sense or images of the condition of our lives taken as a whole” (p. 25). When asked what was meant by the ultimate environment, a student in one of Fowler’s classes responded:

I think you mean, Professor, our images of that largest theater of action in which we act out our lives. You might say that our images of the ultimate environment determine the ways we arrange the scenery and grasp the plot in our lives’ plays. ... Furthermore, our images of the ultimate environment change as we move through life. They expand and grow, and the plots get blown open or have to be linked in with other plots. (p. 29)

Fowler asserts that we do not compose faith on our own; therefore, the images and meaning of faith are not static. There are points where change can take place in the way that faith imagines, “when one’s image of the ultimate environment undergoes a shift of center” (p. 31). Depending on experiences, doubt is experienced in faith. However, as Fowler describes it, this is not the opposite of faith: “the opposite of faith is nihilism, the inability to imagine any transcendent environment and despair about the possibility of negative meaning” (p. 31).

Meaning, purpose, and faith. As Fowler (1981), Tisdell (2003), and Parks (2011) suggest, a person creates meaning largely from those who have influenced their world—from those who influence our imagination and contribute to our ways of knowing. As described by Parks, emerging adults (people between the ages of 18-32) are on a *journey* and in search of *home*, composing and recomposing faith, meaning, and purpose. *Home*, as noted by Parks, is the place we start from and where we aspire to be: “To be at home is to have a place in the scheme of life—a place where we are comfortable; know that we belong; can be who we are; and can honor, protect, and create what we truly love” (p. 46). As emerging adults, students question

experiences of belonging and faith, and seek opportunity to ask the big questions of life, especially when they are forming and reforming meaning. When people, specifically students in higher education, attend to the unexamined, they become more aware of self and of others and are better able to interact with the events, relationships, and experiences that make up their lives (Fowler, 1981; Parks, 2011). To solidify the importance of facilitating students' spiritual development, Parker Palmer (as cited in Barbezat & Bush, 2014) adds to Socrates' famous dictum that an unexamined life is not worth living:

Here too, is a lost element of higher education's legacy that can be recovered through contemplative practices, and recover it we must: people who choose to live an unexamined life almost inevitably live in ways that do damage to themselves and others. (p. ix)

Institutions of higher education can do this; they can provide students with opportunities to experience diverse perspectives and attend to the inner self (Astin, 2004; Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al., 2004; Lindholm et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011, Tisdell, 2003; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006; Zajonc, 2003).

Spiritual questioning. According to Palmer (1998), to move towards an education that “evokes the spirit” requires that people “shake off the narrow notion that ‘spiritual’ questions” need to include inquiries about angels or God (p. 1). Bringing spirituality into teaching and learning helps with the kind of human connectedness that students are most in need of. As stated by Palmer, spiritual questions are the type of questions that students ask everyday of their lives:

‘Does my life have meaning and purpose?’ ‘Do I have gifts that the world wants and needs?’ ‘Whom and what can I trust?’ ‘How can I rise above my fears?’ ‘How do I deal with suffering, my own and that of my family and friends?’ ‘How does one maintain hope?’ ‘What about death?’ (p. 8).

Palmer describes why most people chose to ask real questions inwardly, rather than address questions of the heart in front of one another:

Part of that risk is the embarrassed silence that may greet us if we ask our real questions aloud. But the greater risk is that if we ask a real question, someone will try to give us The Answer! If we are to open up the spiritual dimension of education, we must understand that spiritual questions do not have answers in the way math questions do—and that giving one another The Answer is part of what shuts us down. When people ask these deep questions, they do not want to be saved but simply to be heard; they do not want fixes or formulas but compassion and companionship on the demanding journey called life. (p. 8)

As stated in Tisdell's (2003) work, spirituality is essentially about meaning-making.

Spirituality in Higher Education

The current study is also influenced by the research of Astin et al. (2011), who conducted a seven-year study of how students change during the college years, and the role that college plays in facilitating the development of their spiritual qualities. The study resulted from their “shared belief that *spirituality is fundamental to students' lives*” (Astin et al., 2011, p.1). The findings showed that “providing students with more opportunities to touch base with their ‘inner selves’ will facilitate growth in their academic and leadership skills, contribute to their intellectual self-esteem and psychological well-being, and enhance their satisfaction with the college experience” (157). The research also suggests that spiritual development is facilitated when faculty directly encourage students to explore questions of meaning and purpose or discuss religious and spiritual matters, and when there is frequent faculty-student interaction inside or outside the classroom. The purpose of this section is to explore the role that higher education plays in facilitating students' spiritual development, which includes developing the inner self as well as the outer self of the student.

Spiritual development. Although Fowler's theory of faith development (1981) is established through six linear stages, Tisdell's (2011) and Parks' (2011) research points more to spiritual development as something that takes place through ongoing processes of transformation, which include complexities that can be differentiated in different patterns and

orders. They suggest that identity and/or spiritual development spirals back and moves forward as we attempt to make sense of our lives. Tisdell (2003) explains that “we stand in the center of the great spiral in the present moment. We look back to make sense of our lives *now*, hoping that the making sense of the *now* will yield a hopeful or fulfilling future” (p. 93). Looking at the relationship to cognitive development, moral development, and cultural identity development, Tisdell (2003) states that spiritual development unfolds as a process that is “probably more spiral-shaped than [it is] a sequence of linear and clearly defined stages or phrases” (p. 96) and refers to this as “the spiral shape of spiritual development” (p. 95).

A basic premise of Tisdell’s (2003) definition of spiritual development is that it is “a process of standing in the present moment and spiraling back to explore significant events and spiritual experiences that shaped both one’s spiritual journey and life journey and identity thus far in order to move forward to the future” (p. 94). Moreover, Tisdell (2003) states that it is a process that “propels us to the future in attempting to live true to our life purpose” (p. 95). This focus on the entire being, encapsulated in a process of spiraling back and forth, develops and re-develops over a process of time; it is how a person comes to know individual characteristics, otherwise known as identity. As Parks (2011) states, the journey of transformation, development, and imagination is “a series of concentric circles” that honors “our sense of self and other, self and world.” Thus, “human becoming is both a process of moving on and a process of reentering” (p. 69).

Regardless of how the development of spirituality unfolds, Fowler (1981), Parks (2011) and Tisdell (2003) share the commonality that spirituality is developed in ways that are experienced within self and with relation to others outside of self. Whether through a linear order of stages or a spiral formation, spiritual development is a series of transformations—we

travel back and forth in our experiences to make sense of the present and look toward the future to make meaning (Fowler, 1981; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003). Parks notes the vital elements that we need to concern ourselves with:

If we understand human development not simply as departures and arrivals but also as transformation in the meaning of home, then the emerging adults with who we have the privilege of making meaning may become more viably at home in the universe. (Parks, 2011, p. 69)

Spiritual Development is a way to accompany emerging adults as they spiral back and forth, making sense of their lives and how they belong in the world.

Spirituality, higher education, and big questions. Young adults refine their identities during their college years. They formulate life goals and career paths, and grapple with issues of independence, interdependence, authenticity, meaning, and purpose (Astin et al., 2011; Parks, 2011). They have big questions and expect the college experience to facilitate this time of discovery. As Astin et al. (2011) point out: “Many students are eager to explore the inner dimensions of their lives and to understand what others think, feel, and experience within this realm” (p 139). Despite the need to address big questions such as: “Where do I live?” “Where do I belong?” “Does my life have purpose?” “Am I alone?” and “Where is home?” (Parks, 2011), Zajonc (2003) declares that institutions of higher education struggle with how to address issues of faith and reason.

Students, specifically emerging adults, undergo a time of transformation during their time in higher education (Parks, 2011). They question many things, including the academic work they do, their education, and how their decisions will affect their future (to name a few). As cited in Overstreet (2010), a student talks about being at a time of big questions: “I am on this quest to find what it is that gives me life and I guess that I don’t know the answers, but I am actively

pursuing them” (p. 251). The student’s perspective coincides with Parks’ (2011) assertion that emerging adulthood is a journey of forming and reforming meaning.

Infusing spirituality in higher education is a journey that can only be facilitated, not planned (Tisdell, 2003). Nonetheless, institutions of higher education, specifically faculty, can assist students in the quest of human becoming and in their search for deeper understanding (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011). As stated by Parks (2011), students, as all humans, want to be heard, understood, and seen; they seek purpose and meaning:

We human beings seem unable to survive, and certainly cannot thrive, unless we can make meaning. If life is perceived as utterly random, fragmented, and chaotic—meaningless—we suffer confusion, distress, stagnation, and finally despair. . . . We need to be able to make some sort of sense out of things; we seek pattern, order, coherence, and relation in the disparate elements of our experience. (p. 9)

The way we make meaning of ourselves and the world we live in is a developmental process—for all humans, not only for emerging adults. As reported in Astin et. al. (2011), students in college want to cultivate their inner selfhood, and expect the educational experience to facilitate this. Students reported that the time pressures associated with college were the greatest impediment to thoughtful exploration of self (Astin et al., 2011). In the quest for belonging and identity, students turn to others for guidance, placing their trust in authority figures such as teachers (Parks, 2011). Faculty can assist students by creating environments that encourage them to seek spiritual questioning, welcome conversations about self-development, and implement topics of spirituality with the discipline. According to Parks (2011), when students see higher education as a mentoring environment, they learn how to attain inner harmony, seek beauty and wisdom in life, and become more loving. According to Astin et al. (2011) and Parks (2011), the qualities of a “mentoring environment” (Parks’ words) increase spiritual development and create a sense of connectedness and belonging for students. Parks

(2011) comments on students' desire to make meaning: "Young (and older) adults come to be initiated into critical thought, and on the other side of that discovery to make meaning and perhaps discern new purposes" (p. 204). The responsibility at hand is to encourage authenticity and strengthen the "full potential" of the emerging adult, pushing them to a deeper learning that is so deep "that the conclusions are unforgettable" (Parks, 2011, p. 212).

Transformation of teacher/student relationship. According to Parks, (2011) the relationship between emerging adult and authority figure can undergo transformation. William G. Perry's theory of human development is used to understand how students in the classroom experience developmental changes in their relationship with authority. Perry's Model of Cognitive and Ethical Development describes the process of change and growth that people experience throughout lifetimes, particularly in how people move from late adolescence into adulthood, and make meaning (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000). Perry studied changes in thinking and reasoning in adults, the ways that we come to know who we are, and described them in a sequence of nine steps, divided into three categories of dualism, multiplicity-relativism, and commitment.

In the category of *dualism* (steps one through 4a), students view themselves as receivers of knowledge. This stage is defined in "absolutist terms" (Taylor et al., 2000, p. 344), where "knowledge is quantitative" (p. 343) and authorities have the right answers. In dualism, students do not question authorities; information is received as true. Position one states that "Authorities know, and if we work hard, read every word, and learn Right Answers, all will be well" (p. 342). In the category of dualism, students try to figure out what the teacher is looking for and answer in ways that are like-minded.

As student's transition to the stage of *multiplicity-relativism*, students see the possibility of opposing views. Rather than looking to authority figures they begin to see that their opinions matter. They discover that authorities don't always have the right answers and notice that information can be contradictory. In the stage of multiplicity-relativism, knowledge becomes qualitative (depending on the contexts). This is where students learn to support opinions with data and theory; they interpret meaning by learning to think about their thinking. In this category students recognize that "authorities are not asking for the Right Answer. They want us to *think* about some things in a certain way, *supporting* opinion with data. That's what they grade us on" (p. 342).

In the third category, Commitment, students make choices and decisions for their futures. With awareness that their opinions matter, students take more ownership and feel like they have more power over their lives, and commit to values, beliefs, and ideologies that matter to them. Somewhere, however, between steps seven and eight, students become uncertain and things seem contradictory. Step eight states: "I've made several commitments. I've got to balance them—how many, how deep? How certain, how tentative?" (p. 342). This transition is described as not being able to make logical sense of the dilemmas. Step nine of Perry's model is categorized in the following realization: "This is how life will be. I must be wholehearted while tentative, fight for my values yet respect others, believe my deepest values are right yet be ready to learn. I see that I shall be retracing this whole journey over and over—but, I hope, more wisely" (p. 342).

Higher education and holistic education. Higher education can be a vital space for the exploration and learning of critical, connected, and contemplative thought that helps young adults with the formation and development of emotion, intuition, the personal, and the moral

(Parks, 2011). Professors can present work that is rigorous, yet allow students to *experience* something, to *feel* something within their learning. As mentioned in the work of Astin et al. (2011) and Parks (2011), students want to know that school is more than separation of knowledge; they want to be more than students who sit in classrooms while professors share wisdom. Students want to know that where they are and what they know matters; they want to participate in their learning and know that they are cared for, to know more than they “ought to know.”

Many people within the academy may serve in mentoring roles: faculty, administrators, student affairs, other professional and technical staff, and often students themselves. It is, however, the faculty-student relationship that forms the backbone of any educational institution, and it may be said that the true professor serves, inevitably, as a spiritual guide. (Parks, 2011, p. 213)

The role of professor as spiritual guide balances respect, humility, participation, and influence, but never exerts control or indoctrination over the spiritual lives of students.

Over the years, the focus of college has changed from developing the interior lives of students to developing the material exterior. With academic achievement and career preparation often being the goals of higher education, moral development and interpersonal behaviors are not always encouraged, leaving students with less opportunity to know themselves on a deeper, spiritual level (Astin et al., 2011). As Astin et al. (2011) asserts: “Rather than providing a developmental context of self-reflection, open dialogue, and thoughtful analysis of alternative perspectives, many of today’s college and university environments mirror too closely the strong societal emphasis on individual achievement, competitiveness, materialism, and object knowing” (p. 140). The Dalai Lama speaks about the of lack spiritual components in higher education:

A great irony is that while spiritual indoctrination, in particular, has been banned from our classroom, indoctrination and imposition continue unimpeded. Students aren’t indoctrinated into religious liturgy but instead into dualism, scientism, and most especially consumerism. We have been indoctrinated into a severely limited,

materialistically biased world view. Rather than learning to nurture and preserve spirit, we learn to manipulate the world: to earn, store, and protect wealth. Rather than learning to be sensitive—understand and attend to the needs of others—we learn to want, rationalize, and do for ourselves. With the rise of a kind of ‘economic individualism’ as our basic sense of identity has come the centralization of wealth and power, the loss of the commons, and the ravishing of the planet. The fact is, within our schools and culture, identity is being imposed: not spiritual identity but material identity. (Cited in Chickering, 2003, p. 5)

In thinking of what the Dalai Lama spoke of and the need to develop the spiritual identity of students rather than only the material identity of students, we go back to pre-colonial England. Thelin (2004) describes students’ experience of the collegiate environment at Oxford and Cambridge (prior to the founding of the Colonial Colleges), at the heart of which was the approach of mixing living and learning. In explaining “the collegiate way,” Thelin differentiated between “university,” being the degree granting governance, and the “college,” being the place for living, eating, playing, and exploration. The “college” and the “university,” both independent yet interdependent bodies, together contributed to developing the whole student. The university focused on teaching and training students in their respected subjects and the college focused on offering opportunities for students to engage in dialogue about the mysteries of life and education. Learning at Oxford and Cambridge was more than repeating information for examination. The experience was about taking early morning walks, traveling on bicycles to lecture halls, and taking time to discuss learning with others. Here, professors were more than experts of a subject area and students were more than receivers of knowledge. Students attended the “university” for academic instruction and were ambitious about obtaining a degree; however, their educational life was balanced—when they finished their academic day at the university, students traded their life there for another one that was equally important—the “college,” which offered another way of life (Thelin, 2004). According to Thelin, during time in the college, students often walked the college courts with their professors and other students. Together they

engaged in dialog, formed new ideas, and challenged each other's perspectives. College life was a place for friendship and a time to share ideas about life. It was a time to discuss newly acquired knowledge and to play. During this time, students and professors could do and speak about almost anything they wanted; some talked about politics, some sat in quiet to read, and others jumped in the waters. Regardless of what they were doing, students and professors were in search of truth and community; they relied on each other's insight and spirit and engaged themselves in activities and dialogue that helped them feel the emotions of life. Although it cannot be confirmed what the environment was really like, it does serve as a possibility that higher education can be a place of balance between spirituality and scholarship.

The environments at Cambridge and Oxford are examples of institutes of higher education that can be dedicated to knowledge as well as encourage questions of meaning and morality. As seen in the descriptions provided by Thelin (2004), there is potential for students to develop holistically and academically. This balance is also described in Parks' (2011): "On one hand there is a fresh opening within the academy to consider the big questions of its own purpose and vocation, but on the other hand there is an erosion of the relative freedom of the academy to grapple with such questions on behalf of a wider culture" (p. 209).

Although many of today's college and university environments do not mirror the surroundings of Cambridge and Oxford, more institutions are becoming comfortable with encouraging spirituality-related discussions (Barbezat & Bush, 2013; Lindholm, et al. 2011; Parks, 2011). However, as stated by Astin et al. (2011), the reality is that over time, higher education has become an established knowledge industry, dedicated to academic objectivity and materialism over value, meaning, and morality. Questions of meaning and value, although surely

important, often stand outside the realm of knowledge leaving the development of the inner self diminished. Parks' (2011) research echoes this concern:

Moreover, professors have been vulnerable to functioning as less-than-whole persons, the vocation of higher education has been impoverished, and students concerned with exploring questions of ultimate meaning—a faith to live by—have been abandoned by faculty and others in the academy who are distinctively positioned to serve the formation of critical and worthy adult faith. (p. 207)

Institutional barriers. According to Zajonc (2003), if the spiritual is to be included within the academic disciplines, one issue must be addressed. For change to occur, spirituality has to be seen as a legitimate part of liberal higher education, specifically in its relationship to *Veritas*, or Truth. According to Zajonc, it becomes problematic when there are forms of academic peer pressure that encourage faculty and institutions of higher education to refrain from involving the spiritual and moral dimensions with other disciplines. Zajonc describes the harm in having an either-or thinking, where people believe either in moral dimensions or in knowledge and facts. This thinking is illustrated through a figure that he calls a “wrong map.”

Wrong Map	
Religion	Science
Faith	Reason
Moral Code	Natural Knowledge
Values	Facts
Credit: Arthur Zajonc	

Figure 2. Wrong map of either-or thinking. Zajonc's (2003) “Wrong Map” of either-or thinking, conceptual barriers that block the integration of contemplation and spirituality into higher education.

This illustration of either-or thinking contains two columns: one with religion, faith, moral code, and values; the other with science, reason, natural knowledge, and facts. According to Zajonc, the problem is, if people are asked to look at the figure and decide where spirituality

belongs, most would point to the left side of the column, placing spirituality on the side with religion. The problem with this “wrong map” is that it suggests that people have to decide on a liberal education based on either science and facts, or on religion and moral code. This either-or thinking thus suggests that there is no cognitive possibility to spirituality. According to Zajonc, this division of thinking causes some faculty and institutions of higher education to refrain from including spirituality in higher education. Zajonc asserts that academic peer pressure serves an institutional barrier for those who want to include spirituality in higher education, stating that this either-or thinking serves as a divide. For those who see spirituality through a lens of the wrong map, “it stands like a peace treaty between warring factions defining the territory over which each party asserts control” (p. 54). As long as spiritual development and educational practices are not based on a specific faith tradition, the relationship between spirituality and higher education should not pose a problem.

Palmer (1998) also advocates for an education free of great divides. According to Palmer, whether it is acknowledged or not, spirituality is always present. It is not something that needs to be added or brought into the curriculum, but “is at the heart of every subject we teach, where it waits to be brought forth” (p. 8). In order to evoke the spiritual dimension of education, Palmer makes the following claim:

Part of what good teaching requires is that we stop thinking about our work in terms of the great divides: either facts or feelings, ‘hard-nosed’ or ‘touchy-feely,’ intellectual or spiritual, professors or priests. . . . Teaching and learning, done well, are done not by disembodied intellects but by whole persons whose minds cannot be disconnected from feeling and spirit, from heart and soul. To teach as a whole person to the whole person is not to lose one’s professionalism as a teacher but to take it to a deeper level. (p. 10)

Without institutional change in the academy, we fail to address questions of life, purpose, and direction. Either-or divisions imply that spirituality and higher education do not mix and that the facts of the disciplines cannot be related to emotions of the heart, including purpose and

meaning that students are most in search of. Zajonc (2003) argues for a reconfigured framework: “it is not only possible but in most instances highly desirable to see a *cognitive spirituality* that redraws the map they have reified. On this new map we locate spirituality on the side of knowledge and *Veritas* [Truth]” (p. 54). Once addressed, the aesthetic, moral, and spiritual dimensions of self can be included as a cognitive basis for education (Zajonc, 2003). As Zajonc (2003) notes, there is harm within the wrong map:

Neglecting the contemplative and spiritual aspects of life is equivalent to neglecting half the facts, as we make crucial decisions concerning health care, the education of our children, and the formation of economic policies that shape so much of our common life around the globe. (p. 54)

The imbalance of negating one aspect of cognition in favor of another is problematic for students and for those who interact with them.

In agreement with Zajonc (2003), Astin et al. (2011) rally for liberal learning environments that balance the interiors and exterior qualities of a person’s life. Astin et al. also found that academic peer pressures play a role in the institutional barriers that bridge the divide between spirituality and higher education. According to Astin et al.’s national study, when faculty were asked to rate the importance of goals for undergraduate education, most faculty supported an intense focus on developing students’ personal values (53%) and self-understanding (60%). Significantly fewer supported a similar focus on spiritual development (p.141).

Faculty participants also shared concerns about how their counterparts would view them. Their concerns included (a) what they would do if questions about politics or religion were asked, (b) how spirituality is viewed regarding the separation of church and state, (c) what discussions of spirituality would look like in the classroom, (d) would discussions be viewed as indoctrination of belief, (e) what experience level they need to have on topics related to

spirituality, and (f) is connecting spirituality with higher education something that only experienced faculty can do? One professor reflected:

There are many of my colleagues who would say, ‘Look, we are at a university, and what I do is math; what I do is history; and, really, that’s my competence. Moving into this other area is not my competence.’ I don’t feel [my reluctance] comes from a place of, ‘I’m not doing that,’ you know, like resentment. It comes from a place that, ‘This is not my area of expertise.’ (Astin et al., 2011, p. 141)

According to Astin et al. (2011), results indicated that faculty felt discomfort when the term “spiritual” was connected with higher education. When the term “spiritual” was replaced with terms such as meaning and purpose, the uncertainty and discomfort dissipated. As Palmer (1997) stated, the problem is that once again, we are caught in an either-or dilemma: “whipped from one side to the other, we fail to find a synthesis that might embrace both approaches” (p. 5). To move from an either-or approach requires that people view spirituality as something that is always present, is not separate, and is “truth”—a legitimate part of higher education (Palmer, 1998; Zajonc, 2003). It also requires that teaching and learning “become a legitimate topic in education and in our public dialogues on education reform” (Palmer, 2007, p. 3). According to Palmer (2007), part of the problem is that teachers make for an easy target of blame and criticize when it comes to issues of the world that society does not know how to fix. Palmer (2007) asserts:

In our rush to reform education, we have forgotten a simple truth: reform will never be achieved by renewing appropriations, restructuring schools, rewriting curricula, and revising texts if we continue to demean and dishearten the human resource called the teacher on whom so much depends. (p. 4)

If teachers can get such things right and be free from bureaucratic harassment, they will be in a position to mentor students as they address the big questions of their life.

Benefits of an examined life. Despite the various reasons why some people are uncomfortable attending to the human heart, spirituality in higher education is worth it. Society

depends on higher education to teach students academically and to help them find their position in the world; it depends on institutions to help students develop a mature psychological well-being (Astin et al., 2011). Tolliver and Tisdell (2006) state:

Making it [spirituality] visible in the classroom may be uncomfortable, and many adult educators may feel unprepared for this challenge. It is risky, in part, because as we attend to the spiritual, we are also required to engage authentically as people, not only as instructors and students. . . . The most powerful moments we have had in classes are when participants take risks and share their authentic selves and their connection to others through their own honesty and creativity as they relate course content to their lives. Perhaps it feels risky because it feels as though we also cannot control what feels so powerful. (p. 45)

Students who are spiritual believe in the sacredness of life and are likely to act with compassion, kindness, generosity, and forgiveness; they believe in the ethic of caring and have an internal commitment to values, helping others, and making the world a better place (Astin et al., 2011; Astin & Lindholm, 2011; Chickering et al. 2006; Overstreet, 2010; Tolliver and Tisdell, 2006). As Chickering et al. (2006) note, self-reflection fosters our capacity to understand others: “If we lack self-understanding—the capacity to see ourselves clearly and honestly and to understand why we feel and act as we do—then we severely limit our capacity to understand others” (p. vii).

Astin et al. (2011) found that one of the greatest benefits afforded to students who take on new meaning is that they develop higher levels of equanimity. Qualities of equanimity include feeling peace and calmness, being better prepared to channel frustration and anger in a positive way, being able to find meaning in times of hardship, and being thankful for every day and the experiences that come with it—seeing each day, the good and the bad, as a gift. Characteristics such as these help students handle life situations, and encourage contentment with life, even in times of hardship. Students, especially emerging adults, have a deep desire for self-understanding and hope for a life of common good, building and maintaining sincerity, and

discovering their own interiors (Overstreet, 2010; Parks, 2011). Astin et al. (2011) share a student perspective about the desire for self-understanding:

Since coming to college, my life [has] changed a lot. . . . Before, I was more focused on religion . . . like the visual appearance to my family, not religion in my heart. I think now I'm trying to find it for myself. For me, spirituality is about becoming more aware of how many other ideas are out there, and how other people interpret those ideas and use them in their own lives. It's become more of this kind of journey for me, in the sense of finding out what I believe and how I want to believe it, and what I feel is right for me. (Astin et al., 2011, p. 34)

When students have the opportunity to examine the interiors of their lives, it contributes to spiritual well-being and academic performance. According to Astin et al. (2011), students with high equanimity scores have increased psychological well-being and are more satisfied with the college experience. Astin (2004) shares the contradiction in this:

What is most ironic about all of this is that while many of the great literary and philosophical traditions that constitute the core of a liberal education are grounded in the maxim, 'know thyself,' the development of self-awareness receives very little attention in our schools and colleges, and almost no attention in public discourse in general or in the media in particular. (Astin, 2004, p. 36)

The benefit to spiritual development also includes the exposure to environments where students can strengthen compassion and connection and explore personal meaning to the course content, to self, to others, and to the world.

Teaching, learning, and spirituality. Providing students with opportunities to know themselves on a deeper level does not have to be separate from scholarship. Instructors can design pedagogical approaches that bridge spirituality and scholarship (Astin, 2004; Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al., 2004; Lindholm et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011, Tisdell, 2003; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006; Zajonc, 2003). Teaching, learning, and spirituality is about creating an opportunity for students to engage with the material and experience themselves within their education while becoming independent thinkers. Spirituality goes beyond the teaching of facts

and theories. When faculty see the discipline as an opportunity for students to apply the learning to their lives, teaching the whole person becomes something that is seamless; faculty do not have to jump through a set of hoops to include spirituality (Barbezat & Bush, 2013). This section discusses pedagogical approaches that can encourage spiritual development. As described in the literature, faculty create opportunity for students to attend to their *inner* selves.

The spiritual dimension of teachers. Infusing spiritual components in the curriculum is not an easy undertaking. Things to consider include addressing how to manage interactions, how to present material, and how to create safe environments that are open to different ways of knowing. According to Palmer (1998), to cultivate the spirit, teachers need to stop thinking in terms of “either-or” and start thinking in terms of “both-and.” They need to awaken to a different vision of education that includes cognitive development and matters of the heart. In Palmer’s words, to be a good teacher does not mean having to abandon who we are. Spirituality is the deepest part of our core and never leaves us. Spirituality is part of who we are as people; it lives inside us and does not abandon us for something such as a profession. According to Palmer, the spiritual side of a teacher is not separate from the self of the educator: “whoever our students may be, whatever subject we teach, ultimately we teach who we are” (p. 10). When teachers think in terms of “both-and,” they are able to engage their spirit with who they are, professionally; they are also able to include the heart and mind in education where spirituality and scholarship are connected.

Examining the soul. Spirituality in higher education is a journey for both students and faculty. Good teachers become teachers for reasons of the heart; therefore, the heart of a teacher must not be left unexamined (Palmer, 1998, 2007). One of the critical first steps for teachers who wish to awaken the spirit in higher education is for them to confront their inner self (Barbezat

and Bush, 2014; Chickering et al. 2006). This includes confronting preexisting beliefs and biases that live in the conscious and unconscious of the soul. Like other people, teachers have opinions about teaching and learning; they have opinions about how teaching and learning should look; they have opinions about how to inspire students; and they have opinions about how to foster critical thinking (just to name a few). According to Palmer (1998), “when we bring forth the spirituality of teaching and learning, we help students with life’s most meaningful questions” (p. 6). For teachers who want to evoke the spirit in higher education, Palmer (1998) asserts that teachers need to come together, not to talk about curriculum, politics, and pedagogy, but to talk about the deepest questions of teaching that include questions about educating the mind and spirit. Teachers must be willing to attend to the intellectual, including the way they *think* about teaching and learning; to the emotional, including the way they *feel* when they teach; and to the spiritual, including their heart’s longing that breathes life into love and the work they do (Palmer, 2007). Most importantly, Palmer asserts that they must be willing to know the qualities that make them *who* they are—the *self* who teaches and relates to students, the subject, and to the world. hooks (1994) suggests that learning comes easier to faculty who see that their vocation is sacred and is about teaching “in a manner that respects and cares for the soul of our students” (p.13).

Teachers have a great influence over the lives of emerging adults. Educators must be forthcoming about what drives their decisions to teach, including passions and prejudices (Parks, 2011). Teachers need to know their own perspectives as much as they need to know the content they teach. By disclosing personal convictions, the teacher demonstrates commitment to the well-being of the students and to the learning environment; additionally, the teacher is in better control of what he or she models for students (Ash & Clayton, 2004; Barbezat and Bush, 2014;

Chickering et al. 2006; Mezirow & Associates, 2000; Tolliver and Tisdell, 2006). Parks (2011) describes it best when she refers to the function of the syllabus in higher education and its influence on students' meaning making and imagination:

A syllabus functions as a professor's 'testimony,' as a 'confession of faith.' That is, in preparing a syllabus, educators declare what they believe to be of value: questions, images, insights, concepts, theories, sources, and methods of inquiry that they have found to lead toward a worthy apprehension of truth. (p. 211)

This implies that teachers must understand the relationship between personal attitudes and the work they do. They must work from the core of their inner experiences and be open about their own beliefs, orientations, and prejudices. According to Mezirow (2000), reflecting inward is not an easy task, but a necessary one:

The justification for much of what we know and believe, our values and our feelings, depends on the context—biographical, historical, cultural—in which they are embedded. We make meaning with different dimensions of awareness and understanding; in adulthood we may more clearly understand our experience when we know under what conditions an expressed idea is true or justified. In the absence of fixed truths and confronted with often rapid change in circumstances, we cannot fully trust what we know or believe. Interpretations and opinions that may have worked for us as children often do not as adults. (p. 3)

When teachers strengthen their understanding of personal beliefs and prejudices, they are afforded the gift of remembering their initial passion for teaching, the one that was placed in the heart in the first place (Palmer, 1998). According to Palmer, a good teacher understands that teaching goes beyond the discipline. Equally important is knowing students and the inner self of the teacher. As Palmer (1994) stated, educators who are “more grounded in their own selfhood, [are] more at home in their own lives, [and] less likely to burn out and more likely to flourish” (p. 11).

Responsibility and role of the teacher. When teachers encourage students to look inwards, students become more aware of self. This coming together of the spirit and the

academic poses great responsibility for the teacher. When teachers ask students to attend to the introspective, they need to understand how to manage such interactions and have an appropriate role in the lives of students (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). One of the greatest responsibilities for teachers to understand is that educational practice enlightened by spirituality does not include material that is presented through lenses of indoctrination or dogma. Material should always be presented as an *invitation* to participate in the spirit of inquiry and discovery, not in the spirit of faith or appropriation of belief (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Palmer, 1998; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006). This approach helps students feel less resistant to including spirituality in the classroom and helps to create an environment that is fostered with trust and respect. Additionally, presenting material as an invitation to participate honors students' personal religious faiths, including secular environments and beliefs. This is supported by Palmer (1998) as he asserts that "when we raise such questions in the context of safe space and trustworthy relationships, the soul can speak its truth—and people can hear that truth in themselves and in one another with transforming effect" (p. 6).

To avoid the ideologies of indoctrination, teachers must continuously ask themselves about the intentions of implementation. This helps maintain a balance of trust and respect between teacher and student, encouraging respect in their thoughts and beliefs (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). In addition, Barbezat & Bush (2014) recommend that teachers should be clear in their intentions when presenting material. This helps teachers not find themselves in uncomfortable positions with students. Embedding spiritual components into the course benefits student development, but the difficulty occurs when students share private aspects of their lives. This is possible because spirituality is about a journey to wholeness (Tisdell, 2003). When the teacher is intentional about the pedagogical purposes for implementing spirituality and they take the time

to understand their role in relation to the life of the student, it is easier for teachers to identify when students are sharing too much of themselves; thus, they can communicate to students what the boundaries are (Barbezat & Bush, 2014).

One way for teachers to understand the purpose of implementation is for them to write a teaching philosophy. This recommendation ties to research by Tolliver and Tisdell (2006):

As educators, we must always be aware of the power differentials between ourselves and the learners in our classrooms. When our practice is informed by our authenticity and fullness of being that includes the spiritual, even if the word [spirituality] is never mentioned, we invite learners to participate in the learning process at their own level of desire or comfort, without expectations that they will share our perspectives and passions. (p. 45)

Gutek (2009) introduces philosophy as it applies to the field of education. Philosophy, as Gutek describes it, provides contemplation, yielding overall and profound reflection on prominent dichotomies, such as inquiries about truth, goodness, righteousness, and beauty. When educators engage in philosophical reflection, they think deeply about the meaning of the world and the implications for schools and teaching, particularly for how teachers relate to students (Gutek, 2009). A philosophy of education can serve as a conceptual framework for how teachers examine episodes in teaching and learning, and for what they believe is true and valued. The process for developing a personal philosophy of education is influenced by different experiences: (a) classroom experiences can shape philosophies that guide practice; (b) personal experiences can influence ideas about teaching and learning; (c) philosophies, ideologies, and theories can guide beliefs and practice; and (d) peers can influence teachers to rethink their philosophy (Gutek, 2009).

Reflecting on education requires time and experience. For novices, finding time to examine and reflect on the incalculable significance, or possible metaphysical development and

benefits arising from being a teacher, can be difficult. Often teachers react to immediate demands from teaching, from students, and from the organization (Gutek, 2009).

Blending theory and practice, teaching has both a reflective and an active dimension. It has effects that transcend the immediate instructional episodes of the classroom. The way in which teachers relate to their students depends of their conception of human nature. Instruction is about something; it is about knowledge. One's view of reality shapes one's beliefs about knowledge. When the teacher begins to reflect on the conception of reality, of human nature, and of society, he or she is philosophizing about education. In its most general terms, philosophy is the human being's attempt to think speculatively, reflectively, and systematically about the universe and the human relationship to that universe. (Gutek, 2009, p. 3)

Philosophy of education, as it applies to spirituality, can be tied to metaphysics.

According to Gutek (2009) metaphysics relates to educational practice and theory. Metaphysics, the study of the ultimate environment, raises our most important questions about what is considered genuinely real and what is not (Gutek, 2009). For example, metaphysical inquiries question the truth or actuality of a spiritual realm, the origin of the universe and the purpose of our very existence. The concepts of reality relate to the discipline and experiences with curriculum and society, and to aspects of reality to students (Gutek, 2009).

Epistemology, axiology, and logic also apply to the philosophy of education.

Epistemology, or the study and focus on the nature of human knowledge, is of grave significance for educators. Reflection in this area raises questions about how we come to know what we know—is truth inductive or subjective and personal? Epistemology relates to teaching and learning through cognitive process. Idealists recall “ideas that are present latently in the mind”; realists build concepts from “the sensations we have of objects in our environment”; and pragmatists “create knowledge by interacting with our environment in problem-solving episodes” (Gutek, 2009, p. 4).

Axiology is concerned with moral behaviors and value theory. “Whereas metaphysics attempts to describe the nature of ultimate reality,” axiology refers to ethics and aesthetics (Gutek, 2009, p. 5). In general, people make decisions toward moral values and conduct; as stated in Gutek (2009), we are all influenced by other people who shape our thinking. This results in “you should” statements. Logic, a subdivision of philosophy, deals with the rules of thinking (Gutek, 2009). As it relates to the field of education, logic is concerned with “how we organize and sequence our thinking and frame our arguments according to a coherent pattern, that is, how we organize our supporting evidence to make a case for or to explain something” (Gutek, 2009, p. 5). Deductive and inductive logic are two major patterns of logic. “In deductive logic, or deduction, reasoning moves from general statements or principles to specific cases or examples. . . . inductive logic, or induction, moves from specific instances, cases, or situations to a larger generalization that includes or encompasses them” (Gutek, 2009, p. 6). To develop a philosophy of education, it is valuable for teachers to reflect on their methods of instruction to the different philosophies of education.

Reflection can help teachers discover the elements of philosophy, theory, and methodology that are most aligned with the concept of self. This makes it easier for teachers to remember what they believe and feel in their heart. Questions of reflection can include: What goals and objectives are most important for student learning? What are students expected to learn? What are the educational philosophies that influence teaching approaches? What beliefs do teachers have about interactions with students inside and outside of the classroom? How do teachers feel about building relationships with students and other professionals? And what is the purpose of teaching and learning? This type of questioning can help teachers figure out *if* or *how* spirituality and the educational environment fit together to foster multiple ways of knowing.

Spirituality and the disciplines. Spiritual components can be incorporated in a variety of disciplines, regardless of the institution's governance structure. According to Palmer (1994), teachers can evoke the spiritual dimensions in education by recognizing that spirituality is always present: "Spiritual questions, rightly understood, are embedded in every discipline, from health to history, physics to psychology, entomology to English" (p. 8). They are naturally included when this is realized.

To encourage the merging of spirituality and scholarship, it is necessary to examine some examples of pedagogical approaches and frameworks. For instance, Lindholm et al. (2011) describe teaching examples that demonstrate the application of spirituality in post-secondary settings conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). The HERI team conducted a national Spirituality Project (2005) aimed at ascertaining methods faculty utilized to incorporate spirituality into the classrooms (Lindholm et al., 2011). Faculty were invited to submit syllabi comprising spiritual practices (Lindholm et al., 2011), and from the 39 submissions, three themes were identified:

1. Spirituality as a means of enhancing disciplines.
2. Spirituality as a new paradigmatic lens for everyday life.
3. Spirituality as a pedagogy.

The analysis suggests that because spirituality is demonstrated in everyday experience, spirituality can be included in a variety of disciplines. When spirituality complements course content, students explore the human spirit and the subject. Faculty included in their study used pedagogical techniques such as reflection, journal writing, and meditation to support students in their spiritual development.

The first example is from an anthropology course where students were asked to explore realities of being in the world. Students were introduced to readings and asked to think about the divisions between nature and cultural diversity and how it contrasts with modern ways of thinking. The syllabus stated that each class started with silent contemplation, inviting students to be present in the moment, transitioning from busy schedules to being present in an open, safe environment of emotion and intellect that is free of judgment (retrieved from http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/2/syllabi/hockheimer%0b_ithaca.pdf). Some of the assignments introduced students to indigenous people and certain kinds of plants.

In another anthropology class, students participated in a real-world hospice volunteer situation. Students were assigned to an individual in hospice and had to make weekly visits, and compare the social, spiritual, and psychosocial roles that rituals play in the living and the dead. Students enhanced their spiritual development by reflecting on the quality of life, the burdens of death, and the cultural attitudes towards them (retrieved from http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/2/syllabi/Ronald_Barrett_Stanford.pdf). The HERI project offers numerous syllabi examples; three more will be referenced in this section of the literature review.

Spirituality was also included in a communications class where students explored the relationship between mass media, people, society, and culture. The course invited students to examine the human spirit and how it motivates people to act, looking at the ways that communications hinders or facilitate the human spirit. A goal of the class was to get students thinking about the spiritual dimensions of self and the work they do as communication practitioners (retrieved from http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/2/syllabi/hockheimer_ithaca.pdf). In a leadership course, students focused on leadership activities, looking at how authentic leadership comes from within—the same place where the spirit lives. Teachings

included learning about what is done in leadership and how it is guided by a person's unique personality, talents, and deepest beliefs and cherished values. Students in the course applied theoretical understandings to the spiritual journey they were experiencing in their learning (retrieved from http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/2/syllabi/Mark_Peters_USD.pdf).

In the last example, taken from a nursing class, students were asked to compare conventional Western biomedicine with philosophical approaches to understanding human health. Readings included exploring how political, cultural, and environmental issues influenced health care as a larger system and on an individual basis. In the syllabus, the classroom environment was described as a “teaching-learning” environment where both students and the teacher had equal platforms for contributing knowledge. Diversity, collegiality, and academic freedom were also stated as being valued—students were encouraged to nurture their curiosity, with the respect of honoring different perspectives (retrieved from http://spirituality.ucla.edu/docs/newsletters/2/syllabi/MA_Bright_UMass.pdf).

Examples collected from the HERI Spirituality Project (Lindholm, et al. 2011) indicate that spirituality does not have to be separate from scholarship. Regardless of the discipline, students can attend to the mind and spirit.

Course readings. According to Chickering, et al. (2006) and Taylor (2006), course readings help students develop personal and social awareness. When students are encouraged to increase their spiritual growth by reading the stories and work of others, they are able to discover multiple meanings in their perspectives. The context changes from having a single meaning to having multiple meanings: “in essence, the text becomes an encounter with a third person in a classroom dialogue, where the learners discuss their own perspective in relationship to the narrative” (Taylor, 2006, p. 94). To understand this better, this section starts with examples from

Chickering, et al. (2006). They describe how course readings can serve as an anchor for encouraging the spiritual growth of students. The approaches encourage authenticity, spirituality, and meaning and if implemented well, help students connect their personal emotions to the course content.

According to Chickering et al. (2006), faculty who teach in the areas of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts can include readings and discussions that are centered on past literature. In doing so, students can explore works that express what it means to be human. This includes experiences of life and death and experiences of happiness or emotional suffering. By including literature of different eras and genres, students can reflect on their own experiences and develop new ideas about relationships, lifestyles, and values. The approach of presenting from the discipline helps the student engage spirituality in the classroom with minimal risk. Professors can also include readings based on analysis of historical events. By looking at moral and ethical dilemmas that have taken place in the past, students can reflect on social dilemmas that occur in the world they know. According to Chickering et al. (2006), this helps inform personal judgments and perspectives that students are experiencing.

Spirituality also aligns with the study of anthropology. Within this discipline, students can engage in readings that discuss belief systems, human characteristics, social organizations, and behavioral values and norms of people from different cultures. Chickering et al. (2006) state that the content incorporates the concept of metathought. This includes “how we think and where our behavioral habits and mental models come from” (p. 115). This encourages “the kind of critical self-reflection that can deepen authenticity and strengthen spiritual growth” (p. 115).

In addition, conceptual frameworks in the areas of psychology, social psychology, and sociology are also grounded in human development. For faculty who teach in these areas,

students can explore realms of family and community, lifestyle choices, and diverse ways of thinking. This helps students address their own purposes and meaning making, and issues of identity and integrity (Chickering et al., 2006).

In addition, Chickering et al. (2006) shares pedagogical approaches that can be used in the Schools of Business and Education. For students who are studying business, professors can include questions of economics. For example, they can ask students to learn how the economy affects society and present conflict. Questions can include dialogue spanning economic, governmental, environmental, societal, developmental and other interconnected and interrelated issues, including people who become affected by these issues. Business ideologies “interact with the individualistic, competitive, and materialistic orientations on which business depends” (p. 115). Approaches can help students recognize their responsibility to community and human welfare. This also applies to students who study in the field of education. Students can explore dimensions that foster intellectual and emotional development and learn how to “help others learn to cope with serious personal and social issues” (p. 115).

Regardless of the discipline, there is opportunity to foster spirituality and enhance authenticity. As stated in Chickering et al. (2006), when the discipline is connected to components of spirituality students can encounter their own stereotypes and discover their own strengths and weaknesses. Tisdell (2003) and Tyler (2006) also mention that, when course material includes the symbolic, imaginative, and cognitive dimensions of learning, it can help foster students’ affective experiences. It does not matter what the discipline is, the spirit is ultimately about meaning making (Palmer, 1997; Tisdell, 2003). It is always present in self, including in learning environments.

Integrating content and pedagogy. Another method of instruction for making the connection between spirituality and scholarship is to use learner-oriented approaches. As cited in Chickering et al. (2006), teachers from Wellesley College used these approaches to help students make connections between the spirit and the academic. For example, a professor in the mathematics department shared his strategy for designing pedagogy that helps students “discover something new in their own inner-landscape” (p. 119). Integrating content and pedagogy that helps students “connect with their own ‘inner-landscape’” (p. 119) was described in the following steps:

1. Make sure she is choosing a topic she really wants to learn about.
2. Make sure the problem is sufficiently large and difficult so as to challenge her imagination and provide widespread exploration, but also sufficiently circumscribed so that she can make progress.
3. Provide readings and exercises that supply background knowledge of the subject.
4. Allow time to be playful and to explore, to get stuck and get frustrated.
5. Meet regularly to answer questions and discuss the problem.
6. In these meetings, continually plant seeds related to the overall problem. (p. 119)

While some educators advocate for a pedagogy that is learner-oriented, according to Palmer (1997, 1998, 2007), to evoke the spirit in education, teachers must help students connect the “big story,” told by the discipline, and the “little story,” told by the learner’s life. In this sense, the subject cannot be disconnected from the learner, and the environment must be one that fosters a safe space of trustworthiness and community—one that allows the learner to speak from truth. To do this, teaching and learning require using a subject-centered pedagogy—one that does not place the teacher at the center of teaching nor the student at the center of learning; rather, teachers and students both become embodied in a learning community where all people are present to the truth of the subject. As Palmer (1997) asserts:

When education is subject centered, the teacher’s central task is to give the great thing an independent voice—a capacity to speak its truth quite apart from the teacher’s voice and in terms that students can hear and understand. When the great thing speaks for itself,

teachers and students are more likely to come into a genuine leaning community, a community that does not collapse into the egos of the students or teacher but knows itself accountable to the subject at its core. (p. 6)

While the incorporation of spirituality into the curriculum may be a discomfort for some, Palmer (1997) acknowledges that, yes indeed, this can be difficult since teachers are trained to do the opposite. Many are trained to be the masters of their subjects and dispense as many facts as possible to students. Engaging in a subject-centered pedagogy, however, does not harm or ignore students; rather, “it honors one of the most vital needs our students have: to be introduced to a world larger than their own experiences and egos, a world that expands their personal boundaries and enlarges their sense of community” (p. 6).

Tisdell (2003) also describes pedagogical approaches that can be used to engage the spiritual dimensions of students’ lives. Tisdell asserts that although spirituality is manifested in different ways, rarely does she use the term spirituality in her teachings. For Tisdell, pedagogical approaches include teaching in ways that are culturally and spiritually relevant to adult students. In her teachings she includes the cognitive, symbolic, and affective domains of learning by asking students to connect their personal histories and cultural backgrounds with the content. To help students create meaning, Tisdell describes that she creates environments where students can bring “their whole selves into the learning environment” (p. 42). These approaches help students “create meaning through their cultural, symbolic, and spiritual experience, as well as through the cognitive” (p. 42).

In a different article, Tolliver and Tisdell (2006) share examples of how they help students connect spirituality, holistic development, and the curriculum to the learning experience. By incorporating symbols such as earth, wind, fire, and water with the curriculum, they “help learners access other forms of information that are not necessarily at the level of conscious

awareness” (p. 44). When it comes to facilitating learning that explores spirituality, Tolliver and Tisdell assert the following:

Learning takes place in the context of our life experiences in the world, and these symbols [earth, wind, fire, and water] can serve as a reminder of that. For some people, this sense of symbol can implicitly take learning to what the heart of spirituality is about: the interconnectedness of all things and a sense of knowing through imagination that some connect with creativity and spirituality. (p. 43)

In addition, they include pedagogical approaches of rhythm activities such as using music, sound, dance, and movement to help students express the meaning they have created about the world. These approaches “help learners access other forms of information that are not necessarily at the level of conscious awareness. They often allow us to connect with the aesthetic energies that facilitate learning” (p. 44). Self-reflective practices are also used in the classroom. These practices provide students with opportunity to share the joys and difficulties of their learning experience.

Creating a classroom environment that fosters spirituality. The spiritual dimension of learning requires that faculty move beyond traditional cognitive orientations of learning to one that invites students to include the affective (Taylor, 2006; Tisdell, 2003; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006; Parks, 2011). This includes creating an environment that fosters exploration and exhibits compassion and courtesy. Faculty must create an environment that honors the teacher, the student, and the subject; honoring diversity, multiple ways of knowing, and honoring the spirit of the student (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Taylor, 2006; Tisdell, 2003).

When including the spiritual with other disciplines, the goal is to maintain a healthy environment that honors the whole person. This includes a commitment from faculty to design lessons that refrain from asking students to adopt a particular belief. Students should have the opportunity to experience for themselves what they believe in and process their own inner

experiences. Barbezat and Bush (2014) state that “there are numerous ways to engage the spiritual dimension in the higher education classroom that have the potential to facilitate transformative learning without imposing a religious or spiritual agenda” (p. 40). Even when including spiritual components into the classroom environment, faculty do not need to mention the word spirituality (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Tisdell, 2003). If the environment supports students’ and is built on a platform of trust and respect, healthy relationships will be maintained (Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006).

Additionally, faculty should not invalidate the importance of academic knowledge and career preparation just because they are using approaches that connect spirituality with the disciplines. According to Barbezat and Bush (2014), students need a balanced learning environment that challenges students to think critically about the content with the freedom to explore the questions of life. Together, this balance helps students examine their life and work toward their desired vocation.

Contemplative methods of inquiry. Zajonc (2006) maintains that, in order to maintain peace in the world, we must first maintain peace within ourselves. Young students must learn to love “which is also the task of learning to live in true peace and harmony with others and with nature” (p. 1742). According to Zajonc (2006), higher education should prepare students in the areas of critical reasoning and scientific and quantitative analysis, but also include practices of contemplative inquiry. Zajonc (2006) argues that institutions of higher education should balance intellectual accomplishments with issues that include social justice, care for the environment, and peace education. He refers to this as “intimacy and participation—that is, an epistemology of love—that extends scientific and scholarly inquiry in ways that need not be viewed as problematic to academic teaching or to our research disciplines” (p. 1744). An epistemology of

love, as described by Zajonc (2013), is one that embodies practices such as respect, gentleness, intimacy, vulnerability, participation, transformation, and insight. To explore the relationship between knowledge, love, and contemplation, people must explore “knowledge, (which we excel at) and love, (which we neglect)” (p. 1743). This includes advocating for an education free of great divides, including a re-imagination of knowing that gives practices such as contemplative pedagogies a place in education (Zajonc, 2013). Zajonc (2013) asserts that:

Contemplative practices can become contemplative inquiry, which *is* the practice of an epistemology of love. Such contemplative inquiry not only yields insight (*veritas*) but also transforms the knower through his or her intimate (one could say loving) participation in the subject of one’s contemplative attention. (p. 1744)

Characteristics of spirituality are enhanced by educational practices such as contemplative pedagogy that encourage students to explore their lives, the lives of others, and the beauties of the world. Contemplative inquiries balance critical thinking and reasoning with the reflective, affective, and ethical capabilities of students.

Gifts of contemplation. Contemplative practices meet the vision of many universities, which include a focus on teaching students how to think (Barbezat & Bush, 2014).

Contemplative practices support the attentive, emotional, and cognitive development of students, increasing diversity in students’ knowledge, enhancing cognition, and encouraging students to develop compassionate and empathetic relationships (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Zajonc, 2013).

According to Zajonc (2006), there is a disconnection that people feel when identifying with others and with the natural world that surrounds us. This separation hinders us in the search for identity with other people, groups, and nature (Zajonc, 2006). Contemplative practices help with this. They help students find meaning and purpose in the work they do and afford students with opportunity to make connections between learning and relevant societal issues. To include

contemplative practices in higher education, there must be intentional decisions to do so. Zajonc (2003) asserts this:

Healthy human relationships do not happen automatically; each of us must cultivate them intentionally. Nothing in this realm is given for free. The same logic holds true for our relationships to the environment. . . . Our relationship to nature must likewise be intentional. (p. 1745)

Contemplation helps students develop empathetic relationships and think of others instead of thinking in isolation. Parks (2011) describes this as an empathetic bond with others. When emerging adults are initiated into the power of contemplation, they engage in dialogue with “otherness” (p. 190). Encounters with “otherness” transform questions and unexamined assumptions, fostering the process of imagination, human development, learning, and meaning-making. Contemplation, coupled with critical and connective thought, and with transformative dialogue with otherness, is one of the greatest gifts of a mentoring environment (Parks, 2011). Together, they yield “*a worthy dream*” which includes “a relationship between self and world that recognizes the reality and needs of the world and honors the authentic potential of the emerging adult in practical and purposeful terms, yielding a sense of meaningful aspiration” (Parks, 2011, p. 190).

Contemplative practices also promote compassion, which is the ability to suffer with others (Parks, 2011). When emerging adults focus on activities such as gratitude and loving kindness, they are prepared to engage in encounters with others and create relationships where an “empathetic bond is established that transcends *us* and *them*, creating a new *we*” (Parks, 2011, p. 181). Practices that cultivate compassion are extremely important, because each student brings with them their own experiences and approaches to figuring out life. When students can increase emotional awareness for self and others, they are able to make decisions that consider the feelings and sufferings of others; they become the kinds of “ethical actors” with basic human

values that society is most in need of (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Palmer 1998). Parks (2011)

describes compassion and the qualities it affords us:

An empathetic bond arises from recognizing that the other suffers in the same way as we, having the same capacity for hope, longing, love, joy, and pain. These are the undergirding features of our humanity that link us with the vast commonwealth of being. The ability to imagine the experience of the other by drawing on our own well of experience and blending it with the particular features of the other's experience makes it possible to see through another's eyes, to feel through another's heart, to know something of another's understanding. What one knows of another's experience is always partial. But one of the most significant features of the human adventure is the capacity to take the perspective of another and to be compelled thereby to recompose one's own perspective. (p. 182)

According to Parks (2011), contemplative traditions are “integral to the intellectual life, and to the formation of trustworthy meaning—the life of faith (p. 148). For students to benefit from contemplation, answer big questions of life, and activate the re-imagination of meaning and purpose, Parks describes the need for students to engage in contemplation: “The place of pause in the process of imagination is the place where one learns both to endure and to resolve the apparently irreconcilable tension that constitute life's biggest questions” (p. 189). The absence of contemplative practices is problematic to strengthening the imagination of meaning, purpose, and faith, especially at a time where emerging adults are analyzing self and world, and imagining possibilities. Contemplation is an element that helps emerging adults come to new ways of living in the world as they form and reform knowledge, meaning, and faith. Described as the second phase in the recomposing of imagination, “pause” is the place where emerging adults can deal with conflicting circumstances that may be confusing, disturbing, difficult to deal with, or even spurred from having a sense of wonder. Good teaching and leadership embodies the contemplative practices; this is when real questions of the mind and heart are evoked (Parks, 2011).

The gifts of contemplation reside in the practices that increase students' attentive capacity, deepen understanding of course material, and enrich relationships with self, others, and the world (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). Exercises allow students to practice compassion for one another and understand that, although people are diverse in their perspectives, human beings are similar, longing for love, compassion, and happiness, but also experiencing sorrow, pain, and hurt. Contemplative practices enhance spirituality, deepen care, and help students make connections with others (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). "It is critical to remember the simple value and beauty of life as it is, not as it is used. The simple awareness cultivated by contemplative practices can bring us back in touch with this beauty, enriching our interactions with others" (Barbezat & Bush, 2014, p. 93).

Contemplative pedagogy. According to Astin et al. (2011), contemplative practices "are among the most powerful tools at our disposal for enhancing students' spiritual development" (p. 148). They can be woven into curricula across disciplines and compliment course material. They are not another subject of study. Contemplation emerges from the inner-self of the student which is part of who we teach and who we learn from (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Chickering, et al. 2011; Palmer in Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Parks, 2011). Contemplative pedagogy supports the development of "student attention, emotional balance, empathetic connection, compassion and altruistic behavior" (Zajonc, 2013, p. 83). These approaches help students examine the things that truly matter to them and help them explore meaning and purpose (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Parks, 2011). They improve health and psychological well-being and foster awareness of emotions and reactions.

There are different ways to use contemplative practices in the classroom. Although the types are varied, what brings them together is a focus on personal awareness that leads to insight (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). They include the following:

1. Meditation exercises that help increase focus and awareness.
2. Contemplation and introspection exercises that deepen students' understanding of the material.
3. Compassion and connection to others that deepen students' sense of morality and spirituality.
4. Contemplative inquiry that helps students find personal meaning and fosters creativity and insight.

One example of contemplative pedagogy is reflection. As Chickering et al. (2006) assert, reflection and contemplation are the process for meaning making and are integral components to the development of personal authenticity:

Without reflection, whatever new experiences we have, whatever new information and concepts we encounter in lectures and text, end up like the residue from food we don't metabolize. It passes through us and may be excreted for a quiz or exam, but it does not nourish learning that lasts. (p. 143)

There are several benefits for including reflective writing assignments in the pedagogy. For example: (a) when students write reflection papers, they internalize material and make connections to course readings; (b) reflective practices prepare students to express ideas and evaluate experiences; (c) reflective practices validate students' experiences and expand their understanding of self; and (d) reflective assignments deepen students' understanding of the material before they move to the next assignment (Barbezat & Bush, 2014.)

In Barbezat and Bush (2014), a professor shares how she designed a practice called "here and now," a writing assignment where students "just write" about the experiences that were

happening in the here and now. Students wrote about what they were seeing, feeling, touching, and thinking; this encouraged them to pay attention, without judgment, to what they knew in the moment. These contemplative practices helped students gain confidence in their writing, trusting that their thoughts were important; it also helped students improve grammar and structure.

Other forms of contemplative pedagogy include stillness and movement practices. The practice of mindfulness, for example, nourishes mental stability and awareness. According to Zajonc (2013), it is a common practice used in the classroom, partially because students are somewhat familiar with it, and thus, willing to using it within the classroom setting. Through mindfulness activities, students learn to focus their attention on something such as breath. As their mind wanders, students learn to set aside distracting thoughts and return their attention to breath. The practice helps students experience emotion and become present to what is going on. In addition, mindfulness improves concentration and problem-solving skills (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Zajonc, 2013).

Contemplative practices require time. It is the slowing down and moment to pause that helps emerging adults with the formation of meaning making (Parks, 2011). Despite the approach, contemplative pedagogy “deepens experience through repeated engagement and . . . leads students to gradually foster those capacities for insight that will aid them in the true understanding of the content of their studies and perhaps even assist in the precious moment of discovery” (Zajonc, 2013, p. 90). They teach people to think in different ways, and allow students the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the content, of self, and of others. Students do this by discovering themselves within the material, pausing for contemplation, and learning from multiple perspectives. As Barbezat and Bush (2014) state: “People must have the capacity to hold alternative possibilities along with the ability to switch their attention between

them” (p. 13). Used in higher education, contemplative practices relate to introspection and reflection, and help students be observant and gain insight.

Encouraging contemplation. According to Barbezat and Bush (2014), teachers need to consider three things when implementing contemplation. First, teachers need to know their role. Contemplative practices should be introduced as an invitation to participate; they do not include forms of indoctrination. Teachers hold a powerful connection to students’ lives. To foster a relationship of respect and openness that supports students in their spiritual journey, students need to experience their own inner processes. The practices should be free from suggestion to follow particular beliefs, and students should be encouraged, with freedom to have their own beliefs and experiences (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Palmer, 1998; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006). To avoid imposition, Barbezat and Bush (2014) make the following suggestions:

1. Teachers should construct their own practices and avoid adopting or even role-playing practices of a particular religious view.
2. When using contemplative practices in the classroom, teachers should be aware of the languages they use. Vernaculars that imply particular religious worldviews should be avoided.
3. Teachers should encourage students to use their own language to express their experiences. The environment should support respectful interactions.
4. Contemplative pedagogy should include practices from a variety of backgrounds so that students do not perceive an underlying bias.

Second, when encouraging contemplative practices, teachers need to practice what they preach and live lives where contemplation is valued. Students can recognize when teachers are not committed to fostering their own self-development. This discernment may result in students

being less responsive to contemplative practices that engage the heart and the mind (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Palmer, 2007). Students need to witness humility, calmness, and clarity—all of which are integral to contemplative awareness. This is emphasized in the following quote: “We can encourage students to strengthen their attention, sustain their commitment, cultivate equanimity and openness, realize insights, and appreciate interconnection only if we are on that path of awakening ourselves” (Barbezat & Bush, 2014, p. 91).

Third, before teachers implement contemplative approaches in the curriculum, they must familiarize themselves with the practices and make decisions for how they will be used. This begins with the question of why. Why are contemplative practices being used in the curriculum? When teachers have a clear purpose, it helps students move towards a goal and helps the teacher understand how the practices can affect learning. If the purpose is unclear to the teacher, it will be unclear to the students. Material should be presented at a time when students are open to learning.

Additionally, teachers need to create environments where students feel comfortable and respected (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). This is a large part of contemplation and especially important for practices that include discussion. Students need to feel that their thoughts are valued. Discussions should emerge in ways that are original and surprising and allow for conversations to include emotions such as anxiety, impatience, tension, or playfulness (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). When teachers always have the “right answer,” dialogue becomes stifled and the potential for students to share diverse perspectives is potentially silenced. Contemplative practices require flexibility and the ability to let go of preconceived outcomes. Teachers must demonstrate an appreciation for the pause in learning and honor the constant changing nature of ideas. If teachers are unfamiliar with the practices it will be difficult to guide students when they

encounter difficulties and lack of motivation (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). Preparation is required when implementing contemplative practices.

Transformative practice. The experiences students face often shape who they are. Sometimes the experiences impact students in ways that causes a paradigm shift, fundamentally changing their approach and underlying assumptions, and changing their way of thinking. This critical mode of meaning making is a component of transformational learning. According to Mezirow & Associates (2000), a transformative process includes “becoming aware of one’s own assumptions and expectations and those of others and assessing their relevance for making an interpretation” (p. 4). Tolliver and Tisdell (2006) make the connection between spirituality and transformative practices: like spirituality, “transformative learning creates a more expansive understanding of the world regarding how one sees and experiences both others and one’s self” (p. 37). As described by Mezirow & Associates (2000), transformational learning focuses “on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others” (p. 8). The process connects to the experience of decision making. Though teachers cannot be certain that students will undergo transformation, designing lessons where students experience something as well as learn something, can result in transformation (Mezirow & Associates, 2011).

Teaching and learning for change. While teaching and learning for change can be viewed as having potential for growth in students and educators, it can present challenges, particularly in transformative learning environments (Taylor 2006). The role of the transformative educator is significant and requires a great amount of self-awareness. Taylor notes that, in order to help the student transform, teachers must be willing to undergo transformation—requiring the educator to reflect and gain a deeper awareness of frames of

reference that shape their practice and ways of knowing. The educator must be open to the unexpected. A person cannot predict when a transformation will occur; an educator may enter a situation that may impact the view of teaching, learning, and life. According to Taylor, when “educators develop a greater sense of self (both personal and cultural), an appreciation of the spiritual, and a recognition of the ethical dimensions associated with fostering transformative learning” (p. 92) develop as a more authentic teaching practice. Exploring for a greater self-awareness and awareness of others help shape ways of knowing, bringing an openness and spiritual dimension to the authenticity and acceptance of teaching self and others (Fowler, 1991; Taylor, 2006; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006). Taylor suggests the need to include a greater clarity and understanding concerning the responsibilities of the learner when engaging in a transformative classroom.

Ettling (2006), an educator, raises questions about ethics as it relates to teaching in a transformational learning environment, including interactions between students and educators. Recalling an experience in a graduate level course, Ettling remembers how theory provoked a course redesign of expectations, norms, and methodologies. Ettling states that, when including “transformative learning theory-in-practice, in a matter of minutes, we had the most heated and, I believe, most productive discussion of the semester” (p. 59). The experience, as Ettling recalls, consisted of moments of both insight and discomfort:

I wanted to push this group to embark on the journey of change. I felt inclined to use my persuasive power, through gentle insistence, to engage in experiment. However, I did not. I was experiencing an ethical dilemma. On one hand, these are mature, adult learners whom I believe have the right to organize their educational experiences. On the other hand, will they, without pressure, test the possibilities for new habits of the mind? (Ettling, 2006, p. 59)

Ettling (2006) states that teaching for the potential for transformative change requires attention and integrity from the educator. The educational experience, as Ettling puts it, is “never

value neutral”; she reiterates that the “position, perspective, and power” associated with, and attributed to, a teacher is ever-present in a learning environment (p. 60). Thus, “transformative learning,” or a profound fundamental shift in one’s awareness and “way of being” in life, assumes a genuine mindfulness based on values (p. 65). Accompanying the expectations of teaching for potential change are ongoing learning and critical reflective practices that challenge educators to rethink personal ethics, as they relate to philosophies or sets of beliefs and to an environment of learners (Ettling, 2006). Ettling recommends that educators who wish to experiment with transformational learning experiences in the classroom give greater attention to enduring observations and analyses of suitable methods and the effects of these on both teacher and student. A teacher’s position in/to the world, in/to the curriculum, and to the students must be explored. To develop in a space of transformational learning, there must be ongoing reflection of personal and communal awareness with attention given to the “voiced and unvoiced in the educational context” (Ettling, 2006, p. 65).

Relating to the possibility for ethical dilemmas as they relate to the classroom setting, Taylor, Tisdell, and Hanley (2000) discuss how positionality shapes learning. Taylor et al. assert the position that adult educators interrelate in the course curriculum and theoretical frames of practice. Furthermore, Taylor et al. maintain that adult educators, naturally representing diverse sociocultural backgrounds, are inclined to apply theoretical frames in various ways. Thus, particular personal perspectives shape the way that students learn, how knowledge is constructed, and what knowledge is included (Taylor, et al., 2000). Similar to Palmer (1998) and Parks (2011), the self of the educator is always reflected in the classroom environment. Deep philosophical paradigms of the educator inform interactions with the students and with the topic (Taylor et al., 2000). Students, likewise, bring their positionality and voice to the environment.

As stated by Taylor et al., positionality from both the educator and the student creates an environment of emotional and intellectual curiosity. Approaching the issue of positionality where differences can flourish means “taking an active role at addressing the power disparities that exist between and among the students and faculty by establishing ground rules early on, including often marginalized voices about the topic under discussion” (Taylor et al., 2000, p. 4).

In response to the challenge of emotion in the classroom, Tisdell lays the groundwork for guiding her students to recognize the following: first, “the personal is always a partial view of an experience and never complete”; second, the “personal voice of experience should be interpreted only within the boundaries of that experience”; and third, “the personal is only a guiding point, not an ending; instead it must be problematized and connected to the broader social, political, and historical context of which [it] originates” (Taylor et al., 2000, p. 5). Because the positionality of the educator and students affect how students relate to the course content and to one another, Taylor et al. (2000) believe that education, with the intention of educating for critical consciousness, should lay the groundwork for students to value insights from both theory and practice. Additionally, the complexity of culture should be addressed, introducing different ways of knowing and encouraging reflections on personal perspectives, to facilitate an environment that provokes the strengths and weaknesses of change (Taylor et al., 2000).

Community—A Sense of Connectedness

Students entering the professional world grapple with issues comprising self-confidence, and personal and professional goals. Parks (2011) shares how mentoring relationships and mentoring environments extend invitation to critical thought and meaning making. According to Parks, emerging adults are living in a preoccupied, uninterested, and exploited culture. The dreams that they have do not always match their potential. In the company of good mentors and

mentoring communities, emerging adults are afforded gifts that help navigate them through the complexity of life. The five key gifts include: “*recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration*—[presented] in ways that are *accountable* to the life of the emerging adult” (p. 167). According to Parks’ research, the mentoring relationship takes place between “mentor” and “protégé.” In the subsequent sections the word protégé is intertwined with the word student to describe the teacher student relationship.

The relationship between teachers and their students. According to Parks (2011), emerging adulthood is a time where meaning making takes place. Students, in this sense, have big questions: Who can I trust? Who can I give my heart to? Who has authority in my life? Who can I turn to? Parks speaks about big questions such as these, which are at the core of meaning, purpose, and faith. The way that a person responds to these types of questions in large has to do with the authority figures who influence their decisions and perceptions. The way we make meaning is often taught by people outside of self (Fowler, 1981; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003). Mentoring communities and mentors have the potential to create interconnectedness and belonging for emerging adults (Parks, 2011).

Spiritual mentoring. Facilitating students’ spiritual development includes helping students make connections between their lives, the lives of others, and the world (Lindholm, et al., 2011). This includes helping students find meaning in their career choices. Students with good mentors discover inspirational, caring, and genuine supportive relationships. According to Parks (2011), when higher education is seen as a mentoring environment faculty and administrators can assist with forming and re-forming qualities that shape students’ character, moral development, and critical awareness. When students develop characteristics such as responsibility, empathy, generosity, courage, and skillfulness, society is afforded the gift of

people who possess qualities that are associated with excellent citizenship and leadership

abilities (Parks, 2011). Parks asserted:

Seen from this perspective, every subject, discourse, and methodology in the curriculum of higher and professional education and every class, program, lab, dorms, and athletic team (as well as their analogues in the related contexts of adult work and the wider society) potentially contributes to the formation and transformation of emerging adult meaning-making. (p. 17)

Although emerging adults are dependent on others, they possess a quality of independence.

Enhancing characteristics of spiritual development makes it easier for anyone who interacts with emerging adults (Parks, 2011). As stated by Tisdell (2003), spirituality is a “process that brings one more in touch with one’s core self, which is grounded in one’s deepest spirit. A key point here is that spirituality is about moving toward this greater sense of one’s deepest spirit or more authentic identity” (p. 33). Given that we are shaped by others’ expectations of us (Tisdell, 2003), mentors have a role in the student’s becoming, serving as people who provide guidance and reassurance (Parks, 2011). As Parks (2011) suggests, much of the way that a person responds to big questions depends on the authoritative figures and powers that have influenced thinking. In an educational setting this can relate to the relationship between teacher and student. In some cases, the student places a huge amount of trust into the relationship, viewing any reassurance the professor provides as a confirmation of truth. According to Parks (2011) this form of knowing and coming to know is called *Authority-Bound* and is oriented in the process of seeking answers, trusting, believing, and searching for modes of understanding from people who serve as authority figures that are outside of self. Authority figures can be in the form of a parent, boss, teacher, religious leader, the media, or experts in a particular field.

According to Parks (2011), mentors appear when students are discovering critical thought and beginning to take greater responsibility for self and others. They appear at a time when students are trying to make meaning, questioning the assumptions passed down from authority. Although mentors can come in the form of professor, family member, counselor, therapist, coach, etc., Parks cautions that the term *mentor* is overused and *good mentors* are not easy to come by. Mentors are not developed from all relationships, even the ones who have provided a great source of inspiration. With *good* mentors there is a giving of self on the part of the mentor, offering not only a sense of genuine caring, but providing students with a sense of confidence as they go through changes and transitions in their meaning making. Parks (2011) noted:

As emerging adults are beginning to think critically about self and world, mentors provide crucial forms of recognition, support, and challenge. Mentors also care about your soul—they inspire. Whatever the immediate challenge or subject matter, good mentors know that all knowledge has a moral dimension, and learning that matters is ultimately a spiritual, transforming activity, intimately linked with the whole of life. (p. 165)

Mentors help students navigate complex tasks and answer big questions of life. They assist students and address deep concerns of the young adult life. As described by Parks (2011), the role of the mentor strengthens the emerging adult: “The good mentor is recruited to (but not overwhelmed by) the emerging adult’s dialogue between fear and trust, power and powerless, alienation and belonging, doubt and belief, hope and hopelessness, as he becomes more at home in a larger world” (Parks, 2011, p. 170).

The five gifts of mentorship. In the realm of spirituality and higher education, teachers play an integral role in the way that students construct meaning and knowledge. This includes the inner components of self which are attitudes, beliefs, and values; and the outer components of self that include behaviors, actions, and experiences (Parks, 2011; Astin et al., 2011). As noted by Parks (2011): “Mentoring communities play their essential role by offering the gifts of

recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration and incorporating certain features that distinctively honor and animate the potential of emerging adult lives” (Parks, 2011, p. 176). In subsequent sections, Parks describes the gifts of mentorship.

Recognition. Recognition is the need to be seen. It is the human desire for others to provide respectful voices that confer recognition (Parks, 2011). Particularly in the emerging stage, adults seek recognition and affirmation that confirms the worthiness of their life. Recognition can come from a variety of adult figures, including from parents. Although this is true, as Parks points out, emerging adults seek recognition from voices beyond the parental sphere: “The emerging adult seeks recognition in a wider world of adult roles and responsibilities. As respected voices from beyond the parental sphere, mentors can confer recognition in powerful and practical terms” (p. 166). The desire to be “seen” is solidified through recognition from good mentors.

Support. Mentors support students by providing affirmation, reassurance and recognition. They are supportive in a variety of ways, “including serving as an advocate, a guide to resources, a source of protection and comfort, and sometimes a source of healing” (Parks, 2011, p. 168). Good mentors do not expect the protégé to copy their behaviors or adopt their ways of thinking; good mentors provide encouragement and support by reminding the protégé of their great promise. Mentors understand that college is a time of big questions and recognize that young adults are dependent in substantial ways; nonetheless, they recognize that potential of the young adult and their desire for independence (Parks, 2011).

Challenge. Parks (2011) describes how mentors balance an intricate two-step dance between support and challenge. Mentors push the emerging adult to a new area of potential and provide counsel and reassurance for the work the student is doing. Through a balance of support

and challenge, good mentors practice tough love, inviting and testing the growing strength of the emerging adult, encouraging the young adult to recognize unseen opportunities, ideas, dangers, relationships, and solutions (Parks, 2011). Mentors challenge their protégé but understand the experience can only be understood when presented at the right time, when it makes sense to the student. Good mentors are also not concerned with the hierarchy of age difference between older and younger or wiser figures who assists the younger adult (Parks, 2011). Although the mentor may have more experience, mentors work side by side with the young adult, recognizing the potential of the student and honoring their thoughts. Good mentors dance together with their protégé—they honor the learning process, remain open minded, and stay on the edge of new knowing, assisting the student when he or she is in well over their head (Parks, 2011).

Inspiration. A good mentor practices empathy and understanding, serving as “a steady, inspiring point of orientation, beckoning toward the possibility of meaningful commitment on the other side of the achievement of critical thought” (p. 170). As Parks (2011) noted: “Above all, the mentor is conscious of the challenges the emerging adult confronts in the process of learning to practice critical thought in a complex world” (p. 169). A good mentor is committed to providing empathy and understanding for the life of the student. In the challenges that the emerging adult faces, the mentor inspires and encourages the student to new possibilities.

Accountable. Parks (2011) noted that “few mentors manage to get it right all the time. A mentor is in every case a finite human being, and the relationship can go awry” (p. 173). Although the mentor enters the relationship with a considerable amount of talent and skill, Parks points out that the protégé also makes a distinctive contribution to which neither can forge new realities alone. When there is mutual respect and the relationship works, the meaning and gifts are to both the mentor and the protégé. Mentors are not threatened by the growth of the protégé:

“Good mentors bring out a quality of commitment and passion to the work, they are vulnerable to assimilating the protégé’s vision and potential into their own vision” (p. 173).

Sharing of the inner life. According to Palmer (1997), to foster a mentoring community of meaning-making, teachers and students must become dependent on each other. Palmer points out that “when we are not dependent on one another, community cannot exist” (Palmer, 1997, p. 12). If students are to trust and develop an understanding of the whole, there must be a sharing of life on the part of the teacher. For example, when instructors share a piece of themselves through a personal story, the teacher becomes human to the students. According to Parks (2011), students are grateful to learn from the testimony of others. They can recognize when professors share their authentic self. When professors make connections between the subjects they teach and the life they live, students are guided in their quest for spiritual development and understand why it is important for them to learn what they are being asked to learn (Chickering et al. 2006; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003). Barbezat and Bush (2014) stated:

No matter how radically we conceive of our role in teaching . . . students need support in discerning what is most meaningful to them—both their direction overall and their moral compass. Without opportunities to inquire deeply, all they can do is proceed along paths already laid down for them. (p. 4)

Teaching helps students realize their potential, and helps “learners assess and achieve what it is they want to learn. . . . We need to recognize the difference between our goals as educators and the objectives of our learners that we want to help them achieve” (Mezirow & Associates, 2006, p. 30).

Chapter Summary

The literature suggests that there is an increased interest in the subject of spirituality in higher education. Specifically, the literature discusses the need to help college students address the big questions of life (Astin, 2004; Astin et al, 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell,

2003; Zajonc, 2003) and the challenges that teachers face in incorporating this into their teaching. This can be done by providing time and creating spaces for students to attend to the spiritual. While there is no one definition for the term, three overarching themes from the literature suggest that spirituality has a place in higher education.

First, spirituality is separate from religion and ideologies of indoctrination. Providing students with opportunities to know themselves on a deeper level does not have to be separate from scholarship. Teachers need to know the role that they have in students' lives. They should continuously ask themselves about the purpose and intent of introducing spiritual components in the curriculum, while reflecting on their own beliefs, biases, and orientations (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003).

The second theme of the literature suggests that spirituality is part of who we are as humans, and it is always present (Astin, 2004; Astin et al, 2011; Chickering et al, 2006; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Zajonc, 2003; Zajonc, 2006). For spirituality to be welcomed and respected in curricula, education must be free of great divides and either-or-thinking (Palmer, 1998; Zajonc, 2003). Rather, as the literature suggests, people believe in either truth of science or truth of religion, indicating that there is no cognitive possibility for spirituality in higher education (Palmer, 1998; Zajonc, 2003). When viewed as a quest to wholeness and connectedness, spirituality can be incorporated in public or private institutions across disciplines.

The third theme of the literature suggests that teachers play a vital role in helping facilitate the spiritual development of students. When teachers serve as good mentors to students, they provide gifts such as recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration to the young adult's life (Parks, 2011). Teachers can help students make connections between their lives to the lives

of others and to the world—all of which are characteristics of assisting students in their spiritual development (Lindholm, et al, 2011).

Although research is available with regard to spirituality in higher education, continued research is needed to learn more about what institutions are doing to help facilitate the spiritual development of students and to get ideas for how to incorporate spiritual components with course material. In addition, further research is needed that discusses the criticism of spirituality in higher education and of the researchers who highlight the benefits of spirituality in diverse higher education environments. There also needs to be further discussion about students who do not wish to develop spirituality.

Transition Statement

Chapter 2 provided a literary review of sources used to examine faculty members' pedagogical approaches and attitudes to their role in higher education. Chapter 3 outlines the qualitative and quantitative methods used to gather and analyze data for the study.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members in a faith-based institution use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. This study is searching for answers to three specific questions:

1. How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?
3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

A qualitative approach was used to address the research problem of this study.

Qualitative research is focused on the perspective of the participant and strives to understand how meaning of the experience is created (Creswell, 2008; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Smith et al., 2009). It is recommended that the qualitative researcher care about the outcome of the study and have an immense interest in the topic. According to Creswell (2008), when deciding on a research approach, the most important factor to consider is the research problem. For a qualitative approach, the research problem must be explored, rather than explained. This chapter is organized in the following sections: Research Design, Role of the Researcher, Site Selection, Selection of Participants, Protection of Human Subjects and Ethical Considerations, Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Trustworthiness and Dependability.

Research Design

To explore the personal meaning that people construct (Creswell, 2008), I used an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to address the research questions of this

study. IPA research is interested in “the detailed examination of human lived experience. And it aims to conduct this examination in a way which as far as possible enables that experience to be expressed in its own terms, rather than according to predefined category systems” (Smith, Flower, & Larkin, 2009, p. 32). The topic of spirituality is complex, personal, revolves around a sense of who we are and where we come from, and has to do with the values that we hold dear (Astin et al., 2011). To get a better understanding of how faculty feel about the role of spirituality in higher education, I wanted to give both the personal aspect and the relational aspect of the experience the opportunity to be explored. Investigating such elements of the central phenomena calls for a research design that is explorative of the subjective experience and focused on reflecting upon personal experience (Smith et al., 2009).

In IPA “we commit ourselves to exploring, describing, interpreting and situating the means by which our participants make sense of their experiences” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 40). The key features of IPA allowed me the opportunity to focus on discovering how faculty made sense of spirituality in a particular context, and how they made sense of sharing that particular experience with other people who teach in the higher education setting. According to Smith et al. (2009), there are three theoretical underpinnings that inform the IPA approach: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and ideography. In this section, I briefly describe each theoretical underpinning and provide a rationale for how several characteristics of IPA make the design a good fit for this study. I also introduce how the study considers the work of two phenomenologists: Husserl and Heidegger.

Phenomenology. The first major influence of IPA is phenomenology. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach that is focused on experience (Moustakas, 1994), particularly in what the “experience of being human is *like*, in all of its various aspects, but especially in terms of the

things which matter to us, and which constitute our lived world” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 11).

Phenomenological research grew out of the work of Edmund Husserl, who focused on what was “experienced in the consciousness of the individual” (p. 13). He referred to this phenomenology of knowledge as transcendental phenomenology, one that is focused on the essence of experience, reflecting on a given phenomenon to see what the experiences have in common (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009). Husserl’s work is focused on reflection and encourages researchers to bracket (suspend) personal judgments about the real world to its purest consciousness. This approach allows focus on the subjective experience of the individual and attempts to uncover and interpret the essence of participants’ cognitive processes and description of meaning (Creswell, et al., 2007; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009).

Husserl’s work has served as a great influence for IPA research, helping IPA researchers focus on the process of reflection, everyday lived experience, and the process of attempting to bracket out presumptions (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009). Both IPA and phenomenology are committed to the description of experiences and not explanations; they are both rooted in questions that give a direction and focus on meaning. This focus awakens further interest and concern, accounting for our passionate involvement with whatever is being experienced (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009). Having the opportunity to examine my experiences and bracket my assumptions and viewpoints (Merriam & Associates, 2002) made IPA an appropriate fit for the study.

Phenomenology’s philosophical underpinning is consistent with the nature of this study in that it focuses on showing how complex meanings are built from direct experience and emphasizes the significance of limiting the influence of preconceptions—reality is perceived

within the meaning of the experience shared by participants (Merriam & Associates, 2002). In addition, the philosophy is consistent with my excitement and curiosity in the topic selection. In both phenomenology and IPA, the research grows out of an intense interest in a particular issue or topic (Moustakas, 1994).

Hermeneutics. The second reason that IPA is an appropriate fit for this study is that it has a theoretical underpinning of hermeneutics, “the theory of interpretation” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 21). Hermeneutics is not unique to phenomenology and dates back to scriptural interpretation of biblical texts (Moran, 2001; Smith et al., 2009). Heidegger was the main hermeneutic phenomenologist who connected phenomenology with hermeneutics (Moran, 2001). “By ‘hermeneutics’ Heidegger does not just mean the method specific to the historical and cultural sciences, but the whole manner in which human existence is interpretative” (p. 235).

A key idea that IPA researchers take from Heidegger is that our being in the world is always in-relation-to something else and meaning can only be interpreted depending on how something presents itself and appears (Smith et al., 2009). According to Heidegger’s theory, “things have certain visible meanings for us (which may or may not be deceptive), but they can also have concealed or hidden meanings” (p. 24). It is not until the researcher examines the things that he or she brings from that past, that the new can be seen. The topic of spirituality also requires that the researcher examine what appears on the surface of what is said, and examine the things that may be concealed in the form of appearance. The subjective awareness that is involved in spirituality is not always revealed; spirituality points to the interiors of our life and is experienced internally and privately in our personal mind rather than in an external world (Astin, 2004). Similarly, Heidegger’s work notes that although something may lie hidden, the researcher

is concerned with the interpretation of what can be uncovered—the self-interpretation of the things that do not always show themselves (Moran, 2001; Smith et al., 2009).

Hermeneutic circle. Heidegger insisted that questions carry with them certain presumptions about what one wants to uncover. For instance, he states: “A question seeks certain information by addressing itself *to* something *about* something *for* some purpose. But in order even to be able to pose a question we must have some initial pre-understanding of what we are asking about” (Moran, 2001, p. 236). Heidegger proposes that we pay attention to pre-judgements and reflect on what is asked in the nature of questioning itself. To do so, IPA researchers engage in the process of the hermeneutic circle. This made IPA an appropriate design for this study. The hermeneutic circle is concerned with the relationship between the part and the whole; “to understand any given part, you look to the whole; to understand the whole you look to the parts” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 28). In other words, interpretation can only be made when our assumptions are disclosed, allowing for the new things that we learn to have priority.

It was important that I select a design where I could continuously engage in the hermeneutic circle. The process allowed me the opportunity to reflect on the thoughts and feelings that I constructed and discover judgements that were not visible at the start. For example, some of my assumptions did not come to light until the participants shared what they did. Bracketing, which is part of how meaning is created, also meant that I could go back and forth between my interpretation and what the participant shared (Moran, 2001; Smith et al., 2009). Without considering the presumptions of my questioning, I would not be able to formulate new questions, and thus advance my understanding of the experience (Moran, 2001). Meaning can only become clear when it is in relation to the whole—the individual’s words (Smith et al., 2009).

Ideography. The final characteristic that makes IPA an appropriate fit for this study is that it is focused on the particular—an approach known as ideography (Smith et al., 2009). IPA’s commitment to the particular works at two levels. The first level is that IPA researchers are committed to the particular—where the researcher is focused on the detail that is unique and is the personal perspective of the individual. The second level is where the researcher is committed to understanding how the particular experience is understood as an in-relation-to phenomenon—one that has a worldly and relational aspect to it (Smith et al., 2009). According to the work of Heidegger, although experience is an in-relation-to phenomenon, an individual can provide a unique perspective to the phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009).

The ideographic commitment is perfect in that I focused on the individual details of each participant before moving on to the next case. It was important that I commit myself to the detail shared by each participant, especially in how meaning of spirituality is created in all of its complexity. At the same time, I discovered how the individual meaning of spirituality relates to interactions with others (the institution, other faculty, the students, and the classroom experience) and thus results in a shared meaning. Bracketing the ideas that emerged from each individual case before making more claims is a significant part of sticking to the ideographic commitment.

Summary. The Research Design section of this chapter demonstrates how using an IPA approach is appropriate for this study. “While Husserl was concerned to find the essence of experience, IPA has the more modest ambition of attempting to capture particular experiences as experienced by particular people” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 16). Given the focus on the particular, selecting IPA as a way to analyze the data is the right choice for addressing the research questions of the study. With IPA, the “complex understanding of ‘experience’ invokes a lived process, an unfurling of perspectives and meanings, which are unique to the person’s embodied

and situated relationship to the world” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 21). Through the approaches of this design, I attempted to understand how the participant made meaning of spirituality and the experiences that he or she experienced in the college environment; additionally, how the perspective is understood in relation to the lived experience of others.

IPA encouraged me to engage in an intangible and abstract phenomenon that cannot be precisely measured—one that is experienced in the heart and mind and exists in thought and feelings rather than in physical existence. As Smith (2009) asserted: “In IPA research, our attempts to understand other people’s relationship to the world are necessarily *interpretive*, and will focus upon their attempts to make *meanings* out of their activities and to the things happening to them” (p. 21).

Role of the Researcher

Ethical considerations were kept at the forefront of the study. Having insider status at the institution, it was imperative that I continuously make decisions to keep participant information safe and protect the identity of each participant. It was critical to the outcome of the study that I continuously engaged in the process of epoche—bracketing my assumptions to see and hear things as they were shared by participants (Moustakas, 1994). Although qualitative research requires that researchers acknowledge their biases, the process of bracketing offered additional opportunity to focus on the meaning and lived experiences of the participants. Throughout the study, I reflected on any biases that would shape the outcome of the research. Some preconceptions were easy to access from the early stages of the study, while others presented themselves at different times. It was also important that I reflected and remained aware of my thoughts and feelings throughout the study, specifically because both the participants and I teach undergraduate students.

One thing that I was always aware of was my love for the study. Since I selected a topic that was dear to my heart, the need to balance that love with the ethical consideration for participants' identities and voices was imperative. It was important that my inner-voice did not overshadow theirs. Throughout the study, I was open-minded and allowed participants to make claims on their own terms; I remained as objective as possible, despite having a strong love for the topic of the study (Smith et al., 2009).

Although having insider-outsider positionality was a limitation of the study, insider status was beneficial in the sense that it was easier for me to reflect on the likely consequences of my judgements. IPA does require that the researcher imagine what the insider status is like, being able to think “about the extent to which you can relate to, or imagine, the likely experiences, concerns and claims of your particular group” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 42). Although positionality can get in the way of seeing things with fresh eyes, it made it easier for me to imagine the experiences of the participant and reflect upon my previous knowledge—helping me to bracket out my assumptions and remain committed to the role of exploring the phenomenon through the life of the participant, and not through my own experiences.

As a researcher, another role that I had was to be transparent to both the participants of the study and to the readers of this dissertation. It was extremely important that each participant understood my experiences with the institution, including my educational and professional affiliation with the university, as well as my love for the institution and for the study. In the same way, it is important to build trust with the people who read this dissertation. I am committed to showing the “workings” of the research in my writing, describing how I constructed reality by sharing what I did, what the study will do, and how I managed subjectivity (Holliday, 2007). As the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, it is important that I take a considerable

amount of time to explain the why and how of this research.

Site Selection

This study was conducted at a faith-based institution of higher education in the southwestern area of the United States. The institution is a Catholic university that strives to create an environment of campus diversity. Students and faculty come from diverse ethnicities, cultures, faiths, and beliefs. The university offers undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs and serves around 10,000 students. The average class size is about 25 students. In IPA, sample selection is purposeful and pragmatic; the approach is focused on understanding individuals' personal experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

Site selection was purposeful. According to the mission of the university, the institution is committed to educational excellence in the areas of teaching and scholarship and is committed to the development of the whole person. In addition to scholarship, the university focuses on educating students to have concern for social justice and to be accepting of others. The purpose of this study was to examine spirituality in higher education, and not necessarily in a religious context. Therefore, I wanted to conduct research at a site that welcomed diversity, allowing for spirituality to be described as the participant experienced it. Additionally, I wanted to challenge Astin et al.'s (2011) call for research in secular institutions and explore teaching and learning experiences in a faith-based institution as they relate to facilitating student's spiritual development.

Selection of Participants

I selected eight participants using purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to learn from participants who have experienced situations related to the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2008). In IPA research, "participants are selected on the basis that they

can grant us access to a particular perspective on the phenomena under study. That is, they ‘represent’ a perspective, rather than a population” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 49). Sample selection was based on addressing the purpose of the study and research questions.

The purposeful sampling strategy used in this study is homogenous sampling. Homogenous sampling involves selecting individuals who share a defining characteristic and belong to a subgroup that helps to further investigate a phenomenon and provide insight on a particular experience (Creswell, 2008; Smith et al., 2009). The faculty participating in this study are professors who teach undergraduate students at the same university and possess a similar trait or characteristic of being recipients of a specific faculty award.

Having eight participants in IPA research is considered to be on the larger side. Smith et al. (2009) suggest that novice researchers use a sample size of three to six participants. Nevertheless, the large sample size of eight contributed to the depth of the research, providing readers of this study with rich description and helping to illustrate how faculty members can incorporate spirituality into the classroom, regardless of the discipline. “The effectiveness of the IPA study is judged by the light that it sheds within this broader context” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 51). The collaboration and level of involvement from all eight participants deserve to be honored as they are involved in the process of knowledge seeking and equally showed an interest in understanding ways to help facilitate the spiritual development of students. To participate, the individuals had to be willing to contribute to the study by sharing descriptions of their teaching experiences as they relate to spirituality and to include thoughts and feelings about situations, places, and people connected to the experiences. It was this level of commitment that allowed me the opportunity to understand how the participant perceived the role of spirituality in higher education as it reveals itself through their unique experiences.

Selection criteria. Two main criteria helped to identify potential participants. The first criterion specified that participants be recipients of a specific faculty award. Each year the university recognizes faculty members for demonstrating excellence in living by the university mission in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. According to the university's website, to be nominated for the award, the faculty member must have a love for the institution and embody the university mission in the classroom, school, and community, including interactions with students, colleagues, and members of the community. The faculty must inspire and motivate students to live through the mission values and must exhibit respect for others. Supporting the mission of the university also includes serving the spiritual and material needs of people, helping to develop the whole person. Given the nature of the award, this subgroup was a fitting choice for sample selection.

The second criterion was that participants are faculty who teach undergraduate students. Following the framework of this study, Parks (2011) speaks about emerging adults (typically between the ages of eighteen and thirty-two years of age) and the five key gifts that mentors provide: *recognition, support, challenge, inspiration*, presented in ways that are *accountable* to the life of the emerging adult. Typically, students between these ages are undergraduate students.

Originally, there was a third criterion to only include tenured faculty. The decision was made to protect the subjects. The issue relates to the vulnerable position in which the research could put the participant. Faculty, by contract, are expected to commit to the university mission. If a participant identified that they did not buy into the university mission, it could cause them harm. The decision was also based on the assumption that tenured faculty would provide more honest answers and not be cautious in how they responded to interview questions. This related to

the concern that if the faculty member was not tenured, they might respond in ways that they perceive to be beneficial to their employment.

After sending the letters of invitation, I did have faculty who were willing to participate, but were not tenured. I made the decision to give participants the opportunity to participate regardless of their tenure status. When recruiting participants, the researcher can make the decision to “expand one’s inclusion criteria” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 50), especially if the researcher has individuals who are willing to share detailed accounts of their individual experience that provide insight. Aligned with IPA research, participants viewed the research topic as meaningful and were willing to provide insight on the phenomenon.

Participant selection procedures. Once the subgroup of potential participants was determined, I recruited participants by first focusing on individuals who won the award between the years 2010-2014. Including five years of award recipients allowed for twenty-five possible participants. After I collected information about the award recipients, I determined who was still employed by the institution. Possible participants were from various teaching disciplines in the humanities, education, business, mathematics, sciences, health professions, and professional schools. Simultaneously, I determined who taught undergraduate students. Five faculty were listed as only teaching graduate students and three could not be located on the schedule. This brought the number from twenty-five to seventeen possible participants.

Through the university email system, I sent seventeen individuals a letter describing the research study and invited them to participate in the research project. The letter titled Invitation to Potential Participants (see Appendix A) introduced me as a doctoral candidate and stated that the research project was required to complete a dissertation on the topic of spirituality in higher education. A brief description of the methodology was also included. To determine if the

individuals were a good fit for the study, the letter asked the potential participants if they had experienced the phenomenon of spirituality in the context of higher education, were interested in understanding its meaning, and were willing to participate in a lengthy interview and perhaps a follow up interview as part of the data collection process. Participants had to agree that the interview be recorded and the data published in the dissertation, with confidentiality and anonymity guarded. The letter also provided a brief description of the screening process, including the need for participants to be tenured faculty. As previously mentioned, this criterion was later changed.

For the individuals who were willing to participate, the Invitation to Potential Participants instructed them to sign and return the letter by a specific date (a two-week window). The letter stated that once the forms were returned, I would continue the screening process. I had a goal to interview seven to eight participants. If all seventeen individuals showed interest in participating, I would narrow down the list to individuals who teach from diverse disciplines of study and request a short pre-interview specifically to determine the level of interest and commitment.

From the seventeen invitations, four were interested in participating, ten did not respond (a follow up invitation was sent), two were interested but stated that they were not tenured (at the time, the criteria still stated that they had to be tenured), and one was interested but on sabbatical. I later discovered that one of the four participants willing to participate was also not tenured; nevertheless, the criterion was changed. Initially, four possible participants were identified. To recruit additional participants, I looked at the 2015 award recipients and went through the same procedure. From this new group, I sent out five more invitations. Out of the five, two met the criteria of being tenured and expressed interest, one was interested but was not tenured, one did not respond, and one was not interested.

An amendment was submitted to IRB requesting that my inclusion criteria change to include non-tenured faculty. The request was granted. This meant that in the first group, those who showed interest but did not meet the tenure criteria were able to participate. I re-invited the two individuals who stated that they were interested but not tenured. Out of those two, one responded and was still interested and the other did not respond. In the second group, the individual who was not tenured was also re-sent the invitation and did express interest to participate.

Once I identified the potential participants, a Participant Consent Form (see Appendix B) was sent. The purpose of the consent form was to thank the possible participant for their interest in participating and to secure the individual's signature for participation. The form described the purpose of the study, confirmed that identifiable information will not be published, and stated that participation was voluntary, with the right to withdraw from the study reserved.

When sending the consent form, I requested that we meet for a brief pre-interview. The purpose of the pre-interview was to establish rapport and most importantly review and address any questions that the individual had about the consent form. When going through the consent form I made sure that they understood the nature and purpose of the study, once again confirming that identifiable information is not published, and stating their rights as participants. Although this was stated in the document, I did not want to take for granted that they read the information prior to our meeting. Once they were comfortable, participants signed the consent form and scheduled a date and time for the interview.

Protection of Human Subjects and Ethical Considerations

Protection of human subjects is a dynamic process that happens at every stage of the research process (Smith et al., 2009). Ethical research practice starts at the beginning planning

stages of proposal writing, continues throughout the data collection and analysis, and moves beyond the stage of completion. It is more than getting approval from institutional committees and “requires sustained reflection and review” (p. 53). The overall goal of ethical considerations is to avoid bringing harm to participants (Creswell, 2008). The ethical considerations of this study are mentioned throughout this dissertation.

Data collection for this study began after the IRB approved my application. In addition, I did not collect data until the participant consent form (Appendix B) was reviewed and signed. Prior to signing the consent form, I informed each participant about the purpose of the study and talked about how the results would be used. It was important that each participant understand four main things: (a) that the results of the study would only be used for the purpose of completing the dissertation project; (b) that participation was fully voluntary, with each participant having the right to withdraw from the study at any time; and that each participant had the right to refuse from answering any interview questions that they were uncomfortable with; (c) that I would go to every possible length to protect the identity of the institution and of participants; and mainly, (d) that participants understood my insider-outsider positionality prior to signing the consent form. Although I did not anticipate that any harm would come to the participants, I wanted each participant to make the decision that was most comfortable for them.

At the time of the pre-interview, each participant signed the consent form and we scheduled the interview. Participants were informed that they would receive a copy of the interview questions one week prior to the scheduled interview; I wanted each participant to be comfortable with his or her involvement. This was also a way to maintain ethical consideration by taking into consideration how the topic of spirituality can be personal. After the interviews

were conducted I was available to answer questions that the participant had. Further details about maintaining ethical considerations are stated in the subsequent sections.

Data Collection

This study used in-depth semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data. In IPA, the purpose of the interview is to address the research questions of the study, allowing the participant to speak in their own words, yet facilitating conversations that are related to the topics of the study (Smith et al., 2009). The interview is the best means to explore the lived experience of participants, offering participants the opportunity to share stories, thoughts, and feelings about the phenomenon of study (Smith et al., 2009). Additional sources of data were pre-interview questionnaires and documents.

Interviews were conducted at the site of the study. All eight participants selected their office as the place to conduct the interview. The interviews ranged from 45 to 95 minutes each and were relaxed, free from interruption, and conducive to recording the data (Creswell, 2008). I interviewed each participant privately, inviting them to speak freely about the phenomenon of spirituality. Each participant appeared comfortable in their environment.

It was important that participants had the choice of where to meet for the interview. Since participants are employees of the institution, I knew that the decision to collect data at the site of study could have its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the physical environment could spark the participant to remember an insightful experience; on the other hand, the environment could be a hindrance, prompting the participant to respond in a more cautious way (Creswell, 2008). I needed the environment to feel comfortable for the participant so that he or she could provide in-depth information, in an honest way.

Preparing for the interview. Prior to conducting the interviews, I took some time to think about the original biases that I had about the study when preparing my research proposal. I wanted to see if my pre-assumptions made their way into the development of the interview questions that I planned to ask. To do this, I created an interview guide (Appendix E). Considering the work of Heidegger, I knew that it was important that I revisit the interview questions of the study before engaging in the actual interview because, as Heidegger stated, “our questioning really is a kind of light which casts a certain pattern on the phenomenon, while also filling in our expectation in a way that allows us to formulate further questions, and thus advance our understanding” (Moran, 2001, p. 237).

The guide was not used during the interview. It was created for preplanning, in terms of what I hoped to discover during the interview; it was also a way for me to think about the structure of the questions. Knowing that the long interview is the method through which phenomenological data is collected (Moustakas, 1994), it is important that the structure of questions have a good flow and help to create an environment that encouraged the sharing of rich description. According to Smith et al. (2009), what is meant by ‘rich data’ is “to suggest that participants should have been granted an opportunity to tell their stories, to speak freely and reflectively, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length” (p. 56).

Conducting the interview. To ensure that I was prepared, the day of the interview I arrived at the site ahead of time. I referred to the Interview Protocol (Appendix D) and wrote down the pre-pseudonym of the participant, the date and time of the interview, and double-checked that the participant signed the consent form (Creswell, 2008). I then located the participant’s office and waited until he or she was ready. Once in the office, I began by making small talk and thanking the participant for their time. I had met each participant one time prior to

the interview, which helped with rapport. Although I did not know the participant well, the interaction was very comfortable. Each participant expressed their willingness to participate and agreed on the importance of the research. This helped me feel confident, knowing that the work I was doing was meaningful.

Once I felt that the participant was comfortable, I referred to my interview protocol and read the description of the study. I reminded the participant about the purpose of the study and reinstated my commitment to create an anonymous profile. The participant was told that he or she would be assigned a pseudonym but during the interview I would use the name of participant one, participant two, and so on depending on the order of interviews. I did not read the protocol line by line in hopes that the environment would stay comfortable and natural.

I reminded the participant that the interview was recorded but that the data would be safely stored upon completion of the interview. For each interview, I was prepared with two recording devices. I double-checked that both worked and, before hitting the record button, reminded the participant that they did not have to answer any questions that they did not want to. I also thanked the participant for their participation. Each participant was interviewed one time.

Interview questions. As previously mentioned, I sent participants a copy of the interview questions one week prior to their scheduled interview. Participants of IPA research are encouraged to be active participants of the research process; therefore, it is typical of IPA researchers to give participants guidance and provide them with an idea about what to expect for the interview (Smith et al., 2009). By sharing the interview questions ahead of time, I provided participants with the opportunity to reflect on the questions and begin thinking about what they would share during the interview. In maintaining ethical consideration, it was also important that participants had the opportunity to think through any concerns or sensitivities that they may have

with the topic prior to being put in a situation that may cause harm to the participant (Creswell, 2008; Smith et al., 2009).

I came up with 15 interview questions. Although I developed them in advance, I knew that I could vary and alter them depending on how the participant shared his or her experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Each question was open-ended and encouraged the participant to respond in a descriptive manner and speak at length (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009).

Phenomenological questions are designed to encourage descriptions of experiences; “descriptions keep a phenomenon alive, illuminate its presence, accentuate its underlying meanings, enable the phenomenon to linger, retain its spirit, as near to its actual nature as possible” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 59).

I used a topical protocol approach to help me structure the questions. The approach encouraged dialogue and allowed for descriptions and discussion to emerge; using the approach made it possible to talk about the topics in whatever way was needed to benefit the situation (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Questions were structured so that they could be asked one at a time while still allowing for some probing questions to be asked (Smith et al., 2009).

Additionally, I framed the interview questions as they related to the research questions; this was a way to invite the participants into the research, helping them to understand how their response may help to answer a specific research question.

The interview questions on the interview protocol were listed. For some of the interviews I read the interview questions one by one, following the order and structure of the protocol. For others, I felt more comfortable and was not rigidly following the protocol. Although IPA encourages researchers to use interview techniques that elicit natural interactions (Smith et al., 2009), using the protocol did not take me away from being an active listener. It was quite the

opposite—being a novice researcher, I felt more organized and was able to attend to the views and experiences of the participant. Being an active listener plays a major role in IPA. It is during the interview that the researcher enters the meaning of the participant; the researcher leaves their pre-existing assumptions and attends closely to the participant's words (Smith, et al., 2009).

Known as the hermeneutic circle, the researcher generates questions based on the new information that is being received (Smith, et al., 2009).

Participants seemed confident in their responses and appeared to be present in the moment. I did not feel like any of the interviews were rushed, nor did I feel that any of the participants were being cautious or felt worried about the potential of someone passing by and hearing bits of the interview. Each interview seemed to be natural and comfortable. In several of the interviews, participants apologized for giving long responses and told me that they hoped they were not getting off topic. I reminded participants throughout the interview that there were no right or wrong answers (Smith et al., 2009), and that I was very much interested in what they were sharing. It was nice to hear how passionate each participant was about the topic; thus, making it easier to encourage as much discussion as possible. As stated by Smith et al. (2009), the qualitative research interview is often described as “a conversation with a purpose” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 57).

It was not until the data analysis that each participant was given a pseudonym. As a reader I wanted each participant to identify with the final write-up of the dissertation; therefore, I gave each participant the choice to select his or her own pseudonym. Some participants picked theirs, and others did not. Even if participants did not mind having their real name published in the dissertation, they were not allowed to use them. Allowing one person to make the decision to use their real name “should not be achieved at the cost of anonymity” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 53).

Additional data collected. In addition to the person-to-person interviews, documents were collected as a form of data. Prior to conducting the interview, I told participants that they could share documents such as course syllabi and lesson plans with the hopes that the documents would serve as valuable information, helping readers understand pedagogy and its structures. In the pre-interview I mentioned to participants that documents would not be included in the dissertation manuscript. They would only be used as a method to gather information about how faculty were incorporating spiritual components in their courses, specific to the discipline. Although the documents would not be printed in the manuscript, they were safeguarded. As with other data, the documents are kept for five years after the dissertation is completed. At that time, they will be destroyed. Only one participant provided a copy of a syllabus, and two provided a copy of their teaching philosophy.

As another form of data, I asked participants to complete a Pre-Interview Questionnaire (see Appendix C) and return it to me by the scheduled interview. The purpose of the questionnaire was to help me learn more about the participants and to help them prepare for the interview, getting them to think about who they are teachers. I designed the questions with the work of Palmer (2007) in mind. According to Palmer, teaching is a projection of the soul. It is like any human activity—a reflection of who we are inside, in the heart and in the soul. As recommended by Palmer, it is not good enough to ask the question of what do you teach; or how do you teach; whenever good teaching is at stake, the question of *who* cannot go unmasked.

All participants completed the questionnaire; however, not all participants had it completed by the time of the scheduled interview. Some participants forgot and either quickly completed it at the end of the interview or emailed it to me later. The data was used to help me write the sections in Chapter 4. As with all other data, identifiable information was removed. In

IPA, questionnaires are not favored because they only allow participants to share information in parts and not necessarily in a descriptive and expressive manner (Smith et al., 2009). Although questionnaires do limit participants from being able to share their experiences freely, my hope was that participants used this as an opportunity to prepare for the interview and perhaps think about the heart of their teacher.

Transcribing. Each interview was recorded using two Olympus WS-100 Digital Voice Recorders. The intent was to record the interview on one recorder with the second used as backup, in case of malfunction. After conducting each interview, I downloaded the interview from both recorders using the built in USB connections, transferring the files to my personal computer, which is secured at my home. Interviews were conducted between the months of February through May. Once I conducted all eight interviews, I began transcribing. Transcribing was a lengthy and time-consuming process, taking approximately 45 minutes to transcribe about 4 minutes of interview. It took about two months to transcribe all eight interviews. I did not use software to transcribe the data. Although the process was time consuming, it was beneficial to immerse myself in the data; it allowed me to grow closer to the participants' words. Transcribing each interview made me feel like I was back in the place of the scheduled interview; I could see the participant's face and recall that person's mannerisms—it put me back in the emotional state of relationship between me and the participant. The experience would be different if I used computer software. When conducting the interviews, I did have some foresight that the process of transcribing would take some time. This, however, did not discourage me from allowing participants to respond at length.

IPA does not require that the researcher transcribe prosodic aspects that will not be analyzed (Smith et al., 2009). Although it did not require that I make note of non-verbal

comments, I did want to record aspects of social interactions by placing brackets around the transcribed data indicating when the interviewee paused, if distractions occurred during the interview, or if there were non-verbal utterances such as laughter. I did not record non-words such as hmm or um; they were not going to help me make sense of the participant's world and create meaning.

Data Analysis

The primary concern of IPA is the participant and the meaning. "The end result is always an account of how the analysts think the participant is thinking" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 80). As a result, the analysis is influenced by the analyst's personal feelings and claims. At the same time, there is an extremely thorough and exhaustive process that IPA researchers engage themselves in, drawing between the subjective and maintaining focus on the participant. This is elaborated by Smith et al. (2009):

IPA shares the view that human beings are sense-making creatures, and therefore the accounts which participants provide will reflect their attempts to make sense of their experiences. IPA also recognizes that access to experience is always dependent on what participants tell us about that experience, and that the researcher then needs to interpret that account from the participant in order to understand the experience. It can be said that the IPA researcher is engaged in double hermeneutics because the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them. (p. 3)

With IPA as an interpretive approach, initially I spent approximately five months analyzing the data. In my case, that consisted of spending six days out of the week on the analysis, equating to about 21 hours per week. In addition, I continued to analyze during the writing stages of the dissertation which moved the data analysis to a total of 12 months. Although the process was time consuming, it allowed me to have a sufficient amount of time for reflecting and engaging back and forth in the hermeneutic circle.

Steps for data analysis. The analytic process of this study used the following steps of IPA: (a) reading and re-reading; (b) initial noting; (c) developing emerging themes; (d) searching for connections across themes; (e) bringing it all together; (f) moving to the next case; and (g) looking for patterns across cases. To conduct this sort of analysis, I referred to the work of Smith et al. (2009). There, they set out to provide a “heuristic framework for analysis” (p. 80).

Although I did use the recommended steps as a guide for analysis, I modified some of them depending on what I was most comfortable with and what helped to make sense of the order. IPA data analysis is a complex process—one that is “collaborative, personal, intuitive, creative, intense, and conceptually demanding” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 80). According to Smith et al., (2009) there is room for maneuvering through the analytic approach; however, it is wise for novice researchers to use the steps as a guideline, drawing on principles and strategies of IPA researchers. Where this paragraph introduces the steps for data analysis, in subsequent sections I provide detailed information about the analytic process. The techniques to develop themes are presented in the combination of seven steps.

Reading and re-reading. Following transcription, I engaged in the self-reflection part of data analysis by taking notes and reflecting on any assumptions that I had about the data, once again engaging in the repetition of moving back and forth between my interpretations as a researcher and the world of the participant (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009). As suggested by IPA, I bracketed my assumptions while transcribing the interviews. After transcribing the interviews, I began writing journal notes about preliminary thoughts that I had towards the interviews and about the participants. I then printed each transcript and began to immerse myself in the raw data. I started by re-listening to the recordings and double-checking that the transcription was correct. Using three different colors of highlighters I made notes about my first

impressions on the printed documents; I highlighted text in pink to indicate possible quotes, yellow to highlight any key phrases or expressions that seemed of importance, and blue to take note of any possible themes.

According to Smith et al. (2009), the purpose of step one is to ensure the participant continues to be the focus of analysis. This part of the process is about slowing down, reading and re-reading the transcription, listening and re-listening to the audio recordings, and taking the time to record recollections about the interview experience. After I finished making notes on the printed transcription, I opened my journal once again and thought through some of the feelings that I had when conducting the interview. By listening and re-listening to the interviews, I was reminded of the thoughts that I had when conducting the interviews. Although not favorable, I had to be honest with myself and be vulnerable enough to admit that I had entered the participant's world during the interview. Prior to conducting the interviews, I did foresee that insider-outsider positionality would be a challenge, but did not expect the inner part of me to creep in during the interview. When I heard the ums and the uh-hmms of the interview, I knew that my personal life was present. At times I wanted the participant to keep speaking about spirituality and their experiences, thinking about how their words might help me understand my personal relationship. Even though there were moments when I did have thoughts about my personal life, because of my love for the topic and level of engagement with it, it was easy to shift focus to the stories being shared by the participants. Before moving to the next step, I met with my dissertation chair to discuss the feelings that I had during the data collection. In my discussion, the names and identities of participants remained anonymous.

Before moving to the next step, I emailed each participant a copy of the transcribed interview and asked them to proofread it. As part of member checking, I provided an opportunity

for the participant to correct any errors. I asked some of the participants to clarify parts of the conversation and requested that they elaborate on some of their responses (Creswell, 2008). In the same email, I asked each participant to pick a pseudonym. Some of the participants made corrections to the transcription, some elaborated and added new information, and others said that they were fine with the transcription.

Initial noting. The initial noting step was the most time consuming, taking about two months for all eight participants. In this step, the analysis is seen at an exploratory level, examining the content and becoming more familiar with the transcript by taking notes that help the researcher understand how the participant thinks and talks about the experience (Smith et al., 2009). I created a Microsoft Word document for each interview. Each document had three columns; the left column was for exploratory comments, the middle column contained the transcription, and the column to the right was for emerging themes. In this step my aim was to immerse myself into the participant's world by trying to make connections between the participant and my interpretive world. As suggested by Smith et al. (2009), I moved through the transcript by making three types of comments: (a) descriptive comments: here I focused on key words, phrases, or explanations that the participant used to describe their thinking about a particular event. In this step I developed a richer account of what was important to the participant; (b) linguistic comments: I focused on how the meaning was presented, paying attention to pauses, laughter, repetition, hesitation, and other types of language that was used to make claims about the experience; (c) conceptual comments: here I began to make interpretations about the data, working at an abstract level, moving more away from the explicit words of the participant, and reflecting on interpretations that developed about the meaning of particular instances.

Although this step was time consuming, it allowed me to once again immerse myself in the participant's world. Every time that I moved back and forth through the transcript, I heard something new and in a different way than before. I was more familiar with their experiences and the relationship between their voices, my thoughts, and our interactions had grown deeper. After completing the exploratory comments for one participant, I once again reflected in my journal before moving on to the next. This part of the analysis moved me through the hermeneutic circle, considering the new information that I had constructed in its parts, and understanding its meaning only by relating it back to the whole as described by the participant and seen through his or her world (Smith et al., 2009). It was important that I continue to bracket my thoughts and feelings about the interviews. This experience of bracketing was beneficial; I was wrong about some of my initial assumptions about the interviews.

Developing emergent themes. In the next step of analysis, I continued to move between the whole and the parts of the data. At this point, I had an increased amount of data and was now charged with the task of having to reduce the volume of detail and create themes that were abstractly represented in few words. In IPA, themes are “expressed as phrases which speak to the psychological essence of the piece and contain enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual” (p. 92). Much of this process felt overwhelming to me. Although the time spent making the initial notes was beneficial, the thought of having to reduce the participant's experiences to fewer words felt emotionally difficult. I was afraid to move further and further away from the literal words of the participant in the fear that I would interpret their meanings incorrectly. Several times I went back to my journal, expressing my feelings and reminding myself to trust the process, knowing that the interpretations were brought about from the participant's words. I needed to remain focused to the hermeneutic circle, and know that even

though the narrative flow of the original interview was becoming a set of parts, it would later become a whole again (Smith et al., 2009).

When creating the themes, I used the same document that was used in the initial noting step, this time adding information in the third column titled emerging themes. Here the data became re-organized and reflected a collaborative effort between the interpretations that I had made, and the original words that were spoken by the participant (Smith et al., 2009). Having to come up with a way to paraphrase the experiences in a few short words was challenging; nevertheless, seeing the data in its re-organized state helped me to better see connections in his or her experiences.

Searching for connections across emerging themes. Now that the emerging themes were created, I used a technique called abstraction to help me see how the emerging themes fit together; abstraction is identifying patterns across emerging themes, putting the like with the like, and developing a new name for each cluster called a super-ordinate theme (Smith et al., 2009). To help with the development of super-ordinate themes and determine how to best see the data, I created a system: (a) first, I printed out the document of emerging themes; (b) I then cut each theme with a pair of scissors, and spread the strips across the table; (c) from here I moved the strips around the table and explored how the emerging themes related to each other; (d) to help guide how to re-organize the themes, I made sticky notes with possible names for each super-ordinate theme; (e) once the related themes had come together, I went back to the computer and moved the themes around as they were reflected on the strips of paper; (f) now that I had a clearer picture of the themes, I threw the strips of paper away.

When developing the super-ordinate themes, I had trouble coming up with names for them—having to condense experiences into a few words was just difficult. Regardless, the

document turned out to be a nice visual representation of the participant. The re-organization of the data felt comfortable. Although the literal words of the participant were still close, I was more confident with the interpretations that were being created.

Bringing it all together. To engage in a deeper level of analysis, I took the visual representation that was created and transferred its contents to a new Microsoft Word document. I knew later I was going to make connections across cases and therefore needed to “look at the internal consistency, relative broadness, or specificity, of each emergent theme (Smith et al., 2009, p. 99) that was created for the participant. As recommended, I took transcript extracts from the visual representation containing super-ordinate and emerging themes and made a new graphical representation, helping me figure out what themes were most prominent. Reconfiguring the themes in a new visual representation with tables was beneficial; it offered a fresh new way of seeing the data and helped me to explore patterns within the specific case.

Moving on to the next case. As recommended by Smith et al. (2009), prior to moving on to the next case, it is important that the analyst treats each case as its own, bracketing thoughts that had emerged from the previous case and keeping to the ideographic commitment. Naturally, each case that is analyzed plays a role in influencing the next; nevertheless, the analyst must stay committed to the particular—the ideographic commitment of focusing on the given meaning for a particular case. To do so, I wrote in my journal, bracketing the details and experiences from the previous case so that I was less influenced by what I had just read (Smith et al., 2009). Of course, the goal is to *not* be influenced by the interpretations of the previous case; but as previously stated, inevitably it happens. To lessen these chances and keep to the ideographic commitment, I continued to think about ways to keep moving back and forth through the data, following the flow of the hermeneutic circle. When I wrote, I thought about the whole of the interview and the

new data that I had created with my interpretations. Once I felt comfortable and had taken the time to understand the relationship between the whole and the parts of the case, I moved on to the next case, ready to let new ways of thinking emerge.

Looking for patterns across cases. The final step of analysis involved looking for connections across cases (Smith et al., 2009). Now that I had systematically repeated the steps for each participant, it was time to determine what connections could be made across all eight cases. To do so, I printed out the graphical representation that was made for each participant and spread all of them across a large surface so that I could look at them to see what themes seemed to recur and in what ways one would help shed light on another. I made notes on the printed documents as well as drew creative illustrations in a separate sketchbook which I had periodically used in several of my doctoral educational experiences. The illustrations consisted of words and phrases that represented my understanding, and included shapes to make connections in my thinking. For me, using a sharp pencil, good eraser, and paper with a fibrous texture helped me to reflect and make sense of my interpretations, in any instance.

After looking across the cases on paper, I went back to the computer, made a new Microsoft Word document and created a master table. The master table contained super-ordinate themes for each participant, with emerging themes beneath them. As I looked across the combined data, I saw what themes related to each other and what themes were most prominent; within this master table, themes were reconfigured and renamed and I was now looking at the data as a group rather than individually. To determine what classified as a theme, I developed a criterion to identify recurrent themes; for an emergent or super-ordinate theme to be classified as a theme, it must be present in over half the sample (Smith et al., 2009).

Now that I had an idea of the themes across groups, to double check my interpretations I engaged back in the hermeneutic circle, this time moving from the part to the whole (Smith et al., 2009). Up to now, I spent much time focusing on the parts, and now needed to revisit the whole again to see how the interpretations made sense in relation to the original transcript. In re-reading the original transcript, once again I saw things a little differently.

Trustworthiness and Dependability

A major concern for qualitative researchers is producing research that is trustworthy and dependable. Given the nature of qualitative research, reality is constructed by the person who has experienced the event. Qualitative research is multidimensional, ever changing, and waiting to be discovered and observed; there is no single truth. Quantitative research, on the other hand, is measureable and a single truth can be identified (Merriam, 2007). This difference may create an assumption that qualitative research is of less importance in terms of validity and reliability. To build trust, a researcher must always show the workings of the study and be transparent of how interpretation and meaning are created.

Qualitative research is interpretive; the understanding of the reality is really the researcher's interpretation of the experience (Merriam, 2007). The primary instrument in data collection and analysis is the researcher. I used four strategies in this study to enhance validity. The first is triangulation. Triangulation is the process of gathering information from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection. "The inquirer examines each information source and finds evidence to support a theme. This ensures that the study will be accurate because the information draws on multiple sources of information, individuals, or processes" (Creswell, 2008, p. 266). For this study, I used the questionnaires provided by the

participants, as well as engaged in the process of bracketing throughout the data collection and analysis stages of this study, to help insure that the interpretations and findings were correct.

Member checking was the second strategy used in this study. As previously mentioned, I allowed each participant the opportunity to review the transcript for accuracy. This process included asking the participant if their responses were complete and accurate, allowing them time to carefully examine the transcript and state if corrections needed to be made. Prior to sending the transcript, I spent a large amount of time reading and re-reading each transcription.

I also used peer evaluation as a strategy for enhancing validity. Throughout the dissertation process, I communicated with my dissertation chair. The collaboration offered an opportunity to discuss key elements of the study and gain a better understanding of the data. It was also a way for me to discover if any biases had entered the data. During the collaboration with my chair, to maintain ethical considerations, I did not reveal the identities of the participants or schools that they teach in. In parts of our conversations, my chair did see some of the transcripts, but they were not reviewed in detail nor did they include the participant's name; I only made them available for a quick glance during the preliminary stages of the data analysis.

Finally, as mentioned throughout this study, I spent a large amount of time attending to personal biases, judgments, and assumptions and engaging in the process of bracketing. As the main instrument of the data collection and analysis, it was fitting to constantly observe my thoughts and intentions for the study. Engaging in the process throughout every step of this study felt natural and proved to be beneficial.

Transition Statement

While Chapter 3 presented the methodology and research design used to address the research problem of the study, Chapter 4 presents the findings of the analysis.

Chapter 4. Findings

The purpose of this study is to examine faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members in a faith-based institution use to facilitate the spiritual development of students.

Research questions of this study include:

1. How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?
3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

The chapter is organized under the following headings: Methodology Summary, Research Findings, Super-Ordinate Themes, Summary, and Transition Statement.

Methodology Summary

Participants are eight faculty from a faith-based institution in the southwestern part of the United States and reflect a variety of teaching disciplines in the areas of the humanities, arts, social sciences, education, mathematics, natural sciences, and health professions. Demographic information is represented in Table 1 (see p. 109). Interviews were privately conducted in participants' offices between the months of February-May of 2016.

Research Findings

The findings section of this study begins with a brief description of how each participant described spirituality. The Participant Profile section is followed by identifying the major themes of the study. Participants are referred to by pseudonym. The participants of this study did a beautiful job at describing their experiences; because their words illustrate the opportunity and possibility to facilitate the spiritual development of students, I did not want to dilute the

importance of the findings. The findings of this chapter truly unfolded and revealed themselves in rich, detailed ways.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Number of years teaching at the institution	Tenure status	Gender
28	Tenured	Male
23	Tenured	Male
17	Tenured	Female
9	Tenured	Male
8	Non-tenured	Female
6	Tenured	Female
6	Non-tenured	Male
4	Non-tenured	Male

Participant profile. Participants were interviewed with the hope of discovering how they felt about the role of spirituality in higher education. The second interview question of the study asked each participant to describe how he or she defines spirituality. For the sake of accurately representing how each participant defines spirituality, in their attitudes and beliefs, I stuck closely to their literal words and attempted not to reduce their statements to the essence of spirituality. However, because some participants aligned spirituality to the teaching discipline, some responses were removed and used throughout the chapter to support a theme. Participants described spirituality in the following ways:

Justin (P1):

When I think of spirituality I think of the way that one relates to the divine, the eternal, or the transcendent: that is, to something that is not quite of this world. So, for example, for some people it is Christ, for others a more abstract conception of God, or Nature, or the Kosmos. And I think of relating to that thing through prayer, ritual, meditation, contemplation, or through a religious way of life. So anything relating to the way that one pursues a relationship with that transcendent entity, or views her life through the lens of stories told about that entity; and the order or disorder it brings to the universe, would relate to spirituality on my understanding. So the way I see it, it has to do with seeking or

making some sort of a connection with that which is beyond this world, and whenever one is trying to do this, there are some sort of beliefs and understanding involved regarding the nature of the thing with which one is trying to connect.

Archi (P2):

Spirituality as I would describe it and understand it is something that is not tied to religion or dogma. Though it is not—they're connected but not tied to it. Spirituality, I think, is the awareness of one's spiritual being, spiritual side, and the awareness of nurturing and listening to that spiritual side. And, following that spiritual side and living in such a way that we are in harmony with our spiritual side.

Chuck (P3) not only defined spirituality but went on explain the complexity of the concept:

I never try to define spirituality. I really don't. It's—that's a really tough question you know because I think you define it probably in terms of for me, in terms of a basic decency and niceness and treating other people with some measure of respectfulness and recognizing the dignity in their human existence. And to the extent that those notions mesh with some form of higher, you know spirituality. I'm content with that. I mean that sounds reasonable to me. But um yeah the spirituality thing really, it's a tough issue. I mean does it involve God? Does it involve different kinds of religious expressions? Does it involve participating in religious ritual and ceremony? Does it mean for profession of certain beliefs that you swear some sort of allegiance to? Does it mean that you swear off some things? Gosh, it's a really, it's a tough—you know one the most spiritually based people I know is a friend now gee-whiz, right at 38 years and he's a native American, and he has a very deep kind of spirituality about him. And he's also in federal prison for killing two people. [Short pause] And we don't think of those things going together—somebody who is spiritual and somebody who kills people, who has killed people. And of course he was drunk and it was a long time ago and there was an argument; but the spirituality piece is a challenge. And one of the things that happens is you can get into hassles back and forth about what you know biblical instruction is, or does that get us into discussion about spirituality? I guess it does. You know I confront this all the time in . . . class with people who are firmly convinced that you go to the Old Testament and you know execution is acceptable for this and that and of course a wide range of things, but many of which we would find pretty troubling today. But [short pause] I sometimes fear that you know some people, the spirituality gets in the way of them learning things, and knowing things. Because their religious beliefs to the extent that *that* [emphasis added] and spirituality doesn't mesh. Sometimes it can be like blinders. 'No, no, no I don't want to hear that because it's not consonant with what I know; you know what I've been taught, what I believe and so I don't want to deal with uncomfortable truths.'

Jaymed (P4):

Spirituality to me, and in maybe some senses God, fits in the same description as well. In some ways I think about it as the fabric, that the threads of our daily lives, intertwining weaves. So it's that which is, it's that which is part of us but that is more than the sum of

the individual pieces. So the communal aspect I think of spirituality is all of us together is more than every one of us individually, if that makes sense? So that if you, if each of our lives is a thread and then spirituality is all of them woven together, or God, or whatever you want to call it. And I think it's got a communal aspect and it has a personal aspect. It's got an extra and an intra component to it. And the internal component—what is it? It's a belief system. It's a moral compass. It's whatever is beyond our physical, 3-dimensional, tangible realm. And I think many people in most religions hold the belief that there's something you know whether it's the cycle of reincarnation, or you only go through this once but then you go to heaven or not, or whatever. Everybody seems to have some ideas of what's out there and that's spirituality in my mind. Maybe at some point they've discovered some particle they call it the God particle; if they discover a spiritual particle maybe we'll find some tangible, physical evidence for our spirituality as it were. But I doubt it. I think in some respects those were meant to be separate.

When asked to elaborate on the internal and external parts of spirituality, Jaymed stated:

The internal part is our own individual spiritual journeys. The external is the communal aspect. The community or the idea that we are collectively more than the sum of our parts and that some spirit—there's a component of spirituality that is anchored in or a result of, I'm not quite sure how to say it, but our interactions as social creatures and people in this society or our societies because we have several. And that's part of the human condition too. We're meant to have this experience where we have to live with ourselves and we have to live with other people.

Margaret (P5):

In my own words I see spirituality as the individual's or the person's connectedness to, I mean I don't know if that's a traditional definition but their connectedness to others, to the environment, to a higher being—whoever they chose to call their higher being. So you know the relationship that they develop with those.

Catherine (P6):

To me spirituality is really how you—I see it more as like your beliefs of how to treat others; the impact that you have on others [and] how we're all interconnected. Really looking at someone and understanding that they're human—they make mistakes, you make mistakes. What we do is impact each other. Our actions impact those around us. . . . I think probably the biggest part of what I connect to spirituality is human dignity. . . . Some of the principles I tie to spirituality are like human dignity, teaching with human dignity in mind, teaching with—and that goes back to respect of others, really promotion of peace in the classroom, outside the classroom. . . . My definition of spirituality is broken up into those. And it's really about the relationship you have with a higher being. For me is God, but also for your relationship with you and your higher being, your relationship with those around you and how all of that combines.

Otto (P7):

I'm more likely to use the word faith than spiritual but my thinking is that the belief that there is something, something beyond what we see and touch necessarily on an everyday basis. That there is supernatural; that there's is nature and we may learn natural sciences and things of that type of thing but then there are things that are supernatural and what you believe that's not explained in a science book or so on. So those are sorts of things that I think are in the spiritual, faith realm.

Elizabeth (P8):

For me spirituality is tied to our beliefs regarding the meaning of life. You know I think spirituality is broader than religion. I think religion is under that umbrella, but I think spirituality is broader than that. I think it's very personal because each one of us has to decide what we believe about God, or even if there is the existence of God. Why we are here? Is God involved in our daily life or not? Is God's some remote that put the universe into spinning but then backed away? Or, is God involved in the minute details of everyday life? And I think also part of our spirituality is our connection to other people and the rest of the universe. So I think, I think of it that way. So I think of it, you know in . . . [the discipline I teach] we put things in context of the holistic approach. I think of spirituality as one more dimension. You know we have our physical body, we have our mind, we even have our emotional state but I think spirituality is a dimension beyond those things.

Describing Spirituality. When describing spirituality, three main points emerged: (1) participants believe that spirituality has a personal aspect to it; (2) spirituality includes having a sense of connectedness to others and/or to a higher being or to something beyond; and (3) spirituality can be separate from religion. Common words such as personal, individual, belief, relationship, and connection were used to describe spirituality. Descriptions are represented under the following headings.

Personal and up to the individual. All eight participants believe that spirituality is personal; participants described spirituality from their own perspectives. Evidence of this is included in statements such as: "the way that I look at it" (P2), "I never try to define spirituality" (P3), "spirituality to me is" (P4), "in my own words" (P5), "I see it more as" (P6), "my thinking is" (P7), and "for me spirituality is" (P8).

Four of the participants used the word individual or personal within their descriptions (P2, P4, P5, P8): “it’s the part of me that is—it’s all the part of me that I can’t touch, is not tangible and that I cannot understand—it just happens” (P2), “I think the internal part is our own individual spiritual journeys” (P4), “it’s very personal because each one of us has to decide what we believe” (P8).

Six of the eight participants used the word belief or beliefs in their description of spirituality (P1, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8). Participants variously described beliefs using words such as: “there are some sort of beliefs and understanding involved regarding the nature of the thing with which one is trying to connect” (P1), “it’s a belief system” (P4), “the belief that there is something, something beyond what we see and touch” (P7).

Connection and relationship with. Five participants used the words connection or connectedness to describe spirituality (P1, P2, P5, P6, P8), while two more participants described spirituality using similar words that suggested connection (P3, P4). Participant responses included: “a basic decency and niceness and treating other people with some measure of respectfulness and recognizing the dignity in their human existence” (P4), “connectedness to others, to the environment, to a higher being” (P5), “I see it more as like your beliefs of how to treat others; the impact that you have on others, how we’re all inner connected” (P6), “our spirituality is our connection to other people and the rest of the universe” (P8).

The word relationship was also used to describe spirituality (P1, P5, P6). Relationship is seen in the following responses: “anything relating to the way that one pursues a relationship with that transcendent entity, or views her life through the lens of stories told about that entity” (P1), and “it’s really about the relationship you have with a higher being . . . [and] our relationship with those around you” (P6).

Religion and spirituality. When describing spirituality, three participants stated that spirituality is not about religion or becoming more religious (P2, P6, P8). Participant statements included: “spirituality as I would describe it, as I would understand it, is not something that is tied to religion or dogma. Though it’s not—they're connected but not tied to it” (P2), “I feel more comfortable that it’s not being defined as just religion” (P6) and “I think spirituality is broader than religion. I think religion is under that umbrella, but I think spirituality is broader than that” (P8).

Three participants mentioned that spirituality is not about belonging to a certain religion (P1, P6, P8). The remaining four participants did not relate spirituality to religion in their interviews; the absence of this also indicates that, for all eight participants, spirituality is not defined through religious terms. However, religion can be related to spirituality if that is how the individual chooses to connect and relate to it.

Personal views reflected in the discipline. When stating personal definitions of spirituality, four participants mentioned their discipline, connecting their personal views and beliefs about spirituality to instruction (P1, P3, P6, P8). In similar ways, when describing the role of spirituality in higher education, three participants related their responses to their discipline (P3, P5, P6), while the additional five participants spoke of the role of spirituality in higher education in general terms (P1, P2, P4, P7, P8).

Super-Ordinate Themes

Six super-ordinate themes emerged from the analysis. A synopsis of each super-ordinate theme is presented, followed by a table reporting the number of participants included in the theme. Each super-ordinate theme includes multiple themes and supporting data. Super-ordinate themes are: (a) University Mission Facilitates Spiritual Development, (b) Promoting Holistic

Development, (c) Engaging in Critical Inquiry Together, (d) Challenging Students to See Self in New Ways, (e) Practices That Respect Student Choices, and (f) Guiding Through Uncertainty.

Super-Ordinate Theme 1: University Mission Facilitates Spiritual Development

The super-ordinate theme *University Mission Facilitates Spiritual Development* has to do with the context of the study and how the university cultivates an environment for students and faculty to develop spiritually. Themes are presented in Table 2 and described in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 2

University Mission Facilitates Spiritual Development

Supporting themes	Number experiencing	Participants
Facilitating spiritual development in a faith-based environment	6	P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8
Facilitating spiritual development through service	5	P1, P4, P6, P7, P8
Creating a sense of belonging	8	All

Facilitating spiritual development in a faith-based environment. Participants reported the faith-based environment influences the direction that they are able to pursue with students. At the heart of participant responses, when describing the university and its contributions, six participants described their alignment to the university, and the benefit of facilitating spiritual development at a faith-based institution (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8). Participants described also being able to connect with students around spirituality and the mission of the university.

According to participants, the university environment enriches the support that students receive. Jaymed, for example, described the commitment that the university has to assist students in their spiritual development. Although he believed that spirituality was foundational to higher

education, he did not “fit” spirituality within the discipline. Nonetheless, he knew that students were supported through the university:

That stuff is ongoing all around campus. Which I think is the benefit of a faith-based institution, right. . . . there are lots of opportunities to plant little seeds all through their education. . . . And so the fact that it’s all around, then I sort of benefit from it in the sense that students may say . . . something about something they did for their volunteer work or whatever where I can chime in and plant another little seed.

Participants described their connection to working at the university, stating that working at a faith-based institution provides faculty with opportunities that they would not have working somewhere else, in particular, at a state institution. “Being at a university like this you . . . certainly feel free to introduce stuff like that in ways that you may not feel comfortable doing elsewhere” (Justin). Similarly, Elizabeth says:

I think it works its way into this setting real naturally, and especially in a university like this where you don’t have to worry [like] in a state school. . . . I’ve felt fortunate to be working in a faith-based university where you don’t have to shy away from talking about spirituality. I think if I were working in a state institution I’d be more concerned about, ‘well maybe I’m not supposed to talk about that or maybe I’m not supposed to say anything about that’. . . . I just think at a faith-based university, it gives you even more ability to bring that into the classroom you know, and more of an invitation to talk about it; both for them and for us. (Elizabeth)

Participants also described that working at a faith-based institution contributes to the way that they are able to interact with students. One participant states, “that’s something that’s, I mean, certainly easier here at a Roman Catholic institution than it is at a state school,” to have discussions that are faith-related (Otto).

Facilitating spiritual development through service. Participants described the university as an institution that encourages spirituality through service. Mentioned in five participant interviews, helping others is central to the university’s mission and to the educational experience (P1, P4, P6, P7, P8). Otto shared that the overall mission of the university is to engage students in “meaningful service opportunities” that “improve the lives of people who are

in need.” In his words, part of the university’s initiative is to help students be more involved in service; to do this, the university tries to find ways for service to be part of students’ education.

Part of the planning that’s going on is that we’re going to do more service learning. And it’s going to be more integrated with their [students] education. And, you know, we’re going to do service that’s meaningful, that’s transformative for our students as well as for the community. . . . We’re realizing more and more that the things we think are no brainers, to a nineteen-year-old is very intimidating. We’re going to have to have ways to build them up to be the service leaders of the future. We’re gonna have to take them step by step from just a simple "show up" and do service . . . to the point . . . [where they plan a] meaningful [service] project [on their own] that really helps people. That really does meet the mission. (Otto)

As described by the participant, the university is intentional about scaffolding service opportunities for students.

Participants described that some service opportunities are voluntary, while others are integrated with the learning experience. In whichever way, participants said they made sure students are aware of opportunities and resources. Participants also described a collaborative effort to connect the educational experience with the missions’ statement to help others. Service experiences were described in the following ways: Three participants mentioned that the university creates opportunities for students and faculty to participate in service-learning and community service opportunities (P1, P4, P7), and two participants said that the university creates opportunities for students and faculty to learn about principles of social justice (P6, P8).

Overall, participants describe service as going out in the community to help others, as the following four examples indicate. In the first example, Otto describes an introductory service opportunity called Alternative Spring Break:

They sign up with their class and they may go with their professors and there’s bonding. . . . And so the students are volunteering for one to five days during the week to paint houses for families that can’t do it themselves. . . . So you have a new freshman or someone who hasn’t done any service hours, okay, come out, see what it’s like; we’ve got everything structured for you. You don’t have to plan anything; just show up. There will be breakfast for you, there will be reflection, [and] there will be transportation out to

the site. We'll have someone that tells you what to do and then go out with your friends, come back with your friends.

In the second example, Justin shared the university allows faculty the option to turn their courses into service-learning courses. "It's just a regular class and we just add this [service-learning] component. . . . Anybody can make a course service-learning, in any discipline." The university has a center for civic engagement office and they helped him "put together the bioethics, service-learning component" for one of his classes. As described by Justin, turning a course into a service-learning course helps students make a connection between the discipline and the importance of getting "out in the community" to help others.

In another example, three participants mentioned that students at the university engage in community service (P1, P6, P7). Although community service is a requirement for graduation, all three participants said that students also participate in service opportunities on a voluntary basis. When it comes to community service, participants said that the university is willing to help students find places where they can complete their hours, but that students can also plan and organize on their own.

Lastly, connected with the university's mission, two participants said that the university creates opportunity for faculty to introduce *Catholic Social Teaching* in the classroom as a way to help students understand the importance of treating others with human dignity (P6, P8). Examples are elaborated on in the super-ordinate theme *Engaging in Critical Inquiry*.

Creating a sense of belonging. Participants said that the university creates a sense of community and belonging for faculty and students. According to participants, sense of belonging is aligned with the mission of the university. The mission encourages the community to welcome diverse perspectives; in addition, students and faculty are encouraged to work in partnership,

“supporting each other in the pursuit of truth” and working on stuff together (Justin). Explaining the importance of the mission, Justin shares:

The last point about being welcoming of people of all faiths and backgrounds asks that if we are going to get to the truth, we have to have all these perspectives. And then that leads into the point of the Catholic intellectual tradition being founded upon this, this belief and the compatibility of and complementarity of faith and reason. So, yes it is a Catholic university, but no questions are off the table here. Right. Because the whole Catholic Church begins with trust that faith and reason are not at odds with one another ultimately.

Echoing how the mission connects with the campus life, four participants described that the university is made up of people with different faiths and beliefs (P1, P2, P6, P8). To illustrate an example, another participant shared a conversation he had with one of his students who is an Atheist. Archi said the student described the campus as a place she wants to be, despite having a different faith and tradition. He described having a “very good working relationship” with her and one day asking her how she felt about attending the Catholic university. Their conversation went as follows:

I asked her one day about coming here and she actually said, ‘well, you know, I came because of the music program—I love the professors and I love what’s going on and I want to be part of all this—of the program; I love the major!’ And I said, ‘well you know, this is a Catholic institution and I do intend to pray in class. I do, and we do have those moments; and we do do things that are very spiritually based.’ And she said, ‘oh no. I get it. I know what it is [and] I know the place that I am here for.’ And her basic response was, she said, ‘I don’t expect you to change anything about what you do. I am me, and you got [to do what you do].’ But it actually gave her comfort that we were professing our faith and acting on it, even though she did not share that faith. It was a comfort thing to her I think to see that you know.

In the same conversation, the participant was asked if any students questioned prayer. The participant responded:

I’ve never ever had a student here, like even the atheist that we’ve had, have said, no, pray—do your thing. We understand that that’s the charisma of this place. We’re here and we don’t expect to change that charisma. We’re just—we’re part of it.

Like the other participants, Archi said that developing a relationship of mutual respect is key. When they prayed in class, “she [the atheist student] just kind of sat and smiled and just let us do our thing and then she continued with us, you know. I mean it was a very respectful, mutually respectful kind of relationship” (Archi).

Creating experiences for people of all faiths and beliefs to participate in a spiritual life is a special aspect of the university. Even though the university is Catholic, it does not only recruit students and faculty who share in the same faith; rather, the university encourages an environment where students and faculty are mutually supporting each other regardless of differences in faiths and beliefs. A final example of this is illustrated in Justin’s statement:

In a Catholic university, I think we have a special responsibility to provide resources that students can take advantage of to help develop themselves, spiritually speaking, while they are here. And not just for Catholics or Christians, but [also] for anyone who comes here with the spiritual life that they want to work on. You know I think that it is really interesting that we have a lot of Muslim students who come here and they say that they are more comfortable here than at a State school, not because they’re Christian by any means, right, but just by being at a place where there are people of faith who take that seriously makes them feel more comfortable even though it is not their faith. . . . I guess while not sharing the same religion, there is something about a shared worldview that makes a place an important place for spiritual life.

Community. According to all eight participants, the university cultivates an environment where faculty and students have a sense of being connected to the university and to each other. “I think that that’s something this university strives to do. I think we’re pretty deliberate and intentional about it, creating that environment” where people are able to connect with each other and feel like they belong (Chuck).

Participants described connecting with others in community as a valuable aspect of the campus life. For instance, Jaymed said: “We’re getting bigger. And things are definitely changing with that, but I think the community and the sense of community is still solid.” The theme *creating a sense of belonging* describes that the university helps students and faculty feel

like part of the community, in one way by creating an environment that welcomes diversity of faiths; in another way, by structuring events that facilitate the making of friendships.

Facilitating the making of friendships. The university encourages community involvement for students and faculty to feel like they belong. Four participants said that service opportunities are a great way for students and faculty to develop friendships (P1, P4, P6, P7). One participant described that going out to do service work is a great “bonding experience”: it’s a way to connect with students around campus and it “gives us a different understanding of each other. . . . it’s more of a family kind of feel to it” (Otto). In a similar way, another participant said that for some courses the university implements the learning community concept, where first year students take classes as cohorts in their first semester:

That’s a great way to facilitate relationships amongst students and this is the issue here because some are commuters and naturally don’t find themselves part of the community. And then between students and faculty because we spend more time together than you would in other courses because . . . we try to schedule some outings and events just for the classes. (Justin)

Responding to the question, why are learning communities created:

Well for a number of reasons, I think. . . . If you can get students to feel like they’re really a part of the community, they’ll stick around. And, I think it really does facilitate the making of friendships for students when they first get here as first year students. . . . And then I think facilitating relationships between students and faculty; helping students to feel more comfortable going to faculty. And I think that happens through exposure and familiarity. (Justin)

Faculty connecting with each other. Five participants expressed different ways of being connected as faculty (P1, P2, P5, P6, P8). As gathered from their responses, supporting students’ spiritual development relates to the way faculty interact with each other; in a similar way, being connected in community relates to the way that faculty mutually come together through similar objectives. Participant responses illustrate a sense of community, support, and belonging.

For example, when interviewing Margaret, she continuously praised her program and the faculty in it. When asked how she facilitates the spiritual development of students, Margaret said that she doesn't know if *she* [emphasis added] necessarily makes a difference, but as a program, they do. The program includes objectives that encourage students to think through their spiritual development. Aligned with the campus effort to include spiritual aspects in the academic setting, Margaret and other faculty can support each other. Of course personalities and perspectives differ; "there are some who have more experience than others and some who are reluctant to discuss what they may perceive to be sensitive information"; nevertheless, together, they share a commonality to helping students through their development.

The example shared by Margaret also demonstrates that being able to collaborate with colleagues provides a sense of community among the faculty. In a similar way, Catherine shared that her first semester working at the university, she was given the *Principles of Catholic Social Teaching* to include in her teachings. Although the principles really guided her idea of spirituality—specifically related to the way that people treat others and the importance of practicing human dignity—Catherine shared that she "really didn't know how to use it" within her teaching, "so, I just kind of mentioned it and I moved on."

And then over time Dr. . . . next door had said she had connected it [the *Principles of Catholic Social Teaching*] to some special ed. discussion that we were having and I said, *I like that* [emphasis added]! And we started talking about it. So then when this class came up I thought, that's the *perfect* [emphasis added] foundation to build that class because it's. . . [a course that focuses on special education]. And so throughout the course we had that theme [of human dignity]. (Catherine)

Catherine proceeded to share how, "no matter what it is, . . . [students] have to connect . . . [their work] back to what it means to be human." When one of her students was struggling with an assignment, she said, "maybe go back and describe what it means to be human—what does that

mean to you?” The student continued to struggle so she gave the student the principles, and the student “was able to connect through that” (Catherine).

Institutional Fit. Three participants described a practice of the university. When attending faculty orientations and workshops, participants mentioned that the university encourages faculty to include time in the classroom for students to learn more about the mission of the university. For example, Otto recalls what was shared at faculty orientation: “The president, when I was hired, I remember he sat us down, the new faculty and said, ‘I think that every class should start off with some kind of reflection’.” When I asked Otto what was meant by reflection, he responded with the president’s words: “He was very, very open on that. . . . [But] his main point was, how are we different from a secular university; how do we set ourselves apart?”

Catherine and Elizabeth had a similar experience. They described that, when attending workshops, the university encouraged faculty to put some aspect of social justice into the syllabus. Both participants recalled that the *Principles of Catholic Social Teaching* were given to them the first semester they started working at the university; they were encouraged to include them in their teachings to encourage students to think about how their actions affect others. Participant responses described support from the university for how to integrate aspects of spirituality in the classroom. This also connects to another point: the university creates opportunities for faculty to learn. Participant descriptions introduced a willingness to meet the mission of the university. Further illustrated, participants describe their connection to the university and to the mission:

I think fit is the key. . . . I just kind of lucked out because I think there are a lot of other places I could have ended up where I wouldn’t have had the opportunity to do things that I tend to do well, and I’d be forced to do other things that I don’t do very well. And that would make for a much less pleasant experience for me. (Justin)

Participant responses demonstrate a perspective of institutional fit. Three participants mentioned the mission of the university when describing their role to facilitate the spiritual development of students (P1, P7, P8). Archi also equated his personal beliefs with his appreciation: “The fact that I have the option, that I have the right” to do things that are spiritually based, “is one of the reasons why I teach at this institution.” Another participant said, “It’s an awesome place to work and *awesome* [emphasis added] faculty everywhere . . . we have some awesome students!” (Margaret). In a similar way, four participants mentioned that they enjoyed working at the university (P1, P2, P5, P8). Participants shared in the sentiments that the university is a special place to be, describing support from the university and feeling that it’s okay to connect with each other around topics of spirituality. Participant descriptions also demonstrate a reflection of how the university fosters a sense community for the campus environment.

Super-Ordinate Theme 2: Promoting Holistic Development

The super-ordinate theme *Promoting Holistic Development* refers to the shared belief that teaching includes both the objective and the subjective. Themes describe participant’s willingness to support students at a time of transition and discovery. Themes are presented in Table 3 and described in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 3

Promoting Holistic Development

Supporting themes	Number experiencing	Participants
Having a shared philosophy	8	All
Moving beyond the content	7	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8
Acknowledging big questions	8	All

Having a shared philosophy. Spirituality was described as something that is always present and is not separate from the things that people do. It is “part of who we are as human beings” and is “that part of not denying who we are as humans” (Archi).

If we assume that higher education *is* the place where formation of the person that is now going to enter society happens, and is going to shape society, and is going to help build the society that we live in, then I can’t imagine that higher education would be devoid of spirituality. Because to do so is going to be to only develop—you know we become a trade school; it only is going to be to develop one side of a person and not an entire person. So I think that whether it is a spiritual institution or not, that needs to be in the mix. Or else we’re simply not doing our job of helping to activate and liven, and build an entire human being. (Archi)

All participants were unified in thinking that the inclusion of spirituality helped to create a holistic environment, and that holistic education has a place in higher education and is a way to support the inner life of the student. Participants believe that spirituality is foundational to student wholeness and to the educational experience, a shared philosophy that is echoed in Jaymed’s words:

I would say in some respects [the role of spirituality] it’s a supportive one. I was thinking about it the other day and it’s, in some ways it’s also like saying, what’s the role of good health or good nutrition in higher education? . . . And it’s something I think that is a part of our civilization or the human experience, but it’s such a foundational one that’s in a different category than a subject. You know you might think of science in higher education and what’s the value of a well-rounded liberal arts education and those are things that are directly a part of education. (Jaymed)

Additionally, participants stated that spirituality in higher education is an opportunity to encourage students to have increased self-awareness and an increased sense of respect, empathy, and compassion for others, all holistic qualities.

Moving beyond the content. The theme *moving beyond the content* describes the philosophy and willingness that participants had to include both the objective and the subjective in the educational experience. According to seven participants, teaching includes moving students to a different place and guiding them along the way; it includes moving beyond the

content and sharing principles that help students connect the content to the world around them. In Archi's words, teaching is about "engaging a human being; it's teaching the student and not the subject [and] everything that that implies." It includes pushing students to get in touch with their spiritual side, and moving them to a deeper and different spiritual space (Archi). Another participant shared:

We are not going to just talk about what's in the textbook in this course. We're gonna try and put things in a broader context where you don't feel comfortable thinking about and talking about some of the things that are going to touch on your spirituality. (Elizabeth).

Three participants gave additional examples of moving beyond the content:

In higher ed. a lot of times students are learning to learn, or wanting to learn beyond them. So they're trying to find their role as a being. They're trying to find their role in with how they fit in with their future career. . . . So I really think part of my role as a professor is helping them find that part of themselves. . . . I think higher ed., yes there's content, but there's really that growth within one self of, who am I as an adult and who am I as a being? And how do I fit in with those around me? I like focusing on what you do impacts those around you. I also like to point out the bigger picture in things. . . . So it's not so much the content in higher ed., but how your actions impact those around you. There's a bigger meaning other than content if that makes sense. . . . The way to look at others and treat them with dignity; I hope they remember that. (Catherine)

I believe you walk in a room and you teach the students; and the subject matter is the vehicle that you're using to reach the students. . . . I also think that they know . . . I'm not trying to just educate them on a subject. I think they know that. I think with me it's deeper than that. You know if you get into one of my classes, I'm so sorry but it isn't just about passing the test. It's about growing in yourself in a way you might be uncomfortable. (Archi)

[I] try to pull students into a journey where they learn, they develop, and they enrich themselves. That's what a good teacher should be doing. . . . You should be more; you should not just be a dispenser of facts. Because if that's what you're doing as a teacher, well then just—oh hell, just give your students the damn textbook and go let them read it themselves and you are irrelevant. You're superfluous. Your job is to help guide, structure, and lead people towards a certain sort of goal that they will never get to—you'll move them towards something. Open them up to possibilities they didn't know of before, and new ways of thinking and entertaining ideas that they hadn't approached before; that's what I try to do with students. (Chuck)

The inclusion of spirituality in higher education does not insinuate that course material is unimportant. All eight participants emphasized the importance of making sure that students are growing and developing in their academic understandings. Participants shared in the philosophy that moving students to a different place includes the willingness to stretch them in their thinking and help them to have greater empathy, understanding, and care for others.

Acknowledging big questions. The theme *acknowledging big questions* refers to the shared belief that undergraduate students are typically at a time when they start questioning and experiencing doubts. All eight participants described connecting with students to provide guidance and support through big questions and uncertainties. When describing undergraduate students, participants shared the following commonalities: (a) Undergraduate students are at a time of transition. Many of them have moved away from home and are transitioning from past experiences to their present life of attending college; (b) students are at an age where they feel uncomfortable in certain situations, specifically in their communications with others; and (c) students are at an age where they are trying to find personal meaning in their academic experiences. Many of them have big questions about their future, specifically with what will happen after graduation in terms of finding a job. Participants expressed a willingness to help promote the holistic development of their students.

Participants' willingness to encourage spiritual development is based on the belief that there is potential for helping students in their search for meaning, especially at this age. With a shared philosophy that undergraduate students are at a time of transition and big questions, participants expressed the willingness to support students in various ways. Elizabeth, for example, described:

I think it is, for most students they're generally going to be in their early twenties and it really, to me it is a time in our life that many people start questioning why am I here?

What is the meaning going to be in my life and my work? And so, I think it's a time that you can really help with that process. Cause I remember going through that phase . . . you know I think it's a time you start questioning what do I, what do *I* [emphasis added] believe? Not what my parents raised me in this faith but ultimately you come to, is that really what I own and what I believe about spirituality? We all come to that place and I think it's neat when we can help them in the university setting to really ponder that some more and work out for themselves what, what they do really believe about their own spirituality.

Six participants mentioned that, as students transition through higher education, they see change in student perspectives, interactions, and decision-making (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8). One participant shared, "They come in as freshmen and they change a lot of their behaviors, or assumptions or maybe even their world-view over the course of the years that they're here" (Jaymed). Another participant shared, "I was watching them the other day, how they talk to one another and I noticed that they . . . haven't been talking to one another like college students talk to one another. They seem more professional, more aware" (Catherine). Six of the eight participants also used words such as being young adults, maturing, growing up, being at that age, and/or being at a time of feeling uncomfortable (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8). The commonality of transition was expressed in the participants' comments about the development of students' faith and their search for personal meaning.

Development of faith. Three participants described the possibility that undergraduate students are at a time of developing and transitioning in their faith (P1, P7, P8). Moving away from home and transitioning to higher education plays a role in the questioning that students develop with regard to their faith. According to the three participants, questions have the potential to develop based on a student's upbringing—growing up in an environment where a person is raised to believe the faith of their parents, to being at a time of figuring out for themselves what they do and don't believe. For example, Justin shared:

I think I have more of these sorts of conversations with people who are not so sure about what they think, but . . . feel that their families are sure about what they think or what they feel. Maybe they have some fairly conservative families, religiously speaking. I think that sometimes what ends up happening is students who are more philosophically inclined tend to be students who aren't so sure, or more skeptical, or maybe they have just discarded their religious beliefs altogether.

Participants' willingness to support students through this time is also elaborated by Otto:

Usually [this is] a young person's first time away from home so it's a transition . . . from living the faith of their parents, to discovering their own faith. So I think higher education has to be a safe place for them to make that transition to their own faith and to have that sort of support network in truth finding, if you will.

Seeking personal meaning. In addition, participants mentioned that the transition to higher education can be difficult for students because they have to consider or come to terms with things that they did not necessarily have to before. All eight participants shared ways that undergraduate students are at a time of searching for meaning. Five participants said that many times students are faced with questions and conflicts relating to the decisions they will make regarding life after college (P2, P4, P5, P6, P8). For example, Otto described that students want to be prepared for future opportunity. Thinking about future careers, students want to say the right things and learn how to be patient. When describing some of his students, he shared:

They're faced with this, this spiritual problem, if you will, of this is the person I am today. And this is a flawed person; this is one who may hurt other people or may not take the opportunity to help someone. And that's not the person I want to be. And so . . . we can give them pointers on to how do you change from that person to this person. (Otto)

Margaret also shared some student perspectives, "I think there's been some conflict along the way. I think there's been some realization that there are other ways to adapt to something . . . There are other pieces to the puzzle maybe."

In addition, six participants mentioned that conversations in the college classroom can generate big questions for students because students are asked to think about their own spiritual beliefs, as well as consider the beliefs of others. (P1, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8). One participant said:

Many of the things they know about the world, the social system, society, [and] their fellow human beings, may not be exactly what they think they know. . . . Things aren't always what they appear to be. And so, when you deal with people who are young people and they're wrestling with some heavy questions, issues: What is truth? What should I do? What's the future hold for me? And, who likes me and why? Or, who doesn't like me and how come? Am I doing the right thing? Am I not? Then I think it's, maybe at those moments that spirituality becomes important. But I never try to define spirituality. (Chuck)

Questioning. When speaking to participants in individual interviews, they appeared to be comfortable with the term “spirituality.” Nevertheless, it appeared more common that participants addressed undergraduates as having general or big questions, as opposed to having spiritual questions. Although having big questions can include matters of spirituality, and in some cases did, participants commonly addressed questions in general terms, speaking more to the particular age group and about being at a time of transition, uncomfortableness, and challenges, rather than speaking to what spiritual questioning looked like.

Super-Ordinate Theme 3: Engaging in Critical Inquiry Together

The super-ordinate theme *Engaging in Critical Inquiry* focuses on pedagogical approaches across disciplines that were used to facilitate the spiritual development of students. Themes are presented in Table 4 and described in paragraphs that follow.

Table 4

Engaging in Critical Inquiry Together

Supporting themes	Number experiencing	Participants
Emergence of spiritual topics through content	7	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8
Encouraging self-awareness	4	P1, P5, P7, P8
Breaking habits of the mind	5	P1, P2, P3, P6, P7
Challenging assumptions	5	P1, P3, P5, P6, P8

Emergence of spiritual topics through content. Seven participants conveyed the message that spirituality is part of the nature of the course and emerges from the content.

Although spiritual related topics can be integrated into a course, and in some cases were, the overall feeling was that spirituality is not something that is separate from the academic experience. “I don’t think of myself as integrating it in a way that I might, as though it were an extra ingredient that I have to slip in there somehow. I mean it is just part of what we do” (Justin).

Participants agreed that spirituality is not something that has to be spelled out in syllabi or in lessons. Discussions related to spirituality have the ability to stem from the topic of whatever is being discussed in the context of the course work. Thinking about what is meant by topics of spirituality in the classroom, participants described spirituality in the classroom in ways similar to spirituality in higher education—stating that spirituality is present in all that they do. They don’t have to talk about it openly, but it’s there (Otto).

I don’t see it as much of an overt thing, an overt part—a very front window part of my discipline for example. But it’s like you talked about playing music in the background. It’s sort of the background music; it’s sort of the broth. When you make the soup you’ve got this [broth]—that it all exists in. (Otto)

As a way of welcoming spirituality into the classroom, participants described helping students make connections between spiritual principles such as treating others with human dignity, to the academic experience. One participant said, “No matter what it is, they have to connect it back to what it means to be human” (Catherine). Another participant said that they talk about ways to treat others:

This is where spirituality comes in because at some point we are talking about things that are not necessarily objective. Spirituality can be heavily subjective, attitudinal, connected to values and, so do we just deal with facts? Or do we get into this discussion about values and how they operate in society? . . . I never worry about having those kinds of conversations with students. In part because I think students like it. They like to talk about things that they believe, things that they value; things they hold dear. Things about what they consider right and what they consider wrong. But it’s in this context of talking about, if not spirituality, maybe talking about something very close to that like social justice. (Chuck)

Aside from teaching content-related material, participants' teaching styles included helping students make connections between the curricula and how their decisions impact others. Another participant shared that not only is spirituality "part of the curriculum," but it is included as a standard objective of the program. As faculty, they address "the spirituality and the culture of the patient" (Margaret). Conversations in class include talking about "the human nature [and] the human experience, which is more than just physiology" (Margaret).

For . . . [this program] [spirituality is] the central piece of the human individual and it's a major concern for our . . . [students] to understand the differences between spirituality and you know how our spirituality, and religion, and culture impact the patient and the family. The health outcome, the whole essence of the experience that . . . [students in the health care field] deal with on a daily basis. I mean it's central. (Margaret)

Two more participants described how the course content and spirituality directly relate:

As far as spirituality goes, if you are talking about a relationship to things divine, eternal, or transcendent, you know in . . . [class] we have plenty of opportunities to talk about that stuff because it's just part of the nature of the discipline. So, we do routinely address questions like that. . . . We focus on those beliefs and understandings—explicit or implicit—for the purposes not of figuring out the objective truth regarding that transcendent entity, but of getting a little bit clearer about your own beliefs and ways of relating to it. . . . [The class] is about the pursuit of self-knowledge. So we investigate questions both about the self that is trying to relate: Is there a soul? If so, what is it like? What makes me, me? Why do I have the spiritual beliefs I have about the nature of my self? Do I have free will? What does it mean to believe, i.e. what is faith? And about that entity with which the self is trying to connect: Is there a God? What do we mean by the eternal, transcendent, or divine? What is the nature of the God in which we believe? How do we understand our relationship with that God? Why does God permit evil in the world? What is the relationship between God and morality for the ancient Greeks, for Christians? (Justin)

For the second participant, students who major in the fine arts naturally do things that are spiritually based; it is not something that is separate from the curriculum (Archi). The course is about engaging fully and deeply, encouraging students to engage in spiritual and transformational experiences that helped to enliven the spirit; it is about engaging in that deeper part of self and producing "beauty in the world" (Archi).

It's all-pervasive—all the time. It has to be! . . . If you're gonna create the beautiful thing that you create, you can't not be in touch with your spiritual self and perform the music that is calling for something that is way deeper, you know beyond itself. You know, you can, you can do that, but what you get is plastic, surface level, you get things that have no staying power, no duration. (Archi)

Encouraging self-awareness. To help facilitate the spiritual development of students, four participants reported using oral and written reflection as opportunities for students to reflect on personal beliefs and to engage in practices that promote self-understanding (P1, P5, P7, P8). Of the four participants, three participants mentioned oral reflection (P1, P5, P8), and three participants mentioned written reflection as pedagogical practices (P5, P7, P8). As part of encouraging reflection, participants felt strongly about encouraging students to reflect on who they are, not only as a way to engage in self-understanding, but as a way to help students understand and respect others. The theme *encouraging self-awareness* reflects participant views on how they provided opportunities for students to explore meaning.

Reflective practices were encouraged for three main reasons: (a) to help students to have an increased spiritual awareness and spiritual maturity; (b) to help students to nurture their spiritual needs, improving interactions with others; and (c) to help students understand that not everyone believes the same way, in turn helping students learn to respect others who may believe differently. In addition to helping students think critically through their thoughts and feelings, three of the participants also mentioned reflection as a way for students to process what they are experiencing and to find more comfort in what they believe (P1, P5, P8).

Encouraging students to engage in oral reflection. Oral reflection was described as a way to engage students in a deeper level of thinking, helping students question and explore personal meaning. For example, one participant shared that in class, oral reflection is constantly used as a strategy for students “to question their own interpretations” and to “more critically,

more rigorously” think through personal values and beliefs (Justin). “I’m always trying to get them to do that; to be able to give an account to the reason why they do what they’re doing. . . . [And] to think about the meaning and the significance of what we are doing” (Justin). According to the participant, encouraging students to reflect on personal thinking is a way to help students be more “mature in that belief” and to help students “be more sympathetic” to where the other person is coming from. As seen in the following description, the participant shared a reflective exercise that is frequently applied in class.

I guess what I’m up to with them is trying to help them to apply what we call *Principle of Charity* to those around them who they feel are kind of too rigid. So it’s the idea that when someone says something that seems crazy, which happens in philosophy all the time, we have an obligation to interpret what they’re saying in such a way as to maximize its truth and/or its rationality. So we may decide in the end that it is not true, and it’s not fully rational. But the idea is if we hear something and it sounds crazy and we just dismiss it as crazy, we don’t learn anything, right. Whereas if we hear something and it sounds crazy and then we have to question our own initial interpretation, which we wrote it off as crazy, and then try to think a little more creatively about what this could mean or why someone might believe this, then we end up learning something, right. We see something in there that probably makes some sense. . . . So we try to make some sense of what we were saying and doing which does not involve necessarily condoning it or agreeing with it, but again, but at least making more sense of it. (Justin)

Where the above example represents a description of helping students reflect on their personal beliefs for the sake of understanding and making sense of where the other person is coming from, participants also believe that when students have the opportunity to engage in self-understanding, there is more potential for them to develop empathy and compassion for others. All four participants spoke to the importance of helping students think about personal beliefs and attitudes, and the role they play in how students think of and act towards others (P1, P5, P7, P8).

Aligned with this thinking, Elizabeth and Margaret both shared that students need to have an increased self-awareness of personal beliefs, values, and cultural upbringing if they are going to be able to go out and professionally help others. Both participants are referring to pedagogy

developed for students who interact with and take care of patients. For example, Margaret shared that she asks students to self-reflect for the purpose of helping students recognize their own qualities so that they can help others through the profession and have compassionate interactions with others.

I usually start with a question; okay so, were there any ethical issues? Did you notice—was there anything that happened on the unit today? There could be an ethical issue. . . . How could you, what did you do? What were your thoughts when you were interacting with that patient and you were hearing their story? What were your thoughts? What were your feelings? Trying to get them to recognize their own . . . qualities maybe. How could you maybe change, improve?

In a similar way, Elizabeth shared that students are often faced with experiences in the hospital where patients need spiritual support. She sees part of the role of spirituality in higher education as an opportunity to engage students in reflective practices that will help them work through situations in the professional field. She said, “I think that it has a role in helping the student to understand how they need to nurture their own spiritual needs if they’re going to be able to go out there and help other people.”

Additionally, both Elizabeth and Margaret shared that they encourage students through oral reflection to think about their personal beliefs for the purpose of helping students feel more comfortable with asking patients about their spirituality. “Like, how do you talk to the patient about their spirituality without imposing your own spiritual beliefs on them?” (Elizabeth).

They have to understand themselves first. . . . The students should understand their culture and their cultural beliefs. And the student may not have any identified culture but that’s okay too. You know what are your important beliefs? You’re taking care of a patient of another culture and you don’t know what that culture is, and you don’t know what the beliefs systems are—then you need to find out. Because I mean sometimes if you don’t know, you can be kind of crass and careless and make some huge faux pas and lose the trust of the patient, the respect of the patient, or the respect of the classmate or whoever. (Margaret)

Encouraging students to engage in written reflection. In conjunction with oral reflection, participants incorporated reflective writing assignments as a way to facilitate deeper thinking; participants encouraged students to think about what they were experiencing, helping them understand that their thinking and actions toward others are a reflection of personal beliefs and values. As Elizabeth said, the “reflections and the journaling that they do . . . definitely help facilitate their spiritual growth.” Additionally, Margaret said it is not easy for students to write reflections; her students do not “particularly like” writing them and she finds that by asking students to write written reflections, it is a way to challenge them. Margaret’s students “have trouble thinking beyond, ‘you know, I’m awesome’.” They write about the profession and how they are doing everything correctly; for Margaret, she provides feedback and asks them to think “*beyond* [emphasis added]” the role of being task oriented—to write about their experiences about how they interact with others.

Overall, participants commonly shared that they help students reflect inwardly so that students can think through how to act outwardly. Participants used reflection as a way to facilitate students' deeper understanding of how they felt inside, but it was also a way for students to see the connection between their personal beliefs, the academic content, and how, through their career choice, students could positively help others.

Breaking habits of the mind. The theme *breaking habits of the mind* is based on the idea that although participants made great efforts to cultivate a classroom environment that encouraged critical thinking, oftentimes students were reluctant to share their thoughts clearly and in their own terms. Participants mentioned that it was difficult for undergraduate students to formulate and express their uncertainty and vulnerability, stating that the transition to higher education is sometimes difficult for undergraduate students, specifically with how students and

professors exchange ideas in the classroom setting. This theme is based on challenges that five participants described (P1, P2, P3, P6, P7).

Otto describes that the transition from K-12 to higher education plays a role in the way that students participate in the learning environment:

Let's face it, a lot of K-12 we have spent making them conform to what we think about rectangles and making them conform to what we tell them about chemistry and so forth. And they don't always feel comfortable about expressing their own views. They feel like they have to just regurgitate *my* [emphasis added] views. And so I can tell you lots of times in my career where students tried to answer open-ended questions in a way they thought I wanted them to answer. And they guessed wrong about, you know they guessed very wrong. I wanted to hear what *they* [emphasis added] had to think. And sometimes it's difficult to get them to tell you what they really think.

Participant statements commonly communicated a message of dependency—dependency from the standpoint of students being, to some extent, reliant on the professors' knowing and understanding. Participants shared that many undergraduate students come with the perception that higher education is a place where the professor is all-knowing, and the student is the receiver of knowledge. For example, Justin shared that when he and his students go through the university's mission statement as a class, students are surprised that they are expected to be in partnership with their professors.

I think it is kind of an eye opener for them because I think there are a number of points that they tend to be kind of surprised by. One is that the idea that the university, the idea is that the students and teachers are mutually supporting one another in the pursuit of truth. They come to college thinking of education as really being a one-direction activity where they are receiving the wisdom of the professor. . . . But then it connects with back to the point about the pursuit of truth and the idea that we're all engaged in this common pursuit which is, as I put it, dialectical rather than rhetorical, right. So we make this big deal about rhetorical being this art of persuasion, so I am here to persuade you of something whereas dialectic is the two of us engage in critical inquiry together in the pursuit of truth. So there is this third part of the relationship right. And so, I think, that first part about students and professors supporting each other drives the idea that we are in a dialectical rather than a rhetorical relation [in that] I am not here to persuade you of stuff.

Participants recognized, even if students seem reluctant to exchange ideas, it does not mean students lack the willingness to be involved. Part of the struggle is that students are not quite sure if it is appropriate for them to respond in ways that perhaps question the professor. Even though participants encouraged student participation, students were reluctant to emotionally invest in their education and make claims based on their intellectual curiosity:

But again, this is kind of tied into a student's sense of the professor is the authority figure and that's just a kind of, that's something we just socialize students into buying into and that professors are kind of almost untouchable. And I feel a little bit badly about that because I kind of—I like it when things get a little warm in the classroom and people are passionate about what they believe. You know, here's the deal, the one thing you really got to value about people who hold a certain kind, hold any form of spirituality, is at least they believe something! They really believe in something! And that's a lot better than not knowing what to believe or not believe in anything. And, or not caring. And way too often I think many teachers will tell you we end up with students who really don't—they're just floating through. Just passing through, they really don't care a whole lot; they're not really emotionally or spiritually invested in getting an education. They want credentials, they want the degree, but they're reluctant about the education. Because if you *really* [emphasis added] want the education then you've got to make that emotional, slash spiritual kind of investment in what it is that you're doing. And you have to throw yourself into it, with passion and devotion, as Weber says in *Science as a Vocation*—passionate devotion. And so that's what I try to do with my students is to help them develop that passionate devotion. (Chuck)

Additionally, participants pointed out that as professors, they face the challenge of getting students to see that education is more than passing the test. They stated that the education that students had prior to higher education contributes to the perception that education only includes the process of developing content knowledge. Elaborated in participant statements, the educational experience includes more than being focused on content—in some ways it involves the willingness to emotionally move from one place to another in terms of growing and developing within. Changing student perception can include modeling the importance of spirituality:

I think that's what we have to do in everything. We have to model that wholeness and that wellness and that spirituality. If we want our students to act that way, and if we are

trying to form them in something other than just data collectors in their head—you know so they can pass the test. You know, I get students in class too that say, well you know is that going to be on the test? And I tell them don't, you're worried, you're obsessing too much about the test. The reason you're in this room is not about the test. I'm more concerned that you learn the material and that you know, [that] we have this growing experience here—and if you pay attention and come along with me on this experience, with this material, you're going to do fine on the test. But don't be in class *only* [emphasis added] to pass a test you know. So, you know, we try to model that kind of thing. (Archi)

Challenging assumptions. Through discussions and questioning, participants stated that they actively challenge students to talk about why something does or does not make sense. The theme challenging assumptions is based on how participants encourage students to critically think about the implications of their personal thinking and how it affects others. Helping students consider perspectives that they may have not otherwise considered includes challenging students to develop in their thinking of how they think and treat others. One participant states:

On occasion . . . [we] get into areas of truthfulness slash spirituality slash social justice. And I think those points need to truly challenge students, afflict the comfortable—afflict those who are confident in their certainness that they know *exactly* [emphasis added] the way life works and functions. And I think what you try to challenge them to do, is to tackle as Tolstoy would say, the two questions that science can't answer and that is, what shall you do and how shall you live? At the end of the day it's still the overriding question in many people, in many students, and the thing that they have to contend with is, [is] this a good idea? Should we, or should we not be doing this? Is that the right thing to do? (Chuck).

Five participants are included in this theme. Participants were not concerned with telling students that they were right or wrong in their thinking; however, they did challenge students to see others as human beings. The pedagogical approaches referred to in this theme are encouraging class discussion, asking probing questions, and exposing students to different perspectives by bringing in guest speakers or taking students off campus to experience people in different situations.

Challenging through questioning. Five participants expressed that the classroom is the place to engage students in deep levels of questioning (P1, P3, P5, P6, P8). As a way to help

students grow in their understandings, participants mentioned curricula initiatives of encouraging discussion as a way to help students develop self-understanding and to learn how to step out of their thoughts to consider perspectives that they may have not otherwise considered. Probing questions were also included as ways of helping students intellectually and emotionally develop in their thinking.

According to Chuck, part of helping students develop in their thinking includes challenging students to “think deep and hard about important things.” Speaking about the classroom environment, he describes it as the place to engage in deep, meaningful ways with students.

The classroom is *the* [emphasis added] place where you have that discussion. It’s the one forum in our society where you should entertain these ideas that sometimes make us uncomfortable and make us wiggle and make us uncertain. And that’s a college classroom, that’s what you do in it!

Encouraging students to explore their thinking, Chuck described “challenging students to think about what social justice is. If you somehow believe in it, if you connect to it, [then] what do you do? You know, how do you live a life based on that?” (Chuck).

I . . . [also try to] get them to stop and think deeply about these various social issues. As a . . . [social scientist] what we address, are a variety of social issues and to talk about what is, if you say that human beings have dignity and a measure of sacredness then what goes with that? With respect to how we punish people or not? What kinds of crimes we throw people in prison for? Or don’t? Do we allow some people whose sexual orientation is different from others to get married, or not? And so that’s what I like to do! Is to challenge students on some of those things. I would like to think that I change minds on certain things, but I’m satisfied if I can just get them to think seriously and be skeptical of conventional wisdom. (Chuck)

Similarly, Catherine shared:

I definitely think that my role as an educator is to challenge, because if they’re not being challenged, they’re not growing. . . . I think if you don’t meet any challenges, then where are you advancing in your own understanding of not just the content but of everything in general? And so a lot of the times I’ll tell my students, there’s no right or wrong answer, but I want to see it advancing. And not just in depth, but how does that relate to other

things? And how does it also impact other things? So it's not like expanding your definition, but expanding in general, your understanding of the concept. How it relates to others?

As communicated by Elizabeth, encouraging students to engage in class discussion also takes willingness from the teacher.

Class discussion is first and foremost, and you never know; you always have to allow for time to just—if it wasn't on my agenda but it seems to be a pressing need for them to talk about something with a deeper meaning then you allow for that. Cause I've learned that they're probably gonna benefit more about going more into depth about that discussion than listening to me blah, blah, blah about . . . [the discipline], you know. So I think you have to capture those moments with class discussion where they see that it's a teachable moment with something you know related to—let's put things in a broader context of, what is this really going to mean when you're . . . [in the profession]? How are you really going to impact a patient? How are you really going to help a family member? You know those kinds of things. So I've learned to be less on my agenda sometimes and if they're ready to talk about something, you don't want to waste that; because you may not get that back again.

Exposing students to different perspectives. Included in the theme of challenging assumptions, the same five participants mentioned exposing students to situations that they may not have otherwise experienced. Several of the participants mentioned helping students deepen their understanding of the content, while challenging them to consider real-world situations. One of the things that participants did was to expose students to different perspectives by bringing in guest speakers or by taking students off campus to complete field and/or service work. In any instance, experiences were aligned with the content and were intentionally presented as opportunity for students to examine their internal feelings and beliefs so that they could be better positioned to understand and help others—additionally deepening the level of compassion that students had for others. Presented for the reader are two powerful examples in which participants hoped that students would reflect on the assumptions and judgments that they had of others; participants' intent was to expose students to people who are different in their situations and in their thinking. Examples demonstrate opportunity to deepen students' connection with the

content, as well as demonstrate opportunity for students to consider personal thinking and to see through the eyes of others.

Catherine shares a story about teaching a class for students who want to be high school teachers; she shares how she connects the content to principles such as treating others with human dignity. Her goals were to challenge students to grow in their understanding, to help them understand the value in their learning, and to broaden their view of others and their situations.

The topic we were talking about was homelessness because we have an increase in population of students in K-12 that are homeless and we do have laws that protect them. So the conversation was the McKinney Vento Law. And the law really guides and protects students who are homeless. Well, in that discussion, one of the students made the comment that, it's their fault if they're homeless (talking about the parents). And they're all alcoholics and they've all—you know he kept putting the blame on them. They've done something to make themselves homeless, or they're not working hard enough to get out of it. *And it really bothered me* [emphasis added] because it's a very narrow view. It's a view that you're not looking past yourself. So I decided to take them to . . . [a local homeless shelter] and do a tour because I knew that they had two different programs. When you go inside the building, everything is a training program. So if you help in the kitchen, you're actually working with a chef and you get a certificate for Culinary Arts. And then they bring in hotels to interview you and so you start cooking in a hotel. If you work in the landscaping, you get a certificate for landscaping and you go on interviews to work. If you help in the food bank, you get your forklift license that you can work. So that was one view of it. And then they also have, I think it's called Prospect Court or something like that. And those are individuals who live outside and they're not committed to being clean and sober; they don't want to go through a program. Okay. So I wanted them [students] to see both sides. And so we show up, and outside the building the . . . [student] is saying comments like, 'Oh we're gonna see homeless people—yay!' And, you know he's kind of being a goof ball about it. And so we go in and they take you in a room and they describe the stats around there. . . . And their eyes were you know—*huge* [emphasis added]. They [shelter staff] gave all these different stats and then they were talking about all the different people they serve. Like they had one man who was an engineer who lost his job and couldn't find another job because he didn't know technology very well. Who's going to hire someone who's close to retirement and train him? So that's what led him to being homeless. And I look over at this gentleman, this student who was being a little closed minded at first; and I see that his eyes were—[he was] surprised at what he was hearing. So then they started talking about other people they see in the program, you know a young mother who was going to community college, her husband passes away. They were so young that they didn't make decisions on, like, life insurance, and different stuff like that, because they were just so young and now she was raising a child—couldn't afford to bury her husband. And it was just all these stories that we don't think about; which can be heart breaking, but I think this is exactly what he

[the student] needed to hear. So then we start touring the facility and he sees that it's not the people that you see begging on the street. There's young children [and] there's young guys that look just like him. And he actually said, you know we passed by one guy because we just learned that they get this tag to scan in and out of the building and there was a young man his age pulling a suitcase and has that tag. And I see him eyeing it and he turns around and he says, '*he looks just like me* [emphasis added].' And I said, '*yeah* [emphasis added]!' And he said, 'then how is he homeless?' And I said, 'doesn't have family to go back to you know. And we just walked around the facility [and] he interacted. And after that he came into my office and he said, 'thank you—you know I *never* [emphasis added] thought about [the] hardships.' After that I ended up having him in a class two years later and it was for Special Education. And for the final, I just required a paper. And he went *over* [emphasis added] and beyond. He rented a wheelchair and he went across campus for two days filming how difficult it was for him to travel campus and he came back and he presented this. And not only did he present how our campus isn't always universally designed for everybody, but he came in with solutions. And, I don't think he would have done that before. So I really think that experience, you know—*and me* [emphasis added] when he said those things, I kind of went back to he's human. He hasn't had a lot of experience. He's viewing it only through the lens that he has been exposed to. So my job in higher ed. is not just to teach them what the McKinney Vento Law is, but to understand the population and *why* [emphasis added] it's there. You know, and how does it connect to human dignity, how does it connect to these things? I might have not used those terms, but that's what I wanted him to see. Because if he doesn't understand why the McKinney Vento is there and who it's meant to protect and why, then he's not going to apply it correctly as a teacher. He's not gonna see the value. And the people that are gonna hurt are the children. So I think that was very powerful, that experience for him. And I learned a lot because initially I was rather upset at him and frustrated [chuckle] and how can he believe that? But I had to think, you know, he thinks that because he hasn't experienced anything else.

Another participant, Chuck shares a story about a student who underwent a transformative experience; the topic of the class lesson was about the death penalty. To premise the story, the participant began by introducing a guest speaker who would visit his class. The goal of the lesson was to challenge students to consider a perspective that they may have never considered.

This week the founder of the *Journey of Hope... From Violence to Healing*, that's the name of the organization . . . Bill will come and talk to my . . . class. And he'll tell them a story. . . . He'll be talking about something that they don't hear. He'll be talking about being a murder victim's family member and engaging in forgiveness, and talking about forgiveness. . . . He just didn't come out as an opponent of the death penalty; he went through this thing that we would wish on nobody—to be a murder victim's family member and to reconcile.

Chuck went on to describe a semester where Bill and members of the organization came to speak with students about their personal journeys of finding forgiveness in devastating and unfair situations.

Some years ago I had a group of people who belonged to Journey of Hope come to a summer school class I was teaching. Journey of Hope is comprised of murder victims' family members and the families of death row inmates, all of whom speak against the death penalty. And so the murder victim family members are a very interesting collection because we normally think that these are people who want and demand the death penalty and retaliation for the murder of a husband or wife, mother or grandmother. And they don't! This particular occasion I had three of them in the class and I had invited others so we had a room full of about maybe 40 people, 35 people. One was a woman from Virginia whose brother was a highway patrolman who had been murdered in a confrontation with a guy who was on the run and he, the murderer, had been sentenced to death and this woman had reached out to him, and mind you it was her brother who had been murdered, and she was going to return to the state where he was gonna be executed. And she was going to sit with his side of the witnesses. Another one was a woman who had been in prison for a crime she had not committed, I can't recall if she had been sentenced to death or not, but in any case she had had that prison experience and she had been exonerated. Another woman had had a daughter who had been murdered, really horrible you know, and she did not believe in the death penalty either. [Well,] the woman whose brother, a cop, she's speaking against the death penalty talking about her brother, and I had a student in class, another woman named Karen, and Karen was a . . . County Constable; and she finally couldn't take it any longer and she just interrupted and said, I cannot believe this! If I was killed in the line of duty the least I would expect is that you people would kill the son of a bitch for me. And it got pretty tense and then not tense, heightened emotion and then back-and-forth. And then when the whole thing, after the whole session was all over with, after class was done there were hugs, tears, and everybody was fine. But quite clearly this [student] Karen had some pretty intense feelings about execution and the death penalty and who deserved death. And the following semester she's in one of my classes, I get to class early and she's reading Helen Prejean's book, *Dead Man Walking*. And I said to her, what are you doing? And she said, well I'm just reading what the other side has to say—I haven't changed my opinion, I'm just reading. Okay. [So] the following semester (now are about a year out, right), the following semester she comes bounding into my office and she said, you want to see what I'm reading now? And I said, show me. And she showed me a copy of Jesse Jackson's book, *Legal Lynching: Race in the Death Penalty*; I might be off on the title. And I said, Karen, if you keep reading this stuff it is going to seriously goof up your politics! And she said, I've changed my mind. And she said, it all started last summer with the Journey of Hope. I couldn't shake the experience. . . . She said, and so I've been on this journey to learn more and she said, I've changed my mind. . . . So, it was like, there was that, there was that moment in that class where something resonated downward with this or inward with her. And she said, I couldn't shake it; I couldn't get rid of the

feelings, whatever, the contradiction. The whole experience moved her from where she was to someplace else. And that was a kind of a transformative moment for her and you know those are the special things that happen in a class that have a certain power. And I think it's more than just an objective sort of, oh I've read now and I look at data differently, and I've studied more history and so I changed my mind. Nah uh—there was other stuff. It was [a] more emotional, spiritual change that was going on with her because she was coming to the realization, really that maybe all life possesses some measure of human dignity and that, and sacredness. . . . I guess in a way what I'm saying here is as a teacher what I'm trying to do is to create these moments, these experiences, these discussions—in this case . . . [they listened] to the murder victim's family members who does what we don't think murder victims' families do which is forgive. Nice to talk about—nice to read about it in the Bible but to actually do it; and so what's going [to] happen here is—something's gonna happen inside some of these kids.

Super-Ordinate Theme 4: Challenging Students to See Themselves in New Ways

The super-ordinate theme *Challenging Students to See Themselves in New Ways* is what participants desired for students: to have a growing experience and to see that they can contribute to society by positively impacting others through their career choice and through service work. Themes are a continuation of how participants connected the learning environment to exposing students to different perspectives.

Table 5

Challenging Students to See Themselves in New Ways

Supporting themes	Number experiencing	Participants
Helping others	5	P1, P5, P6, P7, P8
Agents of change	6	P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8
Guiding by example	6	P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8

Helping others. The theme *helping others* is based on the different ways that participants encouraged students to have an increased sense of being connected to each other and to the community. Additionally, the theme has to do with the real experiences that participants created for students. As a way of facilitating students' spiritual development, participants described

exposing students to educational experiences that promote service to others. Participants spoke about the value in providing students with opportunities that allow them to engage in civic engagement, describing service as a way to help students understand that their actions can positively impact others. Participants hoped that by providing opportunities to help others, it would also allow students to see another perspective. Describing service learning courses and the connection to spirituality, Justin shared:

I teach service learning courses and part of the idea there is to provide students with kind of raw materials for their moral imagination; and I think that certainly has implications for spiritual life. Because you know, I guess as I see it, your spiritual life is sort of profoundly informed or connected with your world; and your world is really a product of your imagination in a way. I mean in the sense that you know the reason in bioethics that they go to service learning is to go out with . . . [a local] mobile clinic and go to schools to help get vaccinations to kids who haven't gotten their vaccinations. And to just see kind of the state of these schools, these kids, their situations, you know, family situations. . . . And in one sense, it's not like they don't know all this is going on. Right. But in another sense, *they don't* [emphasis added]. And this is something we talk a lot about in . . . [class], is the difference between what you know intellectually and what you know existentially, we might say. Right. What's *really* [emphasis added] part of your world and what's not? So there's these statistics in the paper and the stories in the news; and then there's what you see when you go home, or what you're thinking about when you see someone as you're going home. So, I think it is important for students to get out in the community and to be exposed to stuff that they are not normally exposed to so that it becomes part of their world; and it really doesn't if you are only reading about it or talking about it. So given the connection between the world of your imagination and your spiritual life, I think it's connected. (Justin)

Challenging Students to See Themselves in New Ways reflects guiding students to develop in their understandings of how to care for others. The theme speaks to helping students develop a sense of purpose and engaging students in activities that promote sense of responsibility and connectedness to others. Participants shared the following examples: (a) taking students out to shelters where they get to work with children of different age groups who have been removed from their home for one reason or another; (b) taking students out to foster homes for children with special needs (which include children that are non-verbal or have other physical

disabilities); (c) encouraging students to play games with the children and understand the importance of modifying for other people's needs; and (d) taking students to a Catholic Charities camp where they have refugee families and students are able to work with people from elementary school age to adults.

Participants mentioned that students do service work because they like it. A participant shared, "they really do like community service. They like to hear, or see how they impact others (Catherine). At the university, "they have the 45-hour community service requirement" and yes, "they do service because they need hours, but they also do service because they do enjoy working with the kids and doing this work. It doesn't have to be an either-or" (Justin). "You know you see little differences in [students] when they do service projects; their views of some of the neighborhoods of the people that they're helping change. They definitely feel better about themselves having done some service work" (Otto).

Agents of change. In addition to exposing students to service opportunities, elaborated in the theme *agents of change*, participants also encouraged students to see themselves in new ways through their career choices. Five participants stated that they relate the course content to how students can positively help others through their career choices (P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).

Additionally, three of the five participants strongly voiced that their pedagogical intentions are to help students see the bigger picture of looking beyond themselves to help others (P5, P6, P8).

Instead of seeing a profession as just a profession, participants used the university experience as a way to help students see people as human beings and to reflect on the connection that human beings have with each other. Speaking about a discipline and students that he teaches, a participant shared how the fine arts contribute to society:

That's the beautiful thing about the fine arts is that they allow you to be in touch with that in a way that almost nothing else does. It's not that nothing else is creative in the world—

there's lots of stuff that's creative, but that's the unique gift to humanity of the fine arts. . . . When they give back, there's that spiritual connection. It enriches humanity. It's a symbiotic relationship. (Archi)

Rather than only teaching content, participants mentioned challenging students to think about what *they* could do, individually and collectively, to take part in the promotion of treating others with dignity. Responding to the role of spirituality in higher education, Elizabeth shared:

I think it's also to inspire students to want to help others selflessly. You know that you can show them through this career path you're going to be able to help people in ways that you never even dreamed of maybe.

Additionally, Elizabeth described teaching students to think about the professional setting and being concerned with issues of treating others with care and compassion. She implements *Principles of Catholic Social Teaching* as a way to guide students to think about taking care of the vulnerable in the community and treating human life with dignity. Once her students have had some experience in the professional setting, she talks with them about how some of the principles play out in the hospital. In health care, “they really do see some of the injustices, but then they also usually have really good examples of how they’ve seen works of mercy” (Elizabeth). Elizabeth described a time where a homeless man was admitted into the hospital; she connected the experience back to the principles of social justice.

I had a student once start an IV on a homeless man that was kind of dim when we went into the room and she started wiping his arm with alcohol, an alcohol prep pad where she was planning to start the IV. And she lifted up the alcohol prep pad and it was just covered in dirt. And we made eye contact and um, so I went and got her a washcloth, first because neither one of us realized that—I mean he had just been admitted the night before so nobody had bathed him yet, and goodness knows how long it had been. . . . [And] the student just did a beautiful job of taking care of this homeless man. I mean never for a moment made him feel uncomfortable, unwanted. You know it was just like we're going to do this; and she treated him with kindness and respect. . . . And so they think about those kinds of situations where they can—they can talk about it in the context of social justice and you know what are we doing to care for the homeless in our community? And what happens when they get sick? You know what are we gonna do when they've been a diabetic and haven't been taking care of themselves—haven't had

insulin, and now you know they've got gangrene on their toes because their blood sugar's been high for so long their limbs are literally rotting off you know.

Instead of allowing students to only see themselves as students with little to no experience, participants encouraged students to understand that they have a role and responsibility to contribute to helping others. As depicted in the following statements, Margaret and Otto also expressed how they help students to see themselves in new ways. In Margaret's case, she tries to help her students understand that they need to be more than people who perform professional tasks. She explains that part of being in health care is taking the time to get to know the patient and seeing the individual as a human being.

I'm trying to get them to focus on the caring, compassionate. Anybody can be a nurse. Anybody can do these skills and probably correctly implement the whole critical thinking process, but what makes *you* [emphasis added] different from somebody else? . . . I'm trying to get them to see the full patient experience. And so sometimes you have to ask the patient, 'if you weren't here what would you be doing?' Or, 'how do you feel about this treatment that you're getting?' Or 'how do these medications make you feel?' Or you know, 'what could be done different in my error? What do you need . . . [me] to do for you?' You know, which is more than fluffing pillows. Maybe it's just spending a few more minutes at the bedside and providing some reassurance. [Because] it's real easy to be distant you know in the busy life of the whole unit. It's really easy to be distant and it's really easy to be annoyed when the patient calls for something and you're on your way to do something else. [It's] having the students see beyond themselves—encouraging the student, maybe that's it, to see beyond themselves, the typical linear eyesight to see the *whole* [emphasis added] individual rather than just, you know the clothes [that the patient is wearing]. (Margaret)

Similarly, another participant shared that pedagogically he helps students think about how they can positively influence the lives of others through their career choice. The participant shared that he wants his students to be the type of individuals who change the future outcomes for others. When speaking to his students about the different population of children that they may teach, the participant tells his students that even if the children are raised in poverty, they can still get an education and be successful. Helping his students think about “what impact they can

have on children,” the participant shared that he wants his students to be teachers who push students to look past their circumstances.

I want my future teachers to experience that and see the social change that they can make by getting students to learn to read and write and to do arithmetic. . . . To really get them to think about what impact they can have on children and how they can change their future outcomes. And really, if we think about social justice, what better way to equip them to, to move out of poverty and to give them a great education. (Otto)

Included in this theme, four participants did share that it can be difficult for students to see themselves in new ways (P5, P6, P7, P8). Throughout the interviews, participants also spoke about the importance of not letting perception and stereotypes get in the way of approaching others with openness. They described encouraging students to think of the bigger picture of connecting with others through caring, compassionate, and respectful interactions.

Guiding by example. To help students come to new understandings, participants described modeling for students through their curiosity, and constantly engaging with students through partnership. Understanding that students were being exposed to new situations, six participants described guiding students through their uncertainties (P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8). Role modeling for students was described as an approach to help students grow in their understandings at a time when students are trying to make sense of their experiences.

Thinking about the type of influence that participants had on the life of the student, participants felt that they could influence students positively by modeling for them to have an increased self-awareness, and to have positive interactions with others. As a way of teaching students to have an increased awareness of self, Archi shared that as a department they find importance in role-modeling spiritual wellness for students.

I think every faculty member . . . has to acknowledge and be aware that they are at least influential to the spiritual life of the students. When the students are here . . . and in my care, I feel like I now have to gain that privilege to have them here. So you know, I have to live, and act, and work in such a way that sort of models what I would wish for them,

and that sort of spiritual thing. And we've actually talked about that with our own faculty up here in faculty meetings. You know, what is the philosophy of our department and how do we show the students how to buy into it? . . . What is the wellness of ourselves? [And] how do we model that spiritual wellness for the students so they can see? (Archi)

Similarly, Jaymed shared that there is always opportunity for faculty to model for students.

The way people treat each other and think about [others], you know that's something I think we can influence either directly or by example. . . . And it makes sense you know that we are who the students spend a lot of their time interacting with. And so we're a major conduit for that. And not just in the sense of directly addressing it, (you know we made the health analogy earlier) so not just about putting up posters to say these are the healthy food options, but what does the cafeteria serve; that's what you see every day. And so for us, it's a chance to teach by example. I think I try to do that a lot more than any direct thing, is just let me show you what I do and how I deal with the situations and let you take from that what you will.

Five of the six participants also described modeling for students in their communications with others (P2, P4, P5, P6, P8). In several of the examples, participants described helping students understand perception, diversity, and the importance of avoiding discriminatory thinking. A goal of participants was to model for students to have positive interactions with others. One faculty member mentioned, "That's what we're trying to develop for our students;" for them to be compassionate and have those type of interactions (Margaret). Responding to the question, how do you teach compassion, Margaret answered, "You allow them to witness it."

Participants recognized that students see examples of poor role modeling and that they experience examples of good role modeling. They "see kind of the whole realm" of interactions (Margaret). Knowing that students witness different examples of modeling, participants strongly believed in modeling the importance of having the type of interactions that treat others with respect and dignity. For example, one participant described a time when she took some of her students off-campus to work with "medically fragile" children. She described the environment as being a place where children had "feeding tubes, or things that help them breathe;" additionally, students at the medical center had other disabilities. When telling her story, the participant

remembered when her students first walked up to the facility, “I could tell they felt uncomfortable because they were looking down [and] they’re not making eye contact.” The participant stated that these particular students were freshmen and sophomores, and “at that age if they feel uncomfortable with a topic what they chose to do instead of saying I feel uncomfortable, [is] they shut down or they’re quiet. They don’t make eye contact, they don’t greet, or they make fun of” (Catherine). Noticing her students’ behaviors, the participant described modeling for her students as a way to help her students feel more comfortable, showing them that it was okay to interact with the children at the facility.

Throughout the visit, I made sure I went *over and beyond* [emphasis added], stronger than I would normally to greet students [at the medical facility] as they walked by. I would shake their hand and put my hand on their shoulder and say good job! And so we were there for about an hour and a half. I greeted every single . . . student that walked by, asked them how their day was going, asked them what they learned that morning. I said, ‘I noticed so and so about you when you were walking down the hall,’ [and I] engaged in these conversations. Well by the end of the hour and a half, I noticed our students doing similar behavior. And so things like that, kind of goes back to, we only know what we’ve been exposed to. So, just through that hour and a half, I saw growth. . . . When we first started, I mean they wouldn’t look around the room; they wouldn’t look at a child and say hi, how are you doing? And at the end, I mean they were greeting [and] they were talking. But they needed that opportunity to see that it was okay to do those things. (Catherine)

Participants also described modeling as an opportunity to help students reflect on their personal thinking. Instead of allowing students to be caught up in the negativity of what others do, modeling was a way to help students to have tolerance, to be accepting of others, and not to criticize others.

Helping students see a different perspective was mentioned in participant interviews. For example, Elizabeth shared, when it comes to helping students see a different perspective, “a lot of it is role modeling”; even when the modelling is negative, there are learning opportunities.

What I always try to bring them back to when they talk to me about, this nurse did that . . . really poorly, and they really blew that patient off, and it just made me angry. I try to

flip it into okay, what will *you* [emphasis added] do when you're the nurse and you're in that situation? How will *you* [emphasis added] respond differently in a way you think that was worthy of what the patients' needs were at that time? So there's lots of opportunity to get them to reflect on themselves. And I try not to let them go on too long about complaining about other nurses and also getting them to think about well what did the nurse have going on that day? What other stressors did that nurse have that maybe they were experiencing? And you know, try to get them to be a little bit more compassionate about you know—it's easy to criticize, but you weren't really walking in their shoes that day either. (Elizabeth)

In a similar way, Margaret described helping students in their interactions with others, modeling and teaching students to look beyond attitudes, especially with people who are “difficult” to deal with.

It's really easy to give an opinion about something, but until you really know the full circumstance, you're only voicing opinion on a very small perception that may be true or may not. . . . Perhaps begin to identify with their perspective what they're dealing with. Because you don't know what happened to them before you walked through the door. (Margaret)

The participant stated that it is about getting students to look “beyond” what they see and to help them think about how they can “make a positive difference” for someone else. Because a “positive difference is not some flip it comment that can be hurtful and mean” (Margaret).

Super-Ordinate Theme 5: Practices That Respect Student Choices

The super-ordinate theme *Practices That Respect Student Choices* represents a sense of care and respect for students. Themes found in this section represent a coming together of participants' personal philosophies with how students are seen and treated. Participants approached facilitating the spiritual development of students in cautious ways; they were clear in not wanting to be intrusive or indoctrinating to the spiritual lives of students. Themes are presented in Table 6 and described in the paragraph that follows.

Table 6

Practices That Respect Student Choices

Supporting themes	Number experiencing	Participants
Presenting in broad contexts	6	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8
Honoring students	5	P1, P2, P3, P5, P8
Noticing behavior	8	All

Presenting in broad contexts. Found within the commonalities of participant interviews, participants spoke about the importance of presenting spirituality as an invitation for students to explore meaning and purpose. Presenting spirituality in broad contexts invites students to make connections and participate in questioning rather than accepting the instructor's view as a form of imposition. Knowing that faculty are somewhat seen as authority figures, participants reported not wanting students to see them as individuals who are trying to impose their views and beliefs on students. Although spirituality can emerge naturally, participants believed that students should have the freedom to believe in their own ways, as long as they are growing in their understandings of how to positively and respectfully interact with others. "With a lot of things, especially with spirituality, you can't tell them what it is, or how to think—it needs to be really a reflective process that happens within them" (Catherine). Six participants are included in the theme *presenting in broad contexts* (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8). They approached spirituality from topics related to the course, to the career choice, or from discussions that encouraged students to have respectful interactions with others.

Participants intentionally connected spirituality to the learning environment in welcoming and general ways; they did not want to limit the possibility for students to find meaning and purpose in their educational experience. For example, when presenting the *Principles of Catholic Social Teaching*, Elizabeth described the following:

I try not to frame it in Catholicism because I know that in every class there's gonna be people that aren't Catholic. And there, even in our university, there are people that I think are struggling with their own spiritual beliefs. They don't really know yet what they think is the truth about spirituality and so I think you know if you keep it in a broad context then you kind of open it up for them to just think about, you know just think about it. If nothing else just think about it and how will you be able to help other people through their career choice.

Stating pedagogical intentions. To help students feel comfortable and present spirituality in non-intrusive or indoctrinating ways, six participants said that they were purposeful in sharing pedagogical intentions with students (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8). As a way of presenting spirituality from impersonal perspectives, six participants presented spirituality through the context of the course (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8), four participants connected spirituality with the career choice (P2, P5, P6, P8) and three participants presented spirituality as a form of social justice (P3, P6, P8). They consistently described having clear and purposeful intentions for including components of spirituality in the academic setting. In doing so, participants predicted that through these efforts, students knew the purpose for talking about the topics in class.

For example, one participant repeatedly stated that his intention and motivation for getting students to deepen their spiritual engagement is based on helping students understand that if they are going to succeed as music artists', it is imperative for students to have a "spiritual connection to the actual art that they are doing" (Archi). From an impersonal perspective, the participant tells students that in order to have longevity in the field of music, they have "to open up that part that is deeper than just, I am going to swap something together" (Archi).

Additionally, some participants mentioned that it is not necessary to use the term spirituality in the classroom. When helping students make connections for including components of spirituality in the academic setting, they typically understand why they are doing what they are doing.

Perception of student feelings. Participants shared their perception of how students feel about topics of spirituality in the classroom. Six participants expressed that because spirituality naturally works its way into to the university environment and to the nature of the course, their perception was that students had a better understanding as to why they were attending to things that are not necessarily objective. Participants shared the way they introduced spirituality in the classroom made a difference in the way students perceived it.

Four participants perceived that students are open to spirituality in their educational experience because of the university they attend (P1, P2, P5, P8). One participant shares: “They never question it because they get it; that’s why they are there,” to be part of the university and to be part of the major—they understand why spirituality is part of their education” (Archi).

Additionally, two of the four participants mentioned that because they relate spirituality to the mission of the university, students do not question why they are talking about the things that they are talking about, in part because students who attend the university typically understand that they are going to attend to a broad context of issues. The excerpt below provides an example of being clear with students about the reasoning of how spirituality relates to the mission of the university.

On the first day we spend most of the class reading through and commenting on the mission of the university. . . . I explain to them that what philosophers are often trying to do is just to think about what we’re doing. Right. So, we are constantly engaged in various activities and projects but we don’t always stop and step back to think about the meaning and the significance of what we are doing, what was really involved in all this. So I’m always trying to get them to do that; to be able to give an account to the reason why they do what they’re doing, so they know that value, belief, whatever. The mission is the university’s ultimate account of the reason why we do everything that we do, and so, if they are part of this community, to understand what it means to be part of this community is to understand where we are headed and why we are doing what we are doing, and so, this is a really important document. Or it should be; I think, for us and for them. . . . So anyway, we spend time doing that and that certainly is connected to spirituality because part of it is using your imagination to think about the three sisters who came over from France and what that would have been like and how hard that is to

imagine what that would have been like and what could have really possessed them to do this. And for them, that had a lot to do with their spiritual life—you know, their religious convictions. So you know that's—I think setting things up in such a way that they can see that we're going to have to attend to really broad contexts for thinking about what we're doing in this class. And how what we're doing in that class should have some implications for how they understand their project as a student fulfilling the core, or their project as a major, their project as a university student, or their project as a person. Right—it's all connected. The mission delivers that sense to them. (Justin)

In a similar way, two participants mentioned that students who attend the university typically find more comfort in connecting the learning experience to matters of spirituality; participant thoughts are based on a perception of what students are experiencing, not necessarily based on what students have shared. One participant stated:

You know, so this is a Catholic institution and they let you talk about that and it's like, it's part of the curriculum so yeah, we talk about that. So, but regarding the human nature and you know interpersonal interactions, I think it's expected. (Margaret)

The second participant stated:

I think we're fortunate here at . . . [this university] that we tend to attract the kind of student that is comfortable talking about spirituality. They came to this university a lot of times seeking that anyway—they wanted to be part of the faith-based community. I think if anything we have to sometimes help them stretch their horizon a little bit to understand that not everybody's going to have the same spiritual beliefs as you, and being okay with that and accepting them and not making assumptions about that just because their Hispanic [or] they're Catholic. You know, you don't know that until you ask. And you have to tread waters lightly with people and respect people. I think most of the students, though they're ready to talk about it [and] they're ready to process it, they're just sometimes surprised, like they didn't expect to be hit with pretty heavy-duty stuff pretty early on. (Elizabeth)

Continuing to describe her perception, the participant also shared that she connects what they are doing to the mission of the university.

By and large at . . . [this university], I think they get it—they know why I'm bringing it up. They know why it's an important topic to talk about, and especially if it gets tied back to the tenets of the university, you know this is about service to others—this is about faith. . . . If you can bring it back to why they chose this university—that these kind of things are gonna be discussed because we believe as faculty that it is important to talk about it. So I think by and large the approaches, if they're chosen well and if they're

timed well, they feel pretty natural to the students most of the time and they understand that yeah, we gotta think about [it]. (Elizabeth)

Avoiding imposition of religious views. Participants stated that religious beliefs were separate from encouraging students to connect with their inner selves. Although students can relate their experiences to religion, to avoid imparting religious views to students, participants were careful in how material and conversations were presented. Included in the theme of *presenting in broad contexts*, four participants stated that spirituality in the educational environment is not about religion or getting students to become more religious (P1, P3, P6, P8); rather spirituality is an invitation for students to relate in their own terms. Despite coming together in a Catholic university, participants understood that students are from different religious faiths, and therefore approached spirituality with openness. They wanted students to view spirituality as an opportunity to engage deeply and grow in their personal spiritual development, as opposed to viewing it as an imposition of religious views. In the following statement, Chuck shares an example of his philosophy:

What you want to do is to not tell people that they're wrong, but to help them see things more clearly. See things the right way. Whatever that is. And that, that's the tricky part. But I think in an institution, back to the whole question about spirituality—help people develop as soulful, spiritual people. Not necessarily devout and not necessarily as ritually religious. And I don't see it as turning people into, improving their element of religiosity, making them go to mass or go to the mosque. I don't see it that way. I think what good teachers try to do—what I try to do is to help my students be better people. And to know more, to feel better, I mean to be more in touch with the world in which they live. To have some greater empathy for people who are different and to break out of their cozy little conventional assumptions. And so to the extent that I can do that, I'd like to think that somehow, maybe very indirectly, I'm helping them become better, deeper, spiritual people—more contemplative, less judgmental, maybe more forgiving.

Statements from participants related to respecting that students come to the college environment with their own beliefs and meanings. The next two examples demonstrate how participants intentionally conveyed the message to students that engaging in spirituality is not

about becoming more religious. Introduced earlier, two participants described how they used the key *Principles of Catholic Social Teaching* with their students (P6, P8). When speaking to them, the question was asked if any students had expressed discomfort in using principles that could possibly be viewed as an imposition of religious beliefs. In both responses, participants shared that they had not received pushback from students; the first thing they do in class is to state their pedagogical intentions to students—which includes how the principles are used to guide students’ understandings of how they can positively help others, specifically through the work that they will do in future careers. The intent of including the principles had nothing to do with sharing Catholic doctrine with students, and everything to do with helping students connect the content and their career choice with themes of social justice, particularly the importance of treating others with human dignity and taking care of the vulnerable. Elizabeth provides an example of clearly stating pedagogical intentions; the example also emphasizes an awareness of knowing that not all students are Catholic.

I always try to say, I know not all of you are Catholic and I, you know and that’s not what this exercise is about. This exercise *is* [emphasis added] though about just talking about social justice in general. And so I think when you introduce it that way, people are pretty open; and students will often pipe up and say, you know I’m not Catholic and I’m really you know, I really am not even Christian but I am spiritual, I do and I don’t go to a certain church. So a lot of times they’ll talk about—but I’ve *never* [emphasis added] had any of them say I don’t believe in the *principles* [emphasis added] of social justice. I don’t think anybody comes to this university, and I don’t think most people in general, if you just poll the public—I don’t think there are many people out there that would publicize that they don’t believe in principles of taking care of the vulnerable in our society. So yeah—I don’t [have students that share that they have a problem using the principles in class]; but I try to put it in a very open context of, this isn’t about Catholicism, but I’d like for us to reflect on these things, aspects of how do we take care of people in the community. And so I don’t get any push back. (Elizabeth)

In a similar way, the second participant shared that when she presents the *Key Principles of Catholic Social Teaching* with her students, she is also clear in the pedagogical intention for using them. For her, the principles are used to help students grow in their understanding of how

to treat others with dignity (Catherine). When asked to share if any students had spoken out about the language presented in the document, (regarding an implied religious view), the participant responded:

Um hum [indicating no]. Cause I'm not Catholic either and that's the first thing I say. Is, you know, I wasn't raised Catholic, [and] I'm still not Catholic. But, I find comfort in these principles and so they guide my own way of kind of seeing the world around me. And we'll take about one a week and really explore [them]. And so far I haven't had anyone say anything about religion. (Catherine)

Also referenced from the eight participant interviews, two participants did mention prayer in the academic setting (P2, P8). Resembling a similar thought process, neither referred to spirituality as something that happens through religious languages or rituals. For example, one participant mentioned prayer as an expression of showing empathy for students, at a time of academic pressures. As described by the participant, she either invites students to say the prayer, or she will do it herself, depending on what the students decide—avoidance of imposition is also demonstrated in the statement.

One of the things that I do also is offer to pray before exams and you know *never* [emphasis added] do I—I never just say we're going to pray. *I'll ask them*, [emphasis added] would any of you like for me to pray for the exam? And generally, you're gonna get like *yes*; [emphasis added] please pray for me. (Elizabeth)

Additional elaboration of how prayer was used in the classroom is presented in the preceding theme.

Honoring students. Referring back to participants' descriptions of spirituality, participants commonly expressed that spirituality is something that is personal and up to the individual to decide how he or she defines it and relates to it. As seen within the theme *honoring students*, participants continued to believe that spirituality is personal and each person needs to decide the meaning that it has for their life and how they relate to it. The theme *honoring students* speaks to the awareness that participants had in not wanting to define spiritual

experiences for students. Seen within the commonalities of this theme, five participants stated that although they are doing things in class that could touch on someone's spirituality, they did not know if their experiences together were spiritual (P1, P2, P3, P5, P8).

Even though participants were able to describe that spirituality has the potential to emerge from experiences in the academic setting, and, additionally were able to perceive how students felt about things that are spiritually related, participants could not predict if students had, or would have, a spiritually related experience. Examples of this are presented in three representations. In the first narrative, because the participant does not know if students connect the curricula with their spiritual life, the participant was unable to say for certain that the experiences are spiritual. The participant said:

I think that can generate personal questions, personal implications for people and so you know sometimes people want to talk about reasons, or why it does or doesn't make sense to believe one thing or another. I don't know whether I would describe our experiences as spiritual experiences together but, we are certainly talking about questions that have implications for one, again, about the way one relates to whatever one thinks they are relating to that way. (Justin)

In the second instance, the participant provided a description as to what it may be like when someone is moved spiritually. Although the participant had an idea as to what it means to be moved from one place to somewhere else, the participant was also indefinite if their experiences together were spiritual.

I think sometimes, and it's kind of vaguely spiritual. . . . But it's when moments of clarity occur and you go oh! Now I see. And when those moments happen in the classroom or because of something maybe later, but because of something that transpired in the classroom then you move people's hearts, and if you move their hearts you open up their conscience. And you allowed them to see what they previously had not seen and to feel what they had previously felt. Then I think those are kind of moments of spirit or spirituality. (Chuck)

In another part of the interview, the participant also spoke to the uncertainty of knowing how spirituality is experienced from the student perspective. He said, "It will be interesting to have

these, to have this kind of a discussion with students. And to get them talking about if they've had, if they've ever had those moments—and to describe what transpired and how it looked” (Chuck).

In a similar way, another participant recalled a memory from one of his classes that seemed to be a powerful moment related to spirituality in the classroom. Although the participant described the potential for moments of spirituality to connect with students in the academic setting, the participant said that he does not know if he would term the experience as being spiritual.

One in particular that comes to mind is when our nation was attacked on 9/11, 01'—that was a Tuesday. The next day was Wednesday and that's when I meet the . . . main singing group here. And I looked at them, you know all these students, and they looked at me and we sat in rehearsal and they were kind of numbed and shocked, as was everybody at that time. And I said maybe we should pray. And they all immediately went into that. . . . And they needed that. And then I opened up to them and for the next twenty minutes—their concerns, and their petitions, and their fears were all being voiced by them. They were able to pray for family members who were in the military who they were nervous about what was going to happen; they were able to pray for whatever anxieties they were feeling at the time. And we did that for the first half of class; and the second half I said, well let's sing. And we went in to rehearse. . . . I don't know what would be termed as a very spiritual rehearsal—I don't know what that means; but it was an outlet for them to voice what was in them and then to sing through it. It gave them that outlet to sing. It was a healing moment, you know, for them. That's probably one of the stronger moments I can remember with the students. (Archi)

Overall, participants believed in offering space and time for students to explore their own meaning and purpose. Although they were willing to facilitate spiritual development, participants recognized that ultimately it is up to the student to call the experiences spiritual—participants' expressions only spoke to a perception as to what spiritual moments looked like, as opposed to a certainty.

Noticing behavior. As faculty, all eight participants mentioned ways of noticing student behavior when it came to matters of spirituality. In each of their interviews, participants

described how important it is to observe how students respond to certain situations. The theme of *noticing behavior* demonstrates a sense of care and consideration for students. According to participants, including spirituality in the academic setting is not only about presenting spirituality in inviting ways, or in being cautious to the possibility of imposition; when including spirituality participants described that there is a level of responsibility and compassion that must be demonstrated to and for students. For example, even though participants perceived that students are comfortable with spirituality being part of their education, they still recognize students as human beings and acknowledge that they come to the university with personal experiences that are separate from the academic life. One participant shared the importance of noticing student behavior—describing that one day a student can be very comfortable with a topic, and another day be uncomfortable:

I think a lot of it depends on their personal histories in the topic. You know, I think if it hits too close to home it can be very uncomfortable. . . . I try to watch my students and if it's, you know, if I can gauge that somebody looks particularly uncomfortable, I'm certainly not going to call on them or you know, I try to be—watch their verbal communication and that kind of thing. (Elizabeth)

The participant continued to share that sometimes there is no way of knowing if students are trying to make sense of the content based on their own personal experiences, or if they are trying to make sense of their personal experiences based on the content. Being uncertain, the participant described that it is important to observe students' body language when certain topics are being discussed in the classroom—understanding that sometimes you don't know what a student is going through and what they are processing.

I think I've had enough experiences that tell me *I really have no idea* [emphasis added] what these students have going on in their lives sometimes. And I have no idea what they're processing. But I do know on the looks of people's faces, you know we hit certain topics in the classroom [Elizabeth's voice starts to crack with tears] and I don't choke up like this in the classroom, but you can just tell on the looks of their faces that they—the wheels are turning and they are giving things a lot of thought. And they're giving

spiritual things a lot of thought. . . . For instance, in the first semester when I was teaching in one of the fundamental . . . [health care] courses, we do cover the topic of grief and grieving. And I had invited a hospice Chaplain to come in and talk to the students and he really, he came in several semesters while I was teaching that course and he really did a wonderful job of facilitating their [thoughts of] just thinking about it. And really kind of, I can remember it was the second semester he came and one of the students got up and left through the back of the lecture hall and I really didn't think about it too much at the time because you know it's not too uncommon someone needs to excuse themselves to go the restroom, but he didn't come back for a little bit. And then another student had needed to go out the classroom and she came back in and she came over to me and she said, she told me the student is out in the back area and he's tearful. And so I went out there and saw him and I just said do you want to talk about anything? And he said no. No, I'll be okay. And, I said okay, well I'm gonna sit in the back of the lecture hall and I'm gonna stay right there just in case you need me just come get me. And so, a few minutes later he came back in and then he—the Chaplain was there a long time so people of course needed to go out and go to the bathroom; and so as people would come back in, they just would sit down next to him and I (I think they thought they were supposed to sit there when they came back in). But it was sort of neat because I think—I hope he felt supported and surrounded you know. And he never did, he never did tell me what was going on and don't know if he was—I can only imagine he was probably processing a recent grief; you know a loss of someone that he probably had. . . . [And so] I've really become aware of how I never know even students in that classroom have been affected by their own [difficulties]. (Elizabeth)

Another participant also explained that because he does not know “the impact it is having on their own personal spiritual life,” to talk about some of these things in class, he really makes an effort to observe student interactions and interpretations (Justin).

Noticing behavior in different ways. Participants reported different ways of noticing student behavior. The different responses can be summarized as: (a) noticing when students become disengaged from the learning environment, specifically when they are talking about a certain topic in the curricula, (b) noticing as a way to assess students' understanding of the content—noticing when students are struggling to participate in or to understand the things that are related to the curricula, (c) noticing when students are uncomfortable in their surroundings and in turn are struggling in their communications and interactions with others, (d) noticing student behavior when it comes to prayer in the class, (e) noticing student behavior when taking

students off campus to do field work—noticing students feeling uncomfortable in their surroundings and/or in their interactions with others in those circumstances, (f) noticing when students are unfamiliar with making independent choices, (g) noticing that students have a sense of detachment to their role in having responsibility to the outcome of certain situations, and (h) noticing when students are disinterested in talking about things that are beyond what they need to know to pass the test or get a job.

In any instance, participants acknowledged that they played a role in the material and circumstances that were presented to students. Being quick to notice and perceive how students were feeling helped participants understand the potential that they had in helping students grow in their experiences. In addition, having some awareness of what students appeared to be experiencing provided participants with guidance in knowing what was fitting and natural for them to do in terms of helping students grow in their understandings. Participants recognized that in order to move students to a deeper level of participation, they had to relay a sense of sensitivity and compassion to students—noticing student behavior afforded participants with the opportunity to help students feel more comfortable in their time of transition. Noticing behavior provided faculty with direction, especially at a time when students were not always forthcoming with describing their personal thoughts and feelings.

Possibility for imposition. Noticing student behavior provided participants opportunity to reflect on the possibility for imposition. Although participants tried to avoid imposition, the following three examples represent the wide range of possibilities for students to interpret messages as a form of imposition. Nevertheless, they represent a sense of respect for students by taking the time to either double check with students, or to personally reflect on the possible result of their decisions. Participant responses demonstrated insight and willingness to consider

students' feelings—similarly, the examples demonstrate the possibility to change or alter future interactions and communications with students.

One participant clearly stated that he intended to pray in class (Archi). Considering that prayer can be viewed as a religious practice, I asked the participant if any of his students questioned prayer in the classroom. The participant said no, and proceeded to share how he took notice of a student in one of his classes that is an Atheist. As a way of not ignoring her presence, the participant described having a conversation with the student about her level of comfort with prayer in the classroom. The main purpose of the conversation was to express his care for the student; he did not want the student to feel uncomfortable and therefore, took the time to communicate a message of respect, assuring her that prayer was an invitation for those who wanted to participate—in no way did she have to participate in prayer.

In another interview, a participant shared how he starts off every class with a reflection from the Bible (Otto). In the participant's words, "I just pick something out of the Bible that seems like a good thing to meditate on at the beginning of class. . . . Sometimes it's relevant to something we're doing in class and sometimes it's not" (Otto). The decision to include the reflections was based on being encouraged from the president of the university to start each class of with some sort of reflection—the president did not offer any guidance as to what was meant by reflection. Considering that biblical reflections can be viewed as religious practice, the participant was asked to share if any of his students questioned biblical reflections in the classroom. The participant began by sharing how some students really enjoyed the reflections. As the interview continued, a moment of self-discovery appeared to take place—the participant did think of two students who "did perceive something judgmental in it" (Otto). The participant described the possibility for students to interpret their own meaning:

I don't think it's anything in the content of the verses. I think that it's the idea—and I think that there was, there was a male student who I think may have had an orientation that was, you know may have been homosexual—I don't know. But he may have interpreted my, that using those quotes as being somehow part of a school of thought that would disapprove of him, that would dislike him. And I think there were, there was another student who was not married and became pregnant during the year and I think she may have also—I mean I got, I got a vibe from that, that maybe they figured that anybody who reads those verses would be, would condemn them. And I sure hope they knew better by the end of the year that what I thought of them as individuals, and that I wasn't someone who would condemn them. But that's something to be careful about because people, well let's put it this way—we hope that our young people don't develop stereotypes or prejudices based on skin color, or language group, or anything like that. And I'm afraid that sometimes they develop very subtle prejudices. . . . And they don't realize the prejudices they do have. And so I think sometimes our students might have stereotypes about what . . . [the university Chaplain] might think, just because he's a Catholic priest—and they might have stereotypes; and I hope we can break those. I hope we can get them to see that I see you as an individual—you're not a group to me. And I hope you see me as an individual and that I like you. But anyways, ongoing challenges, things you learn. That sometimes they'll take the wrong message from something. (Otto)

In a different part of the interview, the participant continued to think of those students. His response indicated that he did not fully understand the implications that his decisions had on the way that certain students connected with the reflections. Reflecting on student behaviors possibly played a role in future decisions as to how he constructs the practice of displaying and presenting the reflections to students.

The final example leads into the importance of the next super-ordinate theme, *Guiding Through Uncertainty*. Mentioned in that theme, participants acknowledge that faculty have influence in the way that students see themselves in the academic setting. Connecting that idea to the importance of noticing behavior, another participant appeared to make a connection between the choices that he makes in class, with the influence that he possibly has over student perceptions. The participant began by describing some of the behavior that he observes from students:

The problem is by the time college students get to college they've been sufficiently socialized through our educational system to be docile, and subservient, and passive, just

receptacles (...). And typically they don't challenge authority, they don't like to—they're very afraid of how other students are going to define them and see them and so they want to be well-liked so they're maybe reluctant to take unpopular views, or to articulate something which is you know an outsider's perspective. Or to run the risk of being labeled as a miscreant [chuckles] troublemaker. All of which is a way of saying that sometimes the dialogue piece can be frustrating because sometimes students like to clamp down and not say anything so getting the conversation going and getting it to a level where you really are accomplishing stuff more than, better than just changing conventional wisdoms can be a bit of a challenge. (Chuck)

In addition to sharing the above, the participant also mentioned that on the first night of class, he clearly states his position on the death penalty with students. In responding to the question of whether any of the students felt discomfort in hearing his personal beliefs about the death penalty, he responded “no” and continued:

I just try and make this as open and nonthreatening as possible by just saying look this is where I am—I'm opposed to the death penalty and I don't think it's a good public-policy. And I think it makes plenty of mistakes and wastes a lot of money; but I recognize that many good people of very good will don't agree with that position. And I said this is where—I don't grade you for agreeing with me on this issue or grade you for not agreeing with me on this issue. You're graded on scholarship. Not whether our political mind on this issue meshes. So, but I never had any pushback on that. And, although I sometimes, I do think that probably I will have students in class who might be unsure—I mean very undecided about the death penalty. Ultimately just not really sure which way to believe, and students who do, you know really think that in the end there are probably some crimes and some criminals who really do deserve it. I mean John Wayne Gacy—come on, he killed a couple of dozen of young boys. And that—those students *maybe* [emphasis added] since I don't want to get into an argument with Dr. . . . on this because you know he's got too many counterarguments. (Chuck)

The last sentence from the participant's statement emphasized a connection that he appeared to make about stating his personal beliefs and thinking about students openly disagreeing with him, relating it to the possibility of students not wanting to question the professor's views.

Noticing change. Noticing student behavior was also used as a guide to help participants in their reflections of teaching styles and in the way that they encouraged students to communicate with others. Six participants described noticing positive changes in students' character development over time (P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8). Participant responses indicated

awareness, noting that students did become more comfortable in situations and through interactions with others over time. One participant shared how she notices change in students' behaviors and attitudes:

You see them grow. You see them use some of the information that you shared with them. You see them behave in a way, a different way than they did when they first started the program. You know, you see them in practice when you go to the hospitals or whatever. (Margaret)

Evidence presented in the theme of noticing behavior illustrates the need to observe behavior and changes that students undergo during the college years. Participants were aware that faculty played a role in the impressions that students have about the role of spirituality in higher education.

Super-Ordinate Theme 6: Guiding Through Uncertainty

The super-ordinate theme *Guiding Through Uncertainty* refers to the role that faculty play in relation to the spiritual life of the student. Participants expressed the importance of guiding and supporting students through their curiosities, helping them through a time of big questions. Themes describe approaches used to support students in the teacher-student relationship. Themes are presented in Table 7 and described in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 7

Guiding through uncertainty

Supporting themes	Number experiencing	Participants
Growing together	8	All
Mentoring students	5	P1, P2, P4, P5, P7
Acknowledging students	8	All
Connecting with students	6	P1, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8
Creating safe environments	6	P1, P2, P3, P5, P7, P8

Growing together. All eight participants viewed the teacher-student relationship as something worthwhile. Participants were not always sure if they were making a difference in the lives of students; nevertheless, participants demonstrated a willingness to invest in the development of the teacher-student relationship. Because participants did not always know the impact that they were having on the life of the student, nor did they always know the potential and possibility for a relationship to develop, they stated that they were intentional in the way that they interacted with students. For example, one participant shared:

Teachers never know [emphasis added]! . . . [Sometimes] you can say something inadvertently or intentionally and much of the time what we do doesn't have, doesn't resonate a hell whole of a lot and doesn't matter. But on occasion, something happens! And those are very special moments! (Chuck)

Although participants had their own way of developing the teacher-student relationship, they expressed the importance of supporting students through the teacher-student relationship. For example, one participant described the importance of responding to students in ways that they need:

I think that the biggest thing is to be responsive to their sort of probes. Because if I'm too, if I'm too pedantic, if you will, then I'm afraid that that's just one more adult giving them you know another opinion rather than responding to where they are. One of the best advice I heard was about a child physiologist [who] was . . . [addressing] the question of, when's the right time to tell your children about the birds and the bees? And his general advice was, answer their questions. You don't need to go further than answering their questions—their questions will let you know what they're ready for. That's kind of my feeling about the spirituality, is if they know I'm approachable, they can come and kind of try things with me. (Otto)

Developing the teacher-student relationship was viewed as a way to demonstrate support for the student. According to participants, the teacher-student relationship is cultivated in different ways, through multiple instances of maintaining appropriate and supportive relationships. Participants demonstrated a continued effort to recognize students as human beings. All eight participants communicated the message that the teacher-student relationship is

cultivated over a period of time, and is something that takes a lot of little things coming together. It “is not the result of any one particular kind of episodes, you know” (Justin).

Opening up. Five participants reported that when the teacher-student relationship is developed, there is more potential for students to open up and to trust in the relationship—resulting in more of a willingness for students to open up about uncertainties (P3, P4, P5, P7, P8). As described by one participant:

I think they get, as time goes by they become more at ease and so they get to where they can—they’re more bold about asking things or putting their two cents worth in. We certainly see it happen just in general you know, in asking questions—they asking questions during class, them coming to me outside of class; them responding when I ask them questions in class. You know the more comfortable [they are], they’ll be more talkative and be braver. (Jaymed)

Four of these five participants described that when the relationship is developed, there is potential for students to open up about topics related to spirituality (P3, P5, P7, P8). Participant statements included the following:

Especially as the semester goes on and they gain my trust and they know that it’s confidential and not gonna be shared with anybody else—they’ll really open up you know, and you learn more about what they were thinking, what they were feeling, the thoughts that were going through their head. (Elizabeth)

Sometimes we get to know them a little too well. In that we know more about their personal lives than we should. There’s nothing unethical or immoral about that, but I mean sometimes we know our students really well, so they’re able to maybe more freely communicate their difficulties or concerns, trials and tribulations, those sorts of things. (Margaret)

So, I guess my approaches are very much to be open to the students. I think I also try to know my students. And I think that by knowing things about them . . . by having a sort of personal relationship, they’re more likely to come to me with, what do you think about this? What do you think about that? And you know, I think this, whatever. So I think that by, by kind of being open to be that someone in their life as they are defining their own faith, is sort of what I see as my role more than anything else. (Otto)

Developed through partnership. Participants mentioned the importance of continuously reminding students that they are in partnership together. Mentioned throughout the interviews,

participants expressed their feelings about being invested in the life of the student. Three of the eight participants used the word “partnership” to describe their relationship with students (P1, P5, P6). For example, one participant said, “It’s equal fill. They teach me just as much as I teach them. And so it’s really a partnership and us growing together” (Catherine). And another participant said, “I don’t see myself way above. And you do this—do this, and prodding students. . . . I see myself as a participant in their education” (Margaret). Although only three participants directly used the word partnership, all participants described that the teacher-student relationship is one in which students and faculty are in partnership with each other. Being in partnership was described from perspectives of mutually supporting each other in educational pursuits and in mutually supporting each other in the togetherness of being in a relationship.

Developed through balance. With a committed effort to maintain appropriate and welcoming relationships, participants remained aware of the potential influence that faculty have on the lives of students. Whether it was inside the classroom or outside of the classroom, participants reported that they were intentional about the way that they interacted with students. According to participants, maintaining appropriate relationships requires balance in how the teacher and student interact. For example, one participant described the teacher-student relationship in the following way:

I think it’s a kind of weird relationship. Or at least I think the ideal relationship between a teacher and student is kind of strange because you want a level of familiarity and almost intimacy, and yet also distance. Right. So I think to try and create that humor in the classroom can be very important, because . . . that just kind of brings you together to this kind of perspective right—well that was funny! . . . So, I think that can be helpful and important. And [then,] always conveying the sense of, or regularly conveying the sense of [partnership], which [is to say that] we’re still, you know, we’re scholars, which is to say students, and so to say we don’t have [all] the answers. . . . So I think those are ways of kind of bringing us together. And then you know, also just kind of always being quick to acknowledge mistakes and ignorance. And that goes [on] that side of things. And then on the other side, trying to be really demanding and strict creates a little distance. . . . Again, I think it is one of those balance, sort of tightrope-walking situations. On one hand being

super demanding and on the other hand really communicating that you are there to support them that we're kind of in this together; in a variety of ways you know, from attendance, to quizzes, to the way you do writing assignments, to expectations on tests—on the challenging side. But then again, I think that also communicates to them that you care. (Justin)

The teacher-student relationship is also demonstrated through a combination of challenge and support for students. One participant example is:

I think you support students by reassuring them when they do good work and you compliment them on it and you say so in class to them. Maybe just like, *that's a really excellent question* [emphasis added]! Or, that's a really solid point—did you all hear what she said? *Say it again* [emphasis added]! You reassure students; you try to bolster their confidence. When they write a good paper, when they write a good paragraph, you know—say so! You get more with I think telling them what they're doing right and encouraging that than by one criticism after another—that gets tiring after a while. I find that when I read papers, book reviews, term papers, whatever—short papers, reflection papers, whatever, that I, I'm making lots of changes, writing lots of suggestions. And sometimes I go back and look at those things and I just say, you know, you've got to say something positive here—you can't just be correcting grammar and saying insert this and omit that. You've got to reassure them. (Chuck)

Another participant described balance in the teacher-student relationship:

I think, you know, just being a decent human being to them. You know and being fair and consistent and you know trying to encourage them to come talk and to be approachable. I think those are the things. It takes a little time and then, of course, you earn a reputation. You know how it is in teaching, like they're, they're gonna to tell the next semester coming up, 'oh, you're really going to enjoy her,' or 'he's really tough,' or you know—so your reputation sort of is out there. But I mean, I have had students tell me they have found me very intimidating, but I don't think that's most people's experience of me. Usually I think if I've been intimidating it's been because I wanted them to step up their performance. But I think for me, building that relationship is—this is a balance of I do hold really high standards, but I also try and balance that with being approachable [and] being caring. And I have found in teaching, as high as I hold the bar, they're going to rise to it, you know. So I think I was easier with them in the early years and as I've moved on, I'm about year nine now, I've learned that if I hold the bar they're gonna move to whatever my expectation is. (Elizabeth)

Other participants also described the teacher-student relationship as having a balance.

They said: “I tend to be firm but flexible” (Margaret). “It can be a fine line but you have to let students know that you care” (Otto). You have to take “them out of their comfort zone and

stretch what they think they can do,” but do so by “listening to them and acknowledging” them (Archi).

Developed by spending time together. According to all participants, spending time with students outside of class is a great way to develop the teacher-student relationship and communicate care and support for students. Participants reported: (a) working on service projects or community service together; (b) working together in the context of a club or in the context of tutoring; (c) being able to talk with each other in the office setting or in various areas of the campus; (d) coming together in the office setting to discuss the student’s academic or personal concerns; (e) coming together through passion for a particular discipline; (f) taking time to mentor students; and (g) taking time to talk about plans and/or concerns that relate to the student’s career choice. All participants described that having an open-door policy contributes to the development of the teacher-student relationship.

As emphasized in the following quote, the teacher-student relationship is developed outside the classroom environment, in places where both can be more relaxed and open with each other, furthering the potential for topics of spirituality to naturally emerge.

The student-teacher relationship requires time, nurturance, and more than one shot. You’ve got to kind of follow a career pattern so to speak. You’ve got to stay with a teacher over a period of time. And you’ve got to get to know that person outside of just the person standing behind the lectern or the person who’s flipping through the PowerPoints. You’ve got to walk into his or her office or meet for a beer or a cup of coffee—you’ve got to know the person. And when that happens, *then* [emphasis added] you can start doing the soul work that just develops naturally—then the spirituality piece, the soulfulness, as it were, beings to occur as a matter of fact. You don’t need to be deliberate about it. You just have to be authentic in who *you* [emphasis added] are, and to the point or to the extent that you can have these conversations about dignity and justice and spirituality, and belief. And those discussions take the real student-teacher relationship that kind of takes place outside the classroom. It takes place in those settings where you have—you know maybe it’s in your office. . . . But I guess that’s what I think of the teacher-student relationship, to the extent that you got to kind of nurture people in a deep soulful way—you’ve gotta get backstage, because it ain’t going to happen in the

front stage. And *then* [emphasis added] when it happens that way, it becomes a lifelong experience! And those are relationships that last forever! (Chuck)

Another participant described how his personality tends to be more open when he can bond with students outside of the classroom environment. For him, working with students on service projects is the best way for him to connect with students.

I think service projects bond us much, much closer. So the students who have done some sort of service projects with me are much tighter in the teacher/student relationship. I have a sort of classroom persona and an out of the classroom persona. And not just for faith issues but for academic issues. . . . So that gives us a different understanding of each other. You know we have a, it's more of a family kind of feel to it. (Otto)

Two other participants mentioned that spending time with students doing service related projects helps students feel comfortable in the teacher-student relationship (P1, P6, P7).

Maintaining close relationships. Participants believed that the teacher-student relationship is considered worthwhile, in part because there is potential for the relationship to develop into something that is long lasting. Five participants talked about students who had managed to stick with them beyond the time of graduation (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5). Participants described how certain students would call them up to see how they were doing, to share special news, to thank them for the support that they had received, and/or to update the participant on the progress that they were making in their education and/or in their career. Additionally, participants said that students continued to reach out asking for support with reference letters, career guidance, or with other circumstances that required mentorship.

Participants were happy when they were able to maintain close relationships with their students, as was evidenced from their words and mannerisms. One participant shared how a student had reached out to her three years after graduation; “she called me on my cell phone out of the blue, she told me her name, and it’s like I connected with her instantly” (Margaret).

Another participant said:

It's really fun to see students develop. . . . And I think there's that measure of connecting that you are—it's obviously a spiritual sort of connection because you've got two souls who are fusing together in some way and they're resonating with each other and how they're, what they're doing runs deep. And it matters! Those are student-teacher relationships! (Chuck)

Mentoring students. Mentoring opportunities were described as a great way to support students and build the teacher-student relationship. Five participants specifically mentioned mentoring students outside of class as a way to guide them through their uncertainties and demonstrate support (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7). Participants described mentoring students in general terms, specifically helping students with their academic work and with thoughts about life after college. For example, Jaymed recalled a thank you card that he received from a student:

The best line that I've ever gotten in one of those was from a student that I mentored as an advisor for a little while. And then a research advisor, she was doing, she was working on a research project and then she changed gears to go neuroscience and basically I was an informal advisor and kind of career mentor for her. And she left, she gave me a little card when she graduated and said thank you for believing in me. Which I think was like *oh wow* [emphasis added], you know that really—just the fact that I always told her that she was gonna be fine, really made a profound difference in her life. And I think still does. I mean I'm kind of—she's become a friend of mine and also somebody that I mentor. You know we did a mock interview a couple of weeks ago cause she's applying to go back to graduate school to get her doctorate. And so I'm still in that role for her. But that's one example and I think for her it probably made a very big difference. (Jaymed)

Participants described mentorship in different ways. Two participants used the following titles to describe their roles: Justin called himself an “unofficial advisor” and Jaymed recalled serving as an “informal mentor,” “research advisor,” and/or as a “career mentor.” Justin described mentoring as something that goes a long way. If you can “seek them out and communicate that you care, basically that can make a pretty big difference. . . . The mentoring that goes on, and writing letters and that sort of stuff,” helping students with applications and thinking about summer internships—those are the things that help to make a difference for students (Justin). In a similar way, Jaymed described that students typically want to have

conversations about what they are majoring in and their career choice; they have big questions about not doing well in the course, thinking about alternatives, switching majors, and doubting their career choices. For them, mentoring goes a long way. Additional participants described mentoring as taking time to review quizzes, provide resources, or to sit down with students to explain the content.

Sometimes academically they're just *struggling* [emphasis added] to pass. It's just giving them the extra time . . . [to] come during office hours—let's go through the exam you just took; let's have you take some notes on the kinds of content that you missed so you can go back and review it—explaining things a different way. (Elizabeth)

Spiritual mentoring. Although mentorship could, and in some cases did, include helping students with their personal lives, the theme *mentoring students* does not directly relate to spiritual mentoring. Rather, participants saw their role as guiding students in their search for meaning, which could include spiritual development, but in most cases, did not. That said, if students did want to talk about spiritual topics, participants were willing to do so, but in ways that were non-intrusive or did not step beyond the role of what students needed. Archi shared how undergraduate students can be in positions where they search for different types of meaning:

I think they're looking for so many answers; they're looking for—in some cases they're looking for a parent. In some cases, they're looking for someone they can trust to tell them the truth. In some cases—I mean they're looking for things that in so . . . many areas of our society are not there. They're not stupid you know. They see; and I think they just want someone to be real with them and tell them the truth and say, can you really help me, or can you really guide me; because they're getting so many misleading voices. (Archi)

Three participants were not included in this theme, although throughout their interviews there *was* evidence of their commitment to helping students inside and outside of the classroom, which insinuated a form of mentorship. It should not be assumed that they did not spend time supporting students in this way. Although guidance is a form of mentorship, the only difference

between these participants and the other five participants is that they did not directly use the term mentor.

Acknowledging students. As an approach to demonstrating care and support for students, all participants described the importance of recognizing and acknowledging students as human beings. They stated that the way students are seen and heard contributes to the teacher-student relationship, and in addition, contributes to the way that students are supported.

Participants used the following words to describe teacher-student interactions: acknowledge, listen, reassure, engage, approach, care, respect, and/or encourage. In addition, five of the eight participants used the words individual or human when describing students (P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).

For instance, Archi described supporting students in the following ways:

I think mostly by listening to them and acknowledging—that's the first thing. I think that's the best, most important [thing] right there, is the word listening. . . . Because what do most people on the planet want? They want to be heard. It's the same with these kids and with the young people—they want to be listened to. And a lot of times students come in and I'll say, didn't you talk to the teacher? [And the student responds with,] no they won't talk to me about it. And they just feel like they're not being heard . . . like they're not being allowed to engage in the conversation. So the first thing that I do with them is I engage [them] in the conversation. I let them talk, and I let them say what they have to say, and I don't make them feel bad for what they're saying. If they believe this enough to come and tell me, then for them it's real. Even if I might, at my age look at it and go, oh you know, you don't know this yet, but that's actually not a real problem at all—but to you at this point, it's a real problem. And I understand that, so I let them do it. And I listen to them. It doesn't mean that I agree with them all the time, and it doesn't mean that they always get their way, because a lot of times the answer is no. But it's a respectful no after listening to them and talking about it. Always students will leave and go okay, well thank you for talking to me, or thank you for listening. And if they feel like they're being honored that way—listened and respected, then they don't have a problem with the answer no, because they feel like it's out of respect. (Archi)

In a similar way, other participants mentioned the importance of listening to students and engaging students in conversation, specifically approaching students by name. Margaret said, “it's important for me to know their names and I think they appreciate the effort too” (Margaret). Several other participants reported that students appreciate when they are seen as individuals;

they appreciate when faculty make efforts to approach them through open dialogue, and when faculty take the time to notice things that they say and do. Catherine described some of the things that she does to support students and build the teacher student relationship:

I try *a lot* [emphasis added] to let them know through my actions that I see them as individuals. So I greet each one, even when I see them . . . [in the food court] or anywhere else. I greet them by name [and] I ask how they're doing; if I know that they have a daughter, I say, 'how is your daughter?' But I try and make my conversations very individualized. I also . . . [send] emails here and there just to let them know [that] I notice things. Like every time we have an exam, I email the person who made the highest grade, (no one knows I do it except that person), and I say *way to go* [emphasis added], you made the best grade in the class! *Keep it up* [emphasis added]! Or, if someone's grade increases [I say,] *hey* [emphasis added], your grade was so much better this week! Keep it up! If they're absent, I email [and write] hey, I noticed you weren't there—we missed you. Are you okay? So it's a lot of individual communication. I also invite them to do different things here on campus like community service. And I don't . . . invite the group; it's like an individual hey so and so, would you like to join me with this? I'm going to go ahead and . . . do a book collection. Would you like to join me on this book collection?

Respondents also reported the following approaches when describing how they support students through teacher-student interactions: (a) paying attention and showing interest by engaging students in conversation; (b) providing students with individualized communication; (c) honoring the things that students have to say through ways of listening; and/or (d) acknowledging students' thoughts and ideas by ways of communicating when they are really on to something.

Connecting with students. Participants continued to make efforts to help students feel at ease in their interactions and communications in the teacher-student relationship. The theme *connecting with students* developed from the way that five participants described their willingness to relate to students (P1, P3, P4, P7, P8). Participants described a desire to help students see them as faculty whom they can trust and connect with. Taking into consideration the perception that students may have towards the teacher persona, participants were clear in stating that they did not want to be seen as authority figures; on the contrary, they wanted to be seen as

approachable and supportive. In hopes of relating to students, participants described the following two approaches.

Sharing of self. Four participants said that they were willing to share self-related information with students as a way to help students feel less intimidated in the teacher-student relationship (P1, P4, P6, P8). Shared by one participant:

It's trying to bridge that gap a little bit to help show them that I can get things that are relevant to them. And I think that some of that is that is just trying to throw things out there—if I understand this, or agree with them in a situation, or mention something that I do [like] mountain biking or yoga, or something that, *oh my God, he might be a human* [emphasis added]! This might actually be a human being that I'm talking to instead of an adult—*it's crazy* [emphasis added]! So trying to get over that stigma that we usually have of people . . . [that are] twice our age. I'd say, it's helping them into that by showing them that I'm a human being and reassuring them that I'm not going to hurt them. I'm going to be respectful of their feelings, I'm going to listen to them, [and] I'm not going to judge them or think that they're wasting my time, or presume to tell them what they should do. Or, you know, anything that they would find confrontational or intimidating. (Jaymed)

Another participant described presenting herself in approachable ways:

I'll talk to them about my kids. . . . I'll show them a picture of something; like for instance this semester in January my son turned 16 and we were having an on-campus clinical that day, so I showed them a picture of my son—we had just gotten him a car and my husband was taking him to the DPS to get his license that day. So I said, you know it's a big day at the . . . house! I think sometimes, just things like that; it makes them realize I am a person. I have a life outside of this building. (Elizabeth)

Although participants were willing to open up with students, the findings did not insinuate that participants were willing to share personal information that crossed boundary lines. Shown in the following example, the participant managed to share something that was special to her, but did so in a way that was suitable and fitting to what they were discussing in class: the importance of treating others with dignity and compassion. The participant shared her New Year's resolution with students, combining it with efforts to invite students to do community service.

At the beginning of the semester, my New Year's resolution that I told them is—I can't pick something like I'm going to lose weight, *because I won't* [emphasis added] and I can't pick, I'm going to exercise more, *because I won't* [emphasis added]. And it's—it really won't better me in the long run. So, what I do each year [is] I pick something that by the time that I'm much older and I'm sitting around telling stories, I've built up something to make me better. Each year I pick a theme. And this year my theme was compassion. And so I'm reading about compassion, I'm talking to people who are compassionate—I'm doing a year study on compassion. And so, I invited them to join me as just, not class, nothing like that, but together, for a year, let's learn about compassion. Because when we're older that's a skill that's going to stay with us—that we'll need. Not that we ran; I mean that's good, but it wears off. So, we did a hygiene drive, a beauty and supply drive for Catholic Charities, for their refugee families, and that was a really hot topic because that was when . . . [a political candidate] started making a lot of comments that could, you could say didn't have human dignity in mind. We did a book drive also for them. We're doing the cards for Easter; we're sharing our compassion with . . . [a local nursing home]. (Catherine)

Subsequently, the participant shared that the opportunities not only helped her and her students grow in the teacher-student relationship, but students do “more service through these discussions” (Catherine).

Sharing sensitive information. As just described, participants were willing to share impersonal experiences with students; also, some participants were willing to share more personal and sensitive related information with students. Three participants described sharing personal experiences with students that related more to spiritual beliefs and experiences (P1, P6, P8). Still mindful to avoid imposition, participants were willing to share personal thoughts and feelings with students, with the intent of letting them know that it is okay to have big questions about spirituality. For example, participant intentions are evident in the following statement:

Again my role is to facilitate them inwardly reflecting. . . . I don't think my role is to get them to become Catholic. . . . I think it is to encourage their own self-reflection and to not impose my own beliefs. But to share [with] them when I think it could be helpful to them. Sometimes they'll ask [me], well, what do you believe? And so then that opens up the door. But a lot of times I'll say, this is what I believe, but that's it—that's what I believe. And . . . sometimes I'll even kind of share with them what I thought when I was younger, and sort of through my life experiences how my spirituality or my beliefs might have changed over time; and I think that that's normal, and natural, and to be expected. (Elizabeth)

Recalling memories. Continuing to make efforts to help students feel at ease in the teacher-student relationship, five participants tried to relate to students by recalling memories of their college days and past experiences (P1, P3, P4, P7, P8). They recalled memories of things that happened to them when they were at a similar age and remembered what it was like to be a student. Four of those participants also recalled memories of people who had made an impact in their life (P1, P3, P4, P7), with three participants recalling memories of past teachers (P1, P3, P7).

Two participants recalled memories to help them understand the impact that class discussions may have for students (P1, P8). In both examples, participants described that sometimes there is no way of knowing what kind of an impact it makes for students when they start talking about some of the content related material. One participant began by responding to the question, is it difficult for students to talk about content-related topics such as death? Seen in his response, the participant described that he starts by noticing behavior, making sure that discussions are impersonal and related to the content; additionally, as a way to relate to students, he recalls personal memories.

I think there have only been a couple of occasions where I have sensed that it was really difficult for a student and that was, you know, on occasions when I had a student in the class who had just experienced the death of someone close to them. You know, so it was all pretty raw. But, by in large I don't have that sense; though I don't know. I mean I don't know what kind of an impact it makes for students when, you know, we start asking questions about why anyone would believe that we have a soul. Because they mostly all come in thinking we have a soul and it's this invisible part of me and it's going to go somewhere—which is a very strange thought to have. And so, we have to tackle that . . . [in the context of the course]. So I would imagine for some people that it would be kind of jarring. I mean it was for me. I was raised Catholic, went to Jesuit high school, went to a Jesuit college, took my first philosophy class and properly explained to my parents that I wasn't going to church anymore. But I was really paying attention and really got invested in asking these questions and thinking about what the consequences would be. And so it was jarring for me. But I don't know—again, I don't really have the sense of how jarring it is for them and it does depend on the extent to which they really engage in

it or not. Now, I think, I do try and make an effort, and it's also been an issue where (so my cards on the table—I am Catholic. I went through a number of years where I was kind of done with it and I came back) initially as a teacher I made a real conscious effort to prevent them from knowing anything about me, or what I thought, or what I believed. You know for pedagogical purposes right, I don't want them to defer to my view because it's the teacher's view, and I also don't want them to be worried about whether I'm trying to push them somewhere. But I think more recently, I felt more of a responsibility to present myself as a Catholic so that both the religious people in the room and the non-religious people in the room can see that you can be a Catholic and still insist on asking really tough questions, and not being sure of what you think, and not necessarily towing the party line. (Justin)

In a similar way, Elizabeth recalled a memory with the intent to understand that students need time to process some of the experiences that relate to the content and to the nursing profession. She provided an example where at times, they do get in to some class discussions about “spirituality, and beliefs, and God” (Elizabeth). Trying to relate to her students' experiences, she recalled what it was like for her to cope through similar situations. Elizabeth shared the following story about her students:

On their very first day in the hospital the nurse asked a couple of my students to sit with a dying patient because he had nobody—he had no family there. And they sat there with him and he did pass away while they were there—and it was their very first day in hospital. And so you have to debrief with students after a time like that; you can't expect that they're not going to need to process something like that. And then it does come up, well I wonder what he believed? I wonder you know. I mean I can remember my own first experience of the first patient that I was with when he passed away. And I remember having (and I would have been in my early twenties at that point), and it's like, it really hit me, one moment you have this man breathing and all of a sudden he's not breathing and he just made eye contact with me and . . . I thought, where did you go? Like, I wanted to look up and think, is he having an out of body experience? Is he? What just happened? And at that point in my life I did, and I still do very much believe in God and an afterlife. And I think God takes care of people. But each student sort of has to make their own, they have to come to their own comfort with that and their own belief about that and what do you believe about it. (Elizabeth)

Participants also recalled memories of people who inspired them and made an impression on their lives. One participant recalled memories of having appreciation for people who had served as good role models in his life. His hope was to inspire students in the same way.

I remember my role model as my older brother. . . . He was in the Coast Guard Academy; he was [in] Big Brothers. And he had a little brother that he would see like every weekend or other weekend, [and] he'd do something with this young man and I thought, that is so cool—that's who I want to be! And if I can give them some vision of who they want to be, you know I wanted to be like my older brother; if I can give them some vision of who they want to be, I think that's important. (Otto)

Lastly, two participants recalled memories to try and make a difference in the life of the student.

They held the following visions in their mind when interacting with students:

You know I think what teachers do and this is such a triton conventional analogy but it's like planting a seed and then you gotta water it. And then maybe it turns into a little plant and the plant turns into a bigger plant. And then maybe finally it blooms. But this doesn't happen overnight. And that's kind of what I . . . hope I'm doing—that that's working that way. I'm inclined to think it is because I can still remember back to when I was an undergraduate, and certainly when I was in graduate school, to situations, to encounters, to moments—not confrontations but where all of a sudden you see something, hear something, think something that, that strikes you however simple it might be as oh boy—an ah ha moment. And so they kind of reverberate and it stays with you over a period of time. (Chuck)

I actually refer to my own experience as a student in college thinking about powerful experiences in the classroom. And I think, what came to mind was being in a seminar, philosophies seminars as an undergraduate and we were talking about pre-Socratics and some of the crazy ideas that pre-Socratics had, and kind of what would follow from things they are saying and I made a comment and the professor kind of stopped and said, 'Oh I—you know, I never—that makes a lot of sense but I never thought about that before, and that's a really kind of an elegant idea.' Which is powerful for me because it made me feel like, man I'm really doing this you know? And so I think that has kind of stuck with me. So that now I make an effort in class to always make a really big deal of it when someone says something to me that hasn't occurred to me before, so that they have a sense that we are all kind of in this together. I think one of the great parts of the . . . [university's] mission, is a line where it talks about professors and students supporting each other in the pursuit of truth; and this idea that this is another dimension of higher education and we are no longer in the business of conveying information to you, right. We are researchers, which is to say students still. And so we're all working on this stuff together. So I think I now try to create similar experiences for my students by giving them some ownership over their comments and ideas in the course of the discussion. (Justin)

Creating safe environments. Still keeping support for students at the heart of participants' efforts, the super-ordinate theme *growing together* includes helping students come to new understandings by creating safe places for them to grow in their thoughts and feelings.

The theme *creating safe environments* refers to environments that participants created for students, both inside and outside of the classroom. Six participants described the importance of helping students feel at ease by creating safe environments for students to explore meaning and find purpose (P1, P2, P3, P5, P7, P8). Participants described creating safe environments in classroom settings, in office settings, and in writing assignments. Participants described discussions in the class environment as being more general, impersonal, and related to the content and or to the career, the office setting as being a place for more private and personal conversations to take place, and reflection papers as a way for students to process and share experiences.

In the classroom setting. Creating safe environments in the classroom continues to reflect participants' beliefs that students should be honored and respected, and that efforts should be made to help students feel more comfortable in their pursuits. Describing environments where students know they are safe, some participants spoke about not embarrassing students, or making them feel bad about the things that they have to say. In Margaret's words, supporting them rather than calling them out and punishing them. Participants also described creating environments where students are encouraged to have respectful interactions, creating environments where students know they are safe, and creating environments where students know that it is okay to have questions. Additionally, creating environments where students feel empowered to speak about their truths and to think through their ideas with minimal risk. As described by two participants: "You gotta create an environment where people feel they have the freedom to speak out, to speak up, and to speak against" (Chuck).

I think the biggest thing is, have a, a kind of a low stress classroom environment. And students will just say that they're having an issue or they're having a bad day or what happened, and they're not afraid to talk about those things. And so I think that kind of

cultivates an environment where they can talk to me. And they can talk to each other about it. (Otto)

Helping students feel that it is okay to have questions. To create safe environments, two of the six participants communicated to students that spirituality is not about getting to a place of shared beliefs (P1, P8); rather the environment is a place and time for students to explore different perspectives with “no questions off the table” (Justin). Part of that is being a facilitator in the spiritual lives of students, where whatever the student believes is fine, as long as he or she is becoming a “more mature believer” (Justin).

So I guess, I think of my role as being the facilitator and the maturation of their spiritual life. So you know if you are an atheist, I want you to be a more mature atheist. Which is to say, to have more critically, more rigorously thought through atheism. And if you are a believer, I want you to be a more mature believer. (Justin)

Additionally, both participants described supporting students not only by allowing them to believe in their own ways, but by helping them feel like it’s okay to have questions. According to Justin, when it comes to spirituality, part of maturing in spirituality is getting a deeper understanding and maybe even changing in some way (Justin).

I do always try to convey to them the idea that in anyone’s spiritual or religious development, there’s a point which hopefully your spirituality starts to mature and part of that is through asking really tough questions and experiencing doubts and coming to recognize what you do and don’t really know, or do but don’t really believe, etc. etc. (Justin)

Justin expressed that creating safe environments for students to explore in their spiritual development goes back to the mission of the university, in that it strives to be “welcoming people of all faiths and backgrounds.”

Encouraging respectful interactions. In an effort to create spaces that welcome students to share in their questioning, participants made sure that students were learning how to engage in conversations that not only provided an outlet for students, but also helped them provoke thought

and connectedness to each other and to the learning environment through respectful interactions. Described by Jaymed, part of that is helping students understand that not everyone does things the same way, and that's okay; but it doesn't mean that we have to be "mad at things when they're not our way or we don't understand them" (Jaymed).

So like being open to diversity in the sense that we do things a certain way and then we see somebody else not doing them a certain way, we're like, *what's your problem* [emphasis added]. Just being open to the idea that not everybody sees something in the same way and that not everything, not every process, every paradigm fits everybody equally. And so I may do something one way and somebody else sees it thinks, that's ridiculous, it would never work for me—and that's true! But that doesn't mean that it doesn't work for me. (Jaymed)

Another participant described how welcoming students to "participate fully" is about creating spaces where everyone can engage in the process; regardless of their "different abilities," it is about setting up the environment in a way that lets students be creative and allows them to participate through respectful interactions, where there is "an open dialog" that is "not threatening" (Archi). Additionally, Archi stated:

As long as you're being upfront with them and honest, and respecting them and listening to them and they feel like they're being heard. . . . they'll come in and they'll tell me anything—they talk to me and they know it's a safe place.

Creating safe places in their writings. Of the six participants, three described making it safe for students to open up and share information in their journal writings (P5, P7, P8). Two of the three participants mentioned that when students feel comfortable, they learn things about students that they had not previously disclosed (P7, P8). In both responses, participants described that students shared personal experiences that had to do with their childhood and difficulties that they had experienced with their families. The experiences that students shared were a result of something that stemmed from the content. For example, one participant shared that through journal assignments; she learned why the academic experience was difficult for a student:

We have them [students] journal each week; they write about their experiences. And that in itself is really helpful to them I think to be able to put words down on paper and what—you know we have them write what their feelings were, what their thoughts were about today's experiences, what their challenges were of today's experiences. And all she had really shared with me in previous journals is that this was a really difficult clinical for her to go through. I really didn't think about it too much because a lot of students have that sort of feeling of that rotation of psychiatric mental health and being with psychiatric patients. But as the semester went on, she finally disclosed in one of the journals that she herself had been a patient as a child and because her parents were going through a really difficult situation, (and so without giving you too much detail), she had really gone through some difficult experiences; and then it was like oh my gosh, no wonder why this was hard for her to be in this clinical experience. (Elizabeth)

Similarly, the other participant talked about a student “who seemed very disengaged from classmates [and] disengaged from the course” (Otto). When the student wrote about the topic they were discussing in class, she expressed her difficulties, sharing that the lesson had been difficult because she personally identified with things that were being discussed in the classroom; the experiences reminded her of issues within her family. Allowing the student to reflect on her experiences helped the student open up; it “kind of opened up one of my tough nuts to crack” (Otto). The three participants reported that providing feedback on writing assignments helps students feel comfortable sharing their experiences through journal writings and reflection papers.

Creating safe places in the office setting. Additionally, participants described making it safe for students to come and talk to them in the office setting. According to participants, regardless of how developed the teacher-student relationship was, students do not always feel comfortable sharing their experiences in front of a classroom of 30 or 40 people.

I mean they're not as comfortable discussing matters of faith in front of their classmates. That's something that's I mean certainly easier here at a Roman Catholic institution than it is at a state school or something. But it's still something where they're afraid they'll be judged for their views you know. So, I think [it's about] making it safe for them to come and talk to me. (Otto)

Although participants welcomed students to share their experiences in class, the most common way participants learned about what students were experiencing was by students visiting during office hours, or in environments that were outside of class.

Thinking about questions that students have, participants mentioned that when students wanted to talk about something spiritually related, conversations tended to be after material was covered in class, or when students lost a family member, or had a personal tragedy and just needed to talk. Participants also described that when students visit during office hours, conversations related to academics or to the students' career choice; participants said that both are big concerns for students. Two participants specifically mentioned that when students come to visit them, they do not come with questions related to spirituality (P4, P5).

If they're coming to me it's because . . . they have a question about the course they're taking. . . . Spending time with students and providing them with some resources or sitting down and explain content. You know those types of things—over and over and over. (Margaret)

Similarly, the other participant mentioned: “At least in their conversations with me, it's usually when they are not doing well in a course and they're trying to think about other alternatives. Or it's when they're doubting their choice in their career” (Jaymed).

Two participants used the word “occasionally” to describe students who visited to talk about spirituality (P1) (P4). Jaymed said, “If it's in somebody to ask questions or to have those [spiritual related] conversations, it would be more on a one on one basis” (Jaymed). So, it's about “planting the seeds” with the big audience, and allowing them to go deeper if they want (Jaymed). Participant responses did not indicate that spirituality is unimportant; rather participant responses expressed that when students visit them, students are concerned with academics.

Other examples of visiting during office hours included spiritual or general questioning that developed from class discussion, questions that developed from guest speakers coming in,

questions that developed after going out to do field or service work, questions that developed from the content, or questions related to professional experiences. In any case, participants described making it safe for students to come to talk to them, supporting and guiding them in their uncertainties.

Chapter Summary

Participants described the university's commitment to facilitate spiritual development; congruent with the focus on the mission, the university provides students and faculty with opportunities and resources to deepen spirituality through service. Participants described that some service opportunities were tied to the curriculum, while others were presented as an invitation to help others. Participants also described how the mission of the university supports an environment that cultivates a sense of belonging.

Spirituality and higher education. Participants shared in the philosophy that spirituality is foundational to student wholeness and directly relates to the educational experience. All eight participants viewed spirituality as a way to support the inner life of the student. Spirituality in higher education was viewed as an opportunity to encourage students to have an increased self-awareness and increased sense of respect, empathy, and compassion for others.

Participants shared the viewpoint that spirituality is something that is always present. Participants described their commitment to providing a well-rounded education for students, allowing for attention to be given to both the spiritual and the academic sides of the individual. In addition, participants shared in the philosophy that undergraduate students are at a time in their lives where big questions have the potential to develop. Participants acknowledged that, in some ways, transition into higher education could be difficult for students in that they have to come to terms with things that they did not necessarily think about before.

Encouraging students to attend to the inner parts of self was described as a way to help students in their development; specifically, in the way students think about and treat others. Mostly, participants expressed that they want students to grow in the understanding that there is value in having interactions that are sympathetic and understanding towards others. Regardless of how participants expressed the role of spirituality in higher education, participants agreed that spirituality very much has a place in higher education and includes encouraging students to have an increased spiritual awareness and awareness of others.

Spirituality and educational practices. Participants described that spirituality not only has a place in higher education, but it has a place within the classroom. Participant descriptions demonstrate that helping students to see the meaning and value in what they are learning allows for spiritual dimensions to emerge naturally. Teaching strategies included helping students make connections between spirituality and the content, helping students make connections between spirituality and students' desired career choices, and helping students make connections between spirituality and helping others. Additionally, participants described educational practices that help students understand that personal thoughts and feelings can impact the way that they think of and treat others. Educational practices promoted self-awareness and awareness of others.

Participants believed in encouraging students to be more in touch with their spiritual self. They felt strongly about encouraging students to reflect on who they are, not only as a way to engage in self-understanding, but also as a way to help students develop empathy and compassion for others. It was important to participants that students connect with others through caring, compassionate, and respectful interactions. Participants commonly spoke about helping students see themselves in new ways. Much of what participants did to help students in their spiritual development included helping students make the connection between their career

choices to how they could use it to positively help others. Additionally, participants encouraged students to engage in service opportunities.

Described by participants, spirituality in higher education did not mean that higher education is devoid of academic rigor; participants believed that the educational experience should include the objective and the subjective. As a way to engage students in critical inquiry, participants described creating environments where students were encouraged to think about multiple ways of knowing and understanding. Additionally, participants described fostering environments where students were invited to explore authenticity and where students were challenged to reflect on the implications of their thinking, specifically with regard to thinking of others. Pedagogical approaches used to help facilitate the spiritual development of students included encouraging class discussions, asking probing questions, encouraging students to engage in reflective assignments, and exposing students to situations that provide them with different perspectives.

Respecting student wholeness. Although participants believed that spirituality does have a place in higher education, participants shared in the philosophy that it is up to the student to decide how involved they will be in relating their personal lives to their educational experience. As a way to honor students and see them as individuals, participants described different ways of respecting student wholeness.

As illustrated in their descriptions of spirituality, participants believed that spirituality is something that is personal; it is something that cannot be defined by others, and each person needs to decide what it means to them. Participants did not believe in defining what is meant by spirituality for others. With efforts to honor students as human beings, participants described the importance of presenting spirituality in ways that are inviting and free from indoctrination. The

nature of participants' thinking included a belief that students should be afforded the opportunity to describe their own way of coming together with material presented in the discipline.

Furthermore, participants demonstrated awareness in knowing that students come to the educational environment with different beliefs and experiences. Although participants believed in encouraging students to deepen their understandings of spirituality, participants conveyed a sense of care and respect for students by allowing them the freedom to decide how much they related the educational experiences to their personal lives. Participants communicated the importance of not wanting spirituality to be viewed as imposition and described that spirituality is not about getting students to be more religious.

Participants also expressed the importance of knowing their role in the spiritual lives of students—mentoring and modeling for students through their curiosities were reported as ways of helping students through their time of big questions. Participants described a continued effort to honor and acknowledge students as human beings. Developing the teacher-student relationship was viewed as a way to demonstrate support for the life of the student. Trying to break down perceptions and stereotypes that students had towards the teacher-student relationship, participants focused efforts on presenting themselves in approachable ways and hoped that their efforts made it easier for students to connect with them, and to trust them. Participant responses represented ways of helping students feel at ease and comfortable in the teacher-student relationship.

Transition Statement

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study. In Chapter 5, I will interpret these findings and make recommendations for future practice.

Chapter 5. Discussion, Implications, Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members in a faith-based institution use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. The faith development theory of Sharon Daloz Parks (2011) was used as a framework to explore the role that faculty play in the spiritual development and meaning-making processes in undergraduate students. Findings of this study identified how spirituality naturally works its way into the higher education environment, including both the university's involvement to facilitate spiritual development, and faculty involvement to support spiritual development through pedagogical approaches and through the teacher-student relationship.

The findings of this research provide members of higher education with new perspectives to promote student development academically and spiritually. This study did not review student outcomes. Thus, the results are limited to the perception of the participants in this study and cannot be generalized, not even to the institution of study. More evidence is required to substantiate the results of student development from faculty who integrate spirituality in teaching. The previous chapter summarizes the findings of the study in detail and Chapter 3 describes how an IPA research design was used to analyze participant data. This chapter is dedicated to describing the results and conclusions that resulted from this study; including providing recommendations for future research.

Summary. Aligned with research introduced in the literature review, faculty of this study described spirituality as foundational to student wholeness. Additionally, the participants of this study believe that to neglect the spiritual sides of self and of others is to deny the deepest parts of

who we are as humans. Believing that spirituality is always present, faculty described that spirituality naturally aligns with higher education and the things that we do—spirituality and scholarship are not separate. Aligned with existing literature, faculty of this study believe that encouraging and welcoming spirituality in higher education can assist students in the quest of human becoming (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011).

Selection of participants. The participants of this study were selected using purposeful sampling. They are eight faculty from a faith-based institution in the southwestern region of the United States who reflected a variety of teaching disciplines. The faculty participating in this study were identified by their peers as exemplary, for living by the university mission in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. They share the same characteristic of teaching undergraduate students at the same university and were recipients of a specific faculty award that honors faculty for supporting the mission of the university and for serving the spiritual needs of students. To be nominated for the award, faculty members must inspire and motivate students to live through the mission values and exhibit respect for others. Faculty who participated in this study provided information-rich examples of integrating spirituality in teaching. They are honored by the university for supporting the mission of the university and for serving the spiritual needs of people. The decision to focus on faculty perceptions was based on existing literature that describes the critical role that college faculty play in strengthening and promoting students' spiritual development (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011).

Research questions. This study examines faculty members' views about how they describe the role of spirituality in higher education, the pedagogical approaches that they use to enhance students' spiritual development, and the role that the teacher-student relationship plays in helping to facilitate spiritual development. The research questions of this study are:

1. How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?
3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

In addition, participants were asked to share their personal definitions of spirituality.

Problem statement. This study set out to address researchers' concerns that faculty in institutions of higher education are reluctant to enhance students' spirituality, despite the benefits that it has for students' inner development, and for the way students come to interact with others and perceive the world (Astin et al., 2011; Chickering et al., 2006; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Zajonc, 2003). Particularly important to researchers, practitioners, and educators, is the notion that institutes of higher education often claim responsibility to help develop the "whole person;" stating not only to develop students' cognitive capacities, but to also attend to the moral and inner development of students (Astin et al., 2011). Although institutions of higher education have long held this position, many students in higher education are not being encouraged to attend to the big questions of life—the ones that awaken the spirit and attend to the deepest needs of the soul (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2003).

Gap in literature. Underexplored in the existing body of literature is the connection to spirituality in faith-based institutions and the attempt to better understand practices of spirituality, particularly from faculty who teach at faith-based institutions. Gathered from literature reviewed, there is a strong focus to reform secular institutions from ones that caution spirituality in higher education, to ones where spirituality has a place in the university—thus helping to develop the whole person (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer 1994; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011;

Zajonc, 2003). Understandably, “it may appear especially problematic for public institutions in a culture committed to separation of church and state” (Parks, 2011, p. 213) to see that there is a “cognitive spirituality” (Zajonc, 2003, p. 54). However, there is still a need to explore what is being done in faith-based institutions to facilitate students’ spiritual development.

Discussion of Major Findings

Answering research question 1: How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education? Spirituality in higher education begins by recognizing that spirituality is the essence of who we are as human beings. Whether it is acknowledged or not, spirituality is always present; it lives within every subject and within every student that we teach (Palmer, 1998). Aligned to existing literature, faculty believe that truly having concern for the whole student means the educational experience should include things that are spiritually based. If higher education fails to attend to the spiritual dimensions, it fails to attend to the whole person, ignoring the deepest values and issues of students’ lives (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer 1994; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Zajonc, 2003).

Participants in the study asserted that an education devoid of spirituality only develops part of who we are as human beings, with spirituality being a way to support the inner life of the student and to encourage respect, empathy, and compassion for others. At a time when “young adults refine their identities, formulate adult life goals and career paths, and test their emerging sense of independence and interdependence . . . [and] often grapple with issues of authenticity, meaning, and purpose” (Astin et al., 2011, p. 138-139), the college environment holds great opportunity and responsibility to encourage students to develop spiritually. Similar to research previously conducted (Astin et al., 2011; Palmer 1994, 1998; Parks, 2011; Tisdell, 2003; Zajonc, 2003), faculty of this study believe that facilitating students’ inner-developments is critical to the

educational experience, specifically for undergraduate students who are at a time of figuring out what they believe for themselves.

To include spirituality in higher education reflects faculty involvement in encouraging students to have an increased self-awareness and awareness of others. Faculty point out the bigger picture of learning, helping students consider new perspectives and think about the impact they have on others. Spirituality in higher education serves to transcend the minds and hearts of people, inspiring and awakening student perception to deeper understandings of what *they* can do, individually and collectively to help others. Enhanced by practices that encourage students to nurture personal beliefs and understandings, spiritual development is deepened through topics around what it means to be human and engage with others through caring and compassionate interactions. Connectedness is a major finding of this study that bridges spirituality in higher education.

Described by the participants of this study, spirituality does not impose on the deepest values and beliefs of students, including their desires and commitments to develop academically. Giving attention to both the spiritual and academic sides of the student, spirituality in higher education is a way to support the inner life of the student. From the views of faculty who participated in this research, spirituality is not coupled with forms of indoctrination and efforts to improve religiosity.

Answering research question 2: What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students? “Spirituality—the human quest for connectedness—is not something that needs to be ‘brought into’ or ‘added into’ the curriculum. It is at the heart of every subject we teach, where it waits to be brought forth” (Palmer, 1994, p. 8). Embedded in the disciplines, spirituality is brought forth by faculty who teach with

awareness; that within every student is a mind, heart, and spirit—a human being that is seeking personal meaning, understanding, and purpose. Willing to honor the inner self of the student, spirituality naturally emerges from connections that faculty make between the intellectual passion and understanding for the discipline, combined with commitment and responsibility to care for the becoming of the student.

At the center of pedagogy, where spirituality naturally emerges, is a consciousness that lives within the soul of the professor—a personal philosophy that recognizes the discipline and classroom environment as an opportunity to promote self-questioning, acknowledge big questions, and support discussion of meaning-making. “The syllabus: a confession of faith” (Parks, 2011, p. 211), functions as a professor’s testimony; “that is, in preparing a syllabus, educators declare what they believe to be of value: questions, images, insights, concepts, theories, sources, and methods of inquiry that they have found to lead toward a worthy apprehension of truth” (Parks, 2011, p. 211). Aligned with Parks’ (2011) research, findings from this study connect the philosophy of the professor with the connections they make between the discipline and their responsibility to help students grow in the interactions and perceptions that they have toward others. As stated in the philosophy of one professor, “The way that they look at others and treat them with dignity; I hope they remember that” (Catherine).

Practices that enhance spiritual development relate to the real experiences that faculty create for students. Knowing that the choices students make will impact others, faculty make conscious efforts to introduce curricula at a deeper, more spiritual level that connects learning to how students will go out and help others, especially through service and through their career choice. Similar to a finding of Astin et al. (2011), faculty believe that spiritual development is enhanced by practices that encourage students to participate in service to others. As a

pedagogical approach, five faculty of this study combine learning objectives with service where students take on new roles and responsibilities. By exposing students to situations that allow them to see self in new ways, as individuals who create change for others, faculty perceive that students are afforded opportunities to see how their actions can positively impact others.

Discovered as a finding in Parks' (2011) research, "encounters with otherness," "are the most powerful sources of vital, transforming questions that unsettle unexamined assumptions, foster adaptive learning, and spur the formation of commitment to the common good" (p. 181). By "otherness" Parks refers to "encounters with those outside of one's own tribe, those generally regarded as *them* instead of *us*" (p. 181). In a "constructive" encounter with otherness, "an emphatic bond is established that transcends *us* and *them*, creating a new *we*. This grounds commitment to the common good rather than just to me and mine" (p. 181). Consistent with Parks' research, faculty of this study believe that there is a difference between knowing because it exists in the world, and knowing because you are involved. By exposing students to situations where they not only imagine the experiences of others, but participate in them, faculty perceive that they make it possible for students to know more and to feel more. Service learning allows students "to see through another's eyes, to feel through another's heart, to know something of another's understanding" (Parks, 2011, p. 181).

Coupled with pedagogical approaches that promote critical thought, faculty include practices of deep discussions and questioning, challenging students to consider multiple perspectives, and flourishing capacity to reexamine self-understanding. Through reflective practices such as oral and written reflection, students are encouraged to nurture their spirituality—formulating for themselves what they believe and value, while trying to make sense from another perspective. Through these processes faculty encourage students to recognize

personal qualities that will lead to the way they will go out and help others. Simultaneously, as student take on new ways of thinking, faculty guide students through their uncertainties and curiosities and model for students how to treat others. Encompassed in the pedagogical approaches used, faculty connect what they do in class to how students understand self, understand others, and understand the world; thus, the finding of connectedness is demonstrated in the disciplines.

Also at the center of pedagogy, where spirituality naturally emerges, faculty acknowledge the distinctive role that the university plays in allowing for spirituality to be brought forth in any discipline. A major finding in the study is that faculty feel supported by the university and its mission, stating that being at a faith-based university makes a difference in the way that students and faculty engage in spirituality, meaning-making, and connectedness. Understanding that spirituality and scholarship are not opposites, the university frames spirituality in the context of helping others through service, and in the context of faculty and students mutually supporting each other. Additionally, the university cultivates an environment that provides a sense of belonging for all, including the welcoming of people of multiple faiths and beliefs.

The inspiration and guidance demonstrated by the university makes a difference in the way that students and faculty connect with each other, and in the way that spirituality naturally works its way into the setting. Because the university cultivates an environment of belonging, acceptance, and respect for others, students and faculty are exposed to diverse ideas that facilitate the understanding of multiple perspectives. Additionally, the university provides faculty and students with resources and opportunities that contribute to how the faculty of this study feel well-positioned to facilitate the spiritual development of students.

With spiritually not being focused on religious beliefs, faculty are able to focus their efforts on service and its relationship to spirituality. Going back to Parks' (2011) research, when students are afforded opportunities to have "encounters with otherness," an "empathetic bond" is created which "gives rise to compassion" (p. 182). "This conviction of possibility fosters the courage to risk on behalf of more than mere self-interest, recognizing that my well-being and the well-being of other are linked" (p. 182). The opportunity to include service as part of the learning experience was something that faculty appreciated.

Answering research question 3: How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students? Invested in the becoming of the student, faculty are intentional about acting from a place of support for students. Teaching from a philosophy that students and faculty are in partnership together, the finding of connectedness is not only demonstrated in pedagogical approaches, but also in the relationship that is shared between student and teacher. Embracing the heart, mind, and spirit of the student, the relationship is carried out through methods of acknowledgement, ones that above all recognize students as human beings. From a perspective that spirituality relates to the interactions that people have with each other, faculty define relationships through philosophies where all human life is deserving of dignity. Modeling the importance of fostering relationships that are caring, compassionate, and respectful, the teacher-student relationship represents a coming together of faculty's personal philosophies with how students are seen and treated.

The desire to connect with students also includes a sharing of self on the part of the teacher. Faculty make choices to present themselves as human beings and recognize that their attitudes and behaviors both in and outside the classroom environment influence the way that students see them. Faculty present themselves in approachable ways and make themselves

available to the life of the student. They embrace an environment of community and demonstrate to students that they are seen and heard. As described through the words of Parks (2011), “the encounter of student and teacher . . . is a meeting of spirit and spirit” (p. 214).

Although willing to participate in the students’ becoming, faculty remain aware of the potential influence that they have in the life of the student. With characteristics aligned to Parks’ (2011) description of “Professor as Spiritual Guide” (p. 213), faculty play an appropriate role and create environments, learning experiences, and relationships that avoid persuasion through indoctrinating perspectives. They present spirituality from impersonal perspectives and allow students the respect and freedom to decide how they relate the learning experience to their own faiths and beliefs. Faculty spend time attending to the academic pressures that students are under and acknowledge their concerns for professional opportunity. Consistent to Palmer’s (1999) description of spiritual questioning, faculty believe that assisting students’ in their spiritual development includes questions that are “the kind that we, and our students, ask every day of our lives as we yearn to connect with the largeness of life. [Such as:] ‘Does my life have meaning and purpose?’ ‘Do I have gifts that the world wants and needs?’” (p. 8). That said, faculty view their role in relation to students’ spiritual life as one that guides students through a realm of support. Whether it be helping students with academic concerns, or spiritual topics, the relationship is characterized by principles that promote partnership, belonging, acceptance, and knowledge.

Aligned to the theoretical framework of this study, faculty appear to students through “five key gifts of mentorship: *recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration*—in ways that are *accountable* to the life of the emerging adult” (Parks, 2011, p.166-167). Although careful to avoid suggestion from imposing perspectives, faculty acknowledge that students are at a time of

discovery and are committed to provide mentorship and guidance. Mentoring, in the classic sense, takes place between two individuals, “a younger adult and an older, wiser figure who assists the younger person in learning the ways of life” (p. 165). Referencing Parks’ (2011) description of mentors and “protégés,” a distinguishing feature of the mentor’s strength is “the capacity to work shoulder to shoulder with the emerging adult” (p. 169) and not define the relationship as a hierarchical one (Parks, 2011). “Although a mentor brings some larger realm of experience or talent to the relationship, great mentors nevertheless also learn from their protégés through a process of mutual challenge and discovery” (p. 169). Connected to the findings of this study, faculty of this study viewed the teacher-student relationship as one where faculty and students mutually support each other and work in partnership.

Conclusions

Facilitating the spiritual lives of students is not the sole responsibility of faculty; nor does it happen through the efforts of the institution alone or solely from the faculty member’s set of beliefs. The ability to facilitate students’ spiritual development is the coming together of the institution and faculty members’ shared beliefs and core values, otherwise known as institutional fit. Not previously identified is the notion that what faculty and the university have in common allows for the capacity of connectedness to emerge.

Where existing literature turns to the critical role that faculty play in enhancing students’ spiritual development (see e.g., Astin et al. 2011; Astin & Lindholm, 2008; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011), this study contributes to existing literature by identifying that institutional fit influences the way that faculty feel about spirituality in higher education. In order for faculty to better assist students at a time of big questions, two things need to come together: the heart and mind of the

teacher, encompassing their philosophy of education and philosophy of how people should treat others, aligned with the way the institution frames and presents spirituality.

Within the structure of this study, there were no interview questions that asked faculty to comment on the university; from their own perspectives, faculty credited the university for its contributions. They spoke about their alignment to the mission of the university and described the institution as a place where spirituality is promoted through service and though an environment that encourages belonging. Although being at a faith-based university made a difference in the way that faculty felt comfortable facilitating students' spiritual development, it was the distinct characteristics of *this* particular university that made it possible for faculty to combine who they are as a person with their willingness to embody the mission of the university and nurture the spiritual development of students.

The conclusion of this study first makes the connection between faculty members' personal definitions of spirituality to ways that students are seen and treated, and to the way that faculty view the role of spirituality in higher education. In an effort to better understand what is meant by spirituality, one of the first interview questions of this study asked faculty to describe their personal definitions of spirituality. From their responses three main points emerged: (1) spirituality is personal, part of who we are, and is something that everyone needs to decide individually; (2) spirituality includes the way that one connects and relates to others, and/or to a higher being, or to something beyond; and (3) spirituality and religion can relate but do not have to, depending on the individual and their relationship to it. Having said that, there is a personal aspect to spirituality and there is a relationship aspect to it.

When sharing personal definitions of spirituality, several of the faculty members aligned their descriptions to the discipline and to their role as a teacher. In a similar way, faculty

described that spirituality is a part of who we are as human beings—thus aligning their personal belief to their declaration that spirituality is a direct part of higher education. Likewise, faculty view spirituality as something that is personal—thus aligning their personal belief with the way that spirituality is presented to students—with care and respect to not present spirituality through imposing ways. Also encompassed from their responses, when speaking to faculty about their relationships with students, faculty continuously placed their inner self alongside the becoming of the student—constantly finding ways to relate to students and conveying empathy for what it is like to be a student—equally acknowledging students as human beings and reassuring them that it is natural to have big questions. Therefore, it can be said that faculty members’ personal descriptions of spirituality guide their way of teaching and interacting with others. In the same way, the conclusions are aligned to Palmer (1998) in that “we teach who we are” (p. 2) and to Parks (2011) in that yes indeed, the syllabus is a confession of faith.

Making the connection to institutional fit, because the university presents spirituality in the broad contexts of service, social justice, partnership, and being welcoming to people of multiple faiths and beliefs, faculty were able to align the principles of what they believe in to the mission of the university and to the way that they teach and interact with students. Because the university did not set out to impede the personal faiths and beliefs of individuals—for example, to improve student and faculty members’ religiosity—faculty were able live by their belief that spirituality has a personal aspect to it, and in turn were able to demonstrate care and respect for the student by providing them with choices as to how they define spirituality.

Additionally, faculty were able to focus their efforts to the side of spirituality that was appropriate—the relationship aspect and the importance of connectedness to self and to others. The conclusion can be made that because neither the institution nor faculty set out to impose on

the personal faith and beliefs of the student, students and faculty were able to mutually support each other in community and belonging—which is an important element in helping students and faculty understand that as human beings we are all in this together and therefore have a responsibility to serve others.

The conclusion can also be made that the context of the university and the way that faculty perceive the institution's expectations of spirituality in higher education both make a difference in the way that faculty are able to enhance connectedness. When there is institutional fit, it makes it possible for faculty to teach from their hearts and combine what Palmer (1998) refers to as the “inner landscape of the teaching self”—the three important characteristics of the teacher's inner life: the “intellectual, emotional, and spiritual” (p. 5) with a place where the human self can be interwoven in education (Palmer, 1998). This provides faculty with a place to be at home with their profession and with their authentic self.

Second conclusion of the study. Although the first conclusion focused on the role of institutional fit, a major conclusion of this study is that ultimately, it's the passion and commitment of the teacher to help students in their inner-development that makes a difference in how faculty view the classroom as a place for students to grow spiritually. Even if institutional fit is visible in every relationship that exists between faculty and the institution, if passion and commitment for students' holistic development is not there, it makes it almost impossible for someone to see beyond the academic discipline.

As demonstrated in the findings of this study, spirituality is carried out by faculty who are willing and bold enough to move beyond disciplinary frameworks of objective knowing—to encourage students to create new meaning from the context of the learning and to see the importance of connectedness. Interpreted from the findings of this study, much of what

participants do in their teaching is connected to the hope that students will learn more than what can be uncovered in the subject. Their passion and commitment to care for students facilitates the transformation of learning from one that is focused only on scholarship, to one that challenges students to examine personal understandings and inspires them to have greater empathy, understanding, compassion, and care for others.

This conclusion relates the findings of this study to Parks' (2011) research, stating that "for the emerging adult to be drawn into full participation in the academy as a community of imagination, he or she must be led out by scholarship that is animated by passion" (p. 216). As Parks suggests, teaching that derives from passion and commitment to honor the becoming of the student facilitates mentoring relationships that enhance new understandings and develop wholeness.

The conclusion of this study also connects the findings to Tisdell's (2003) research that focuses on learning environments that engage the cognitive, affective, and symbolic domains of learning. Tisdell describes that including the cognitive domain (engaging students in multiple ways of knowing and in the discussion of new ideas), the affective domain (exploring how the course material connects with other people and life experiences), and the symbolic domain (engaging in activities that further a more holistic approach to learning) are part of spirituality in education. Although much of her research focuses on teaching for cultural relevance, the participants of this study used similar pedagogies; thus, honoring the significance of spirituality and creating learning environments where students can engage in activities of meaning-making and where their inner developments and knowledge are celebrated.

Limitations of the Study

To address the limitations of this study I continuously circled back and forth through the hermeneutic circle to make sure that I understood the parts and the whole of the data (Smith et al., 2009). Throughout the data collection and analysis, as well as in my time of writing and re-writing, the limitations of my study had a way of coming to light. Through extreme passion for the topic, I placed an immense amount of responsibility on myself, continuously challenging myself to grow as a researcher and to complete research that is true in its form. Knowing that it could be dangerous to hold this research too close to my heart, I continuously opened myself up to my dissertation chair—through my deepest vulnerabilities I allowed her equal voice to question my interpretations.

Recommendations for Future Research

Astin et al., (2011) make the claim that “in many respects, the secular institution is the ideal place for students to explore their spiritual sides, because, unlike many sectarian institutions, there is no official perspective or dogma when it comes to spiritual values and beliefs” (p. 6). I argue that making claims that sectarian institutions of higher education are connected to forms of indoctrination contributes to the growing concern of faculty who believe that spirituality does not fit within secular institutions.

As demonstrated in the findings of this study, being at a faith-based institution does play a role in making the discussion of spiritual topics possible. Nevertheless, there is harm in assuming that faculty of faith-based institutions are all comfortable and collectively on board with spirituality in higher education. Specific to this study, when inviting faculty to participate in the study, although at a faith-based institution, there were still some faculty who did not respond to the invitation to participate, and others who responded with concerns that they could not

contribute to the study because spirituality was not aligned to what they did in the classroom. That said, they were unable to connect spirituality with their contributions to assist students academically. Therefore, the first recommendation for future researcher is that research at faith-based institutions be explored. It does not matter if secular or faith-based, there will be those who are unable to make connections as to what is meant by spirituality and its relationship to higher education and holistic development.

Additionally, as reported in the findings of this study, there are students who attend faith-based institutions who have big questions; therefore, it is important to continue research at faith-based institutions to determine how to best support students in their spiritual developments. Not only that, but there is much to learn from institutions that naturally engage students in educational pursuits that move beyond the academic.

The second recommendation for future research is that institutions of higher education look to see how they present spirituality. What is expected on the part of the faculty member and of the student when stating that spirituality should be part of the educational experience? What would help faculty feel like they are supported and well-positioned to facilitate students' spiritual development?

In addition, taking what we know from the conclusions of this study, the third recommendation for future research is that it identify the relationship that institutional fit has to the willingness and comfort level that faculty have and feel to facilitate the spiritual development of students. How can faculty feel comfortable facilitating students' spiritual development if the institution fails to support faculty? How can the institution set out to solidify its identity if faculty do not embody the mission and its values? To what extent do search committees consider the importance of facilitating students' spiritual development when identifying

institutional fit? What resources and opportunities are available for faculty already established in the institution who see spiritual development as a separate part of higher education?

When identifying institutional fit, part of the recommendation three is that universities explore opportunities for faculty to attend teaching workshops that potentially and hopefully inspire faculty to engage deeper in their own spiritual self. If faculty play a critical role in enhancing students' spiritual development; (see e.g., Astin et al. 2011; Astin & Lindholm, 2008; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011) and if "teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one's inwardness, for better or worse" (Palmer, 1998, p. 2), then attention and implemented reflection should be incorporated in the responsibilities of the professor. If the heart and the soul of the teacher is indeed projected onto students, the subject, and to "our way of being together" (Palmer, 1998, p. 2), then to what extent is the institution willing to give its attention to the "who" of the teacher (Palmer, 1998)? It is recommended that the research of Parker Palmer (1998), as he says, awaken both the mind and spirit of the teacher. A simple yet inspiring place to start is to conduct a faculty book study using the book, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (Palmer, 1998).

The recommendation is that the methodology for future research consist of both quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative research can be used to gather larger samples of faculty, where the findings from qualitative research can represent the who of the institution and the who of the teacher. The exploratory research can include questions such as: What is the relationship of institutional fit to how the university's mission statement is carried out? How can institutional fit help to educate the whole person? What benefits does it have when the self of the teacher is joined with efforts to assist the holistic development of students?

What is it about faculty that makes someone willing or unwilling to combine who of who they are, with the mission of the university?

The fourth recommendation of this study is that students should be interviewed to identify how they feel about holistic education. This recommendation relates back to the theoretical framework of the study, where Parks (2011) states that the “mentor becomes significant only if he or she ‘makes sense’ in terms of the emerging adult’s own experience” (p. 170). As with any study that wishes to understand the relationship between student and teacher, or the experiences that students have with higher education, it only makes sense to conduct a study that involves both students and faculty. Gathered from the findings of this study, faculty hope that students will begin to see themselves in new ways—as individuals who have a responsibility to engage with others in a way that brings people together, rather than ones who use differences to separate the minds and hearts of people. Especially through their career choices, faculty want students to think about what *they* can do, individually and collectively, to make a difference in the lives of others. By providing students with an educational experience that honors the heart, mind, and the spirit, faculty hope that students will align their role in the world with being someone who will go out and positively impact others. As stated as the fifth gift in the theoretical framework, “when the relationship works, the meaning and satisfactions that it yields are gifts to both the protégé and the mentor” (Parks, 2011, p. 173).

Recommendations for Action

In this study, faculty shared that although they made great efforts to cultivate safe environments where students were encouraged to look beyond the views of the professor and express their own positions, often times students were reluctant to share their thoughts and ideas and therefore did not always engage in discussions that were going on in the classroom. It is

recommended that another study be conducted at the same university, this time with students as participants and as interviewers.

Several of the faculty who participated in the study stated that they do not get any pushback from students—in other words students did not express disagreement to certain situations. It would be insightful to ask students why. Was their silence a true representative of how they feel? Or do we have to consider what was said in the theme *breaking habits of the mind* where faculty shared that typically undergraduate students are afraid of disagreeing? Is there a possibility that students are not speaking up because they fear the way that they will be looked at if they speak up and against the professor's views? Are environments being created where students are encouraged to freely express their thoughts? Do they feel imposed upon?

It is recommended, when students are interviewed, the research focus on how students perceive themselves in the teacher-student relationship. In this study, faculty shared that undergraduate students can be reluctant to share their perspectives with people who are older than them—particularly with faculty who they perceive to be all-knowing. Similar to Perry's Model of Cognitive and Ethical Development, students in the stage of dualism view themselves as receivers of knowledge (Taylor, et al., 2000). Their responses are indicative of the belief that learning is one directional, where the teacher is all-knowing. Students in this position think that teachers want them to respond with positions and opinions similar to their own. In considering Perry's research, it can be assumed that students can be reluctant to open up and share their true feelings. Consequently, when conducting future research of students, it is recommended that studies use a mixed method approach: students should be trained as interviewees to ease their comfort level and help them make choices and decisions for themselves. A mixed methods approach will provide findings that are generalizable and explorative.

It is also recommended that the same university conduct a study that asks all faculty to share their perceptions about spirituality and teaching. A short survey with quantitative and qualitative questions will provide the institution with results to determine if faculty are able to make connections to spirituality and the disciplines. If so, or if not, why? Existing literature can be used as a guide to structure the research. It is recommended that future research be opened up to all faculty, including part-time faculty. Considering the pedagogical impact that adjunct faculty can have, and the possibility for part-time faculty to become full-time, it would be significant to include their input.

As stated in the details of this study, sample selection for this research was purposeful. A homogeneous sampling strategy was used to select individuals who share a defining characteristic and belong to a subgroup. By opening future research to all faculty, including those who teach graduate students, the results of the study will be generalizable to the institution.

Additional Contributions

This study contributes to the growing concern of practitioners who have set their research efforts to reform higher education from one that concerns itself with academics over meaning making, to one that encourages students to explore questions of meaning, purpose, and faith, alongside the disciplines (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006; Lindholm, Millora, Schwartz, and Spinoso, 2011; Palmer, 1998; Parks, 2011; Zajonc, 2003). This study can help faculty of both secular and non-secular institutions of higher education gain ideas as to what is meant by spirituality in higher education, especially with ways to envision and present spirituality alongside the academic discipline. The hope of this study is that the findings will help faculty and institutions of higher education discover ways to connect spirituality and higher education. Along with other researchers, the desire is to help faculty rethink the meaning

of spirituality in higher education. As stated by Zajonc (2003) in order to reform higher education, we need to reconfigure “the wrong map,” where faculty and institutions of higher education see a “cognitive spirituality,” where spirituality is placed alongside knowledge and “Veritas [Truth]” (p. 54).

This study also contributes to existing literature by presenting research where spirituality is described by faculty across disciplines at a faith-based institution. The participants of this study help students make connections between what they are doing in class, to how they understand self, and how they understand others. The findings of this study may have implications for understanding how faculty at faith-based institutions understand spirituality, specifically from faculty outside the department of religious studies. The suggestions for practice can be especially important for those who wish to implement spirituality separate from religion.

References

- Astin, A. W. (2004). Why spirituality deserves a central place in liberal education. *Liberal Education*, 90(2), 34-41.
- Astin, A. W., Astin, H. S., & Lindholm, J. A. (2011). *Cultivating the spirit*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Astin, H. S., & Lindholm, J. A. (2008). Spirituality and pedagogy: Examining the relationship between faculty's spirituality and use of student-centered approaches to undergraduate teaching. *The Review of Higher Education*, 31(2), 185-207.
- Astin, H. S., & Lindholm, J. A. (2011). Assessing students' spiritual and religious qualities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 52(1), 39-61.
- Barbezat, D. P., & Bush, M. (2014). *Contemplative practices in higher education: Powerful methods to transform teaching and learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bryant, A. N. (2008). The spiritual struggles of college students: Illuminating a critical developmental phenomenon. *Spirituality in Higher Education Newsletter*, 4(4), 1-8.
- Bryant, A. N., & Astin, H. S. (2008). The correlates of spiritual struggle during the college years. *Journal of Higher Education*, 79(1), 1-27.
- Chickering, A. (2003). Encouraging authenticity and spirituality in higher education, introduction. *Journal of College and Character*, 4(8).
- Chickering, A. W., Dalton, J. C., & Stamm, L. (2006). *Encouraging authenticity & spirituality in higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Columbus, OH: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Clark Plano, V. L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs selection and implementation. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35(2), 236-264.
- Ettling, D. (2006). Ethical demands of transformative learning. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education* 2006(109), 59-67.
- Fowler, J. W., (1981). *Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*. New York, NY: Harper Collins

- Gutek, G. (2009). *New perspectives on philosophy and education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Holliday, A. (2007). *Doing & writing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). London, England: Sage Publications.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lindholm, J. A., & Astin, H. S. (2006). Understanding the “interior” life of faculty: How important is spirituality? *Religion and Education*, 33(2), 64-90.
- Lindholm, J. A., & Astin, H. S. (2008). Spirituality and pedagogy: Faculty's spirituality and use of student-centered approaches to undergraduate teaching. *The Review of Higher Education*, 31(2), 185-207.
- Lindholm, J.A., Millora, M.L., Schwartz, L.M., & Spinosa, H.S. (2011). *A guidebook of promising practices: Facilitating college students' spiritual development*. Los Angeles, CA: Regents of the University of California.
- Merriam, S. & Associates (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2007). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J., & Associates (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Moran, D. (2001). Introduction to phenomenology, Robert Sokolowski. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 32(1), 109-112.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Overstreet, D. V. (2010). Spiritual vs. religious: Perspectives from today's undergraduate Catholics. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 14(2), 238-263.
- Palmer, P. J. (1997). Teaching and learning in community. *About Campus*, 2(5), 4-13.
- Palmer, P. J. (1998). Evoking the spirit in public education. *Educational leadership*, 56, 6-11.
- Palmer, P. J. (2007). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Palmer, P. J. (2014). Foreword. In D. P. Barbezat & M. Bush, *Contemplative practices in higher*

- education: Powerful methods to transform teaching and learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, pp. vii-x.
- Parks, S. D. (2011). *Big questions, worthy dreams: Mentoring emerging adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith* (revised ed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Pryor, J. H., Eagan, K., Palucki Blake, L., Hurtado, S., Berdan, J., & Case, M. H. (2012). *The American freshman: National norms fall 2012*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.
- Religion. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary (11th ed.)*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/religion>
- Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field methods*, 15(1), 85-109.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Spirituality & the Higher Education Curriculum: The HERI Syllabi Project (2005). *Spirituality in Higher Education: A National Study of College Students' Search for Meaning and Purpose*, 2, 1-4. Retrieved from <http://spirituality.ucla.edu/publications/newsletters/2/syllabi.php>
- Taylor, E. W. (2006). The challenge of teaching for change. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2006(109), 91-95.
- Taylor, E., Tisdell, E. J., & Hanley, M.S. (2000). *The role of positionality in teaching for critical consciousness: Implications for adult education*. Paper presented at the 41st Annual Adult Education Research Conference at University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.
- Taylor, K., Marienau, C., & Fiddler, M. (2000). *Developing adult learners: Strategies for teachers and trainers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Thelin, J. R. (2004). *A history of American higher education*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Tisdell, E. J. (2003). *Exploring spirituality and culture in adult and higher education*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Tolliver & Tisdell (2006). Engaging spirituality in the transformative higher education classroom. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2006(109), 37-47.
- Zajonc, A. (2003). Spirituality in higher education: Overcoming the divide. *Liberal Education*, 89(1), 50-58.

Zajonc, A. (2006). Love and knowledge: Recovering the heart of learning through contemplation. *Teachers College Record* 108(9), 1742–1759.

Zajonc, A. (2013). Contemplative pedagogy: A quiet revolution in higher education. *New Directions in Teaching and Learning*, 2013(134), 83-94.

Appendices

Appendix A

Invitation to Potential Participants

Date _____
Dear _____,

My name is Darlene Carbajal and I am a graduate student working towards a doctorate in education with a concentration in higher education. In addition to being a doctoral student, I am a K-12 public-school educator and an adjunct professor. In partial fulfillment required to complete a Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.), I will conduct a research project on the topic of “Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty Experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual Development of Students.” You are receiving this letter as an invitation to participate in the study, understanding ways to help facilitate the spiritual development of students.

Purpose and framework of the study

The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of faculty members’ attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and of the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. Sharon Daloz Parks’ (2011) work provides a framework for this study. Much of Parks’ work, found in her book *Big Questions Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* focuses on community and helping students between the ages of eighteen and thirty-two address big questions of life such as: “Who am I and why am I here? Why is the world the way it is? How do I work for something when I don’t even know what it is?” (p. 178).

According to Parks, addressing the big questions of life is extremely difficult for students. Faculty particularly, have the ability to assist students in the formation of meaning, purpose, and faith, providing place and time for students to get in touch with the inner-self, designing lessons, creating environments, and developing relationships that assist students in their spiritual development.

Methodology and research questions

It would be an honor if you would be willing to participate in this study. To participate, the individuals should be willing to contribute to the study by sharing descriptions of teaching experiences as it relates to spirituality, to include thoughts and feelings about situations, places, and people connected to the experiences; this will allow me to understand the how the participant perceives the role of spirituality in higher education as it reveals itself through your unique experiences. To gain a better understanding, qualitative research methods will be used. The research questions of this study are:

1. How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?
3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

Identifying Potential Participants

Participant selection began by identifying faculty who had most likely incorporated spirituality in the curriculum. To identify the possible participants, I looked at individuals who received the . .

. Award, an award that recognizes faculty commitment to promoting and supporting the mission of the university. Essential criteria to participate includes: the potential participant has to have received the . . . Award, the faculty member must teach undergraduate courses, and the faculty member must be tenured. The goal is to interview seven to eight participants; if all potential participants show interest to participate, I will narrow down the list to individuals who teach from diverse disciplines of study.

Data collection

To participate, you must be willing to take part in a 60 to 75 minute tape-recorded interview and a follow-up interview (if needed). You must also complete a pre-interview questionnaire and meet for a 15-20 minute pre-interview meeting to review the consent form, granting permission that the data be published in the dissertation, and establish a date and time for the interview. In addition to the interview, I will also encourage participants to share documents such as course syllabi and lesson plans. These documents will help readers get examples of pedagogy as it relates to spirituality in higher education. Because the documents contain information that would make the institution and participant identifiable, course syllabi and lesson plans will not be printed in the dissertation. They will be used in the data analysis to create themes and also used to describe pedagogical examples for those who read the dissertation. To help provide an anonymous profile for the participant, the name of the participant, the name of the institution, and any identifiable information will not be included in the dissertation manuscript.

Ethical standards and confidentiality

This study adheres to ethical standards of human science research. Participation is voluntary with the right to withdraw from the study at any time of the project. I do not anticipate that any harm will come to individuals who participate in this study. There is no foreseeable risk that the questioning of this study will cause harm to participants, e.g., cause them to relive any trauma or share any experiences that will harm your emotional well-being. I will go through every possible length to protect the identity of the institution and of the participants; however, because there is a limited amount of degree granting private universities in South Central Texas, there is a possibility that the participants and institution can be identified. To help protect the identity of the site and of the participants', participants will be given pseudonyms instead of using real names and all identifiable information will be removed from the data; this includes specific information about the faculty award and the school that you teach in. There will also be no mention of . . . in the printed dissertation manuscript (as it relates to the site of the study). This includes any information that helps identify the university. Although I cannot guarantee anonymity, as stated, I will go through every possible length to protect participants' identity. I do however have a reasonable guarantee of confidentiality. Interview data and documents such as syllabi and lesson plans will be stored on a password-protected home computer, used only by the researcher. The data will be safeguarded and stored for five years after the dissertation project is completed. At that time, collected data will be destroyed following procedures provided by a removal of electronic media company.

I appreciate your willingness to possibly participate in this study; your experiences will be valued. If you are willing to participate and meet the criteria, please sign by the date of _____ and I will arrange to obtain this form from you. You may also sign and email back as a .PDF document. Depending on the number of participants who are willing to participate, I may need

to continue the screening process, limiting the amount of potential participants (you will be notified by email with information). If all is well, we will set up your pre-interview and review the consent form; this will be a wonderful time to address any questions that you may have. Please contact me with any questions or concerns. I can be reached at 210-618-1429 or darlenecarbajal@hotmail.com.

Thank you kindly,
Darlene Carbajal

Interest to Participate/Date	Discipline of teaching	Number of years teaching at this institution

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix B
Participant Consent Form
Subject Consent to Take Part in a Study of
Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty Experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual
Development of Students

Date _____
Dear _____,

Thank you for your interest to participate in my dissertation project on faculty experiences of facilitating the spiritual development of students. I value your contribution and am excited about the possibility of your participation. The purpose of this letter is to reiterate information about the study and to secure your signature to participate.

Purpose of study, methodology, and research questions

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and of the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. The research approach I am using is qualitative, an approach selected for the purpose of seeking descriptions of your experiences. This study will use a phenomenology research inquiry to investigate different understandings of spirituality and the role it plays in the higher education environment. The reason for this inquiry is so that faculty can describe what they are experiencing or have experienced in facilitating the spiritual development of students. Faculty will share their perceptions and experiences of educational practices and views on the role of spirituality in higher education.

Using this approach I hope to answer three research questions:

1. How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?
3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

Person-to-person interviews yield the best information to address the research questions of this study. The interviews will be conducted at . . . ; plan for the interview to take approximately 60 to 75 minutes. It will be suggested that interviews take place in the participant's office or work environment of choice such as the library. Should you request a different location for the interview, I am flexible and open to suggestions; I want you to be comfortable. An Olympus WS-100 Digital Voice Recorder will be used to record the interviews. To prepare for malfunction of the device, I will have a second voice recorder available. The voice recorders have USB connections that allow interview data to be transferred to my personal computer for review and transcription. For safeguarding purposes, I will use my personal computer that is not mobile and is located at my home. The desktop computer is password protected and is only used by me. The audio recordings will be stored for five years after the dissertation project is completed. Upon completion, I will contact a computer-based company that will provide information for how to remove and dispose of the electronic media.

In addition to the person-to-person interviews, I am also inviting you to share documents such as course syllabi and lesson plans. These documents will help readers get examples of pedagogy as it relates to spirituality in higher education. Because the documents contain information that would make the institution and participant identifiable, course syllabi and lesson plans will not be printed in the dissertation. They will be used in the data analysis process to create themes and also used to describe pedagogical examples for those who read the dissertation. For example, the printed dissertation may say something similar to, “a professor supported the spiritual development of students by asking students to explore personal values, morals, and responsibility to citizens who would be affected by testing prototypes. The professor’s goal was to teach students about having a global and cultural awareness of others.” By including pedagogical examples in the dissertation, readers will get examples of how they can integrate activities that help support the spiritual development of students. To help provide an anonymous profile for the participant, the name of the participant, the name of the institution, and any identifiable information will not be included in the dissertation manuscript. As with the interviews and research materials, the documents will be safeguarded with ethical considerations to confidentiality and kept for five years after the dissertation is completed. At that time, they will be destroyed. This also includes the information that you have shared on the pre-interview questionnaire. The information that you share may be used in the data analysis but identifiable information will be removed and the materials will be safeguarded in the same way and kept for five years after the dissertation is complete.

Expected duration of the subject’s participation

Through your participation, I hope to better understand how you perceive the role of spirituality in higher education as it reveals itself through your unique experiences. I am seeking descriptions of your teaching experiences as it relates to spirituality, to include your thoughts and feelings, as well as learn about situations, places, and people connected to your experiences. The expected timeframe for this study is as follows:

1. Spring 2016: Invite potential participants, conduct the pre-interview, obtain signatures for participation, and conduct interviews
2. Late Spring 2016: Begin to transcribe interviews
3. Summer 2016: Begin to analyze data and communicate with participants about the interpretation of data
4. Fall 2016: Continue to communicate with participants and complete the dissertation project

Ethical standards, confidentiality, and foreseeable risk to participants

By agreeing to participate in a research study of “Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty Experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual Development of Students,” I understand the procedures used in the study, that the results will be used for my dissertation project, and am participating voluntarily. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and will not be penalized for withdrawing. I do not anticipate that any harm will come to individuals who participate in this study. There is no foreseeable risk that the questioning of this study will cause harm to participants, e.g., cause them to relive any trauma or share any experiences that will harm their emotional well-being.

To help provide an anonymous profile for the participant, I understand that the researcher will go through every possible length to protect my identity and the identity of the institution; however, because there is a limited amount of degree granting private universities in South Central Texas, there is a possibility that I can be identified, as well as the institution. To help protect my identity, I understand that I will be given a pseudonym instead of using my real name and all identifiable information will be removed from the data; this includes specific information about the faculty award and the school that I teach in. There will also be no mention of . . . in the printed dissertation manuscript (as it relates to the site of the study). This includes any information that helps identify the university. Although I cannot guarantee anonymity, as stated, I will go through every possible length to protect participants' identity. I do however have a reasonable guarantee of confidentiality. Interview data and documents will be stored on a password-protected home computer, used only by the researcher. The data will be safeguarded and stored for five years after the dissertation project is completed. At that time, collected data will be destroyed following procedures provided by a removal of electronic media company.

Additional statement related to confidentiality

As previously stated, participants for this study were selected from a limited pool of faculty. Individuals who received the . . . Award between the years 2010 through 2014 were considered to participate in the study (a total of 25 faculty). The goal is to interview seven to eight participants (although I have been approved by IRB to interview a max of ten participants). If I am unable to find at least seven participants, I will look at the year 2015, then the year 2009, and then the year 2008 as a possibility to recruit participants (possibly an additional fifteen faculty). Given the limited pool of faculty, once again, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. The . . . Award will not be mentioned in the dissertation; language used in the dissertation will be general, such as stating that the faculty award recognizes faculty commitment to promoting and supporting the mission of the university.

Taking all participants in consideration, I do not want to use your real name (even if you grant me permission); I am committed to protecting the identity of the institution and participants to the best of my ability.

Description of any benefits to participants

By participating in this study you will not be compensated; you are participating on a voluntary basis. You will however, contribute to other faculty and members of the higher education communities by sharing strategies and resources for how to help students in their spiritual journeys. Given your diverse subject areas and pedagogical approaches, you will not only be able to gain ideas for enriching students' lives but you will assist other faculty who have a desire to help facilitate and incorporate spiritual components in the curriculum.

Granting permission

I grant permission for the data to be used in the process for completing a PhD degree, including the publication of the dissertation. I agree to meet at the following location _____ on the following date _____ at _____ for a research interview of approximately 60 to 75 minutes. If necessary, I am willing to meet for a follow up interview. I also grant the researcher permission to tape record the interview and

understand the procedure for safeguarding the data: interview data and documents will be stored on a password protected home computer, used only by the researcher. The data will be safeguarded and stored for five years after the dissertation project is completed. At that time, collected data will be destroyed following procedures provided by a removal of electronic media company.

I value your participation and am thankful for the time you are willing to commit to this research. If you have any questions about the study or your rights, please contact me before signing the participant consent form. I can be reached at 210-618-1429 or darlenecarbajal@hotmail.com.

With appreciation,
Darlene Carbajal

Research Participant/Date

Researcher/Date

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix C
Communication with Regard to Participation
Part I

Date _____

Dear _____,

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my dissertation project on spirituality in higher education. I am currently in the screening process and narrowing down the number of willing participants to a max of ten participants, the amount that I was granted permission by IRB to interview.

At this point I have more than ten potential participants who are willing to participate in the study. Although this is positive and exciting, unfortunately I am now in a position to continue the screening process, narrowing down the number of potential participants to a max of ten, with a goal to interview seven to eight. If you are receiving this letter, unfortunately there is a chance that I will not be able to use you as a participant in this study. To narrow the list to a max of ten, I am sending this letter to individuals where more than one person represents a discipline. For example, if three potential participants teach in the sciences, I am sending this email to the three of you. Although I would love to have input from all of you, having diversity in disciplines will benefit the findings of the study, offering readers with pedagogical examples of how to integrate spirituality in higher education across disciplines.

My question to you is: are you still willing to participate? If something has come up that will no longer allow you to participate, or you anticipate that you will not be able to commit, please allow someone else to take your spot. If you are willing to participate, please sign and return this letter to me by the date of _____. If you are no longer able to commit, please inform me by email.

Once I receive responses, if I still have more than ten, I will accept participants on a first come first serve basis. Whoever returns this letter to me (Communication With Regard to Participation) will be the first in line for participation. By the date of _____ I will either inform you that I have reached my max of ten participants and unfortunately have to close the participation pool, or I will set up a time with you for the pre-interview and have you sign the participant consent form, securing your signature for participation.

I thank you for your willingness to participate. It brings me great joy to know that so many faculty are interested in assisting students in their spiritual development.

If you are interested in participating and can meet for the 15-20 minute pre-interview, please sign the attached document and return it to me by the date of _____. You may email the document to me and return it as an attachment, or I can arrange to pick it up from you. I can be reached at 210-618-1429 or darlenecarbajal@hotmail.com.

With appreciation,
Darlene Carbajal

Research Participant/Date

Researcher/Date

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix C
Communication With Regard to Participation
Part II

Date _____
Dear _____,

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my dissertation project on spirituality in higher education. I appreciate everything that you have done in hopes of becoming a participant; the students are fortunate to have such committed professors.

Unfortunately I have reached the max of ten participants and will not be able to include your experiences in this study. I apologize; your input would have contributed greatly to this study. Although I am unable to include you as a participant in this study, once I am done with my dissertation, I hope to continue working on other projects, collaborating with faculty and contributing to the body of literature.

I hope to stay in contact you and learn more about what you are doing with your students.

With appreciation,
Darlene Carbajal

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix D

Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Information provided on this questionnaire will help me understand more about the participants involved in the research. Participants do not have to answer questions if they prefer.

The purpose of these questions is not only to provide me with background information, but also to get you thinking about who you are—who is the self of the teacher?

Please complete the information and return it by our pre-interview meeting on the date of _____. The information provided may be included in the data analysis. To help provide an anonymous profile for the participant, your name and identifiable information will be removed from the data collected.

When we meet for the pre-interview we will double check that this form has been completed, answering any questions that you may have, we will review the consent form and secure your participation, and we will set up a time and date for the interview. This will be a wonderful time for us to get to know each other; I look forward to our meeting.

Background questions

1. Have you been granted tenure at this university?
2. Tell me about the faculty award you won in relation to meeting one of the . . . missions of the university mission: Why do you believe that you were nominated and received this award?
3. How do you describe good teaching?

Participant/Date

Discipline of teaching

Rank

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix E Interview Protocol

[Dissertation Project]: Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty Experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual Development of Students

Date and Time of Interview:

Place of Interview:

Participant and Teaching Position:

[Description the project] Thank you for participating in the study. The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of faculty members' attitudes about the role of spirituality in higher education and of the pedagogical and mentoring approaches that faculty members use to facilitate the spiritual development of students. To discover how faculty feel about the role of spirituality in higher education and explore how faculty can assist students in their spiritual development, person-to-person interviews will be conducted. The information collected from this interview will be used for the purpose of conducting a dissertation project. Although the dissertation will be published, names and identifiable information will be removed from any data, helping to provide an anonymous profile for the participant. Any documents such as course syllabi will not be printed in the dissertation manuscript. They will only be used as a method to gather information about how faculty are incorporating spiritual components in their courses, specific to the discipline. Although the documents will not be printed in the manuscript, they will be safeguarded with ethical considerations to confidentiality and maintaining an anonymous profile for the participant. As with other data, the documents will be kept for five years after the dissertation is completed. At that time, they will be destroyed. The interview should take about 60 to 75 minutes of your time. Interview questions are semi-structured and designed to encourage discussion.

[Double check that the participant has read and signed the consent form stating that participation is voluntary, anonymous, and that they can withdraw from the study at any time.]

[Turn on the tape recorder and test it.]

Interview questions related to research question one: How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?

1. In your opinion, what is the role of spirituality in higher education?
2. Describe how you define spirituality?
3. Tell me about a powerful teaching/learning experience you had in the classroom. What did the experience mean to you? How do you believe others experienced it?

Interview questions related to research question two: What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?

4. What pedagogical approaches have you used in the classroom that allow students the opportunity to attend to issues of spirituality, meaning, and purpose?
5. Describe the courses that you teach, the pedagogical approaches that you use for integrating spirituality into the curriculum, and the intent of the implementation. How do you perceive the experiences were for students?

6. In thinking of how spirituality can be integrated with course material that is specific a particular discipline, can you share any documents such as syllabi, lessons, or activities that are used in your classroom to help facilitate the spiritual development of students?

Interview questions related to research question three: How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

7. In thinking about the teacher-student relationship, can you describe your feelings about your role in relation to the spiritual lives of students?
8. Tell me about how you relate to students and how the teacher-student relationship is experienced?
9. How do you know if you are making a difference in the lives of students?
10. Can you describe an experience where you made a difference in the life of a student?
11. How do you describe supporting and challenging students and how is this experienced?

[Thank the participant for their cooperation and participation in the interview. Assure them of confidentiality of the responses and inform them that you may request a follow-up interview should further information be needed. Remind the participant that they can request a copy of the transcribed interview.]

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix F Interview Guide

Research question 1: How do faculty describe the role of spirituality in higher education?

Interview questions related to research question 1: In your opinion, what is the role of spirituality in higher education? Describe how you define spirituality? Please describe one of the last times you experienced spirituality in the college environment and tell me about the situation. What were you doing, who were you with, and how did you feel? Tell me about a powerful teaching/learning experience you had in the classroom. What did the experience mean to you? How do you believe others experienced it?

With regard to the above interview questions, I hope to discover how the participant defines spirituality and how they perceive the role of spirituality in higher education. The questions will also allow the participant opportunity to describe an experience of the phenomenon, sharing meaning of how it is created.

Research question 2: What pedagogical approaches do faculty use to facilitate the spiritual growth of students?

Interview questions related to research question 2: What pedagogical approaches have you used in the classroom that allow students the opportunity to attend to issues of spirituality, meaning, and purpose? Describe the courses that you teach, the pedagogical approaches that you use for integrating spirituality into the curriculum, and the intent of the implementation. How do you perceive the experiences were for students? Did those experiences result in the kind of results that you wanted to see from students? In thinking of how spirituality can be integrated with course material that is specific a particular discipline, can you share any documents such as syllabi, lessons, or activities that are used in your classroom to help facilitate the spiritual development of students?

With regard to the above interview questions, I hope to discover how faculty experience spirituality and pedagogy. Participants will describe lessons or other forms of pedagogy used to illustrate the relation between spiritual components and content specific to the subject they teach. I will ask participants to describe classroom experiences when spirituality and pedagogy were integrated and how they perceived the experience to be for students. This section will address how faculty offer place and time for students to engage in spiritual development activities while teaching students course-required content. Within the findings of this section, I aim to describe of how spirituality and pedagogy are manifested and provide readers with documents that help illustrate pedagogical experiences described in their structures.

Research question 3. How do faculty describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students?

Interview questions related to research question 3: In thinking about the teacher-student relationship, can you describe your feelings about your role in relation to the spiritual lives of students? Tell me about how you relate to students and how the teacher-student relationship is experienced? How do you know if you are making a difference in the lives of students? Can you describe an experience where you served as an inspiration? How do you describe supporting and challenging students and how is this experienced?

With regard to the above interview questions, I hope to learn about experiences that describe the teacher-student relationship in the context of facilitating the spiritual development of students. The aim is to gain an understanding of how faculty perceive the teacher-student relationship and the role they play in the emerging adult's life. Parks (2011) speaks of five key gifts that mentors provide emerging adults: "*recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration—in ways that are accountable to the life of the emerging adult*" (p. 167). According to Parks (2011) "a good mentor is recruited to (but not overwhelmed by) the emerging adult's dialog between fear and trust, power and powerless, alienation and belonging, doubt and belief, hope and hopelessness, and he becomes more at home in a larger world" (p. 170).

This study has been approved by . . . IRB, #15-12-006

Appendix G IRB Approval

12/14/2015

Darlene Carbajal
1810 Edgehill
San Antonio, TX 78209

Dear Darlene:

Your request to conduct the study *Spirituality in a Faith-Based Institution: Faculty experiences of Facilitating the Spiritual Development of Students* was approved by expedited review on 12/14/2015. Your IRB approval number is 15-12-006. Any written communication with potential or current subjects must be approved and include the IRB approval number. Electronic surveys or electronic consent forms, or other material delivered electronically to subjects must have the IRB approval number inserted into the survey or documents before they are used.

Please keep in mind these additional IRB requirements:

- This approval is for one year from the date of the IRB approval.
- Request for continuing review must be completed for projects extending past one year. Use the **IRB Continuation/Completion form**.
- Changes in protocol procedures must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Use the **Protocol Revision and Amendment form**.
- Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others must be reported immediately.

Approved protocols are filed by their number. Please refer to this number when communicating about this protocol.

Approval may be suspended or terminated if there is evidence of a) noncompliance with federal regulations or university policy or b) any aberration from the current, approved protocol.

Congratulations and best wishes for successful completion of your research. If you need any assistance, please contact the IRB representative for your college/school or the Office of Research Development.

Sincerely,

Appendix H

IRB Amendment Revision Approval

3/9/2016

Darlene Carbajal
1810 Edgehill
San Antonio, Texas 78209

Dear Darlene:

Your request for revisions to expedited protocol 15-12-006 was approved. The following revisions to your protocol have been approved:

- Change recruitment criteria to include untenured faculty.

Please keep in mind these additional IRB requirements:

- This approval is for one year from the date of the IRB approval.
- Request for continuing review must be completed for projects extending past one year. Use the **IRB Continuation/Completion form**.
- Changes in protocol procedures must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Use the **Protocol Revision and Amendment form**.
- Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others must be reported immediately.

Approved protocols are filed by their number. Please refer to this number when communicating about this protocol.

Approval may be suspended or terminated if there is evidence of a) noncompliance with federal regulations or university policy or b) any aberration from the current, approved protocol.

Congratulations and best wishes for successful completion of your research. If you need any assistance, please contact the IRB representative for your college/school or the Office of Research Development.

Sincerely,