THANKFUL LEARNING:
A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF RELATIONAL PRACTICE BETWEEN MASTER'S
STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS

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Abstract

Master's education in the social sciences provides a unique opportunity for students and teachers. Students often bring extensive professional and life experience to the classroom, as well as clarity regarding their academic goals. Professors who teach on the master's level are distinctly committed to the teaching mission and see their students' experience as valuable to their own growth as teachers and to the ongoing development and vitality of their academic programs. The purpose of this study is to explore what goes on in relational practice between master's students and professors. Ten matched pairs of recent alumni and professors (from six different schools) were interviewed. Participants reflected on their relationships while the student was enrolled in the master's program, and the evolution of their relationships in the alumni context. Grounded theory dimensional analysis was employed to analyze the interview data. Six dimensions each emerged from the professor and student data respectively. The professor dimensions are: *Orienting, Self-organizing, Valuing, Advancing, Bounding,* and *Regenerating*. The student dimensions are: *Engaging, Navigating, Developing, Connecting, Reconstructing,* and *Collaborating*. The professors' *Regenerating* and the students' *Reconstructing* are the core dimensions. A combined exploration of the professor and student dimensional analyses surfaced six theoretical propositions: energizing the relationship, teaching and learning are bidirectional, difference is potential, asymmetrical primacy, working close to the boundaries, and the connection paradox. This study draws from literature in the following domains: relational cultural theory, positive psychology, positive work relationships, mentoring, adult development, and adult learning. The wisdom of these literatures combined with the findings of this study,

provide a deep consideration of the relational space and experience of master's students and

professors, exploring elements such as mutuality, boundaries, friendship, professional

development, positionality, humor, connection and collaboration. The electronic version of this

dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www.ohiolink.edu/etd

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Exposed brick walls and tasty sandwiches, this was Fitzwilly's Restaurant in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1988-89. Even more important than the good food and warm interior, Fitzwilly's was where I came to see myself as an emerging scholar.

While pursuing a master's degree in counseling, I was captivated by a course on the history of higher education, taught by Dr. Roberta Heston. So as I began thinking about writing my thesis and realized my interest had more to do with the culture of higher education than with counseling, I approached Dr. Heston with my idea. We connected and soon began meeting for dinner at Fitzwilly's to discuss my topic. Roberta, sensing my strengths, encouraged me to consider a qualitative approach which, as far as I can remember, had not even been taught in my research methods class.

Roberta would hand me a book on qualitative methods at dinner and we would discuss it the next time we met. We worked together to develop my idea. And then, against my preference, Roberta suggested that for political reasons, I ask my department head to be my chair, noting that she would gladly serve on my committee. We continued to meet as she helped me with methodology and also to strategize how to put forth what we believed was the first qualitative thesis at Springfield College.

With its focus on athletics, Springfield College is a rather practical place. Quantitative approaches ruled the day and few master's students even pursued the optional thesis. But the conversations with Roberta energized me and I saw that I could apply my curiosity and writing skills on a new level. And there was something else that was important about those meetings at Fitzwilly's. In retrospect, I can see that moving out of the office and breaking bread together altered the positionality of our relationship. Roberta was still the teacher, but that seemed more

about experience than title. By reducing the positional distance between us, Roberta welcomed me to a new professional world; I was closer to becoming a colleague.

Nearly twenty years later, I am now a university teacher. I teach in an accelerated master's program and my students are adults with careers and families and other commitments. They rarely have time for lengthy in-person meetings. Nonetheless, I strive to encounter them as collaborators, both in class and in our exchanges outside of class, either in person, on the phone, or online. The relational dimension of teaching feels important to me. Based on the feedback that I get from many of my students and the energy that I sense in our interactions, I suspect that the relationship is important to them as well.

A wise colleague asked me, why is the relationship important to students? She encouraged me to consider a few students with whom I felt a close connection and she asked what I thought the relationship was about for them. I realized that I had developed assumptions but, in fact, had no informed idea why these master's students would wish to have additional connection with a professor, or what they gained from that connection. Further, I realized that the relational aspect of teaching must hold different meaning for others in my field. These wonderings have inspired my dissertation focus.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore relational practice between master's students and professors. I have applied grounded theory methods and engaged matched pairs of recent alumni and faculty from within social science master's programs. While relational cultural theory, mentoring episodes, positive emotions, and positive relationships at work served as sensitizing concepts, grounded theory positioned me to develop a theory based on the data rather than pre-existing models or my assumptions.

Research Question

The central research question of this dissertation is: What goes on in relational practice between master's student and professor? This study focused on adult master's students. I sought alumni who were at least 25-years-old at the time of their graduate study. This age parameter was to ensure that alumni participants had life experience beyond undergraduate education, when they enrolled in their master's program. The students' life experience helped to further distinguish them from traditional undergraduates. This was important given that I was striving to uncover the teacher and student relationship as it is particular to the master's context. For this study, professors were faculty who teach master's students and included: professors at any rank, instructors, and adjunct faculty.

Situating the Researcher

Looking to Define the Space Between

I believe in relational practice. Clearly, I have not always named it "relational practice," however in my 15-plus years of working with students, I have always thought that relationships were central to the quality of work we do together. In addition, I have had the good fortune to work with several significant mentors over the years, experienced professionals who took an interest in my potential, provided a safe space in which I could risk and dream, and pointed me toward opportunities I would not have otherwise pursued. These mentors were not simply role models who I observed from a distance, rather they were energetic and inspiring relational people with whom I engaged on a deep level.

When I embarked on my doctoral work, I was curious about relationships that I had with particular students. At the time I was a career counselor and I had worked in student affairs for 14 years. There were a handful of students with whom I had connected on a deeper level, a level more profound than was typical in my student affairs work. I knew that the relationships fell

somewhere between career counseling and psychological counseling. From my perspective, these relationships had elements of coach, parent, mentor, and friend. I had difficulty articulating exactly what I wanted to understand about these relationships, but my quest had something to do with the energy between us, or the exchange. I finally settled on thinking of this phenomenon as "the space between" my student and me.

In addition, with no real language for these particular relationships, I began referring to them as "mentoring." The term mentoring seemed easy – my Antioch colleagues and professors had a sense of what I was exploring, and when friends and family outside of our program asked what I was researching, "mentoring" was a clear response. However the use of the word "mentor" remained problematic for me. I believed that mentor conjured many images that were not relevant to my work, for example, mentoring programs and mentoring in the workplace. This predicament was confirmed by my critical review of literature regarding mentoring relationships with students, in which I found many empirical studies which considered mentoring programs and outcomes, but few studies exploring the relationship per se. Nonetheless, my continued work which focused on mentoring, expanded my notions of the space between and my concept of working with students.

Given the importance I have placed on the distinction between mentoring and relational practice, I will offer definitions of both, to guide the reader throughout this dissertation. The concept of mentoring has been given a variety of definitions. For the purpose of this study, I call on the definition provided by Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, and Ballou (2002, p. 90):

> We defined mentoring as a process whereby two people are engaged in a mutually beneficial relationship. A mentor provides emotional support, information, and advice; shares values; facilitates access to key networks; motivates; is a role model; protects; and provides the type of interactions that allow for transfer of knowledge and skills.

According to Beyene et al. mentoring includes particular functions such as providing access to key networks and protecting the protégé. Further, traditional views of mentoring imply a hierarchical situation wherein a more experienced mentor works with a less experienced protégé in what is often portrayed as a one-directional relationship (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). While Beyene et al. claim mutuality, their definition reveals a process in which the mentor gives and the protégé receives. Relational cultural theory, instead suggests a mutual process wherein both members of the dyad grow and develop. Relational cultural theory is based on the work of Jean Baker Miller and suggests that people grow via their relationships. Further, relational cultural theory suggests the actual processes by which people grow in relation. Deeper explanations of this theory are provided later in this chapter and in Chapter Two. My decision to focus on relational practice rather than mentoring is based both on my wish to avoid the specific notions that I believe are suggested by the term "mentoring" as noted previously, and on my preference to explore the deep social processes of these teacher and student relationships. I believe that working from the perspective of relational practice rather than mentoring will allow me to focus more on the process and less on the functions and roles.

Hospitality and Welcome

At this point, two thinkers who added profoundly to my understanding of the space between educator and student were Parker Palmer and Laurent Daloz.

Writing with both precision and great depth and revealing his notion of the teaching and learning relationship as a space, Palmer puts forth, "Good teaching is an act of hospitality toward the young" (Palmer, 1998, p. 50). Palmer wrote about space even earlier and in fact entitled a chapter "To Teach is To Create Space" in *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (1993), first published in 1983. Palmer suggests that the teaching space is a space "in which we can seek truth and truth can seek us" (p. 70). He continues noting that "a learning

space has three major characteristics, three essential dimensions: openness, boundaries, and an air of hospitality" (p. 71).

While Palmer (1998) identifies hospitality as the starting point of good teaching, Daloz (1999) points to the welcome as critical in the evolution of a protégé growing through a mentoring relationship. He says that transformation is not complete until the change is named and he sees the mentor as critical in that process. Daloz suggests that mentors can help students name the change that confirms transformation. "'Welcome' they say in a thousand languages, 'to the new world'" (p. 207). Conjuring imagines of bright and bold new places, he writes:

> For although journeys differ for each of us, like education, they do have direction, they have a common syntax, and we can mark our progress by the passing signposts. In their form itself lies their meaning… The question for us as teachers is not whether but *how* we influence our students. It is a question about a relationship: *Where are our students going, and who are we for them in their journey?* (p. 5)

As with Palmer (1998), Daloz's (1999) foundation, the key to his ideas of mentoring, reveals a notion of the relational space between. "Education is not a bunch of tricks or even a bundle of knowledge. Education is something we neither 'give' nor 'do' to our students. Rather, *it is a way we stand in relation to them*" (Daloz, 1999, xvii). He writes "Teaching is, finally, a special kind of relationship, a caring stance in the moving context of our students' lives" (p. 15). Daloz implies that mentors provide a still space for students amid the business and frenzy of learning and growing. He concludes his opening chapter by asking *"What is my place in the growth of those I care for?"* (p. 16).

Finding an Intellectual Home

The summer before my third year of doctoral study, I made a significant career move, leaving student affairs, and taking a faculty position in a master's of professional leadership program. Shortly after I began teaching, I realized that the same space that I had previously thought was an element of longer-term relationships was also present in some of the exchanges with my master's

students. Yet, I had not known these students for very long and often our encounters were brief. My new cohort of master's students were all adults who worked, so they spent little discretionary time on campus, and our encounters were often before or after class, and short in duration. This was in great contrast to my previous mentoring relationships where I often engaged in lengthy meetings with students and I grew to know them over the course of a few years. Witnessing this same energy in the exchanges with my new students, I came to believe that the space I was exploring was defined most simply by what *transpired* in that space, rather than by its essence as a long-term relationship. The space was created by something even more immediate than the trust and familiarity that develops over time. Moreover, the exchanges per se were often related to the coursework. As a teacher, the coursework always remains central, however as a researcher, I was interested in what else was going on in the exchange; I wanted to know more about aspects such as how we potentially energized each other and contributed to each other's self-esteem. Eventually, I encountered relational theory (Miller & Stiver, 1997) and there I found an intellectual home. Mutuality and growth-in-relation were among the concepts that finally helped me name the space between me and my students. Relational theory and the mentoring episodes framework (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007) also provided a theoretical base for the idea that short-term engagements have the potential to produce powerful moments similar to the magic that happens in longer-term mentoring relationships.

Tempering My Wonder and My Intent

My writing thus far may indicate that I see mentoring and relational practice as profoundly or even exclusively positive. While I believe that mentoring and other relational work have tremendous potential for positive experiences and outcomes, I am also aware that there are many potential problems in these relationships including: boundary violations, misuse of power, manipulation, exploitation, and other dysfunction.

While I work to maintain a balanced perspective on relational work and not lose sight of the potential complications and problems, I have also given considerable thought to what I will be trying to articulate with this piece of research. I do not intend to suggest that all faculty should relate to students in a particular manner, nor that faculty who want more connected relationships with students can simply follow the model that emerges from this study. Rather, I plan to expand my notion of relational work between students and professors by exploring this topic deeply with the study participants. And then, I intend to generate a model which will be a potential point of consideration and reflection for teachers who wish to consider their relational work with students.

Why Focus on Master's Students?

Master's students are an under-researched population, according to Dr. Eugene Rice, a senior scholar at the Association of American Colleges and Universities (personal communication, November 2007). A literature review revealed only one article which examined relationships between social science master's students and faculty (Kolbert, Morgan, & Brendel, 2002). The lack of scholarly attention focused on master's students is noteworthy given the place that master's study holds in the higher education world. As of the middle of this decade there were twice as many students enrolled in master's programs as there were enrolled in doctoral programs ("Trends in Graduate Enrollment and Degrees", 2006).

The available data regarding demographics of master's students is limited. Prior to embarking on this study, I contacted the Council of Graduate Schools, College Board, and the National Center for Education Statistics which is a division of the United States Department of Education. The National Center for Education Statistics offered the most detailed data. In 1970, the first year for which NCES collected data on master's students, women earned 40 percent of all awarded master's degrees. By 1981, women earned more than half of all master's degrees.

Numbers of master's degrees earned by women and men were approximately equal through the early 1980s until 1986 when women began to consistently earn more than half of all master's degrees granted (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). In 2005-2006, women earned a total of 356,169 master's degrees while men earned 237,896 master's degrees ("Master's Degrees Conferred," 2007). In addition, women earned more master's degrees among all race/ethnicity groups except non-resident alien. The only data I could find regarding age of master's students was a table published by the U.S. Department of Education in 2005 which includes a category for "graduate students." However this table (U.S. Department of Education, 2005) does not differentiate between master's and doctoral students within the graduate student category, so I will not report that data here.

The Institute of Education Sciences projects that between 2005-06 and 2017-18, there will be a 28 percent overall increase in the number of master's degrees earned (Husser & Bailey, 2008), including a 29 percent increase for men and a 27 percent increase for women. Given the escalating number of flexible format programs ("The Rise of 'Older' Graduate Students", 2007), such as evening, weekend, and low-residency models, consideration of the master's student experience becomes increasingly important.

Why Explore Teaching and Learning as Relational Practice?

A full review of adult learning theory is outside the scope of this study, however three leader-educators Daloz, Mezirow, and Vella provide a relevant foundation. All three of these theorists extend learning beyond the formal curriculum, recognizing the developmental potential of the endeavor, and all three recognize relationship as relevant if not central.

In 1978, Jack Mezirow moved the adult learning discourse to a deeper level when he conceptualized transformative learning. Transformative learning, with the disorienting dilemma as a central force, suggests that when the learner's assumptions are shaken and then she or he

learns to challenge those assumptions, to understand from where they originate, and to break out of those previous frames, an important shift in thinking and very likely potential action, will have occurred (Mezirow, 2000). Discourse is pivotal in Mezirow's view and he believes that discourse may be within a group or dyad, or even between a reader and a writer. Mezirow recalls Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's (1997) work when he names the "ideal conditions of discourse…. 'really talking' in which emphasis is placed on active listening, domination is absent, reciprocity and cooperation are prominent, and judgment is withheld until one empathically understands another's point of view" (p. 14).

Eight years after Mezirow's initial work, Daloz published *Effective Teaching and Mentoring,* which was offered as a second edition entitled *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners,* in 1999. As noted previously, Daloz does not just view relationship as part of teaching and advising adults, he views working with adults as a "special kind of relationship… a caring stance" (Daloz, 1999, p. 15). With his focus on relationship, Daloz's work is inspirational and foundational to my own research interests. I hope to build on and expand his ideas in two directions. First, while I believe that Daloz sees the teacher as a partner in the learning and views the learning as interactive and not didactic, my sense is that when writing his seminal work, he retained elements of hierarchy, e.g. the mentor as guide, the mentor "gives voice" (Daloz, 1999, p. 123) to the student. I am interested in considering the teacher-student relationship with a lens of mutuality, and this is provided by relational cultural theory. In addition, Daloz, focuses on longer-term relationships with students. He wrote at a time when email was just coming into fashion and perhaps he had more face-to-face time and longer exchanges with his students. Given my previously-noted interest in evening, weekend, and low-residency students who tend to have significant time constraints, I am interested in applying the mentoring episode lens to this work.

Finally, Vella, writing *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults* (1994 second edition published in 2002), reduces the hierarchy, identifying "sound relationship – which implies that there is friendship but no dependency, fun without trivializing learning, dialogue between adult men and women who feel themselves peers" (Vella, 2002, p. 85). Sound relationships is one of twelve principles and practices that Vella identifies in her approach to effective adult learning. As with Mezirow, relationship is one element of many that construct a larger framework of educating adults.

Having reflected on the work of Mezirow, Daloz, and Vella, I see a rich body of literature that energizes and informs those who teach adults. I would like to add to that dialog by exploring the relational practice between student and teacher, beyond what is considered by Mezirow and Vella who paint with a broader brush, considering elements beyond the relationship. In addition, I hope to exchange Daloz's positionality for a more mutual perspective and also consider shorter-term interactions, as well as his longer journey.

Several contemporary theories emerging from therapeutic and workplace research may help to expand the models and philosophies which originate in the adult education literature. Relational cultural theory (Jordan & Walker, 2004; Miller & Stiver, 1997) provides a sensitizing concept that includes zest, action, knowledge, worth, and desire for more connection as elements and indicators of growth-in-relation. Mentoring episodes (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007) offer affirmation of the rich potential of single or short-term exchanges. Positive relationships at work research considers how the quality of work relationships impact the quality of and experience of work (Ragins & Dutton, 2007), while energy in connection research (Dutton, 2003) expands the notion of zest from relational theory (Miller & Stiver, 1997) and also echoes the potential noted in the mentoring episode framework (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007).

Finally, I have also reviewed empirical literature regarding relational practice between graduate students and teachers. With a focus on the social sciences, I identified only one study which looked exclusively at students and teachers in a master's program, *Faculty and Student Perceptions of Dual Relationships Within Counselor Education: A Qualitative Analysis* (Kolbert et al., 2002).

In summary, the question "Why explore relational practice as teaching and learning" sits on a foundation consisting of the work of Mezirow, Daloz, and Vella. I intend to probe the question more deeply with a lens informed by relational cultural theory, positive relationships at work, and other lines of theory emerging from these domains. Finally, a review of empirical literature revealed several studies which consider relationships in the doctoral education context and only one study which considers exclusively social science master's students. This imbalance confirms the need to examine this topic in the master's education arena.

<div align="center">The Organization of the Dissertation</div>

Chapter One provides an introduction including the development of my interest in relational practice in the context of teaching and learning. I present the purpose of the study and the research question. I also situate myself as the researcher so that readers will understand something about the perspective I bring to this work. Additionally, I clarify why master's students are a group worthy of study and why the study of relational practice in the context of teaching and learning will be valuable.

Chapter Two reviews relevant theoretical literature from relational cultural theory, positive emotions, positive relationships at work, energy in relationships and adult development theory. This chapter also examines relevant empirical literature; due to the absence of research focused on social science master's students, this review also notes empirical literature on social science doctoral students.

Chapter Three explores grounded theory and clarifies my reasons for selecting this method. I describe my data collection and analysis as well as ethical considerations.

Chapter Four presents the data that I generated using grounded theory. I present the professor data and then the student data and finally a consideration of pairs data.

Chapter Five provides the theoretical modeling, theoretical propositions, a return to the literature, limitations, recommendations for future study, implications for leading change, and the conclusion.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter will review theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the exploration of relational work between master's students and teachers. The chapter begins with a review of relational cultural theory and then considers pertinent aspects of positive emotions, positive relationships at work and energy in relationships. Next, this chapter reviews relevant adult development literature. Given the range of theories in this literature review, there are areas of overlap and what may seem like artificial boundaries (e.g. "flourishing" as distinct from "thriving"). I have located material within the theoretical domain from which it emerges.

Relational Cultural Theory

An important new chapter in the study and understanding of psychology began in 1982 with the work of Carol Gilligan. She challenged conventional psychological thinking with "In a Different Voice" (1993, orig 1982). She declared that "as long as the categories by which development is assessed are derived from research on men, divergence from this masculine standard can be seen only as failure of development" (Gilligan, 1993, pp. 69-70). Reflecting on her work years later for a new edition of her book, Gilligan added "I reframe women's psychological development as centering on a struggle for connection rather than speaking about women in the way that psychologists have spoken about women – as having a problem in achieving separation" (p. xv). Gilligan's thinking set the stage for all relational theory that would follow.

Belenky et al. (1997) built on Gilligan's work as they identified five perspectives "from which women view reality and draw conclusions about truth, knowledge, and authority" (p. 3). Much of "Women's Ways of Knowing" is devoted to describing the five perspectives, and in addition, Belenky et al. (1997) explore the implications of their theory on teaching and learning.

They move the teacher off the all-knowing pedestal and place the teacher next to the student as a collaborative partner.

> We have argued in this book that educators can help women develop their own authentic voices if they emphasize connection over separation, understanding and acceptance over assessment, and collaboration over debate; if they accord respect to and allow time for the knowledge that emerges from firsthand experience; if instead of imposing their own expectations and arbitrary requirements, they encourage students to evolve their own patterns of work based on the problems they are pursuing. These are the lessons we have learned in listening to women's voices. (Belenky et al., 1997, p. 229)

Whereas Gilligan (1993) and Belenky et al. (1997) brought the notion of women (and perhaps men?) learning through relation to the forefront, Miller and Stiver (1997) dig deeper into the phenomena, proposing the process by which people learn in relation to each other. Relational Theory suggests five components of mutual empowerment: zest, action, knowledge, worth, and desire for more connection (Miller and Stiver, 1997). Their idea of "zest" captures in one word, the energy that I had been trying to name as I thought about these relationships with students, this idea that we both get increasingly energized by the exchange. Miller and Stiver describe this as "the energizing effect of emotional joining" (p. 31).

Along with zest, Miller and Stiver's (1997) other components all combine for a frame that captures the potential for development in dyadic relationships. Relational theory brings with it a new sense of mutuality, claiming that whether the relationship is between therapist and client, teacher and student, or between friends, both parties will potentially experience increased energy, sense of self worth and desire for more connection with others (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Relational theory also suggests that growth-in-relation is a creative and dynamic process, that new knowledge and understandings are created and new options generated, through the exchange. Further, capturing an element of the holding environment, movement might also be made possible by one's experience of feeling heard (Miller & Stiver 1997).

While some might view the emphasis on mutuality as a sign of weakness, merger, or hyper-dependency, relational theory requires solid boundaries and significant ego strength for both participants in the relationship to share such vulnerability and still maintain the independence needed for perspective and growth (Jordan, 1991). Relational theory activates the mentor's knowledge and perspective while tempering the mentor's advanced vision with respect and a keen awareness of the mutuality of the relationship, such that the potential hierarchical and directive nature of mentoring can be reduced. Mentor and protégé walk nearly side-by-side with the mentor just a half-step ahead and with full respect for her traveling companion.

A revisited definition of empathy is central to relational theory. Rogers wrote in 1956 that the empathic therapist can "sense the client's private world as if it were your own, but without ever losing the 'as if' quality" (Rogers, 1992, p. 832). However, Jordan, Surrey, and Kaplan (1991) suggest that theorists continue to view empathy as "an affective intuitive process involving a temporary breach of ego boundaries and regressive, symbiotic merger" (p. 27). They seek to move beyond this view and suggest that empathy requires both affective and cognitive processes (Jordan et al., 1991). Summarizing the work of her colleague Judith Jordan, Janet Surrey writes:

> She has shown that the ability to experience, comprehend and respond to the inner state of another person is a highly complex process, relying on a high level of psychological development and learning. Accurate empathy involves a balancing of affective arousal and cognitive structuring. It requires an ability to build on the experience of identification with the other person to form a cognitive assimilation of this experience as a basis for response. Such capacities imply highly developed emotional and cognitive operations requiring practice, modeling and feedback in relationships. (Surrey, 1991, p. 54).

In 2004, theorists at the Stone Center's Jean Baker Miller Training Institute declared an important step in the evolution of Relational Theory, renaming it Relational Cultural Theory (RCT). The name change reflected their clarification that relationships do not exist in isolation, but that "relationships may both represent and reproduce the cultures in which they are embedded" (Jordan and Walker, 2004).

While relational cultural theory so powerfully explains the developmental dyadic relationship I had been trying to understand for years, I had only begun to apply it to my shorter-term relationships with my master's students, when I stumbled upon the concept of mentoring episodes (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007), a construct that emerges from relational cultural theory. Mentoring episodes are on one end of a mentoring continuum which includes relational mentoring on the opposite end (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). Mentoring episodes are developmentally-powerful short-term relational exchanges. Fletcher and Ragins used RCT to assess whether or not single interactions are growth-fostering. "Mentoring episodes offer mentoring scholars a way to distinguish between a short-term interaction that occurs at a specific point in time and a mentoring relationship" (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007, p. 381). A review of the literature did not reveal any studies which explored relational cultural theory and graduate students.

<div align="center">Positive Emotions</div>

In a simple, yet striking question, researcher Barbara Fredrickson asked "What Good Are Positive Emotions?" (Fredrickson, 1998). Positive emotions "broaden a person's momentary thought-action repertoire" (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2006; Fredrickson, 1998; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). Fredrickson has called this model "broaden-and-build" (Fredrickson, 1998; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). She is suggesting that in positive emotional states, people are more likely to pursue creative or alternative "paths of thought and action," that people in positive emotional states are less likely to rely on automatic responses or the narrow range of responses available to someone in a fight or flee mindset. "Rather than seeing positive emotions as mere rewards or signals of desirable circumstances, we argue that they are complex phenomena that help *create* adaptive behavior" (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2006, p. 39).

Fredrickson reviews several studies and uses the thought-action repertoire lens to consider joy, interest, contentment, and love. Joy, happiness and other "relatively high-arousal positive emotions" move people to be playful in not only the obvious physical and social manners, but also intellectually and artistically and in this way, enhance one's thought-action repertoire (Fredrickson, 1998, p. 304). Interest, also thought of as curiosity and wonder, inherently broadens one's thought-action repertoire as one explores ideas. Contentment, which may sound passive, actually "creates the urge to savor and integrate recent events and experiences creating a new sense of self and a new world view" (p. 306). And love has the effect of building and strengthening social bonds and attachment which can lead to increased support and social resources (Fredrickson, 1998). Additionally, positive emotions have a longer-term impact:

> Not only do the positive emotions of joy, interest, contentment, and love share the feature of broadening the individual's momentary thought-action repertoire, but they also appear to share the feature of building the individual's personal resources, ranging from physical resources to intellectual resources to social resources. Importantly, these resources are more durable than the transient emotional states that led to their acquisition. (p. 307)

Particularly relevant to the academic context of this dissertation, Fredrickson suggests that "positive emotions build intellectual resources" (1998, p. 310). Interest seems to build intellectual resources in a fairly obvious way. In addition, "intrinsic interest in learning has also been linked to greater conceptual understanding, higher levels of academic achievement, lower drop-out rates, and greater psychological adjustment" according to the studies that Fredrickson (1998, p. 310) reviewed: Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier and Ryan, 1991; Renninger, Hidi, and Krapp, 1992; (in Fredrickson, 1998). Fredrickson's review of literature also showed that positive emotional states facilitate learning:

> Remarkably, simply asking students to think for less than 1 minute of a happy moment from their lives, before learning or test taking produces significant increases in intellectual gains and performance…. Isen (1987) suggested that positive affect promotes improved understanding of complex situations. Taken together, these experiments support the claim that positive emotions, though short lived, facilitate learning and

mastery, the products of which can become part of the individuals enduring intellectual resources. (Fredrickson, 1998, p. 311)

More recently, emotion researchers have considered the concept of flourishing. "To flourish means to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005, p. 678). They found that goodness (related to happiness), generativity, growth, and resilience characterize human flourishing. They also found that appropriate negativity (e.g. conflict engagement as opposed to expressions of disgust) is also important in flourishing (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Elsewhere, Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes (2003) consider well-being and flourishing in the workplace. Well-being in the workplace includes engagement that increases positive affect (Harter et al., 2003). After studying the relationship between employee workplace perceptions and business unit outcomes, Harter et al. (2003) concluded that manager "behaviors that increase the frequency of positive emotions" (p. 219) led to employees who were: more clear about expectations, fulfilled at work, connected with other individuals, caring toward others, conscious of company resources and used them congruently with the mission, and owning of the company's altruistic mission (Harter et al., 2003, p. 219).

One other study emerging from the positive psychology realm emerges as relevant to this research regarding relational practice between master's students and professors. Algoe and Haidt (2009) considered 'other-praising' emotions which include elevation, gratitude, and admiration. Algoe and Haidt describe elevation as "the emotional response to virtue" (p. 106) and their research found that elevation motivates people to "be kind or warm toward others" (p. 122). Algoe and Haidt suggest that gratitude is an emotional response to benefitting from someone else's act which was intended to bring benefit (p. 106). Their research found that gratitude moves people to seek additional connection with those who intentionally bring benefit. Finally, Algoe

and Haidt discuss admiration, an emotional response to seeing "extraordinary displays of skill, talent, or achievement" (p. 107). "Admiration participants were energized and wanted to work harder to reach their own goals" (p. 122).

Positive Emotions and Relational Practice Between Students and Teachers

While none of the following studies were developed to study relational practice between students and teachers in the specific context of Positive Emotion theory, these studies' findings support various aspects of Positive Emotion scholarship as it has emerged from the workplace domain.

Cronan-Hillix, Gensheimer, Cronan-Hillix, and Davidson (1986) studied graduate psychology students and found that faculty mentors provided support and professional development. Students in the questionnaire study indicated that important personality characteristics of good mentors included: "good sense of humor, honest, dedicated, empathetic, compassionate, genuine, patient, nonsexist, flexible and loyal" (Cronan-Hillix et al., 1986, p. 125). Schlosser, Knox, Moskovitz, and Hill (2003) who studied doctoral advising and Luna and Cullen (2008) who studied graduate students, found evidence indirectly supporting Fredrickson and Losada's (2005) findings regarding the import of appropriate negativity. In addition, several studies relating to graduate students in general or doctoral students in particular evidenced the importance of student relationships with faculty and of well-being, as related to retention/progress/success (Cronan-Hillix et al., 1986; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Luna & Cullen, 1998; Lyons & Scroggins, 1990; Maher, Ford & Thompson, 2004). These studies indicated: students who did not connect with faculty felt isolated within their program (Luna & Cullen, 1998); students believed that mentors helped them overcome difficulties and remain in school even amid significant challenges (Luna & Cullen, 1998); students who were satisfied with their faculty were satisfied with their program (Cronan-Hillix et al., 1986); students learned balance from their mentor

(Young, Alvermann, Kaste, Henderson, & Many, 2004); and that early finishing women doctoral students were likely to have had a positive working relationship with faculty members, specifically with their primary advisor (Maher et al., 2004).

<div align="center">Positive Work Relationships</div>

Does the quality of our work relationships impact the quality of our work? The quality of our work relationships seems inherently likely to impact the quality of our lives, but how? The emerging field of positive relationships at work seeks to address these and other questions. Ragins and Dutton (2007) define positive relationships at work as "A rich new interdisciplinary domain of inquiry that focuses on the generative processes, relational mechanisms, and positive outcomes associated with positive relationships between people at work" (p. 3).

> Positive work relationships (are a) reoccurring connection between two people that takes place within the context of work and careers and is experienced as mutually beneficial, where beneficial is defined broadly to include any kind of positive state, process, or outcome in the relationship. (Ragins & Dutton, 2007, p. 3)

Researchers have found that positive relationships at work can lead to increased self-discovery and self-actualization (Roberts, 2007), thriving (Spreitzer, Lam, & Fritz, 2008) and energy (see next section). Roberts (2007) suggests that positive relationships allow people to learn more about themselves and to see their strengths more clearly, this in turn leads them "to achieve fulfilling, identity-congruent outcomes" (p. 30). Roberts also discusses mutuality as central, much as it is viewed in relational cultural theory. And she points to Fredrickson's (1998) work on positive emotions as precursors to growth. Finally, Roberts (2007, p. 34) states "In sum, positive relationships provide people with the desire, agency, and capacity to fully utilize their strengths, make important contributions, and grow and develop." Spreitzer et al. (2008) studied trust, connectivity, and thriving: "Our findings suggest that there are indirect relationships

between trust and thriving (through connectivity) as well as between connectivity and innovative work behaviors (through thriving)."

This literature review did not reveal any studies that directly applied elements of positive relationships at work theory with relational practice between master's students and professors. Several studies reported that graduate students indicated that they experienced personal growth or self-actualization as a result of a positive relationship with a faculty mentor (Cronan-Hillix et al., 1986; Koro-Ljungberg & Hayes, 2006; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Luna & Cullen, 1998; Lyons & Scroggins, 1990; Young et al., 2004).

Energy

Can two people energize each other, simply through interacting? Can one person enhance another person's ability to learn, innovate, complete a project, or thrive in a new environment and if so, what are the conditions or the processes by which this happens? These are the types of questions considered in the body of literature which examines energy in work relationships. This literature sits within the Positive Relationships at Work domain, however given the prominent role that energy plays in my consideration of relational practice between master's students and teachers, I am positioning the review of this literature as a separate section. In addition, energy scholarship can be seen to expand an understanding of Relational Cultural Theory's notion of "zest."

Energy Defined

"Energy is a type of positive affective arousal, which people can experience as emotion – short responses to specific events – or mood – longer-lasting affective states that need not be responses to specific events" (Quinn & Dutton, 2005, p. 36). Relating energy to action, Thayer (in Quinn & Dutton, 2005, p. 36) suggests "energy – or energetic arousal – is the feeling that one is eager to act and capable of acting." Energy scholars have considered their topic in the work

organization domain and yet their findings seem exceedingly relevant to teaching and learning in an academic context where outcomes such as enhanced ability to learn, increased creativity, and thriving in one's "work" environment, are equally important. Theoretical and empirical literature regarding energy in relationships also complements the positive emotion scholarship reviewed earlier in this chapter.

Energy and Connection

Quinn suggests that energy relates to connection and he defines connection as even more inclusive than relationship (Quinn, 2007). Connections can be brief encounters and need not be part of longer-term ongoing relational ties (Quinn, 2007). Parallel to the concept of Mentoring Episodes, Quinn's connections acknowledge "the potential significance of even momentary encounters" (Quinn, 2007, p. 77). High Quality Connections (HQCs) lead to "*feelings of vitality and aliveness,*" "*positive regard,*" and "*mutuality*" (Dutton and Heaphy, 2003, p. 267).

Connection scholarship allows for the idea that not all connections are energizing. "Low-quality connections are marked by distrust and disregard of the other's worth," (Dutton, 2003, p. 2). Low-quality connections can have an immediate and specific impact on an individual, diminishing her or his self-worth and can also have a longer-term organizational impact (Dutton, 2003). "When low-quality connections are pervasive in an organization, they eat away at people's ability to learn, to show initiative, and to take risks. They corrode motivation, loyalty and commitment" (p. 2).

Energy and Positive Outcomes

Organization scholars have found empirical evidence that energy in work relationships leads to positive outcomes for both individuals and organizations. Dutton and Heaphy (2003) surveyed relevant empirical literature and found that people engaged in a High Quality Connections are likely to: engage in greater resource and reward exchange; create increasingly positive self-

concepts and conceptions of work; experience growth-in-relation (as first identified by Miller &
Stiver, 1997); and benefit from an expanded learning capacity and context. Cross, Baker, and
Parker (2003) found that workers who energized others were higher performers according to
human resource ratings. Workers who they call "energizers" were more likely to: garner
consideration and support for their ideas; engage colleagues in their work such that colleagues
would work beyond what is required to help them solve problems, obtain extra information, and
expand their network; engage other high performers; and impact learning in the organization.
People "are *much* more likely to seek information and learn from energizers than from de-
energizers" (Cross et al., p. 52).

Energy-in-Conversation

Quinn and Dutton (2005) explored how people generate and diminish their energy in
conversation. Drawing from various studies in the communication, interpretation, and affect
domains, they propose: "(1) People interpret speech acts and narrative roles in ways that affect
their energy. (2) energy is a text that people interpret, affecting subsequent speech acts; and (3)
energy also affects the amount of effort people devote to coordinated activities" (p. 44). They
also suggest that "energy increases when people interpret speech acts to increase their autonomy,
competence, or relatedness, and it decreases if they interpret a speech act to decrease their
autonomy, competence, or relatedness" (p. 43). This latter proposition seems particularly
relevant for professors teaching adult students who might wonder whether connection will
decrease their students' autonomy and growth; Quinn and Dutton indicate that energy in relation
is increased only when the connection increases participants' sense of autonomy and ability to
act.

How is energy created through conversation? When people tell their stories or join in creating
the narrative, they experience power which enhances their feelings of autonomy and competence

and this increases their energy (Quinn & Dutton, 2005). In addition, Quinn and Dutton further

describe the power of mutual conversation wherein both share the narrative.

> Their energy will show in their facial expressions, postures, tone of voice, and other nonverbal expressions, as well as in words and these 'energy texts' act as feedback. This creates a dynamic in which people can generate high – even exhilarating – levels of energy. (p. 48)

Respectful Engagement

Dutton suggests that when we see ourselves reflected in others and that reflection is positive,

we then develop an increased capacity to act.

> When another person engages you in ways that honor your existence and value, at least two important things happen. First, your self-esteem is elevated. Second, you are drawn closer to that person who is affirming you. The connective tissue between the two of you becomes stronger, more vibrant, more resilient. (Dutton, 2003, p. 25).

She proposes that respectful engagement is created by: conveying presence, being genuine,

communicating affirmation, effective listening, and supportive communication. She tells a story

that takes place in a corporate context, but reflects values held in educational settings as well.

Referencing a departmental manager, she writes:

> The minute she enters the room, her affirmative comments, eye contact, and body language send you clear messages that she is glad you are there and is genuinely interested in what you have to say. Her comments and question are always discerning and tough. (Dutton, 2003, p. 22)

Energy and Thriving

"We define thriving as a psychological state focused on 'a sense of progress or forward

movement in one's self-development' captured in two dimensions of personal growth: learning

and vitality" (Spreitzer et al., 2008). Thriving can be thought of as a psychological state of

growth as vitality brings the affective dimension, and learning brings the cognitive dimension

and together they create forward positive direction that energizes (Spreitzer et al., 2008). The

authors also suggest that elements that contribute to thriving, elements identified by others

previously in this review that create energy, such as autonomy, information sharing, and respect also "protect against the depleting effects of stress" (Hobfoll, 1989 in Spreitzer et al., 2008). This literature review did not uncover any studies that looked specifically at energy in faculty and student relational work.

<div align="center">Other Relevant Relational and Adult Development Theory</div>

While relational cultural theory is a primary sensitizing concept for this study, additional relational and adult development theory also serves to inform the question.

<div align="center">*Additional Relational Psychology*</div>

Building on the early work of Miller and Stiver conducted in the 1970s, Josselson (1992) echoes the view that growth happens in relation. Josselson (1992) suggests that healthy maturation is "to attach, to connect, to find ways of meeting one's complex needs for contact with the human environment." (p. 18). She explores a variety of means by which people connect, including attachment, eye-to-eye validation, idealization, identification, and caring.

Josselson (1992) differentiates between holding and attachment, her holding creates safety while her attachment prevents aloneness.

> In attachment we 'hold on' and thereby feel less alone…. If holding is in the arms, attachment is in the touch, the glance, the voice – in short, in the sense of proximity. Attachment resides in an experience of emotional linkage – the space can be overcome if necessary, that there is togetherness despite space. (1992, p.44)

Eye-to-eye validation, according to Josselson (1992) provides a sense of mattering. To look into another's eyes and feel seen is to feel valued. She also believes that eye contact conveys empathy and one could again argue that empathy provides a safety that allows another to take a risk and perhaps transform. Josselson's view of eye-to-eye validation lends support to Quinn and Dutton (2005) and Dutton (2003) who work in the area of positive emotions, looking specifically at energy-in-conversation and respectful engagement (both reviewed earlier in this chapter).

In addition, Josselson's (1992) idealization and identification involve seeing desirable qualities in another and striving to possess those qualities or identify with that person (p. 127). Her vision is that one sees in another a new way of being and begins to move toward a new self. Josselson writes: "Idealization is necessary to growth. Only when idealization is present is there a joyous sense of vista and motion, or transcendence of the boundaries of self and limitation" (p. 128).

Summarizing the power of this aspect of relational space, Josselson says "We learn from each other. We bring into close contact what each of us carries of the world. In doing so, we represent possibility" (1992, p. 137). Josselson's views mirror's Daloz (1999) suggestion that the faculty who mentor graduate students join them on a journey and welcome them to a new professional world. Bringing her ideas on relational space full circle, Josselson's (1992) last connecting endeavor is tending or caring. While all of her other means of contact start with the self and the self's desire to prosper and grow, tending consists of giving to the other, identifying the other's needs and seeking to give care. Josselson's views on caring add to the dialog regarding mutuality. Josselson concludes her work succinctly talking about a client (though she could easily be talking about a student). "What does she feel she needs? I ask her. 'I need to have someone in my corner,' she says. And that I think, is the essence of it all" (Josselson 1992, p. 249).

Relevant Adult Development Theory

An examination of adult development theory in the context of this study, must begin with Levinson's (1978) *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, both because it was the first book to explore adult development per se, and also because Levinson gave significant attention to mentoring, a construct which relates closely to relational practice between master's students and teachers. Levinson believed that a mentor was critical for the young man who was imagining and pursuing the Dream.

> A good mentor is an admixture of good father and good friend. (A bad mentor, of which there are many, combines the worst features of the father and friend.) The 'good enough' mentor is a transitional figure who invites and welcomes a young man into the adult world. (1978, p. 333)

Despite the centrality with which Levinson views mentoring, his research also found that most mentoring relationships ended negatively. Moreover, Levinson's later work with his wife in *The Seasons of a Woman's Life* (Levinson & Levinson, 1996) found causes for concern regarding women and mentoring. Perhaps a product of their time, the researchers found that few women were in leadership positions so few were available to mentor other women (Levinson & Levinson, 1996). In addition, they found that many women who worked with a male mentor, often ended up marrying the mentor and then divorcing when the woman developed and the relationship could not withstand her growth (Levinson & Levinson, 1996). Sheehy reported similar findings in *Passages*: *Predictable Crisis of Adult Life* (2006), first published in 1974.

Moving away from stage theories, Carl Rogers and Martin Buber provide additional perspectives on relation and personal growth. Buber (1970) places relationship front and center. "I require a You to become" (Buber, 1970). Buber also sees relation as reciprocity while acknowledging boundaries in relationships between teachers and pupils (Buber, 1970). In addition, Buber provides a spiritual view of relationship. "The purpose of relation is the relation itself – touching the You. For as soon as we touch a You, we are touched by a breath of eternal life" (Buber, 1970, pp. 112-113). In his dialogue with Carl Rogers (Buber, Rogers, Anderson & Cissna, 1997), Buber takes the power of connection one step further. "When you do something to him, you feel yourself touched by what you do to him" (Buber et al., 1997, p. 37).

Rogers, though writing primarily about the therapeutic relationship, suggests several ideas that apply meaningfully to relational practice between master's students and teachers. Rogers (1961) says that therapists must be genuine, congruent, empathic, and must communicate

unconditional positive regard. "If I can provide a certain type of relationship, the other person will discover within himself the capacity to use that relationship for growth, and change and personal development will occur" (Rogers, 1961, p. 33). Moving beyond his considerations of therapy and discussing teachers and students specifically, Rogers suggests this sort of relationship will move students to become self-directed learners (p. 37). Therein Rogers' ideas link directly to adult education.

Though not perhaps typically viewed in this manner in the adult development canon, Buber and Rogers provide a link between the stage theories (Levinson, 1978, Levinson & Levinson, 1996, and Sheehy, 2006) and the feminist relational theories (Belenky et al., 1997; Gilligan, 1993; Miller & Stiver, 1997; and Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). Buber and Rogers ideas, though clearly relational, also retain a distinct hierarchical element even within the dyad and like Levinson's early work, reflect a time when psychology was written by and based on men. Nonetheless, I see Buber and Rogers as providing an important step in the psychology literature by acknowledging the power of relationship and moving the psychology discourse away from purely individualistic terms and toward the relational constructs that would later emerge from feminist thinkers.

<center>Adult Learners</center>

As noted in chapter one, a full review of literature regarding adult students is beyond the scope of this study. However, this review would be incomplete if I did not call upon prominent and relevant contemporary writings in the field. In chapter one, I pointed to the work of Daloz (1999) and Palmer (1993, 1998) who have significantly influenced my thinking. I also touched upon the work of Vella (2002) and Mezirow (2000) who are prominent in the contemporary world of adult learning. Additionally, in this section, I will bring forth current relevant adult learning literature. I begin this section with the work of Kasworm who explores the emotional

challenges of adult students (2008). Next, I will focus on contemporary adult education literature regarding motivation and mentoring, and authentic teaching relationships.

Emotional Challenges of Adult Students

"Learning is an act of hope" suggests Kasworm (2008, p. 27) describing four challenges faced by adult learners as they return to and engage in school. Unlike traditional-aged undergraduates, adult learners do not typically separate from family and their past lives to begin school. "Rather, most adults continue their complex lives – with the added challenging role of student" (p. 27). She continues to describe this entrance phase which she calls "the first act of hope" (p. 28) as a time when adult students face a variety of new challenges, often while managing existing challenges. Adult students must adjust to working within a new system, facing the challenge of the classroom and being evaluated in a new domain, and managing time and stress with new demands inherent in school. In addition, adult students have often been motivated to return to school by a life crisis such as divorce or job loss and are carrying the related stresses (Kasworm, 2008). Moreover, these students may be dealing with a range of responses from family and friends regarding the return to school, from those who are not supportive and complicate the endeavor, to those who are encouraging.

Kasworm's middle stages reflect ongoing engagement in the academic process. The second act of hope for the adult student is to continue in school (Kasworm, 2008). "Because adults have competing lives, hopes and realities, each semester of college involvement represents either a renegotiation or adaptation of themselves and their lives" (p. 29). Adults students encounter challenges to their worldview and it is the engagement with faculty and success in the classroom that give students the support and strength they need to continue taking on these challenges (Kasworm, 2008). The adult student's third act of hope is learning. In this phase, the adult student is actively co-creating meaning and knowledge and an evolving worldview (pp. 32-33).

The adult student's final act of hope "is gaining a place, a position, a voice, and a related sense of valued self in the cultural worlds of higher education (Kasworm, 2008, p. 32). Given the value and meaning that society places on higher education, adult learners experience "emotional cultural demands" (p. 32) regarding their academic endeavors. Both in the classroom and in the larger campus community, students:

> experience environmental and relational cues, messages and supports (or lack thereof)…through these cultural engagements, adults co-construct their sense of who they are as collegiate students (in relation to other students and in relation to their other adult roles) and their sense of possibilities to be successful and valued in both this academic world and many other adult worlds. (Kasworm, 2008, p. 33).

Motivating Adult Students

Motivation is a frequent topic among those who write about adult learners. From foundational work (Cross, 1981) through more contemporary writers who focus on low-residency and online programs (Burgess, 2007; Conceicao, 2007) motivation is a concern and theme that runs through the adult learning literature. For the purpose of this literature review, I include the application of the future time perspective construct to adult learners (Leondari, 2007), a closer examination of the professor's role in motivating adult students (Wlodkowski, 2008), and two programmatic views (Ralph, 2001; Wlodkowski 2003).

Leondari (2007) applies the future time perspective theory to adult students. "Future time perspective (FTP) is understood as the mental representation of the future, constructed by individuals at certain points in their lives, reflecting personal and social contextual influences" (Husman & Lens, Lens & Nurmi, all cited in Leondari, 2007). Students with a high self-concept vis-à-vis their academic pursuits will expect future success, be more likely to persist and will perform well (Leondari, 2007). Adult students engage in education with a purpose in mind, and an anticipation of long-term rewards; these factors contribute to motivation (Leondari, 2007). This view informs Leondari's perspective on the role of educators who work with adult students.

> Adult educators can be instrumental in how adult students approach new content areas by facilitating and encouraging a learning environment that provides positive reinforcement and rewards the learners' behaviors to increase their level of self-efficacy." (Leondari, 2007, p. 22)

While Leondari (2007) considers both the student experience and the educator's role, Wlodkowski reviews the characteristics and skills that motivating instructors bring to their teaching. Motivating instructors provide expertise, empathy, enthusiasm, clarity, cultural responsiveness (Wlodkowski, 2008). Enthusiastic teaching consists of two elements: "(1) we value what we teach for ourselves as well as for the learner, and (2) we display our commitment with appropriate degrees of emotion and responsiveness" (p. 72). Using actions and expressing emotion, enthusiastic teachers command greater alertness among students which engenders enhanced learning (2008). Wlodkowski encourages teachers to understand the effects of what they teach and of a student's first exposure to new ideas experiences. "Knowing that our learners will experience a 'first' with us can be a powerful influence on our enthusiasm" (Wlodkowski, 2008, p. 73).

Along with suggesting skills and characteristics of the motivating instructor, Wlodkowski (2003) also provides a teaching model. Working from research on emotions and his model of Culturally Responsive Teaching, Wlodkowski (2003) considers motivation. Culturally Responsive Teaching seeks to respect individual cultures while creating a common learning culture. This model offers a Motivation Framework, four conditions that the instructor and the learners co-create and strengthen: establishing inclusion, developing attitude, enhancing meaning, and engendering competence (p. 40). Of particular note, establishing inclusion is integral not only so that all feel welcome, but so that all can take risks.

> Creating a means for helping people to feel connected draws forth intrinsic motivation because social needs are met and they can risk the mistakes true learning involves as well as share their resources and strengths. (Wlodkowski & Ginsbert in Wlodkowski, 2003, p. 40)

Ralph (2001) also provides a framework, offering five principles for creating and sustaining learner interest. Ralph suggests that effective facilitators of adult learning: "promote positive relationships" (p. 64), "gain learners' attention" (p. 65), "ensure content is relevant" (p. 66), "provide support and challenge" (p. 67), and "ensure learner satisfaction" (p. 68). Ralph's (2001); these principles emerged from his review of the effective instruction literature.

Mentoring Adult Students

There is a substantial amount of literature which addresses mentoring graduate students (though most relates to doctoral students) and there is also bountiful literature on mentoring in the workplace. There is far less written about mentoring adult learners outside of those two contexts. While few sources emerged, this small body of literature raises critical ideas relevant to this dissertation. This section explores the possible selves construct (Rossiter, 2007), teacher as mentor to adult students (Herman & Mandell, 2004), the deliberate relationship framework (Tom, 1997), and a discussion regarding the undervaluing of mentoring (Fletcher, 2007) and the related idea of the disappearing of relational work (Fletcher, 1999; Jacques, 1993).

Drawing on one specific construct from which educators mentor adult students, Rossiter (2007) explores possible selves. "*Possible selves* refer to the future-oriented components of the self concept. Possible selves are an individual's conception of future selves, including the selves that are ideal and hoped for, as well as those possible selves that one fears or dreads" (Markus & Nurius, as cited in Rossiter, 2007, p.5). Mirroring Leondari's (2007) work with future time perspective, Markus and Nurius, (as cited in Rossiter, 2007) suggest that possible selves provides "a link between self-concept and motivation" (p. 6). Rossiter also draws on Ibarra's research regarding possible selves and career development (Rossiter, 2007, p. 8). People who are moving toward or into new career roles are also in a process of adapting and negotiating their sense of

possible selves to fit the new role. Iberra (as cited in Rossiter, 2007, p. 8) suggests three related processes "(1) observing role models to develop a repertoire of possible selves, (2) experimenting with provisional selves, and (3) evaluating the new self conceptions against internal and external standards." These emerge as likely endeavors for master's students in professional practice programs who aspire to progress in their fields or make more radical career changes. Given the proximity and potential relative safety of their professors (who are typically separate from the student's workplace), graduate students are likely to see professors as meaningful partners in these processes.

Rossiter (2007) conducted qualitative research to explore adult learners' interactions with teachers, advisors, and other mentors, regarding possible selves. Rossiter found that student identified three relevant themes. First, teachers, advisors, and mentors helped students identify new ideas for possible selves including previously unconsidered careers as well as reawakened career goals. Second, these relationships provided a context in which students could elaborate their image of possible selves by gaining new information, trying out ideas, and assessing positive and negative role models. Finally, educational relationships have the potential to help students increase self-confidence.

Moving to a broader construct, Herman and Mandell (2004) draw from complex notions of dialogue based on classic philosophy to suggest an approach to mentoring adult students in *From Teaching to Mentoring: Principle and Practice, Dialogue and Life in Adult Education*. Herman and Mandell suggest five questions essential to educating adults and declare that "the name we apply to people whose vocation it is to ask such questions is 'mentor'" (p. 1).

What do you want to learn?
Why do you want to learn these things?
How do you want to learn them?
What do you believe you have already learned?
How do you decide that you have done so?

In addition, the mentor's role is to support adult students as they pursue both the practical and contemplative aspects of their education (Herman & Mandell, 2004).

Herman and Mandell's work touches on several important themes. For the purpose of this literature review I will include two that emerge as unique in the mentoring literature. Herman and Mandell (2004) devote an entire chapter to "waiting as learning" and another chapter to "dialogue as cognitive love." First noting the emphasis on speed in today's culture, Herman and Mandell suggest that within more substantial relationships, we wait for each other to arrive, respond, and grow. Friends wait for each other, parents wait for their children, and therapists wait for their clients; so must mentor and student. "In order for mentor and student genuinely to collaborate, as well as respect and support one another's autonomy, each has to wait for the other's idea or question" (2004, p. 77). This idea echoes the work of Milton Mayeroff, "the patient man gives the other room to live; he enlarges the other's living room" (1971, p. 24). Along with their discussion of waiting, Herman and Mandell (2004) explore intimacy, boundaries, and cognitive love. They suggest that in deep mentoring relationships where the student confides in the mentor, intimacy is inevitable. They clarify that this relationship is still occurring in an academic context and should be respected as such. Student and teacher are engaged in a powerful connection as curious co-seekers of the truth.

> Because the cognitive love they experience is genuinely *for'* the other' – each is offering and waiting for disclosure – their desire is truthful and it is just. Moreover, in the delight they experience through a shared inquiry that seeks a better life and coherently embraces the diversity of the unknown, mentor and student discover beauty. (2004, p. 139)

Expanding the discourse regarding boundaries, Tom (1997) applies feminist theory to faculty-student relationships. Tom acknowledges that the role of professor carries with it power and privilege. She also recognizes that professors bring intellectual and emotional needs to their relationships with students. "As teachers we meet our need to engage in a learning and helping

connection with others. This is different from being 'taken care of' by our students" (Tom, 1997, p. 14). Tom offers the concept of the deliberate relationship as a strategy to deal with power imbalances and boundary dilemmas.

> In a deliberate relationship, there is a pause between the experience of an impulse and its expression. In that pause, however brief, we interrogate the impulse: Does it serve the long-term obligations of the relationship? If the answer is No, we refrain. (p. 12)

The deliberate relationship has six elements: "acknowledgements of the rewards of teaching; awareness of power; maintenance of limits; recognition of the dynamic nature of power relationships; transparency of practice; and personal presence" (Tom, 1997, p. 3).

Finally, stepping back from the relationships per se, to the work of mentoring, S. Fletcher (2007), who also works with the possible selves construct, suggests that mentoring is often low among institutional priorities. Too few institutions provide proper training and support to help mentors in their quest to be a transforming influence (Fletcher, S., 2007). Institutions must make mentoring a foundational element; "mentoring must be accorded sufficient creative space, time, and status" (2007, p. 77). S. Fletcher adds the academic context to the discourse on the disappearing of relational work, previously discussed relative to the workplace broadly defined (Fletcher, J., 1999) and health care (Jacques, 1993).

Authentic Teaching Relationships

What does authenticity mean in the context of teaching relationships? Cranton and Carusetta (2004) conducted a grounded theory study with university teachers to explore this very question. They found that authenticity was defined by five categories: sense of self, understanding others, relationship with students, teaching context (including a number of factors such as institutional culture, the physical classroom and the discipline), and critical reflection of one's own practice (2004, pp. 278 - 280). These categories, which interrelate, combine for a model of authenticity in teaching (2004).

Brookfield (2006) adds to the authenticity discourse by exploring authenticity and power. "From the student's perspective, viewing the teacher as both an ally and an authority is an important component of successful learning" (p. 5). Authentic teachers are trustworthy, helpful, and enthusiastic and human in their emotions and frailties (p. 5).

> From a student's viewpoint, credibility and authenticity need to be recognized in a teacher if the person is to be seen as an important enhancer of learning – as an authoritative ally in other words. Interestingly, it appears that an optimal learning environment is one where both these characteristics are kept in a state of congenial tension. (Brookfield, 2006, pp. 5-6).

Brookfield clarifies that authentic teaching is not about "being liked" nor is it about deferring to students' wishes. Rather indicators of authenticity include: congruence "between words and actions" (p. 7); full disclosure of the teacher's criteria, expectations, agendas, and assumptions" (p. 8); responsiveness to students; and personhood or appropriate use of self-disclosure. "So being authentic involves staying true to one's agenda, remaining open and honest about it, and sometimes placing one's power behind it" (p. 11).

Finally, Kornelsen (2006) takes a different approach to authenticity, seeking to more deeply understand presence.

> I was interested in better understanding what for me was an ultimate classroom teaching-learning event, but one that had eluded finite definition or control. It was the moment when a class or learning group seemed to take on a life of its own, and where participants openly and actively created meaning for themselves, often independent of me, the teacher…. What is it about the presence of the person, the teacher, that contributes to the teaching-learning environment? (p. 73)

Using a phenomenological approach, Kornelsen explored presence in teaching. "Teaching with presence means teaching in a way that encourages openness, imbues vitality, and sometimes abandons order" (2006, p. 74). Being present involves being open, both in terms of allowing one's self to be vulnerable and also vis-à-vis remaining open to students and their life experience. (Kornelsen, 2006). Being present also calls for the teacher to be enthusiastic about

the subject (2006). Finally, presence requires the teacher to live with chaos, to be open to the moment and to the ideas that emerge, even unplanned, in the classroom.

Graduate Students

As noted previously, this literature review found only one study that dealt exclusively with social science master's students. Kolbert et al. (2002) explored dual relationships in counselor education. The researchers utilized questionnaires with master's students and full-time faculty, asking them to consider four dual-relationship scenarios (such as friendship, monetary interaction, and a sexual relationship) (2002, p. 198). Their findings suggest that both students and teachers were aware of the power dynamic in the relationships. They also found that students expected professors to maintain appropriate boundaries (p. 203). Finally, students expressed more negative views of dual relationships, showing concerns for the professor's objectivity and potential for exploitation of students. Conversely, faculty saw dual relationships as unavoidable but as something to be managed.

The remainder of these studies relate to graduate students broadly defined or doctoral students in particular. Studying graduate and undergraduate students, Anderson and Carta-Falsa (2002) consider *Factors that Make Faculty and Student Relationships Effective,* in a study of classroom dynamics. Several studies explore the advising relationship in a doctoral context (Goodman, 2006; Knox, Schlosser, Pruitt, & Hill, 2006; Koro-Ljungberg & Hayes, 2006; Maher et al., 2004; Schlosser & Gelso, 2001; Schlosser, et al., 2003; and Turban, Dougherty, & Lee, 2001). Also in the doctoral context, several researchers have considered mentoring relationships (Humble, Solomon, Allen, Blaisure & Johnson, 2006; Huwe & Johnson, 2003; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Luna & Cullen, 1998; Lyons & Scroggins, 1990; Wilde & Schau, 1990; and Young et al., 2004). Several studies explore the experiences of graduate students with combined samples of both master's and doctoral students (Cronan-Hillix, et al., 1986; Kelly & Schweitzer, 1999;

Tenenbaum, Crosby & Gilner, 2001; Waldeck, Orrego, Plax & Kearney, 1997; Wrench & Punyanunt, 2004; and Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008). Finally, two current books provide advice for graduate students seeking mentors. *Getting Mentored in Graduate School* (Johnson & Huwe, 2003) guides readers through the processes of finding a mentor and managing the relationship; this book seems to be primarily focused on doctoral students and master's students in departments that offer doctoral degrees. Mullen's (2006) *A Graduate Student Guide: Making the Most of Mentoring* is definitively aimed at doctoral students. Johnson (2007) has also published *On Being a Mentor: A Guide for Higher Education Faculty*. This book includes one chapter on graduate students which focuses primarily on the doctoral context.

The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach (2007) provides several literature reviews in the areas of youth, student-faculty, and workplace mentoring. Johnson, Rose and Schlosser (2007) review the literature regarding undergraduate and graduate student mentoring and make several recommendations for future study. The authors suggest that future researchers explore helping relationships and apply a definition more broad than mentoring. They also recommend exploring these relationships from multiple perspectives, noting that the majority of studies focus on the student experience. In addition, they encourage researchers to consider matched pairs and more specifically, active dyads. Finally, they suggest that additional research is needed on non-doctoral populations, including master's students.

Elsewhere in *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach*, Mullen (2007) encourages researchers to further consider informal mentoring relationships in the academic context. In the third chapter to address academic mentoring, Sedlacek, Benjamin, Schlosser, and Sheu (2007) review the literature vis-à-vis diverse populations. Their review found no significant differences due to gender within mentoring relationships and they spend the majority of the chapter considering race, specifically African American and Asian American

students. The authors state that their review shows that students of color face many obstacles to finding a mentor. They suggest that the numbers of African American students are increasing more rapidly than the numbers of African American faculty, making it more difficult for African American students to find same-race mentors. Moreover, they indicate that mentoring positively impacts African American student retention. Regarding Asian American students, the authors note that literature on Asian American students and mentoring is limited. They add that Asian American students experience adjustment challenges and may benefit from mentoring, though add that Asian cultural differences impact potential mentoring relationships.

CHAPTER III: GROUNDED THEORY DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study utilized grounded theory methods to explore the question, what goes on in relational practice between master's student and professor. Grounded theory methods call for the researcher to concurrently collect and analyze the data (Charmaz, 2005). This allows early analysis to inform subsequent data collection. Throughout this process, the researcher builds "increasingly abstract ideas about research participants' meanings, actions, and worlds" (Charmaz, 2005, p. 508). This process and interpretation positions grounded theory as useful in the analysis of relationships (Charmaz, 2005). An additional important link, symbolic interactionism, a foundation of grounded theory, further positions the method as appropriate for this study. Symbolic interactionism holds central the idea that we grow in relation to others, that we come to know ourselves in relationship. "The individual comes to see himself or herself as an object in the environment through interaction with others; other people point out to the actor that he or she exists as an object" (Charon, 2007, p. 73). Finally, grounded theory aims to move from data analysis to theory.

> For us, theory denotes a set of well-developed categories (themes, concepts) that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some phenomenon (Hage in Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The cohesiveness of the theory occurs through the use of an overarching explanatory concept, one that stands above the rest. And that, taken together with the other concepts, explains the what, how, when, where, and why of something. (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p.55)

Correspondence Between Grounded Theory and this Study

Two elements of grounded theory -- symbolic interactionism and the constant comparative method -- position this methodology as a strategic and appropriate method for exploring the question, what goes on in relational practice between master's student and professor.

Symbolic Interactionism

Five central ideas form the foundation for symbolic interactionism (Charon, 2007, p. 29).

Human beings are social and thinking beings. Human beings define their situation and their

situation causes their action. And human beings are active, rather than controlled or simply

responsive to their environment. At the core of symbolic interactionism is the importance of

social interaction. According to Charon (2007, p. 144):

1. Social interaction creates our qualities as human beings.
2. Social interaction is an important cause of what the individual does in situations.
3. Social interaction forms our identities.
4. Social interaction creates society.

These ideas fit well for me as an educator who believes that we learn through our relationships.

While curriculum and syllabus provide structure for learning, I believe it is the relationships, the

combinations, the connection between faculty and student, and the various members of a cohort

that fuel the learning experience. When I first applied these elements of symbolic interactionism

to my experience, they made quick sense.

Additionally, symbolic interactionism holds ideas about self, taking the role of the other, and

social interaction, that situate this method as appropriate to explore relational practice between

student and professor. Humans attach meanings to the self, and these meanings are identities

which are "relational, social, and placed in a context of interaction" and "are a source of

motivation" (Burke in Charon, 2007, p. 86). Further, one must "understand human action from

the definition of the actor" (Charon, 2007, p. 128). And, actors' definitions are constantly

changing, in part, in response to their interactions with others (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 2007).

According to symbolic interactionism, when two people engage, each is a social actor and when

they act with each other they create a social interaction. "Social interaction means that *actors*

take one another into account, symbolically communicate to one another, and interpret one

another's actions" (Charon, 2007, p. 142). According to symbolic interactionism, people become important to others via their interactions. The idea of the ongoing back and forth -- of action, interpretation, adjustment, and new action -- which is happening for both actors, might be relevant to the idea of mutuality in relational cultural theory, a sensitizing concept in this study. Charon applies the notion of "taking the role of the other" to teaching:

> Those of us who wish to influence or teach others must recognize that this includes understanding 'where others are at' so what we do makes good sense to them. Successful learning involves mutual understanding through taking the role of the other between professor and learner. (Charon, 2007, p. 113)

Constant Comparative Method

The constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 2008) calls for the researcher to code data as she engages in interviewing, rather than waiting until all interviews are complete to begin the coding process. This process of concurrently coding and collecting data allows the researcher to generate theoretical hypotheses which may lead to theoretical sampling and the inclusion of particular questions in later interviews. Use of the constant comparative method in this study did not point to shifts in theoretical sampling; as I progressed through the early coding, I remained convinced that my remaining sample was appropriate to continue exploring my question. However, the constant comparative method rendered an early hypothesis that master's program structure and culture was influencing these relationships. Following this lead in remaining interviews, if participants did not mention master's program structure and culture by the end of the interview, I inquired as to whether program structure and culture was relevant to their experience. All participants responded with a level of engagement indicating that even though I had raised this topic, it resonated for them.

Design of the Study

The following section outlines the design of this study, including: sampling and participants, interviewing, coding, analyzing the data, and ethical issues.

Purposeful Sampling and Participants

As a grounded theorist, I began with initial sampling, a strategy which called for me to identify potential participants who were relevant to my research question (Charmaz, 2006). I sought participants from several schools, keeping the sample constant by holding close to the definitions of adult master's students and social science professional practice program. Defining the terms of the question was critical to deal with the complexity of language, meaning, and the question (Charmaz 2006).

Master's student

This study focused on adult master's students in social science professional practice programs. "Adult" students were defined as students who were at least 25-years-old upon beginning master's study. This age parameter was applied to ensure that participants would have had life and work experience beyond a traditional undergraduate college career. In one case, I realized early in an interview, that a participant had moved into her master's program directly from undergraduate study. I had received her name from someone else who I believed understood the parameters of the study, so did not screen the student regarding age before setting up the interview. Given that the interview had begun, I decided to continue and use the data.

In addition, in collaboration with my committee, I made the decision after my proposal hearing to interview recent alumni rather than current students. We believed that interviewing current students who were in the midst of an academic relationship with faculty, a relationship that was likely to have an evaluative component, would have been fraught with ethical

complications. So instead, I interviewed alumni who were no more than five years beyond having graduated from their master's program with the hope that they would still have clear recall of their student experience. The alumni I interviewed fluidly discussed their experiences as students and alumni, so the final reporting of the data includes a retrospective account of the alumni's student experience as well as a reporting of their more recent experiences as alumni. Throughout this dissertation, I will refer to these students/alumni as students, except in cases where I am specifically referencing their experience as alumni.

Social Science Professional Practice Program

Social science professional practice programs was delimited as master's programs with which there is no corresponding doctoral program in the same institution. I suspected that relationships between faculty and students may be different in terminal master's programs than in programs attached to a doctoral option where there is a potential long-term research relationship between student and professor. Moreover, I imagined that terminal master's programs tend to attract a slightly different kind of student than master's programs connected with doctoral study. While exploring these assumptions is beyond the scope of this study, I applied these delimitations regarding program type. In addition, I sought to gain perspectives from professors and alumni from more than one program, so sought participants from several schools in various locations.

Professor

The use of the term professor in this study connotes anyone who teaches at the master's level and does not indicate rank. Professors in this study include full-time and adjunct faculty at any rank.

Matched Pairs

A matched pair consists of a student and a professor who worked together in any teaching, learning, advising, or supervisory capacity. I networked with personal contacts to identify

professors and alumni who were willing to talk about a meaningful academic relationship with a counterpart alumnus or professor. Given that I wished to allow professors and alumni to define "meaningful relationship" I remained open to other contextual identifiers such as whether the student and professor had been engaged in an advising or course-related relationship. While I intended to identify pairs based on alumni commitment and naming of professors. As I began seeking participants, I realized it was easier to work through my professional network and to connect with professors first. So most pairs emerged from a professor's initial interest. Professors who were selected to participate agreed to name the corresponding alumnus and I secured the alumnus's commitment to be interviewed before proceeding. My focus on relational practice drove my commitment to interview matched pairs. The very essence of relational practice is what goes on *between two people* and I believed this would be more effectively explored by interviewing both members of the dyad.

Theoretical Sampling

Throughout the data collection I relied on theoretical sampling protocol to determine whether I needed to make specific choices in selecting future participants. The data did not indicate theoretical propositions that needed to be addressed through more defined sampling and I continued to seek participants using the original parameters. I reached saturation after the twentieth interview which completed the tenth matched pair (see Figure 3.1 for gender and ages of participants). At the point of saturation, I had interviewed participants from six schools. Saturation is reached when the recently-gathered data provides no new properties (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 2008). Several times throughout the research process, I confirmed my initial decision that I had reached saturation by revisiting whether data suggested new properties; saturation is reached by "joint collection and analysis of data" (Glaser & Strauss, 2008, p. 61).

pair	gender		age	
	professor	alumnus	professor	alumnus
1	m	f	59	48
2	m	m	78	42
3	f	f	58	38
4	m	f	54	49
5	f	f	55	34
6	m	f	39	27
7	m	f	51	47
8	m	f	57	46
9	f	m	63	52
10	m	m	58	48

Table 3.1. Matched Pairs Gender and Age

Interviewing

Grounded theory data collection may include a variety of tools such as field observation,

document review, and in-depth interviewing. This study utilized in-depth interviewing. The

topic, relational practice between master's students and professors, did not lend itself to field

observation. First, relational practice discussed in this study included unplanned interactions,

such as conversations before or after class or email or phone calls made in regards to specific

advising or classroom issues. Second, the intent of this study was to explore student and

professor perceptions and meanings around relational practice, not a third-party observational

account of interactions. Finally, the decision to interview alumni rather than students, prohibited

me from any real-time data gathering vis-à-vis the student experience.

Grounded theory interviewing, begins with deep listening. Schatzman and Strauss (1973)

devote an entire chapter of *Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology* to listening.

According to Schatzman and Strauss, the researcher works through three stages of listening to

the participant. Initially, the researcher "must be a good role-taker; that is, he must 'stand' with

each respondent in the latter's relationship to the universe, and view it and associated vocabulary

from that perspective" (p. 69). As much as possible, the researcher must listen without imposing

her own framework onto the participant's descriptions. Second, the researcher begins the constant comparative approach, considering what she has heard in this interview with what she has heard previously (p. 69). Finally, she moves to a third stage wherein she applies her "initial and developing framework" (p. 69).

I began each interview with one question and then asked follow up questions to explore the participant's reflection and meaning-making (Charmaz, 2006, 2002). Grounded theory requires the interviewer to refrain from relying on an interview guide or list of predetermined questions, but rather to begin the interview with one question and then craft follow-up questions in the moment, responding to the participant's responses and specific language. This approach was one of the elements of grounded theory that drew me to the method, I wanted to, as much as possible, broaden this exploration beyond my original assumptions; asking follow-up questions that emerged directly from the participant's emerging narrative helped me to honor that goal.

My opening question was: "How have you come to know professor X?" or "How have you come to know alumnus X?" Charmaz (2002) warns that the grounded theory interviewer must "achieve a balance between hearing the participant's story and probing for processes" (p. 678). Thus I sought to remain connected with my topic while also following the participant's narrative and description. I also remained sensitive to the depth of the participant's reflection and attempted to both seek greater depth or reduced depth as was appropriate for the research context, respectful of the participant, and useful for the study (Holloway, personal communication).

Finally, researchers using grounded theory are within the bounds of the method if they keep in mind a few key concepts they wish to explore in the interview process, based on data gathered from earlier interviews. In the later interviews, if professors and alumni did not discuss program

structure or culture as an element of their experience, I asked whether there was anything about their master's program that may have impacted the relationship.

Transcribing and Managing the Data

Through the informed consent process (see Appendix A), I obtained permission from all participants to record the interviews. These interviews were then transcribed by a professional confidential transcription service. The transcription service was advised to include "um's," "ah's" and other signals of pause as well as laughter and other such interruptions in the literal dialogue. I offered all participants a copy of their transcribed interview and invited feedback and corrections. While no participants reported corrections, I found minor errors in the transcriptions. After I made corrections and clarified unclear passages, I imported transcriptions into NVivo. Initially I coded on paper and then entered the coding into NVivo. Later in the process, I coded directly in NVivo.

Coding

"Coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain those data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46). While some methods call for researchers to conclude data gathering before beginning to work with the data, theoretical sampling required me to begin initial coding upon receipt of the first transcript. In initial coding, I remained close to the language used by the participants and named words, lines or segments to begin to organize the data and develop notions of analytic possibilities (Charmaz, 2006). I coded all professor transcripts as a group and all student transcripts as a second group. Thus each transcript was coded only in relation to other transcripts in its group and the codes that I developed were group specific to each person's role. Initial coding generated 1081 descriptors (see Appendix B). Later in the process, I engaged in focused coding in order to "synthesize and explain larger segments of the data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57).

Throughout the coding process, I applied several strategies with the intent of minimizing the impact of my preconceptions. Prior to commencing the study, I engaged in memoing, attempting to bring to light assumptions that I held about relational practice between master's students and professors. I reviewed this memo with a colleague to deepen my awareness of my assumptions and preconceptions. In addition, I continued the memoing process throughout the study, attempting to capture a range of reflections and ideas, including the ongoing struggle with my own assumptions.

Additionally, I worked with a coding partner and a coding group when available. I collaborated with my coding partner consistently throughout the process. We worked particularly close on the first eight transcripts. We coded the first one together, discussing our thinking as we progressed through the transcript. We coded the next seven transcripts independently and then met and reviewed each one line by line, discussing discrepancies and reaching agreement as to how to code the section. At that point, my chair suggested that my coding partner did not need to continue coding. However the early collaboration with my coding partner had been so valuable that I was motivated to ask her to continue to work with me and the data, albeit in a less intensive manner. She read the next twelve transcripts and while she did not engage in line-by-line coding, she memoed overall impressions. We met and discussed her impressions alongside my coding and memos as a continuing check regarding my faithfulness to the data. I did not ask her to read the final two transcripts when I believed that I had reached saturation. Working with a coding partner was particularly helpful; her observations and responses to the data helped to challenge my perspectives and open my thinking to aspects of the data which did not initially strike me as important. This collaborative process created a space wherein I could think out loud as I made my way through the data.

Memoing

While memoing occurred throughout the research process, I positioned it here in the chapter because I see it as a link between data collection and analysis. As soon as possible after each interview, I drafted a memo to reflect on the session. My memos included observations and reactions vis-à-vis the participant, questions that emerged for me during and immediately after the interaction, reflections on my effectiveness as an interviewer in that particular interaction, and any personal reactions that I noticed myself having during the interview. I reviewed some of these memos with my research partner after she read the corresponding transcripts, as we reflected on the interviews. Finally, late in the analytical process, I referred back to the memos to see if my emerging analysis (particularly in regard to the overview of pairs) reflected my observations and reactions at the time of the interviews. This memoing process reflects the approach suggested by Charmaz (2006).

Analyzing the Data

Explanatory Matrix

"What 'all' is involved here?" (Schatzman, 1991, p. 310) is the central methodological question of dimensional analysis and drives this study; what all is involved in relational practice between master's students and professors? Dimensional analysis was developed by Schatzman who created the approach to explore the phenomenon's "parts, attributes, interconnections, context, processes, and implications" (Schatzman, 1991, p. 309). In particular, Schatzman developed the explanatory matrix, central to dimensional analysis, in response to student confusion regarding Strauss's use of several terms.

> It was then that I began to think of the matrix as providing a structure of terms that totally frame and give direction or methodological perspective to analysis…. Thus 'from' perspective, 'in' context, 'under' conditions, specified actions, 'with' consequences, frame the story in terms of an explanatory logic. (Schatzman, 1991, p. 308)

Later theorists expanded on Schatzman's use of the explanatory matrix. Kools, McCarthy, Durham, and Robrecht (1996) affirmed that while the explanatory matrix was developed as a tool for coding data in traditional grounded theory, it takes on a more profound role in dimensional analysis where it is the "*cornerstone* of the analytic process" (p. 317).

To develop each explanatory matrix, I reviewed the dimensions which emerged from the data and explored the potential perspective that each one provides.

> The dimension that provides the greatest explanation for the relationship among dimensions is ultimately selected as the central or key perspective from which to organize or 'choreograph' the data…The final product of this synthesis is a grounded theory 'which gives theoretical and explanatory form to a story that would otherwise be regarded, at best, as fine description. (Schatzman, in Kools et al. 1996, p. 319)

Constant Comparative Method

While the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2006, Corbin & Strauss, 2008, Glaser & Strauss, 2008) played a role in my data collection, it was even more significant in my later analysis of the data. Moving along the conceptual path toward more abstract representations of the data, I wove back and forth between the data and the abstractions as I developed categories, dimensions and the explanatory matrices. A return to the data sometimes shifted my conceptualizations and that new thinking would send me back to the data which would in turn bump my deeper thinking. The process came alive as it reinforced itself. Experiencing first hand these vivid connections and influences that lived between the data and the broader conceptual thinking increased my confidence in the robustness of the data and the grounding of the broader abstractions.

Matched Pairs Review

After I constructed dimensions and explanatory matrices, I stepped back from the data and considered what the pair data might reveal when considered from a greater perceptual distance than is afforded when working amidst the coded transcripts. I considered whether demographic

influences such as race, age, and gender played a role in the stories that the participants told. I also assessed my impressions of whether the student and professor in each pair provided essentially similar narratives of the relationship. Next I considered the pairs in relation to each other to assess whether there were any outliers, that is, any pairs that looked vastly different than the others.

Theoretical Modeling and Propositions

Following a review of the matched pairs, I sought to engage in theoretical modeling to explain and describe the experiences portrayed by the participants. First, I crafted a composite narrative to tell the story of the professor and student data when considered together. Next I began to develop a visual model to represent this composite narrative. While the narrative emerged clearly, the model took several iterations and consultation with both my chair and an artist. I developed a model which I believe portrays the combined composite narrative and presents a visual representation of the data.

Finally, I once again stepped back from the data to consider emergent theoretical propositions. After identifying these propositions, I returned to my memos and to the data to see if the propositions were supported.

Coding Partner Collaboration

Finally, I wish to both acknowledge and clarify the role of my coding partner. Initially, I invited her to code with me to help me see where my assumptions were influencing my read of the data. The process was incredibly valuable and as noted previously, even after my chair advised that my coding partner could discontinue coding, I invited her to read several of the remaining transcripts and we continued the conversation regarding our understandings of the data. Finally, I talked with my coding partner about the evolving theoretical model and propositions to see whether these ideas resonated for her based on her reviews of the transcripts.

These conversations were an important part of this process for me, helping me to see where my assumptions and values were influencing my work and also helping me to think through the emerging theoretical model and propositions.

Ethical Issues

Four ethical issues emerged in this study: participation, confidentiality, power relationships, and time commitments. First, participants were informed of the parameters of participation. I provided information regarding informed consent (please see appendix A for consent form). Second, in reporting the data, all indentifying information was removed or changed to protect confidentiality. Third, the use of matched pairs introduced less obvious ethical considerations. Initially, I proposed interviewing matched pairs which included professors and current students. Through discussion with my committee, we agreed that interviewing pairs who were currently in an evaluative relationship was fraught with ethical complications. Prior to my proposal hearing, a conversation with a work colleague had helped me understand more deeply the inherent complexity of the evaluative relationship between teacher and student. And then talking with my committee, I became more aware of the ways in which asking a professor and student to reflect on their relationship would influence that relationship. Introducing the influences of the reflective process into relationships that currently contained an evaluative component seemed potentially problematic for student and professor and even other students in the participant's cohort. Thus I decided to interview recent alumni instead of current students. While there were still varying degrees of power differentials in the pairs, the evaluative component was no longer present, thus reducing the risk of participation for both members of the pair.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY OF RELATIONAL PRACTICE BETWEEN

MASTER'S STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS

"What 'all' is involved here?" (Schatzman, 1991) is the central question that grounded

theorists seek to address. I was drawn to this question when I began exploring research

methodologies. At the time, I had a vague feeling of being attracted to the idea of

comprehensively exploring relationships between master's students and teachers; "what 'all' is

involved here" seemed to capture the enormity of the dyad. My respect and appreciation for that

question has grown tremendously as I have gathered and analyzed data. Having interviewed 10

pairs of professors and alumni, I now have a clearer vision of the robust complexity of these

relationships. The requirement that I convey these relationships with words and two dimensional

illustrations is daunting as I can only imagine a portrayal of these relationships as animated

three-dimensional models that capture the fields, fluidity, and energy existing and occurring

between professors and students and all that goes on in these relationships. Nonetheless, I will

delay describing the full model and will first explore the professor and student data separately,

considering the dimensions of each and the emergent explanatory matrices. After expounding on

the professor and student data separately, I will consider the pairs as pairs.

The reporting of this data presents a semantic challenge. I began with the question, "what

goes on in relational practice between master's students and teachers". However, through the

proposal hearing, as I focused more on the power issues and positional complexities that would

have been inevitable had I interviewed current students and their teachers, I decided, with

encouragement from my committee, to interview recent alumni instead of current students. So

my question focuses on students, though I interviewed them as alumni. I asked them to reflect on

their experiences as students, and they then often, without prompting, discussed not only their

student experiences but also their connections with faculty, post graduation. In addition, the teachers interviewed for this study, as they talked about their counterpart, often moved between reflecting on the relationship when that counterpart was student or graduate. So, to simplify the reporting of this data, I will refer to the student/alumnus as "student" excepting instances wherein I am specifically referring to description that occurred after the student graduated.

Professors

Primary Dimensions

Six primary dimensions emerged from the professor data: *Orienting, Self-organizing, Valuing, Advancing, Bounding, and Regenerating*. These dimensions consist of categories which are abstracted representations of the data trees which emerged directly from the open coding of the interview transcripts. I note this here again, though it was explained in more detail in Chapter 3, to emphasize that these dimensions ascended directly from a coding process that began with the professors' own words. In addition to the six primary dimensions which capture what all is going on in the relationship, I have surfaced *Regenerating* as the core dimension of the professor data.

Professor Explanatory Matrix Overview

Grounded theorists utilizing dimensional analysis typically create an explanatory matrix for each dimension. However, as I worked with this data and developed the dimensions, each dimension struck me as an element of a singular explanatory matrix. Thus, I did not create separate matrices for each dimension, but rather have created one matrix each for professor and student. The matrices follow Schatzman's concepts as stated in Kools et al. (1996) and thus include context, conditions, processes, and consequences (referred to as "impacts" in this dissertation).

Context indicates the boundaries for inquiry – that is the situation or environment in which dimensions are embedded. Conditions are the most salient of dimensions…. Conditions are dimensions of a phenomenon that facilitate, block, or in some other way shape actions and/or interactions – the processes of a given phenomenon. Processes include intended or unintended actions or interactions that are impelled by specific conditions. Finally, consequences are the outcomes of these specific actions/interactions. (Schatzman in Kools et al. 1996, p. 318)

Figure 4.1 depicts the professor explanatory matrix. Social sciences master's programs provide the context for this study. *Orienting, Self-organizing,* and *Valuing* are the conditions. *Advancing, Bounding,* and *Regenerating* are the professor's processes and *Advancing* and *Regenerating* also emerge as impacts. As noted previously, *Regenerating* is the core dimension.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
(no doctoral program attached)
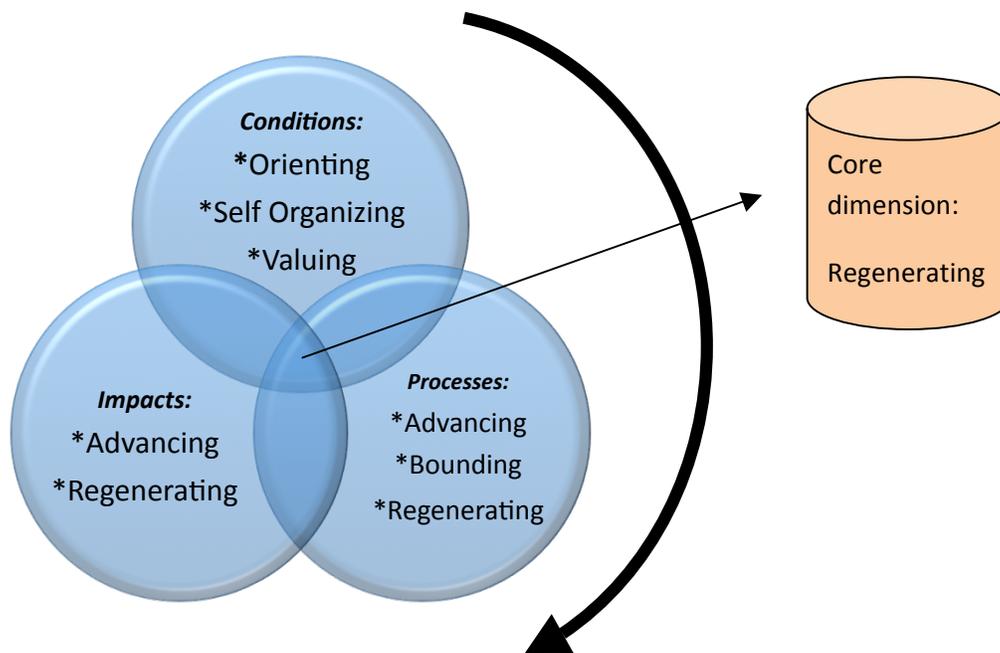
Figure 4.1. Explanatory Matrix: Professor

Primary Dimension: Orienting

Before I had a semantic label for the *Orienting* dimension, I thought of this dimension as a field, I imagined the professor moving through life in a field of influences that shape perception and experience. While there are many elements to that field, the professionally-relevant elements that were uncovered in this study are Describing Self, Positionality, and Master's Program Culture/Structure (see Figure 4.2). Explained more visually, the professor moves through life with senses of self, positionality, and the culture and structure of the master's program in which she or he teaches. At times, the professor is conscious of these forces and influences and at times she or he is not conscious of these factors. Regardless of the professor's awareness, the field created by these influences always surrounds the relationship, whether the professor is in the classroom or the coffeehouse. The field may be considered a holding environment (Heifetz, 1994; Wheatley, 1999); it is a field that is amorphous, permeable, and pliable. The professor's sense of self, positionality, and culture of the program are ever-present influences.

Orienting category one: Describing Self. Though generally unprompted to do so, the professors in this study described *themselves* as they discussed the relationship. These descriptions include ways in which the professor sees her or himself in comparison to other professors, the professor's perception of her or his reputation, and memories of the professor's experience when she or he was a student. In addition, these depictions provide both practical and emotional description. This professor reveals the value that he places on accessibility:

> *I think it was that subconsciously, you know, not wanting to say, 'oh, don't bother me', but you know, my door is always open. My phone is always available. My e-mail is always available if you have questions, and so forth. (professor 5)*

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
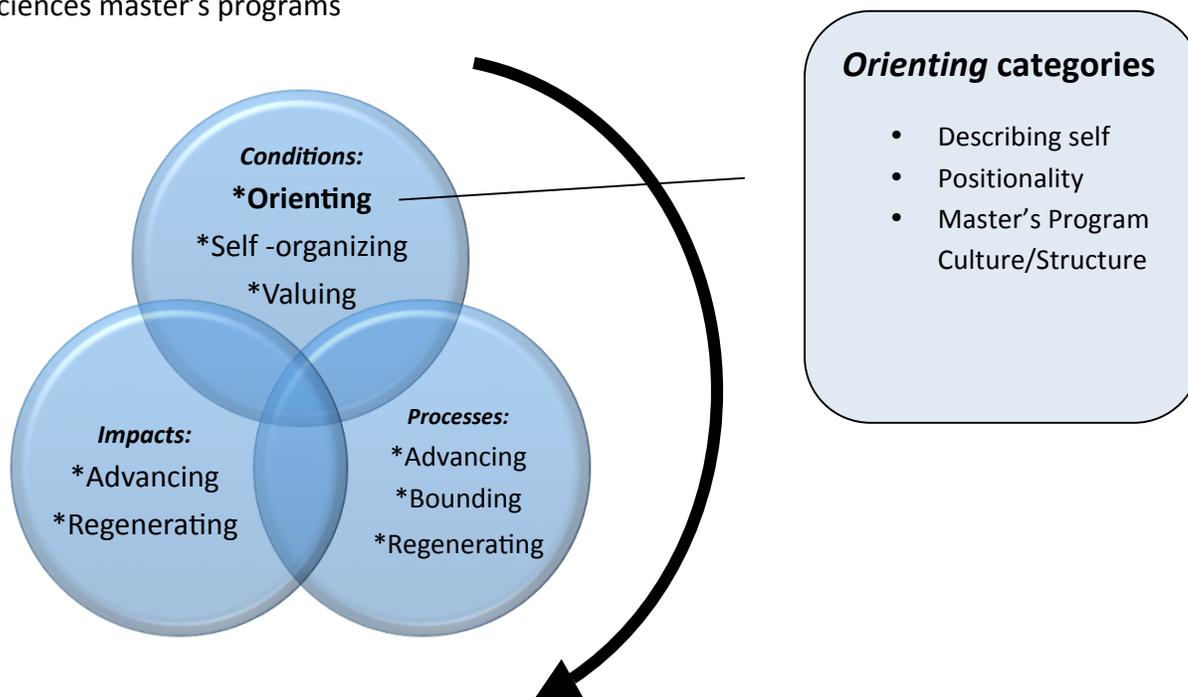
Figure 4.2. Explanatory Matrix: Professor *Orienting*

Another professor reveals his passion for his academic topic as he discusses students in a

program that he had recently launched:

> *A lot of the people that are in my program are – have more experience, you know,*
> *working with kids than I do. They've been doing it 20-30 years, so it's not like they're my*
> *kids, but I'm hoping to expose them and connect them to something new, and helping*
> *them form other relationships, and that feels really valuable, and rewarding to know that*
> *other people are getting excited about it, and the bigger picture for this (specialized)*
> *mental health thing, I think, for me is that, um, this topic that we're talking about, I am*
> *passionate about.(professor 7)*

These two examples illustrate ways in which the professor's sense of self creates a field in

which the relationship with students occurs. While the first professor quoted above may have a

busy day and in fact not answer the phone, he is generally someone who values being

accessible to his students and this influences his relationships. Likewise, the second professor

quoted above is passionate about his profession and is clearly energized by others' excitement

about the work; it is not difficult to imagine how this influences his relationships with students.

   Orienting category two: Positionality. Covering everything from the formal positional

designations such as advisor or program director to complex statements about topics such as

authority, informality, and collegiality between professors and students, Positionality is a robust

category. One professor reveals her sense of Positionality as she discusses informality:

> *But they also know that I am about as whizzy-wig as you get, because what you see is*
> *really who I am. And I don't try to be anything that I'm not. And there are times when,*
> *you know, we can have – we get down to business and there are times when we're like*
> *what was that all about? And that we – you know, not everything is just so formal all the*
> *time then. The informality is still very professional. (professor 2)*

Another professor reveals the evolution of his sense of position over time in relation to the

student he matched with for this study.

> *It's people like (Terry), where I have this – you know, I've developed a closer*
> *relationship with, and that relationship has expanded over time, beyond their – um,*
> *their graduate program, and we become, you know, professional colleagues. Um, and*
> *that's – that's a neat thing to have happen. (professor 9)*

This quote also begins to illuminate the dynamic nature of the dimensions. While this quote sits

within the Positionality category which is located in the *Orienting* dimension, it describes

Positionality after the relationship has evolved. This pair is established and the professor

continues *Orienting* in response to growth and changes in the relationship.

   Orienting category three: Master's Program Structure/Culture. The master's program within

which the professor teaches includes structural elements and cultural norms that contribute to the

professor's *Orienting* within relationships. For example, some professors noted that specific

elements of their program, such as reflective papers or capstone projects, created spaces in which

they worked closely with students. The following professor describes an expanded advisory role

that is inherent in the program design and leads to a multi-faceted relationship with the student:

It's a very close one-on-one – [I: Um hmm.] – in terms of, you know, helping them, uh, articulate goals that they have for themselves, um, and then helping them follow through, uh, on those goals, uh, whether it's their practicum goals, or the goals they have for themselves for the program, or the research that they want to do with the master's project – you know, all those – so, you're part of the students, um, life here in graduate school, um, in those many ways, so you are – you know, it's set up so that, you know, you have this – um, ongoing relationship that has multiple dimensions to it, that you become the confidant for the student, as well as the advocate for the student, as well as the person who helps, um, support them and guide their development. (professor 9)

Other professors described their programs by noting core cultural norms. For example, two professors described their programs as faith-based and a third described his program as relationship-based. Working in the moving field of these structures and cultures provides additional context for the relationships.

   Orienting within the explanatory matrix. Orienting, a condition, helps shape actions and interactions (Kools et al., 1996). The professor begins with a sense of self and then is further influenced by her or his notions of Positionality and finally by the structures and cultural norms of the master's program; these categories combine and form the *Orienting* dimension (see Figure 4.2). This dimension sits at the beginning of the matrix progression; this is the dimension with which the professor starts the day, lives the day, and ends the day. Before the professor has more intentionally considered experiences within the relationship, taken action, or experienced outcomes, she or he is already in the midst of these *Orienting* influences. And, these influences move as a field, with the professor, through all the work and experience of these relationships.

Primary Dimension: Self-organizing

   If *Orienting* is the field that accompanies the professor throughout the day, *Self-organizing* is the dimension in which the professor more actively responds to factors that are at least partially outside the self. In *Self-organizing*, the professor also makes decisions that help to shape the environment in which the relationship occurs. Categories within *Self-organizing*

include: Describing Students, and Experiencing Time, Space, Similarity, and Difference (see

Figure 4.3).

Social sciences master's programs
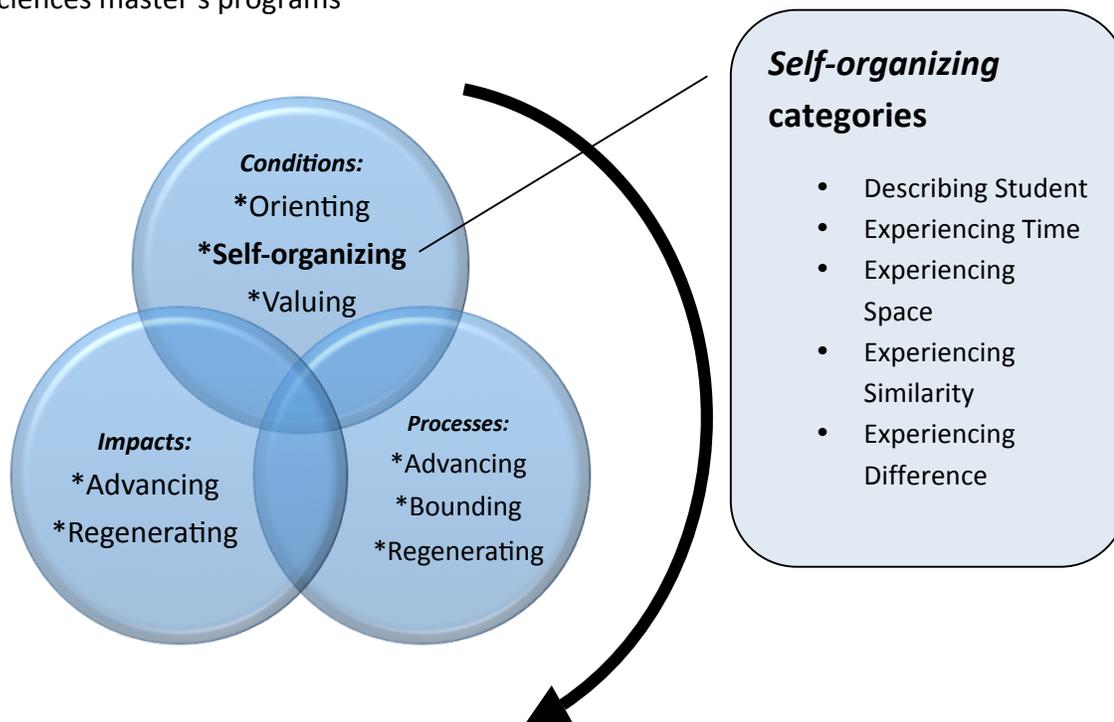
Figure 4.3. Explanatory Matrix: Professor *Self-organizing*

   Self-organizing category one: Describing Students. As they described the students with

whom they paired in this study, the professors revealed ways in which aspects of the students'

identities engaged them and also may guide the ways in which they choose to interact. Some

professors discussed being drawn to students who showed a particular need or vulnerability.

> *But she was very special to me. She always will be. There's always, umm - and there's probably one or two in every – in every class that there's – they're – not that I didn't have – really care about all the others, but there was something there. It was that vulnerability that she would trust me, that I would protect that. And that I wouldn't let anything happen to that. (professor 2)*

Other professors were compelled by a student's intellect, contributions in class, or potential to

eventually be a colleague. This professor begins by noting the importance of the relationship

for the student and then reveals that his potential was important to her.

> *And I think that was, umm, a very important part of forming that mentoring relationship is that he's kind of being taken seriously, like 'you're worth spending some time with.' It's not something that's – I mean I think I take every student seriously, but sometimes it's like they're my child, you know, rather than this is somebody who's really on the edge of becoming a contemporary. This is somebody who is got some sophistication already. (professor 6)*

Another professor describes how her assessment of a student's needs informs her decision-

making.

> *I said but, the latitude that I have is the relationship that I have with you as an individual and the decisions that I make with you are between you and I. It won't fit for somebody else. I may have a different perspective with them. You need me in a different way. You – you need latitude in a different way. (professor 2)*

Self-organizing category two: Experiencing Time. This category did not have many

descriptors. However experiences and concepts of time had influence regarding how professors

self-organized in the relationship and so it is worth noting. This category included structures

such as how often the professor and student were in contact and also the notion that the professor

would help the student work through the program "one week at a time." This professor describes

her anticipation that she and her student have developed a lasting relationship.

> *I guess once somebody graduates and they become your colleague, they can also become a good friend down the line. We talk long term. (professor 3)*

Self-organizing category three: Experiencing Space. The professors experienced space in a

variety of ways that defined and constructed their relationships with students. One professor

noted her position in the classroom and her awareness of how that set her apart from her

students.

> *Well, you know, as I tell students that, because I'm standing in front of the classroom, do not believe that my path was not – was a perfect path to get here, that all of us have something along the way that may be a hurdle that if we can't go over it -- do we go around it, how do we deal with that. (professor 2)*

Another professor draws a clear distinction between relating to students within and outside of the classroom.

> *I think something has to happen that allows you to become – to get out of that classroom role of teacher and student and begin to develop something else [I: Okay.] that goes beyond that. It may still be a teacher-student relationship, but it's not confined by the classroom, by other people being around. It's a one-on-one kind of thing. (professor 6)*

This professor's comment may illuminate choices that other professors in the study made about meeting students on campus versus off campus, and vis-a-vis inviting students to their homes (typically after the student had graduated). These conscious choices about space are ways in which the professor attempts to organize both self and the relationship. In addition, the professors' awareness of space and the impact of decisions they make about space allude to the holding environment that they create with their students. These professors are creating and maintaining an intentional space.

Self-organizing category four: Experiencing Similarities. One of the points of connection between professors and students, was the professors' sense of sharing similarities. Professors tended to discuss experiential similarities such as professional background and raising children, more than demographic similarities such as race, gender, or age which were rarely mentioned. This professor connects with his student based on common professional interests as well as similar personality characteristics.

> *I mean, it's not just with her. I mean, I just – I love to work with teachers now. I learn so much from them, um, but there was just something about this, and just about, you know, her kind of quirky personality that, you know, really – I think we hit it off pretty well, and we could be real up front, and honest, um, with one another from very early, uh, in this, and we shared a common sense of humor, and so it was nice. (professor 9)*

Another professor, from a religiously-based school, connects with a student over a shared spirituality.

> *His experience in the church is entirely different than mine but there was then a sense of similarity and a coming together in the brotherhood of understanding that we're all part of the same thing. (professor 4)*

   Self-organizing category five: Experiencing Difference. The professors who discussed difference with their students tended to see difference as a point of connection. The aim of this study was not to explore difficult relationships so it is no surprise that difference here emerges as a relationship-enhancer rather than any sort of tension. One professor referenced repeatedly that she and her student were of different generations and that at times, because of this, she was surprised that they connected so deeply. She speculates:

> *One of the things I've thought about with her, she's in her early 30's – I'm 55. Over time I've learned a little bit about her family. I think there is alcohol – I don't know, there are some things that didn't work right. The parents didn't approve of her choices. And sometimes I wonder if I've kind of become a symbol of somebody of her mom's generation who accepts her the way she is. (professor 3)*

Another professor articulates many differences between him and his student and suggests that these differences add to the relationship.

> *Let's face it, we do come out of totally different worlds. And that doesn't matter. It doesn't make any difference. In fact, it's of value. (professor 4)*

   Self-organizing within the explanatory matrix. Self-organizing contributes to setting the conditions for processes or actions in the relationship. This dimension is the first dimension after *Orienting*, moving clockwise around the explanatory matrix (see Figure 4.3). The professor is living in the field that is theoretically created by the *Orienting* dimension. She or he then becomes more self-aware and active in the relationship by noticing characteristics of the student, activating characteristics of the self, experiencing similarities and differences with the student, experiencing time, and making observations and decisions about shared space. To some degree, this is the work of the head, this is where the professor is more conscious and intentional about the relationship. The activities within *Self-organizing* are much more subtle than the actions that

will occur later in the explanatory matrix as processes. However these observations, reactions, and actions begin to form the relationship.

Primary Dimension: Valuing

Valuing is the dimension in which the professor most obviously activates her or his primary values. To be clear, this dimension is not literally about valuing the student, it is about the activation of values (though typically in doing this, the professor is *Valuing* the student). Categories within *Valuing* include: Authenticity, Respecting, and Trusting (see Figure 4.4).

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
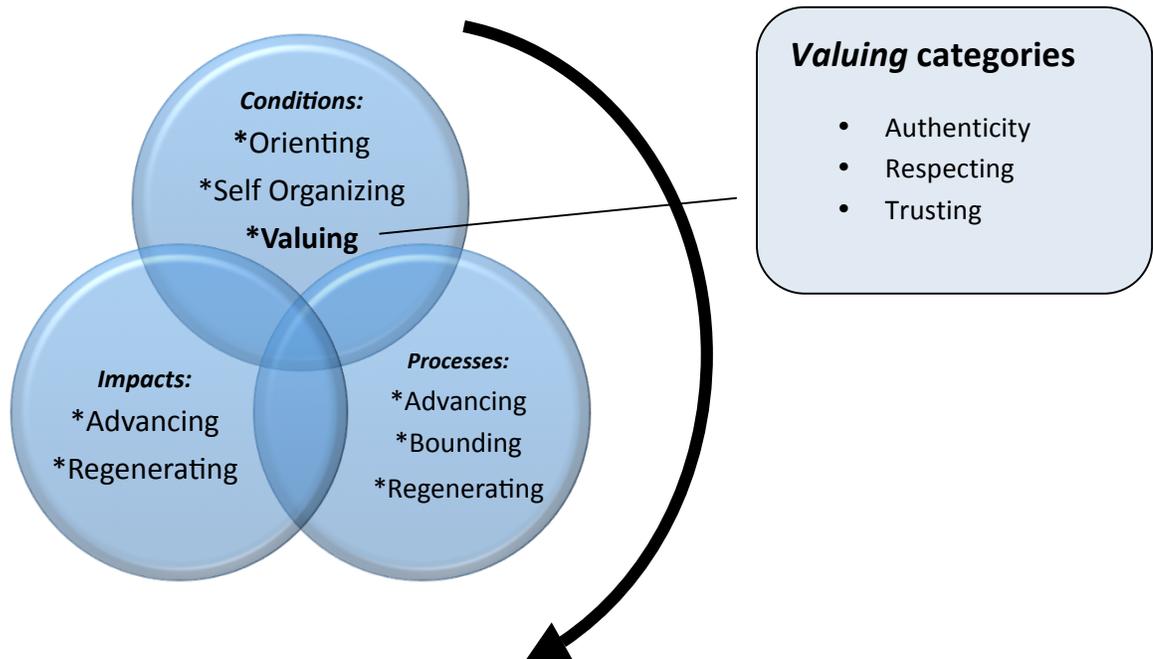
Figure 4.4. Explanatory Matrix: Professor *Valuing*

Valuing category one: Authenticity. Professors in this study described valuing their own and their students' authenticity. In some cases professors described this in terms of being genuine in

their relationships with students. This professor reflects on her own experience as a student with professors who were misleading and her effort to be more honest and consistent with her own students.

> *I said I hated exams where I thought I was, I was duped, you know. Study this, but we'll ask you that instead. I thought I would never do that to students. So I think when you bring that to the classroom, they'll give you the chance to prove yourself. Do you – do you talk and walk the same thing? And I think that, that type of genuineness is very critical in a relationship between a student and a faculty member. (professor 2)*

Another professor suggests that students will potentially learn more effectively when they experience their professor's humanity. This quote mirrors comments by several professors who revealed a wish to be seen as more than just teachers; they value that part of themselves, but wish to be seen as more than one dimensional.

> *It makes students more open, and more open to accept you as a person, besides just a teacher, and makes them, uh, comfortable asking questions, even in the classroom, you know? Um, it – um, it makes them more open to see you not just as a figure head, but as a person. (professor 8)*

Conversely, this same professor discussed the importance of seeing the student's humanity.

> *Until a person, uh, is able to see you as a person – a caring person, a person who is willing to see them beyond this classroom setting, uh, beyond just this academic stuff that we talk about, um, I think that the total learning is going to be hindered if they don't – how can I say this? – I think it enhances learning. [I: Um hmm.] Um, and I don't know how else to put that. [I: Okay.] Um, you know, I think – I think maybe more open and more vulnerable to learning if you see them more than just a student sitting there, um, and there's a connection there. Um, you know, in whatever form, you know, that might take. (professor 8)*

Valuing category two: Respecting. Perhaps somewhat obviously, the Respecting category includes for the professors, a wish to be respected and an intent to respect the students. However, more subtle and interesting is the complexity of a tension existing within the wish for and experience of respect. Discussing respect, the professors reveal tensions between supporting the student and maintaining high standards, closeness and distance, and creating partnership versus independence. One professor indicates that adult students demand respect

and yet a boundary.

> *My personal approach, ah, is that I'm dealing with adults. And you need to treat them as adults. I need, as the instructor, to maintain a respect. I cannot and do not try to be part of the cohort in the sense that they are. I can never, ah, and should never even try to become an equal to them. But on the other hand, I have to meet them where they are. (professor 4)*

Another professor relates that she will be exhaustive in helping students answer questions but

that at the same time, students are partners in learning.

> *I'm gonna tell them, I don't know what you understand or don't understand 'til we have a dialogue and I can reflect on what your questions are that tell me you've misunderstood what I've said. So there has to be, umm, part of the partnership is mutual respect, that every question will be addressed. If I don't know how to address or feel that my response is incomplete, I'll say okay, when we reconvene, I'm bringing this part. You're bringing that. Let's see what we have. (professor 2)*

Valuing category three: Trusting. The professors who discussed trust as part of their stories,

referenced it in one of three manners. Some professors noted that trusting the student was an

element of the relationship. Most often this was about the student consistently meeting deadlines

while producing high-quality work, either in the classroom or in outside-of-class collaborations.

One professor describes a student's work ethic in school that led him to recommend her for a

state committee.

> *We just spent a couple of days together last week in Harrisburg, and I had recommended her to be part of that, because of the work that she had done with me, because again, I knew that she would bring that preparation, that understanding of what needed to be done to this task. (professor 5)*

Another professor related that the trust he developed with the student freed him to give her direct

feedback and allowed her to ask him direct questions. A third professor, discussing trust, related

it to a deep wish to "be there" for her students. She found this trust, which emerged from her

consistency, to be rewarding and also to be a foundation of the relationship.

Valuing within the explanatory matrix. Valuing is the deeper work of setting conditions for

action in the relationship. Valuing follows *Self-organizing*, moving clockwise around the

explanatory matrix (see Figure 4.4.). The professor's activation of values becomes the internal background from which actions (processes) are taken. If *Orienting* creates a field around the professor, and *Self-organizing* is the work of the head, then *Valuing* is the work of the heart. Clearly the experiences of these dimensions are not completely separated into field, head, and heart. However, the metaphoric locating may help to enliven the relationships of the dimensions beyond what the explanatory matrix provides.

Primary Dimension: Advancing

Initially, I named this dimension enriching. While enriching has depth to it, I struggled, believing there was a better name for this dimension. I finally decided upon *Advancing*. Not only does *Advancing* capture the ideas of growth and learning, but it also conveys progress. And I believe that forward motion is the essence that connects all of the categories of *Advancing*: Teaching, Learning, Developing, Supporting, Encouraging, Energizing, Humoring, Communicating, Mentoring, and Collaborating (see Figure 4.5). Moreover, I hope that *Advancing* expresses the mutuality of these actions as both professor and student move forward together. *Advancing* appears twice in the explanatory matrix as both a process and an impact.

Advancing category one: Teaching. Teaching is a potent category in *Advancing*. This may sound obvious given that teaching is the primary work of professors in master's programs. However, keep in mind that I asked these professors to identify alumni with whom they had a meaningful academic relationship. Thus, it would not be difficult to imagine that mentoring, advising or some other more obviously-relational function would have emerged among the deeper categories. For these professors, teaching and relationship are closely connected.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
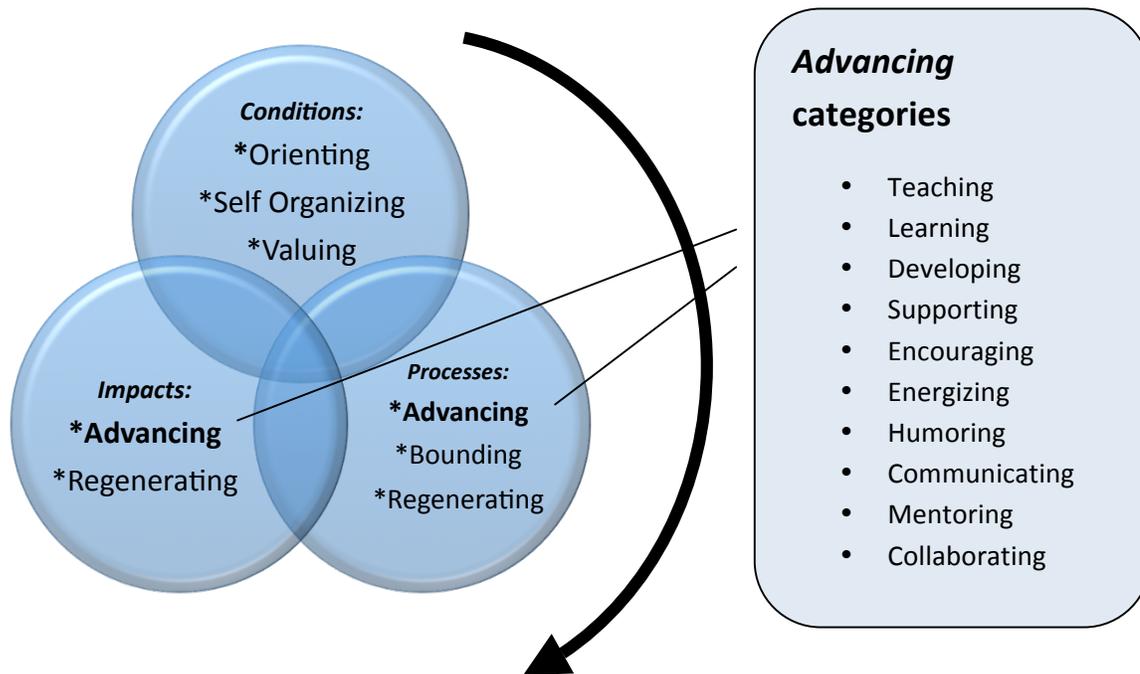
Figure 4.5. Explanatory Matrix: Professor *Advancing*

Many of the professors, when asked to recall working closely with the students, shared experiences of working with students on their papers and projects. In some cases, the professors recalled prompting students to think more deeply to consider the meaning they were making of the course material and its relevance in their lives. Professors also reported trying to help students think more critically. In other cases, the professors were trying to help students expand their ideas and consider the practical applications of theory and ways in which it might expand their professional practice. This professor describes pushing a student to think more deeply and also reinforces the dynamic nature of this emerging model, that various dimensions refer back and forth with each other. His teaching is clearly influenced by the structure and intent of his master's program.

> *An informed perspective. Why specifically do you like or dislike this idea, this concept? How are you responding to it and why? So we actually build that process into the*

program. We have them, at the end of each course, do an exercise where they do exactly that. (professor 1)

Many of the teaching behaviors were somewhat predictable, such as assisting students with their writing and helping them shape research projects. A less obvious category that was discussed by several professors, in relation to their teaching, is flexibility. These professors noted that they maintained a certain flexibility with students based on students' outside demands, informed perspectives as to what they wanted from their programs, and their previous professional experience. This professor reflects on responding to two students who entered her program with significant skill and experience.

Now I'd say what do you need to work on? What do you need to challenge yourself with? Let's do a whole other project, because they really didn't need to be in that class. They could have taught that class. They're both really experienced writers [I: Yeah.] so – so I just was beginning to realize that when you brought people back to school, some of whom had had pretty sophisticated careers, you needed to be flexible. (professor 6)

The emergent reality that these professors talked at great length about teaching, when asked about meaningful academic relationships, suggests that relationships are not extracurricular or simply the bonus of an occasional good connection, but rather that teaching and relationship go hand-in-hand.

Advancing category two: Learning. While teaching is a prominent category within *Advancing*, learning is equally as robust and perhaps in some ways, more informative. While we expect that professors are influencing students, this study reveals that these particular professors have been greatly influenced by their students. The professors reported that students and alumni provided thoughtful feedback that was helpful in: modifying courses, adjusting course offerings, reshaping existing programs and even launching a new program. In addition, several of these professors revealed that students helped them remain current in their profession, given that they as faculty may not be as active in the field. In other cases, students helped professors learn about aspects of a profession that were outside of the professor's expertise.

I ended up learning a lot about – uh, the teaching of reading, and thinking about the – um, what was happening in schools back – this was, I guess, three-four years ago – what was happening in schools around, um, some of the reading initiatives coming out of the No Child Left Behind Act, and so it was kind of an opportunity for me to increase my knowledge in certain realms of education that I don't necessarily have as much contact in. (professor 10)

Another professor related that current students help him and his program remain relevant to future students.

What is it that we need to be doing as an institution of higher learning? To – to address with students that are going to be coming to us, and asking the same questions and trying to achieve the same goals that they are. So – uh, and that's why I see a very important conduit of information coming back to me from these students. (professor 5)

In addition to learning that directly related to teaching and professional practice, a subset of professors told powerful stories about relationships with students that expanded their (the professor's) worldview. In these cases, the professor and student came from significantly different backgrounds and communities. The student would reveal aspects of her or his culture and community initially through papers and class discussion. This work led to deeper dyadic conversations in which the student shared even more deeply and the professor acquired greater insight. In two cases, the professor and student eventually arranged to meet in the community. In this first case, the student was part of an underground alternative community. She was exploring approaches to help this community vis-à-vis mental health issues. She invited the professor to attend a community meeting with her. The professor recounts that meeting:

I knew when I first met her that I had a lot to learn from her. And so, umm, that was a real gift that she gave me, to even invite me. It meant a lot to me that she trusted me to do that, to go there with her, and to open that up. Umm, so it was role reversal. I felt like, umm, umm, I didn't want to embarrass her, you know, that kind of thing. [I: Yeah.] Umm, I just wanted mainly to be quiet and observe and listen and if anybody had any questions or comments that they could ask me, but I didn't want to go in as the expert. I wanted just to be somebody who was there, as her guest. You know, that's – and I was real comfortable. I did not want to be like a speaker or anything like that. I really was going as her guest, as her invited guest. (professor 3)

The professor and student later discussed the student's interest in community mental health.

The professor clarified that while she was willing to serve in an advisory role, she declined to stay directly involved with the project, seeing it as the student's domain. Elsewhere another professor and student also connected around the student's community work and the professor's involvement within his church.

> *Ah, we have a men's group here at the church that meets once a month and it's Saturday morning. I asked him to come over and talk to the guys 'cause I just thought there was a message that, ah, he could carry on the marriage of love and concern, the marriage of – a message of growth and, ah, it just worked our very, very well. And in fact, umm, and it's helped his ministry because our pastor, umm, has been able to put him in contact with some people and some situations that have been very helpful to growing his youth ministry, or young men's ministry. So it's been very rewarding. (professor 8)*

The learning revealed in this category also contributes to the *Regenerating* dimension that will be covered later in this chapter.

Advancing category three: Developing. This *Advancing* category captures professors' roles in addition to formally teaching. Many of these professors engaged in educational activities that are called for structurally via their positions, including academic advising, providing career guidance, and writing letters of recommendation. Some of the professors also took on less-formal additional roles such as mentor, coach, and career counselor. In this case, career guidance indicates relatively straight-forward career support related directly to the master's program such as advice about internships and credentialing. More intensive career counseling included helping students explore career options and change fields. The personal investment that these professors had in their students manifested in comments regarding hopes for the students and commitments to helping students succeed. A deep wish for students to complete the program and find professional success fuels the professors' academic and career advising. These professors want more for their students.

> *And so we had always hoped that we would see these things happen, just like we saw in the degree completion program, where people, you know, got more than their Bachelors*

but they really got reoriented to life, period. (professor 1)

Advancing category four: Supporting. The next three categories (Supporting, Encouraging, and Energizing) work together to provide the momentum in these relationships. Each of these categories contributes to helping the student make forward progress in the program. Students hit obstacles, benefit from being pushed, and in turn at times, bring energy to the relationship. This professor's comment captures the importance of momentum.

> *So that's the constant reinforcement that the progress is forward. I don't care if it's an inch or it's a foot. We're moving forward; we're making progress. That's what I want them to focus on. (professor 2)*

First, I will examine Supporting. A common thread found in this study is that students get stuck; for example, they have trouble selecting research topics, become overwhelmed by family responsibilities, or lose confidence in their ability to complete the program. The professors' Supporting behaviors help students get unstuck and thus move forward or regain momentum. These professors vary in their approach to providing support. At times, professors' support is expressed in their understanding of the complexity of the lives of adult students.

> *And they have real lives. They have children, they have jobs, they have complications and you have to – I like that, though, 'cause I was director of the masters program and I liked being able to kind of make things – get them through the bureaucracy and get them, ah, the flexibility they needed. (professor 6)*

Elsewhere, professors dialog with students to help them past a stuck academic place.

> *It's like tell me what you're thinking about your question. And we just freeform write it out. What does that look like to you? Is that really what you're thinking about? Because when you say the words, it has a different impact than when you're thinking it in your head. [I: Right, right.] So I think there's tremendous value in having that dialogue [I: Mmm-hmm] because that gets them off that stagnant point. (professor 2)*

Another professor believes that helping students relax or regain a sense of security opens them up to do better work.

> *So, again, trying to put the student at ease, and I think if that – if that pressure is released, then they do much better work. And that's – you know, that's the way I*

approach things, even as – you know, policy-wise. (professor 5)

As is true with much of the structure I have tried to apply to this data wherein the lines between dimensions and categories are dynamic and overlapping, the division between supporting and encouraging is blurred. This professor discusses encouraging and yet he is helping a student get past a stuck point wherein she doubts whether the work is doable. At the same time, he is pushing her to engage.

> *And you know, in those cases, it's encouraging them to, you know, hang in there, keep the goal in mind, you know. This is doable. You know, this is – encouraging them to think and engage and be involved, and cheerleading and everything else. (professor 5)*

Similarly, this professor is operating in the place between support and encouragement:

> *But for her it was, umm, she needed to really have visualize evidence that she was worthy of confidence. So it was, ah, to let her know that you can do this. I have every belief that you can do this. And I'm there to believe in you when you don't believe in yourself. And that's really what I think a – [I: Yeah] - good faculty member is. (professor 2)*

Advancing category five: Encouraging. Acknowledging the blurred lines between supporting and encouraging, for the purpose of this study I imagine encouraging to follow supporting on this mini-continuum within *Advancing*. Whereas the professor provides support to help the student get unstuck and begin to move, encouraging is about pushing the student forward to take risks, work at a higher level, and pursue new opportunities. This professor recalls encouraging a student to teach a course at another school. He recalls telling her:

> *You know, you've got all the background, ah, with your master's, you know, the information, you know content wise you know this. You would know how to do – you'd have that knowledge background. You have an experience background that's loaded. Plus you're in the same environment that these people are training to be in. (professor 1)*

Many of these professors continue to encourage these students once they become alumni. The following quote does not seem particularly noteworthy in its content: the professor recalls speaking with an alum who has in turn become a college professor, pushing him to be more active professionally. However the tone conveyed by her words is telling, note the last sentence

of the quote.

> *And I still think he needs – he needs to do some publication now, to keep his academic job. And that's one of the things we talk about when I meet with him as well, what are you working on? Get to work on it. (professor 6)*

Advancing category six: Energizing. Picking up this mini-continuum within *Advancing*, if supporting helps students get unstuck, and encouraging pushes them forward, then energizing is a mutual process that occurs when the professor sees the student engaged. For some professors, this happens as students relate stories of applying their learning. In another case of the blurred lines between categories, this story reveals not only the energy a professor experiences with his students but also the learning that takes place in the interaction.

> *I've been in the field for – jeez, over 25 years, and I'm still learning. And when people do things, and come to me, and tell me what they've done, I still get excited about it, or if they – you know, like if they read something or they've heard something, you know, if they share it with me, I'm excited about getting a new perspective on things, because – you know, and I tell them, this is a very dynamic area, and what we think today, we may think differently tomorrow, based upon the kind of experiences we've had. (professor 5)*

Another professor reports on the energizing experience of helping an already-talented student develop even more fully as a teaching professional.

> *She knew just the right kinds of things to do with students, both on a curriculum level, and on a – on a relational level. Um, I mean, where she – and even pedagogically, she was, you know, just so many things that she was doing well, uh, I mean, at a really high level with these kids. And – you know, the excitement of working with somebody who was starting from, you know, an extraordinary place, uh, and being able to provide opportunities for her to – to grow and expand, um, her capacities. (professor 9)*

Two other professors talked more directly about energy in the group context. The first professor begins by discussing written feedback that she provided to her student and then shifts into describing her effort to help all of her students keep their momentum. She does not talk specifically about trying to energize the students, however the tone of her description implies a particular energy.

I wrote things to her, the comments that I would make, umm, and to say 'bravo'. You got it! You got the question! You know, it was like oh, like you could just feel them exhaling. And I would, umm, you know, periodically during the week would send them emails, or send them – I sent out a broadcast email to the whole group like you know what, we're over the – we're halfway. Look what you've done! You know, great work that we've put together. Okay, now we're gonna do this. (professor 2)

Finally, one other professor offered a vivid example of energy in the classroom, an energy that seems to be fueled by his relationships with his students.

Well, as you go into class and you have an enthusiasm for the material and for the, the students, and I think both are extremely important. The information that you're going to be discussing, exchanging is important and valuable to them, and you come, at least this has been my experience, you come to have a very strong love of, of those students. And [when] you see those two come together – Wow! (professor 4)

Advancing category seven: Humoring. Several professors reported that humor was an element of their relationships with students. In describing aspects of the relationships, professors used words including fun and playful. Taking this category deeper, the data show that professors use humor intentionally to meet a variety of purposes. One professor suggested that his sense of humor is part of his personality and that showing that side of himself to students is part of being authentic; this description again circles back to the *Valuing* dimension. Another professor uses humor to put students at ease. Conversely, other professors described using humor to push students. Describing a similar phenomenon more gently, another professor spoke of using humor to encourage. One other story revealed humor as a strategy to bridge difference and build connection.

The way she communicates is texting. And I'm – I wasn't that good when she first started doing that. So I wrote and I – or she wrote and said 'I'm running late'. And I wrote her back and I said 'are you gonna make it'. And she said 'word'. And I looked at the class and I said what does this mean? So – and then just started laughing; that means yes. So, umm, so then we would, if we texted, I would throw in 'word' every now and then just to show her that I knew what she was talking about. She has a really good sense of humor and we kind of play off what's different between us. (professor 3)

Advancing category eight: Communicating. The communicating category includes approaching behaviors, communicating per se, and disclosing. Approaching behaviors describe ways in which professors initiated engagement with students such as "checking in" and invitations to the students (after they had graduated) to visit with the professor in the professor's home, as well as to join a professional book group. The communication channels sub-category simply captures different methods of communication such as telephoning, emailing, texting, meeting, and providing written comments on papers. Disclosing is the most complex area of the communicating category. A few professors commented on the degree to which students would disclose personal information. One professor saw level of disclosure as an indicator of connection.

> *How did I know with him, I'm making a connection? Um, he was talking more than usual; um, he was – uh, sometimes he would go into personal things. He would always do something academic. He was going to something personal. Um – uh, he was willing to share it more, um, and be, you know, very comfortable about it. (professor 8)*

Other professors reflected on their choices about disclosing to students, some connecting it with the idea of a professor's humanity, which was discussed in the third dimension.

> *I think it's important for students to see faculty with, at least from my perspective, with a humaneness to us. Umm, I do not project myself in any way to be perfect and I will tell students the difficulties that I've had. I am careful where I do that because I want them to understand that there is an accountability for them to do their work. (professor 2)*

Advancing category nine: Mentoring. I chose not to use the language of mentoring in seeking participants for this study, purposely, to remain open to developmental relationships that participants might consider meaningful, but might not label as mentoring. Nonetheless, some participants referred to their relationships as mentoring. Some professors referenced mentoring particularly in regard to career development elements of the relationship. The following professor describes mentoring as deepening the work of teaching.

> *I don't think you teach people leadership. I think you nurture leadership, um, and I*

*think that that's – that's another kind of, um – I mean, there's some commonalities, uh,
to it, um, but it has to do with the installation of – of um, another level of confidence in
oneself, and confidence that they can – that they in turn can support and guide, uh, the
development of other teachers. Um, and I think that that – you know, there has to be a,
um – there has to be an appropriate kind of mentor/mentee relationship in order for
that to be, um, accomplished. (professor 9)*

Advancing category ten: Collaborating. While there is an implied mutuality present in many

of these stories, the majority of the professors also reported true tangible collaborations with the

alumni (and in some cases the students). The purposeful sampling approach most likely

influenced the degree to which collaborations are present in this study; it seems predictable that

professors who were invited to participate in the study and to identify a recent alum, would be

likely to suggest an alum with whom they have had substantial, i.e. collaborative, contact with,

rather than an alum with whom they had no contact after graduation. Nonetheless, the

collaborations are noteworthy and varied and provide an additional glimpse into these

relationships. Professors in this study reported collaborating with students (during both student

and alumni phases of the relationship). Professors and students collaborated on publications,

program development, workshop presentations, summer institute programming, training,

committees, and community outreach.

Advancing within the explanatory matrix. Advancing, depicted in Figure 4.5, is the action

within the relationship, it is the primary process and follows *Self-organizing* and *Valuing* on the

explanatory matrix. The professor is *Orienting* and *Self-organizing,* and then from a place of

activated *Valuing* does the work of *Advancing*: Teaching, Learning, Developing, Supporting,

Encouraging, Energizing, Communicating, Mentoring, and Collaborating. This dimension

represents the professor fully active within context.

Primary Dimension: Bounding

I initially resisted using the word *Bounding* because it evoked images of containment and

constriction. However, when I checked the dictionary, I was reminded that bound also means to spring or leap (*The Oxford American Desk Dictionary and Thesaurus*, 2001, p.87). The opposing meanings contained within this word, the idea that it describes both limiting and leaping, position it well to describe this dimension. The professors in this study are generally conscious of their boundaries with students and make clear distinctions that help them maintain these boundaries. Yet, these professors describe a level of closeness and connection with their students and alumni which also implies that they are also able to consciously push conventional boundaries or move closer to the edge of those boundaries and still maintain healthy, ethical relationships **(**Burns & Holloway, 1989; Holloway, 1995; Holloway & Gonzalez-Doupe, 2001).   I will speculate on this phenomenon in Chapter Five. *Bounding* includes three categories: Setting Boundaries, Familial Analogies, and Friendship (see Figure 4.6).

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
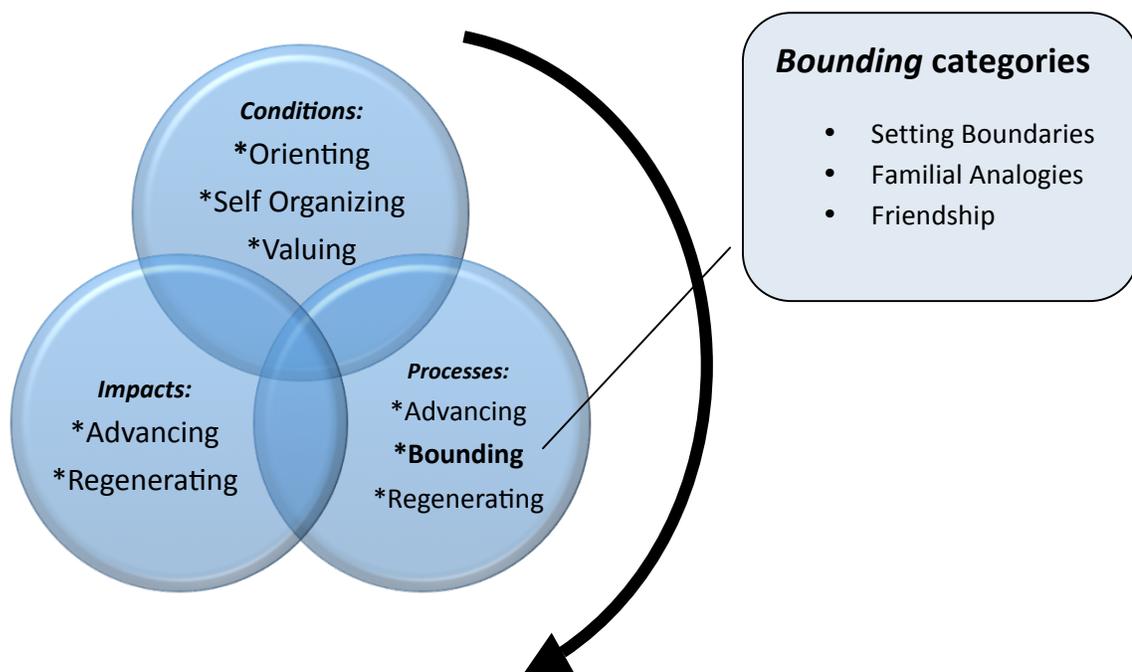
Figure 4.6. Explanatory Matrix: Professor *Bounding*

Bounding category one: Setting Boundaries. The professors in this study set boundaries by remaining conscious of the evaluative component of the relationship and position. They articulated clarifications of role, that even among all the other aspects of the relationship, they remain a teacher in the life of a student. Several professors identified limits to the relationship, clarifying what does not go on in the relationship. Professors indicated a variety of limits with students: not venting, not gossiping, not talking about other professors, not inviting the student to the professor's house individually, and not moving in each other's social circles.

The idea of the classroom also emerged in discussions about boundaries. One professor, perhaps talking about the classroom less literally, mentioned it as a reminder of the evaluative component of the relationship and a need not to let the relationship shift too much, indicating a way in which the classroom contains the relationship. A second professor suggested that meeting with students outside of the classroom expands the relationship.

> *Sometimes I think they need to get out of that classroom setting, and you have to with a one-on-one, and many students appreciate that. [I: Yeah.] And they tell me, you know, I really appreciate that one-on-one time with you, because there's a connection there, and sometimes it even goes beyond the academics or what you're discussing at that point. It's a connection there, and you know, and the students like that. (professor 8)*

At least a few of these professors stated an awareness that close relationships with students present boundary challenges and an awareness of the line defining appropriateness. None of these professors described struggling with boundary issues, all seemed confident that they manage this effectively. Moreover, the professor's use of familial analogies and their descriptions of elements of friendship, indicate that these professors are able to expand or at least push against more conventional ideas about boundaries and student/teacher relationships.

Bounding category two: Familial Analogies. Some professors used the metaphors of parents and children when describing relationships with students. The following comment is indicative of other professors who also made this conceptual connection between their students and their

children, in terms of wondering how the student would continue to grow and develop, even after completing the graduate program. These comparisons suggest that the professors' care is not bound within the time frame of the graduate program, but extends beyond their formal student/teacher relationship.

> *I guess in a way this is a little parenting. Umm, because it's the same – I have a 26-year-old son and a 21-year-old daughter. It's the same kinds of things I wonder about where they – how are they gonna grow? (professor 3)*

Elsewhere, professors indicated a vicarious experience of their students' achievements, much like a parent might with children.

> *There's a joy in their success, and it's almost like they're your kids, um, not quite kids, but there's a joy in that, um, in seeing them be successful. (professor 7)*

Finally, another professor described his student as a brother.

> *He had this tremendously different background and experience, skin color, ah, and response and reaction to various stimuli, totally different from mine. But we tended to mesh, nonetheless. And it's in that sense of recognizing that we were brothers, ah, ah, very significant. (professor 4)*

   Bounding category three: Friendship. Variations on friendship were present in several of the pairs who participated in this study. Most often for these professors, the notion of friendship meant that the professor and student or alum would share personal matters as well as academic and professional matters. In one case, a professor stated that her friendship with the alumnus was no different than friendships she has with other people who were not her students. However in most cases there was still a different boundary in these friendships than in friendships between these professors and non-students.

> *I wouldn't talk with her about relation – my own relationship issues in detail. [I: Okay.] I'm recently divorced, and will joke about, you know, there aren't any good men out there. But I wouldn't necessarily talk to her in detail about things. (professor 3)*

Bounding within the explanatory matrix. Bounding acts as the governor or regulator of the relationship. While *bounding* is active such that it cannot be thought of as a field, it does perhaps help to contain and allow for expansion of the relationship. An action, *Bounding* sits with *Advancing* and *Regenerating* as a process, however as the Venn diagram portrays, it definitely overlays the other dimensions (see Figure 4.6). *Bounding* is influenced by *Orientating*, is a manifestation of *Self-organizing* and *Valuing*, influences *Advancing*, and provides a healthy relationship that is the fertile ground for *Regenerating*.

Primary Dimension: Regenerating

This is the dimension that adds a multigenerational element to this model, creates a lineage among teachers and their own teachers, and their students. Within this dimension there are elements of the professors "paying it back" or helping others in ways that they were helped. There are also elements of "paying it forward" or extending their reach via ways in which they help students develop. This dimension also contains energizing and experiencing positive, two categories that refuel professors for their continuing work. *Regenerating* also appears twice in the explanatory matrix as both a process and an impact (see Figure 4.7) and emerges as the professors' core dimension (which will be discussed later in this chapter).

Context:

Social sciences master's programs
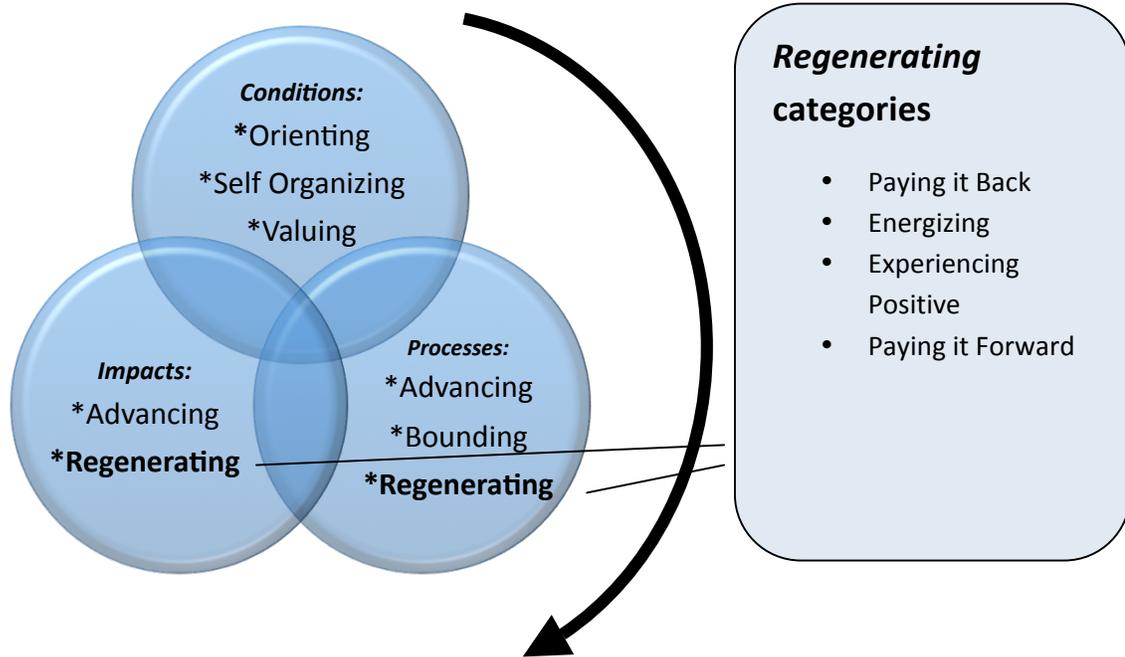
Figure 4.7. Explanatory Matrix: Professor *Regenerating*

Regenerating category one: Paying it Back. While discussing relationships with recent students, some professors referenced their own relationships with professors, mentors, and advisors who had been particularly influential. It was as if their current work connected them to their lives as students, when they benefitted from the connection with a more experienced teacher. In some cases, these memories informed professors' current approach to working with students.

> *So that was – so I said all I can do to repay her, and my dissertation chair who has since passed away, all the graciousness that they afforded me, they did not judge me. They were so – they were so much kinder to me than I was to myself that the only way I can repay them is to do that with the students who follow me. So I promised myself when I finished my dissertation I would never forget the process, and remember what those feelings were. (professor 2)*

For other professors, remembering those relationships reinforces the importance of current connections.

> *I think relationships are crucial. There is a – I have relationships with mentors, and you know, professors, and that's really changed my life, and that really gave me direction and taught me things that were just really, really important. (professor 7)*

Regenerating category two: Energizing. Energizing was covered in the previous dimension and also exists as a category within *Regenerating*. While Energizing is a process that occurs between professor and student, it is also an impact of the relationship. The professor is energized by the exchanges most specifically and by the relationship more broadly. This energy fuels the professor within the relationship and more broadly in her or his work as a teacher.

Regenerating category three: Experiencing Positive. Experiencing positive has the feel of stating the obvious. I sought out pairs of professors and recent alumni who identified as having had a meaningful academic relationship; of course they would have a positive experience. However, if the professors did not offer positive descriptions of the relationships, that absence would be noteworthy, so offering this as a category is meaningful to clarify that it was not absent. Within experiencing positive, professors describe positive feelings toward students and positive descriptions of the relationships. Among the positive feelings expressed about students, professors articulated: amazement, admiration, being impressed, and seeing the student as special. Professors described relationships as: intense, special, important and professional. These descriptors reflect a positivity that fuels the professors, helping to keep them energized and engaged.

Regenerating category four: Paying it Forward. The concept of Paying it Forward or passing it on was one that I did not anticipate as I entered this study and yet it emerged as a robust category within *Regenerating*; many of the professors in this study discussed some variation this theme. For one professor, this theme emerges in terms of passing on a version of

the benefit he gained from his relationship with an influential professor. This story also serves

to show the lineage of these relationships.

> *And um, it was very true for me, you know, when I was a student in the program, the person who was the – um, direct – was a faculty member in the program at the time, certainly helped to kind of, um, encourage me in ways that I might not have at the time seen for myself. And so – um, uh – so, I think that there's a role there that I can play for my students in terms of – of helping them to, uh – to see and understand, um, opportunities for them that they might not – that something, you know, at that particular time, um, either – might not realize are available to them, or might not have the experience and self-confidence to feel like they're capable of it. (professor 10)*

Elsewhere, other professors articulated the experience of passing it on so that the reach of their

work extends beyond what they could singularly accomplish. This professor works with K-12

teachers and sees his influence extend into their classrooms.

> *You know, that's just enormously satisfying, and I think that's true of all of us, as faculty is that, you know, more than anything else, we like to see the students from our programs be successful with their students, that their students are being successful, and achieving, and having – you know, a quality learning in their time in school with their teachers, who are our students. [I: Um hmm.] And, you know, because we don't get a chance to work with children, really much, or haven't at all, uh, that that becomes our kind of vicarious, um, reward for the work that we do. (professor 9)*

Finally, another professor, who runs a program for practitioners who work in a mental health

sub-specialty, also sees his work with his students broaden his sphere of influence.

> *It's about the babies. So if I can help all these practitioners look at babies a little differently, with the relationships between infants and mommies different, daddies differently, and be more informed, and be better in the work, it's sort of that bigger reward of imagining happier babies, happier kids, happier families, um, which is much beyond what I can do sitting in my office doing therapy. (professor 7)*

   Regenerating within the explanatory matrix. Regenerating is both a process and an impact

in the explanatory matrix (see Figure 4.7). Professors *Regenerate* within the relationship and

also experience being *Regenerated* as an outcome of the relationship. The professor does the

work of *Advancing* and this often leads to *Regenerating* which then returns the professor to

Orienting and *Self-organizing,* thus completing and continuing the cycle.

Core Professor Dimension: Regenerating

Regenerating is the dimension that fuels the professor explanatory matrix (see Figure 4.1) and connects all of the dimensions, thus emerging as the core professor dimension. *Advancing*, which includes Teaching, Learning, Advising, and the other developmental work of the professors, would appear to be the most central dimension. However, while the professor engages in teaching and advising with multitudes of students, perhaps it is the *Regenerating* energy of these select relationships that elevates these relationships as more meaningful thus placing *Regenerating* at the core of the explanatory matrix.

Regenerating has horizontal and longitudinal influence on the professor. Regeneration has the effect of fueling the relationship, thus the horizontal impact and sustaining the professor over the long term, thus the longitudinal impact. In addition, the *Regenerating* dimension extends the reach of the professor's work beyond her or his teaching, to the work done by her or his students and the people these students impact.

Students

Primary Dimensions

Six primary dimensions emerged from the student data: *Engaging, Navigating, Connecting, Developing, Reconstructing, and Collaborating.* As with the professor dimensions, the student dimensions consist of categories which emerged from the coded transcripts.

Student Explanatory Matrix Overview

Figure 4.8 portrays the student explanatory matrix. Social sciences master's programs provide the context for this study. *Engaging* and *Navigating* are the conditions. *Connecting, Developing, Reconstructing,* and *Collaborating* are the processes. And *Reconstructing* and *Collaborating* are also the impacts. *Reconstructing* is the core student dimension.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
(no doctoral program attached)
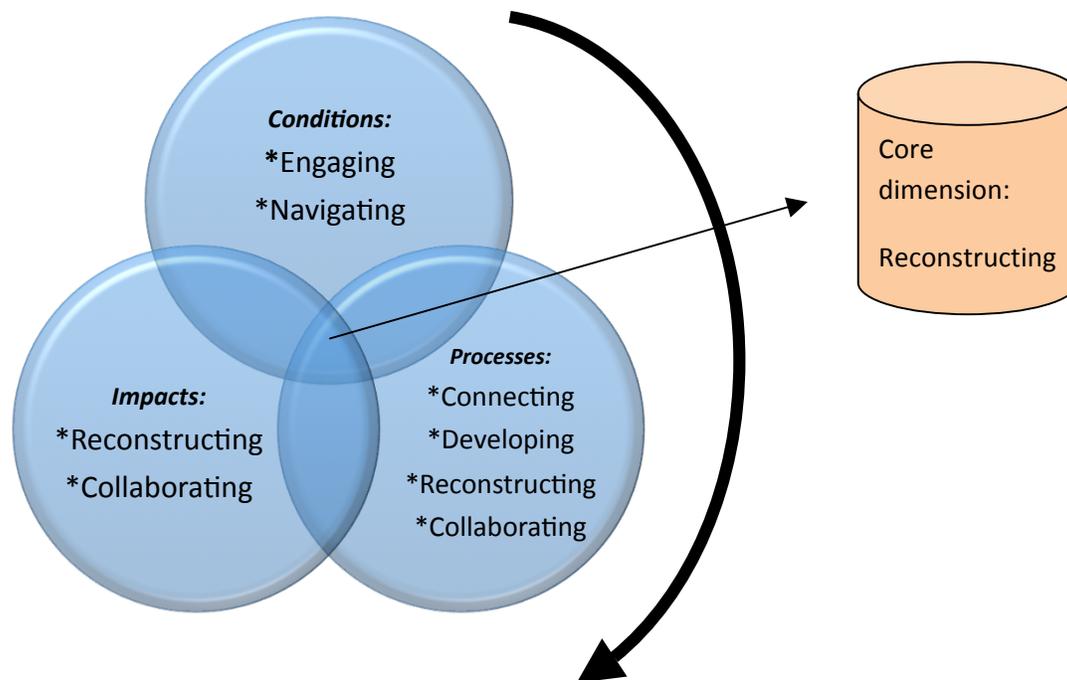
Figure 4.8. Explanatory Matrix: Student

Primary Dimension: Engaging

The professors in this study begin their relational cycle in the midst of *Orienting*, or theoretically living in a field that moves with them. The students in this study however, begin their relational cycle by *Engaging* (see Figure 4.9). Unlike the professors who explored these relationships in the context of their careers, the students offered minimal description of the larger context of their education or careers. With only a few exceptions, most of these students did not discuss other aspects of their lives or other relationships. The professors did not, for the most part, discuss their lives more broadly, however they did discuss their own relationships with important teachers and they described ways in which they relate to students in general. These professors are aware of these relationships happening in a larger educational relational

context. Conversely, the students discuss these relationships in a much more episodic and relationship-specific manner. And these students have other relationships both within and outside of their academic programs. Clearly they have related to other teachers before beginning master's studies. Yet, for the most part, these students did not discuss those other relationships, did not reference them. It is as if these relationships with the master's professors happen in reference to themselves.

The students' richest description that sets the stage for the relationship regards who they perceived themselves to be before they engage deeply with the professor or prior to specific moments of engagement. Even when the student self-reflects, she or he indicates a context wherein she or he was in a particular state or had a particular way of being (e.g. lacking confidence or declining to self-disclose) prior to this relationship or critical moment. The professors on the other hand tended to self-reflect in a manner that implied a more established sense of self. Given that these are adult students who certainly do enter the programs with a sense of self, perhaps this before and after manner of description reveals that the relationship is a turning point, or a point of transition for these students.

The *Orienting* and *Engaging* analogies may also be informative regarding the professors' and students' motivations. The professor needs to orient because she or he is encountering new relationships in a context that is both existing and evolving. The student however is beginning something new. Prior to beginning master's studies, the student was most likely not part of the master's community and did not know the faculty. By beginning master's studies, the student enters a new phase or chapter, with new people and cultures. Though these students did not tend to discuss their motivations for beginning master's study, one might imagine that the students were looking for some kind of change or progress. One does not begin a new endeavor to stand still. So if the student is consciously or unconsciously seeking change, the sense of

before and after makes additional sense. The professors, however, do not begin teaching a new cohort of students primarily because they are seeking change, but rather to continue their own path of teaching and learning.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
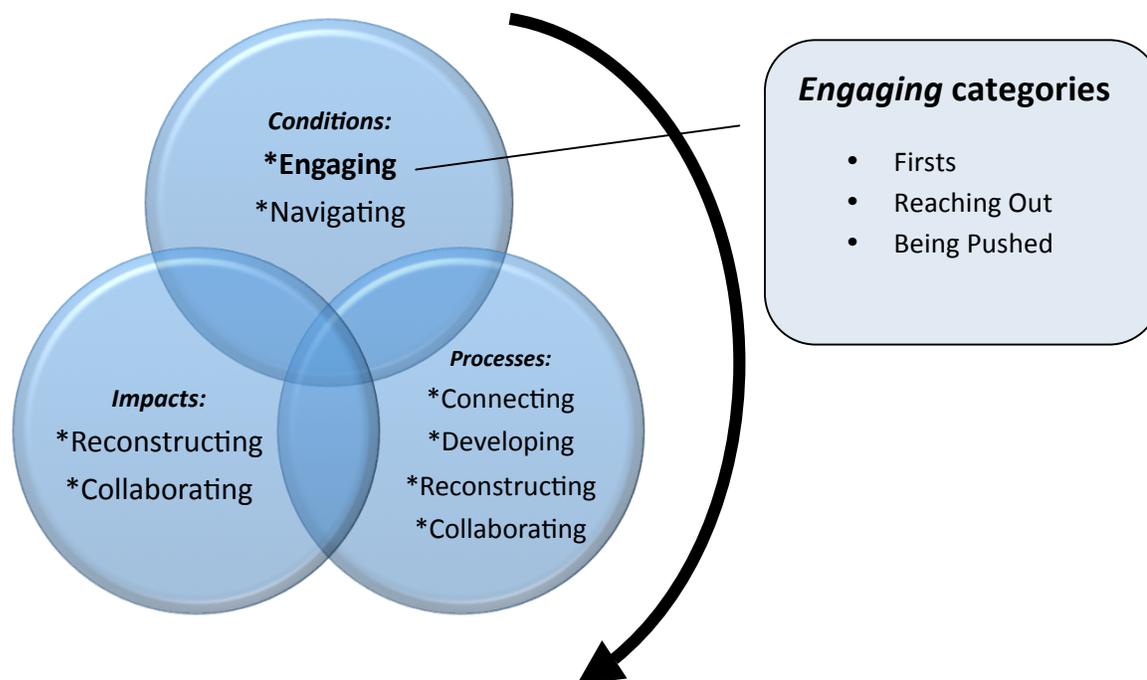
Figure 4.9. Explanatory Matrix: Student *Engaging*

   Engaging category one: Firsts. These students' articulated experiences of these relationships begin with firsts. The category of Firsts is important on two levels: consciousness and structure. These students were more likely than their faculty counterparts to remember when they first met. Likewise, the students' *descriptions* of the relationships began with these experiences of coming to know the other in a literal manner, for example working together on a paper or being observed in the classroom. This is different than the faculty members who typically described the start of the relationship more vaguely, offering something that they noticed about the student, for example that the student spoke frequently in class or had significant professional

experience.

The category of firsts is also important in that it suggests a structural precursor to many of these relationships. In several cases, the professor taught the student's first class. This raises an interesting question as to whether students in their first course are more likely to connect deeply with a professor, or is it true that professors who are more relational are more likely to volunteer/be asked to teach students' first courses? This student recalls the professor's presence (conceptually if not literally) beyond the classroom:

> *I think she was also a professor of mine for the first semester that I was – on the grad level. So, the beginning stages where we're sort of getting introduced into the program, she was part of that process. (student 3)*

Another student suggests that the context of first played a role in relationship development.

> *Being the fact that he was our first professor and our first course, you know, that really started to lay the foundation of the relationships that I think he built with each of us. (student 1)*

Engaging category two: Reaching Out. Several students in this study remembered seeking help from their professor regarding a difficult paper or project. Students recalled struggling with the work.

> *It was two weeks before, you know, it was done, and I still was missing all kinds of elements, and she met me early in the morning before I had to go to work, and you know, on this – you know, eraser board – [I: Right] – laid out every element of what my paper was, and it was a day that she didn't have to be there; she came in specially to meet with me, and she took – you know, an hour, you know, out of her time. And you know, we talked about the paper, and she helped me, you know, piece up – all the elements of my paper were there, I just had them all wrong, and so just seeing them, you know, on the board, we were able to, you know, move things around, and then I don't know, she was just encouraging me. (student 2)*

The story above reveals the movement that these encounters generate; the student gains new clarity and moves forward in the work. Another student shares a similar experience though her struggle was not with a specific assignment but rather with understanding theory more deeply.

> *A lot of questions I had got answered, and he pushed me to the next level, you know?*

And so it was – that was a real turn in a lot of ways, and then I could ask more educated questions, you know, I could – I could – um, you know, instead of just going what is this theoretical model? It was more of, um – oh, so when you say collaboration is like – you know, we can have a more intelligent conversations about the topic beyond – so, what is this thing? [I: Yeah.] You know, so it – it just – it was one of those real stepping off points for me. (student 9)

Along with academic and professional development support, professors also provided personal support. The following student describes personal support and implies that it helped her stay on track in the program.

And then sometimes it was – like I said, when it was stuff at home. Sometimes it was, umm, it was real life events that were putting a lot of pressure on me and could have seriously affected how well I did in the program and what I did afterwards. And I feel like she had a big part to do with how I processed those at the time. (student 3)

Engaging category three: Being Pushed. Other students described experiences of being pushed more directly by their professors. One student recalled with great energy, the experience of being challenged by his professor.

Dr. Joe, as I call him – Dr. Joe – um, is one of those people who sort of won't let you fail. He will push you. Um, he makes sure that you do – you know, up to and beyond your best, so he doesn't really accept, you know, when you come up short. He'll comment on it, or – I know the papers I did, and I probably did in a rush, and he would challenge me to – 'Is this your best work?' – that sort of thing. (student 4)

This student remembers responding not to a specific challenge by her professor but rather to her perception of his expectations.

But my experience was here's a person who's asking – who's asking a real effort of me. Here's a person who's asking to really understand something and wrap my mind around it, and so like my – my – all of my urges for like I've got to deliver, like I – he's actually asking something of me, so I like want to pony up, and make it happen, like that's typically how I respond when people's – like when they demand more, I like – I actually want to deliver more. (student 7)

Another student remembers a push that was not just focused on academics, but was more broadly developmental.

Like networking events, I never attended networking events. But now, I do. Why? Because you know, I want to get to the next level. Umm, I practice my diction, you know,

instead of using, you know – my brother was just on me – my brother calls me 'the professor' now. But, umm, just in conversation, ah, I read a little bit more, I pay attention to the news. I pay attention to the, ah, the political game that has just been played. I can sit and have a conversation with you just about on anything. (student 8)

And finally, this student describes the delicate balance with which her professor pushed students.

I think definitely the way she operates in the classroom, um, like the no-nonsense approach with the soft hands, and how she pushes her students, and it's like she knows how far she can push you, and she knows what your limitations are, um, because I think, like, you learn so much more that way. You learn more about yourself, your limitations, and what you can do, and what you can't do. (student 2)

Engaging within the explanatory matrix. Engaging is a condition within the explanatory matrix and depicts the student at her or his point of entree into the relationship (see Figure 4.9). Engaging makes visible the student's first connection as well as various points of reconnection.

Primary Dimension: Navigating

As students initially engage with faculty, they navigate the relationship based on their perceptions of Positionality, their experiences of space with the professor, and their sense of who the professor is as a person (see Figure 4.10). As the student and professor work more closely together, the student may develop a more mature understanding of the relationship. Students may experience mutuality and friendship and the ways in which these elements are perceived will guide the students' future interactions. Students may also compare their connection with their professors to other relationships. Finally, when encouraged to intentionally describe the relationship, students may turn to metaphors to capture the richness of these connections. I suspect that most of the work of *Navigating* is automatic and without conscious effort or intent.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
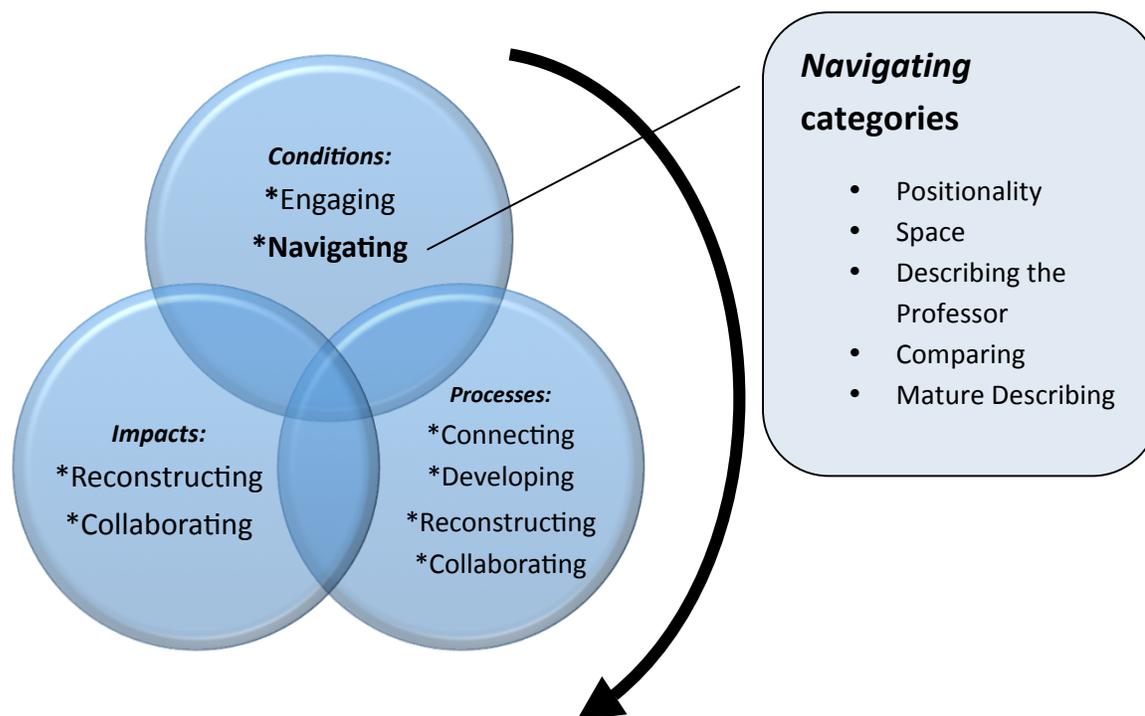
Figure 4.10. Explanatory Matrix: Student *Navigating*

    Navigating category one: Positionality. Students described an awareness of Positionality.

This awareness often acknowledged that student and professor were not peers or equal in power.

Yet, this awareness also reflected a connection and mutuality that reduced, but did not disappear

hierarchy and distance. The image of the professor in front of the classroom sometimes served as

a metaphor for distance to be maintained and sometimes overcome.

> *It was very – a very different experience. It like – I mean, it's the difference between*
> *like somebody who's sort of sitting above you, and telling you what you don't know yet,*
> *and somebody sitting down with you and you're having a discussion. (student 7)*

Another element of Positionality is the students' awareness of boundaries. Students voiced a

clear sense of boundary, often articulated by what *would not* happen between student and

professor, i.e. "I wouldn't ask him to get a beer," or "I wouldn't have him over for a cook-out."

Students also mentioned an awareness that the professor exists in the campus community of other professors and an awareness of potential political issues among faculty. Finally, this student described how boundaries strengthen the relationship.

> *I've never thought of it this way, but the boundaries that sort of – I think maintain that safety for taking risk. We're not best friends, you know what I mean? We're – I am here to learn. I'm paying a tuition, and there is an expected outcome of that. You're expected to support me through this process, and I'm expected to do my papers, and get my stuff in on time, and do my work, and work hard. (student 9)*

Navigating category two: Space. Students and professors meet in a variety of spaces including of course the classroom and the professor's office. Students also reported meeting with professors off campus, typically "for coffee." Other students described visiting a professor's home as well as gathering around a campfire at a summer program. While it seems obvious that different settings create different tones, I think it is worth noting ways in which these spaces helped shape students' experiences with their professors. The classroom and office convey a feeling of formality and seriousness.

> *She's always made me feel like she is that – she is sort of in charge of my destiny in a way, in that, in that office. (student 3)*

Connecting outside of the office shifts the mood and allows for a more personal connection.

> *The other thing that he did, um – sometimes we would have a – we did this (class)on a Friday night/Saturday, and we would have a Saturday lunch. Not always, but periodically we would like all walk together down to Panera or something for lunch, and he would walk with different people and chat – chitchat, and then, you know, walk back and chitchat. So, just that – not just the classroom relationship, but the outside end of class. (student 10)*

And visiting a professor in her or his home, extends the personal nature of the relationship.

> *And I mean she has sometimes had some dinner parties and things at her house and I would go to those, and then I got to know her and I would see her interact with her family and things like that. (student 6)*

These three examples are not presented to imply that settings create definitive climates or boundaries. Clearly, a student and professor can connect on a personal level, even in the

classroom or office. And an off-campus meeting might feel just as formal as one in the classroom. Nonetheless, these students reveal ways in which space adds to the context of the relationship.

 Navigating category three: Describing the Professor. The students' perception of the professor plays a significant role in how the student navigates the relationship. Students are attuned to a professor's flexibility, consistency, and level of engagement. Students had strong feelings about professors' authenticity, humanity, and commitment. The following student reveals how a professor's authenticity established a safe space.

> *She kind of is comfortable in her own skin and will be herself, which made me feel a lot more comfortable, even in those times of crisis, which is why I chose to continue going to her for help in those times of need. (student 3)*

Students revealed that the professors' self-disclosure was important. Professors who chose to share stories of their own struggles and mistakes were experienced as more human, more multi-dimensional and this seemed to strengthen the bond between them and their students, at least from the student perspective.

> *I got a lot more of that from him in case consultation, because we would all sit – like, 'I'm having a hard time with this person', and he might bring up something that he'd had a hard time with years ago, or recently, or like you've got a sense, like this is a whole person with strengths and weaknesses, not just a man who can read more than I can in a week. . . [Laughter] Because he just looks super-human up there in front of the room. [I: Okay.] He does get a lot done. And um, the consultation courses, like he – he wasn't doing all of that, because that's not what was necessary. What was necessary was we all come and sit down and talk about, like 'I think I did this well, but I am struggling in this department, and can somebody help me there?' And he'd share a lot of the struggles. Human. (student 7)*

In addition, several students commented that they value their professor's level of commitment. These students notice that their professors are passionate about the work and about student success. The phrase "more than just a paycheck" noted in the next comment, was used by several students.

I know for me as a student, that's really important to me, to know that, um, this person is, you know, coming here because they really do care about what they're teaching, and it's – you know, it's not a paycheck; it's a little bit more to them, and they're more vested in us. (student 2)

I propose that master's students are often perceived as enrolling in master's programs simply to advance in their careers or otherwise earn the degree. Master's students are not often seen as deeply engaged in the work or passionate about scholarly pursuits. Yet I suggest that the students in this study deeply value their professors' passion and commitment and that this valuing indicates the importance that they place on their learning as well. If these students attended master's programs simply to get the next degree, I suspect they would be happy to move through the program quickly and would not care so much about their professor's level of commitment.

Finally, this student describes that seeing a professor's own journey, and his energy for the work, helped to build connection.

It made him more accessible. I mean, it's a total given that it made him more – and accessible not just in – because he's a very laid back, very accessible person – human being – but accessible in something I cared about. You know what I mean? It was like, ah, he really does understand the woes and the trials and the tribulations of this, and he really does – you know, so there's an accessibility that became – but there's also – um, just flat out connection; you know, where it's like, aha! We connect on the same point, and so that's something to hold on to in future conversations and in future interactions, so – you know, good old human connection, where it's like, ah, you see somebody that's excited and passionate about something that you are. (student 9)

Navigating category four: Comparing. Students draw comparisons between themselves and their professors, noting similarities and differences. As one would expect, observing similarities can strengthen a feeling of affiliation or connection.

You know we have that similarity in that you know she worked for the (city newspaper), the obits for a couple of years before I did and then I worked there. You know she has written for (city magazine). Um she just has that print or ink in her veins you know. And ah, so we have that natural connection. (student 6)

Students also discussed seeing themselves as different from their professors. This did not

emerge as a major theme, however when it surfaced, the differences served as possibilities for

learning and development. This student entered the relationship with her professor holding

stereotypes which were eventually challenged.

> *And she's one of the very clear examples, of sort of, it's like [laughter], umm – this is gonna sound really bad but I guess this is the reality of it is that she has got this little bit of a southern drawl. She's a white, ah, heterosexual, suburban lady. And umm, not that all of those things are bad, but they mean different things to me than – they meant different things for me than they do now, because I now have – and this is funny because this is what I was writing about, this atypical experience that has opened up my view. (student 3)*

The same student believes that her background was also informative for her professor.

> *And when it – I think that I probably helped her open up to a whole 'nother world because my background is very different from hers as far as like I'm the city kid who has this – with roots in the, like, in the underground punk scene and the activist scene here, which she didn't have much experience with. (student 3)*

Considering the topics of similarity and difference, I want to note here that neither race nor

gender emerged as significant factors in these relationships. Age was mentioned briefly by

two students, but also did not emerge as significant.

Navigating category five: Mature Describing. Several students in this study remarked on

their sense of the mutuality of the relationship. These students are often aware that while they

are learning and growing from their relationships, their professors are as well.

> *It's not the things he does; it's the process, it's how he does what he does, and it's certainly that multidirectional communication that has to occur, um, and as a follower, as this person who is going along with where he's taking us – you know? – and along with the rest of the cohort, um, that's one of those dynamic relationships that causes not only growth in me, but it caused some in him also. And you know, that's one of the things that he would also let you know that he's learning from us, just like we're learning from him. (student 4)*

Friendship emerged as an element of these relationships. Alumni freely spoke of friendship

with their professor and also clarified that these friendships were different than other friend

relationships.

You know, I guess I'd say, it is more of a professional friendship, you know. It isn't that I can call him up and say hey, let's go have a beer. You know, it hasn't developed that, you know, into that. Or hey, let's go to the football game, or umm, hey, I'm cooking out – can you come over? It hasn't developed into that. Yet. Would I like – would I like that? Heck, yeah. You know, every opportunity that I have, you know, to sit and talk to him, you know, I would love to have that opportunity. (student 8)

In discussing friendship, these alumni revealed an interesting tension between confining the friendship and wanting more or seeing it as more than a typical friendship. While some students yearned for a more personal or casual relationship at the same time they regard it as having something extra that purely social friendships do not contain.

I guess that, that it's no – notably different than the other relationships I have with that connection because those are more like friends. And this feels like a friendship but much more. (student 3)

Along with contrasting these relationships to other friendships, the some students also compared them to familial relationships. This student describes his professor.

He really was the one who came to me afterwards and kind of gave me the hug, and told me how proud he was of me. And that was like, you know, like your own father stepping up to you and saying how proud he is of you. You felt it when it happened. So, it was quite an experience to say the least. (student 4)

Students used other familial analogies such as brother, mother, and parent. Finally, students drew on a number of metaphors when describing their professors, including: life preserver, guiding light, shepherd, leader of the pack, and in the most contemporary use of metaphor, one student noted that his professor was one of his speed dial people.

Navigating within the explanatory matrix. Navigating follows *Engaging* in the explanatory matrix (see Figure 4.10). Students assess Positionality, Space, the professor, and the relationship, in order to *Navigate* the relational space.

Primary Dimension: Developing

At the core, master's education is about learning and developing professionally and these themes are supported in the *Developing* dimension (see Figure 4.11). These students describe the

teaching approaches and behaviors that they value, that were impactful. They also discuss

academic advising and career development.

Developing category one: Teaching. Though I never asked about teaching per se, as these

students described their relationships with faculty, they identified many teaching strategies and

behaviors that they found meaningful in the academic experience. Some students described

practical matters such as the importance of receiving timely feedback from professors.

> *But invariably, whenever I would send her things she would get it back immediately.
> [Mmm.] And those are lessons that I have learned and I carry over now in my job
> because whenever I get a thesis or part of a proposal or whatever it may be, I try to get
> feedback to the students as quickly as possible because I empathize with them and I have
> been there, and I hate that academic arrogance like, "You will pass when I say you are
> ready." (student 6)*

Other students described the learning atmosphere created by their professors.

> *So, you could probably see, he's a very calm, soft-spoken kind of guy. [I: Yeah.] And
> um, so it's almost like he's in the background, kind of. Do you know what I mean? It's
> just when he asks those questions he just kind of waits it out, and lets you do some
> thinking, but yet provides you with some feedback, and background, and some ideas.
> He doesn't just leave you there to struggle. [I: Yeah.] So, I think it's that mix, that
> balance. (student 10)*

Developing category two: Academic Advising. These students had a rich experience of

Academic Advising. In many cases, the professor who was their interview counterpart was also

their advisor and clearly the role went much deeper than simply recommending courses and

checking requirements.

> *An advisor is somebody who's supposed to help me see further down the road, support
> me through things that I – you know, see where I don't even see yet. I mean, that's my
> idea of an advisor. Um, and to have that bigger perspective. (student 9)*

Many of the master's programs represented in this study include an advising or faculty

mentoring model wherein the advisor (sometimes called a faculty mentor) is intended to be the

student's most steady and consistent point of contact throughout the program.

> *Well, umm, a lot of the issues there were just, umm, umm, he was our resource person,*

so as our mentor, if there was anything that we needed out of the ordinary, umm, or even just to keep in touch with the things going on with it, with the college and the curriculum, you know, we were able to – to be able to have that one-on-one contact with him, that direct contact with him. (student 1)

Context:
Social sciences master's programs
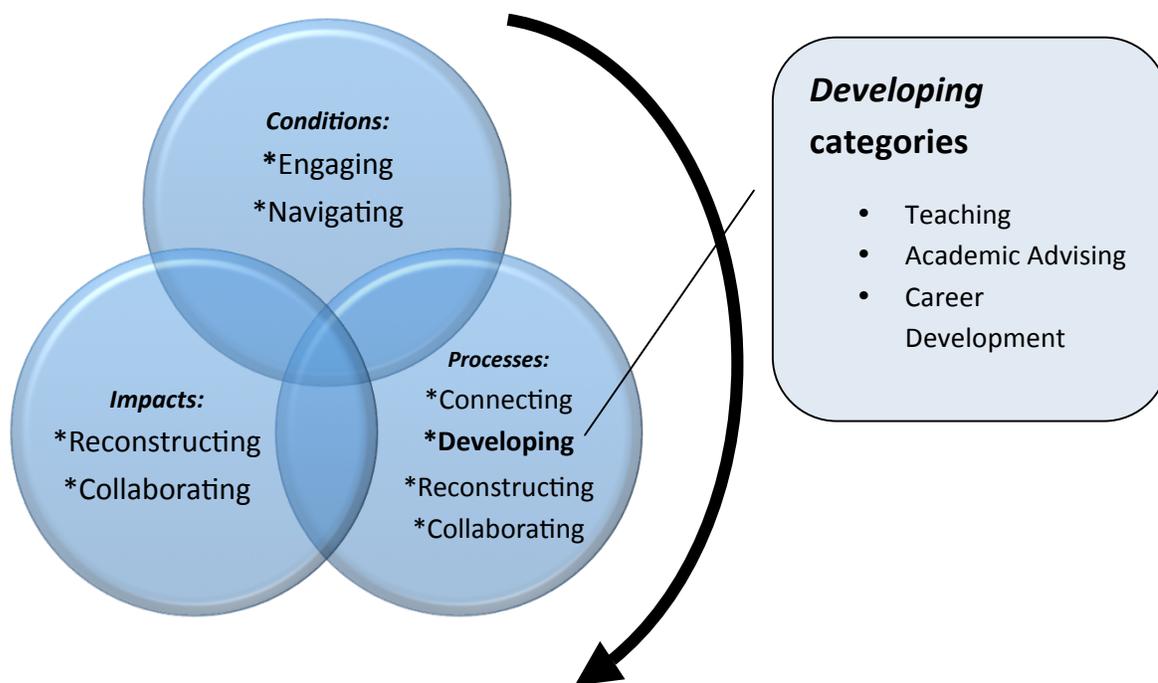
Figure 4.11. Explanatory Matrix: Student *Developing*

Developing category three: Career Development. The students in this study reported a variety of kinds of career development support from their professors. In some cases, professors helped students explore career options. In other cases, students already had clear career goals and professors helped with related matters such as licensing. Students also reported deeper conversations with their professors regarding the future.

What the heck are you here for? And that was the point where I think he was truly instrumental in helping me articulate and find the wording for what that was. He helped me just coalesce all of that stuff, and turn it into, look at it, it's right there, and I was able to put it on paper, and actually look down at it, and say yes, that's it. You're right, that's it. That's it. (student 4)

Aside from the two students who were already K-12 teachers, several of the students in this study went on to teach, most of them as adjuncts and one as a college professor. Finally, many of these students imagined a future-oriented connection with their professors, related to career. Some expected that they would continue to seek career advice from their professors. Others simply conveyed a belief that their professors remained concerned about their futures, even after graduation.

Developing in the explanatory matrix. Developing (see Figure 4.11) is the first and most expected process. Students enter graduate study to develop intellectually and professionally. This dimension reveals the Teaching, Advising, and Career Development that facilitate this growth.

Primary Dimension: Connecting

The *Connecting* dimension is the relational partner to *Developing*. In this dimension, students discuss the relational elements of their interactions with their professors. Categories include: Trusting, Supporting, Encouraging, Praising, and Energizing (see Figure 4.12). As with many other sections of this dissertation, these categories are hard to separate. The distinctions are somewhat artificial and many of the students' passages could easily fit into more than one category. Nonetheless, I will attempt to categorize the various elements of *Connecting,* for analytic purposes.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs

Conditions:
*Engaging
*Navigating

Impacts:
*Reconstructing
*Collaborating

Processes:
*Connecting
*Developing
*Reconstructing
*Collaborating

Connecting categories

- Trusting
- Supporting
- Encouraging
- Praising
- Energizing
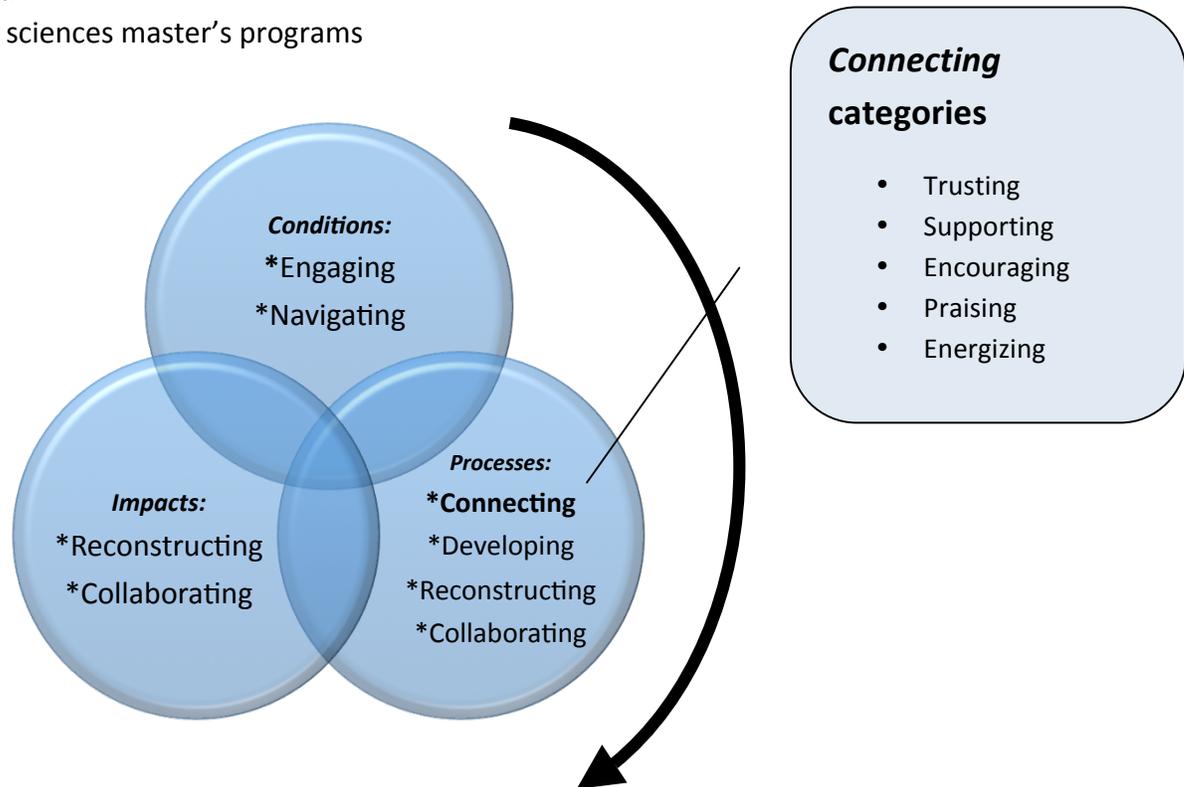
Figure 4.12. Explanatory Matrix: Student *Connecting*

Connecting category one: Trusting. Students mentioned trust as important in terms of seeking support from professors and also vis-à-vis risk-taking. Students indicated that professors' authenticity and self-disclosure increased their feelings of trust.

> *What kind of relationship does somebody have with you when they trust you with that part of themselves, showing you their very heart? And – and you know, Dr. Bob wears his heart on his sleeve, so it's right there for you to see. It's not like hidden. He is not a bottled up stuffy person by any means. I mean, he is just as genuine day one as he is on day 101, the same guy – um, but he really does make real connections with people. (student 4)*

Another student pointed to a shared sense of humor with her professor as an element that helped build trust and also allow for risk-taking.

> *It's okay to have a humorous, joking relationship. You know what I mean? It's that it's – you just – and plus it's just that natural evolution of interaction, and at least in my life it is, because you're not going to get very far without laughing, so – you know, so, to be able to have that; you know, it's not all business, you know? And to be able to laugh at*

yourself, to be able to laugh at your mistakes, laugh at your learning, laugh at – you know, and he has a keen sense of humor, which made it easy for me, which is a natural fit for me, because I can appreciate that. You know? And that just opens the door for more – a comfort level of sharing, and taking that risk of looking stupid, you know, and trying more things. (student 9)

Connecting category two: Supporting. Several students described feeling supported by their professors when dealing with personal and academic stress. One student describes the supportive space created by her professor.

I think that when I was dealing with maybe con – I wouldn't say conflict, but just sort of stress about grades or what I was gonna do with myself, jobs and whatever, even stuff at home, she just could provide this kind of calm, umm, direction I guess. (student 2)

Students noted a consistency to their professors' support.

I had, umm, some definite struggles during the program, umm, and so it just, ah, you know, I never felt abandoned. (student 1)

Another student suggests a similar sense of her professor's steady and ongoing accessibility.

Somehow, we connected really well and so I just kept going to her when I would have all sorts of questions, and dilemmas and whatever. (student 3)

Connecting category three: Encouraging. As with the faculty data in this study, I make a distinction between Supporting and Encouraging. While supporting helps the students to continue, encouraging pushes them forward. One student describes encouragement and reveals her experience of the imposter syndrome.

I just feel like she encouraged me so often when I would feel like maybe I wasn't doing well enough. I have this eternal sort of like – I don't know if this is common or not; people have told me it is – but just like I'm actually fooling people, I'm not really doing that great of a job. (student 3)

Another student discusses the role that her professor's encouragement played in her return to school and makes a fairly rare (in the context of this study) comparison between her matched professor and her undergraduate teachers.

Um, it was very – I mean, it was beneficial to me, because again, my anxiety of coming back into the program, and having other things on my plate at the time, and so it was

very – that part of chunking it and providing the feedback, and he also had a way of being very constructive with his criticism, so you – I never felt crushed by him, and in my educational career, and especially my undergrad, there were times when teachers were merciless. (student 5)

A third student relates the way in which her professor's encouragement helped her see her own potential.

I think it means that I have potential, that I'm maybe untapped potential yet, um, and um, that perhaps there are things out there that I'm just not thinking about. (student 10)

Connecting category four: Praising. Praising is one of the many categories with clear overlap to other categories. Praising is certainly a form of Encouraging and Supporting and yet it stands on its own as well. The following student reveals not only his professor's praise, but also his need for affirmation.

And he's a – he's a praiser. When you do something well, he lets you know; he really does, but that was a time when I really needed to hear that. He was right there on the spot. (student 4)

The following student appreciates her professor's praise. Elsewhere in the interview she noted that her experience is that people do not often notice when she extends extra effort, however this professor noticed her contribution and acknowledged it.

And he's very – he is a very affirming person in that that's a great job. You did it. Hey, I appreciate that, and wow, you really went above and beyond, and that's just part of his nature. (student 5)

Connecting category five: Energizing. Students described becoming energized in their connections with professors. Typically, the energy was created as they shared a passion for the content and for learning.

*Well, it's just – uh, excitement breeds excitement. I mean, when you begin to understand something you want more understanding. . .there's nothing more attractive to me than – you know, and this is the way I feel about teaching right now is I have a glimpse of who I could be as a teacher – I haven't figured out how to get there yet, and so there's sort of this – this trek of challenge of – you know, and in watching **Peter** talk and discuss, it was like whoa, I only – like that's the tip of the iceberg, you know, like I know there's more. I know there's bigger – I know there's deeper, so you know, it just*

triggered this wanting to know more. (student 9)

Another student was energized not only about the content of her profession but also in a related

certificate program that her professor created.

> *Most of the, um, real learning that we did, I think, happened because we were sitting in*
> *a room together having direct interactions, and that's why we were all so like crazy*
> *excited about what we were doing, and it was like a genuine passion, and like I'm very*
> *invested now in that certificate program continuing, because I am so very excited about*
> *that work. (student 7)*

Connecting within the explanatory matrix. Connecting (see Figure 4.12) is a process that

works hand-in-hand with *Developing. Connecting* is the structure and the spice of *Developing.*

Trusting, Supporting, and Encouraging hold the *Developing* activities. Praising and Energizing

add value and vividness to the exchanges.

Primary Dimension: Reconstructing

One of the difficulties in reporting the student data is that the categorization of processes, by

virtue of a written description, appears as linear and discrete. In fact, what is going on among

these dimensions is a collection of processes that are interconnected and overlapping. This

complexity emerges in this fourth dimension, *Reconstructing* (see Figure 4.13). As the students

described the stimulating moment and then the developmental experience, they also articulate

clearly a sense of *Reconstructing.* At times this moment is about reconstructing Knowledge,

coming to understand a concept at a deeper level or with more complexity. Elsewhere, this

moment is about *Reconstructing* Self, coming to understand one's self differently. An additional

element of *Reconstructing* is the moment of Noticing; something in the relationship causes the

student to notice an assumption she or he had been making, and to then question that assumption.

Reconstructing cannot be separated from what precedes it and in fact shades of this have

appeared in students' quotes in other dimensions. However the moment of *Reconstructing* is so

poignant, I have decided to represent it with its own dimension. Reconstructing appears twice in

the explanatory matrix as both a process and an impact and also emerges as the students' core

dimension.

Context:
Social sciences master's programs

Conditions:
*Engaging
*Navigating

Impacts:
*Reconstructing
*Collaborating

Processes:
*Connecting
*Developing
*Reconstructing
*Collaborating

*Reconstructing
categories*

- Knowledge
- Self
- Noticing
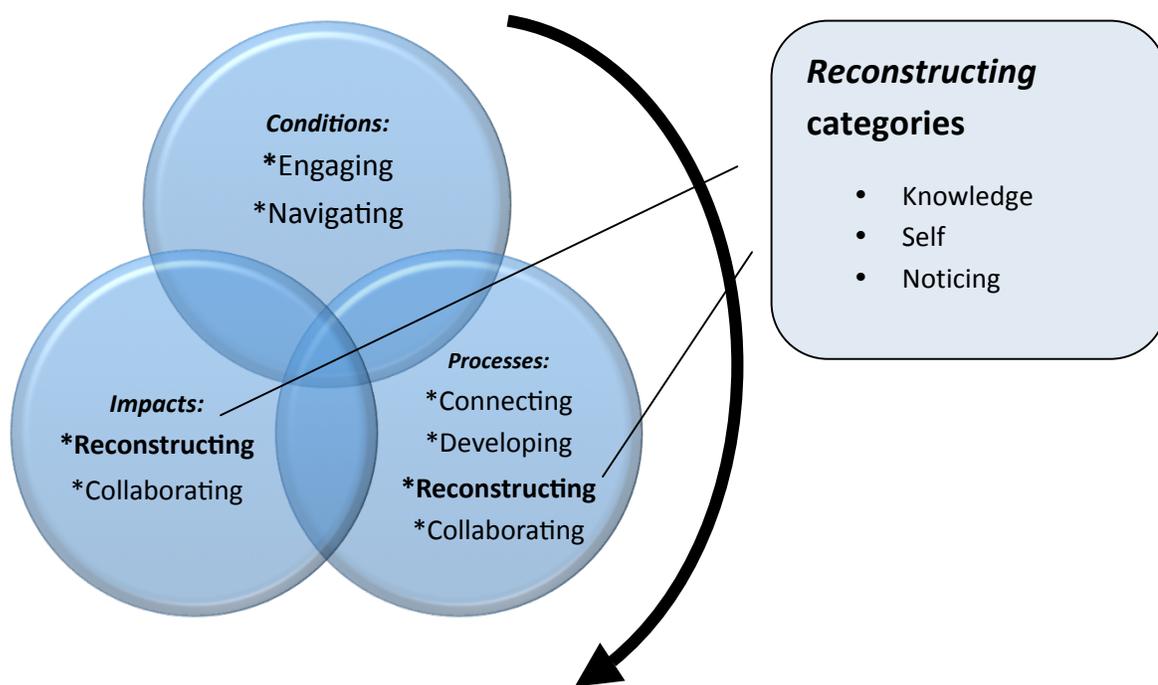
Figure 4.13. Explanatory Matrix: Student *Reconstructing*

Reconstructing category one: Knowledge. The following student recollection provides an

insightful description of a learning moment. At first glance, the student may appear to be passive

in her learning. She comments that she felt as if she "got taught." However, taking this story in

the context of her interview, it was clear that she had already been studying and wrestling with

these concepts. While she describes "being taught" she also notes that she began to make new

connections, thus conveying her active engagement in the learning collaboration. The meeting

described below allowed her to reconstruct her understanding of theory and to take it to another

level. Further, the energy she describes seems only possible if she were engaged with her

professor. This excerpt is longer than what is typically included in the writing of grounded theory findings, however, I would like to make that exception so as to include all of the richness of this student's description.

> *He began drawing the experiential cycle on the chalkboard and some other things, and I can remember my particular thing I was interested in was collaboration, and he was describing to me the difference between cooperation and collaboration, and as he's describing and describing certain things, the whole thing just totally started to make sense. And – and there were two pieces to it: One, it was the – I felt like I really got taught. In other words, I really – it was like I really got a piece of what he has to offer in terms of the critical skills model, and it was like – and it was timely; you know, it was what I needed to put pieces together for me, but he was also so animated and excited about it, that I felt okay about being animated and excited about what I – because I just thought the stuff was awesome, and I could begin to see connections, and you know, I was really excited, and you can't translate that over an e-mail, you know? And so to be able to have that moment of one-on-one, you know, where – where he was able to put it out there visually for me, and make connections for me, and allow me to make connections, you know, to have that – that dialogue face-to-face was – [poof] – worth every penny. And that really was a huge turning point for me. (student 9)*

Reconstructing category two: Self. Along with reconstructing theory or ideas that exist primarily outside the self, several students reported turning points of a more personal nature. While we tend to think of personal development happening most profoundly on the undergraduate level, this study reveals personal development on the master's level as well. Adult master's students may be more established developmentally than their traditional-aged undergraduate counterparts. However the master's students in this study revealed that challenges encountered in graduate school, coupled with meaningful connection with professors, stimulated them to try new ways of being. Upon finding that these new ways of being were perhaps more effective or made more sense with new information, the students seem to experience incremental yet significant developmental changes. This development may not be as striking as the developmental journey of traditional-aged undergraduates, but it reveals an adaptive development that is less obvious yet a profoundly important element of master's education.

One student talked at length about her preconceptions about people in authority. She entered her master's program having had very little meaningful connection with people in authority and doubting the potential positivity of those connections. Her work with her professor shifted her perspective.

> *It's really nice. It's changed the way that I think about people. It's changed the way that I think about how – how you can connect when there's a difference in power. (student 3)*

Another student had discussed wondering if she belonged among graduate students and faculty. She described an ivory tower sense of graduate education and was not sure that she fit. Connection with her professor altered her view.

> *I think I walked away each time – you know, it was a long drive home, and I think I drove away each time with something I chewed on for quite some time, you know, something that – that helped me either put pieces together or validate it for me. I mean, there was a certain degree of – you know, he was complimentary, and had nice things to say, and not in a patronizing way, but in a way that helped me – okay, okay, I am – you know, like any other student, yeah, I'm doing good. (student 9)*

Reconstructing category three: Noticing. A student encounters a challenge and a professor suggests a coping strategy that is outside of the student's comfort zone. The student tries the adaptation and finds that it works. Another student discusses his negative reaction to a classmate, with his professor who offers a fresh perspective on the classmate's behavior. The student looks at his classmate through this new lens the following week and realizes his perspective has shifted slightly. An element of these kinds of *Reconstructing* is Noticing that one is thinking differently and then assessing whether the new theory or framework is effective. This student shared that her previous experiences had taught her that people in positions of authority do not care about their subordinate's personal lives. She held that same expectation with professors however the professor with whom she matched for this study challenged this assumption.

But this was the first time that I felt like it really mattered, like umm, it was surprising and it catches me off guard. Something bad was going on and I'm sort of accustomed to not sharing that. And then I would – she'd be asking me what was, you know, instead of just what's up, it's like oh, well, how's – how are things at home? How are the kids? How are classes? So I would sort of, you know, give an update -- sometimes including distressing information, sometimes including like milestones the kids had made. And her response to it always caught me off guard. Like it kind of still does, because I'm just not used to, I guess, someone playing both of those roles. (student 3)

Reconstructing within the explanatory matrix. Restructuring is both a process and an impact (see Figure 4.13). Students reconstruct their knowledge as they more deeply understand theory and application. They also shift their ideas of self as they think with more complexity and try new ways of being. An important aspect of *Reconstructing* is Noticing, the point at which students are aware they are thinking differently than they had previously.

Primary Dimension: Collaborating

Conventional wisdom suggests that collaborative relationships between students and professors happen primarily on the doctoral level. The student/professor pairs in this study suggest that there is ample potential for collaboration on the master's level as well. Students in this study reported collaborations in the scholarly, non-academic professional, and master's program development realms (see Figure 4.14).
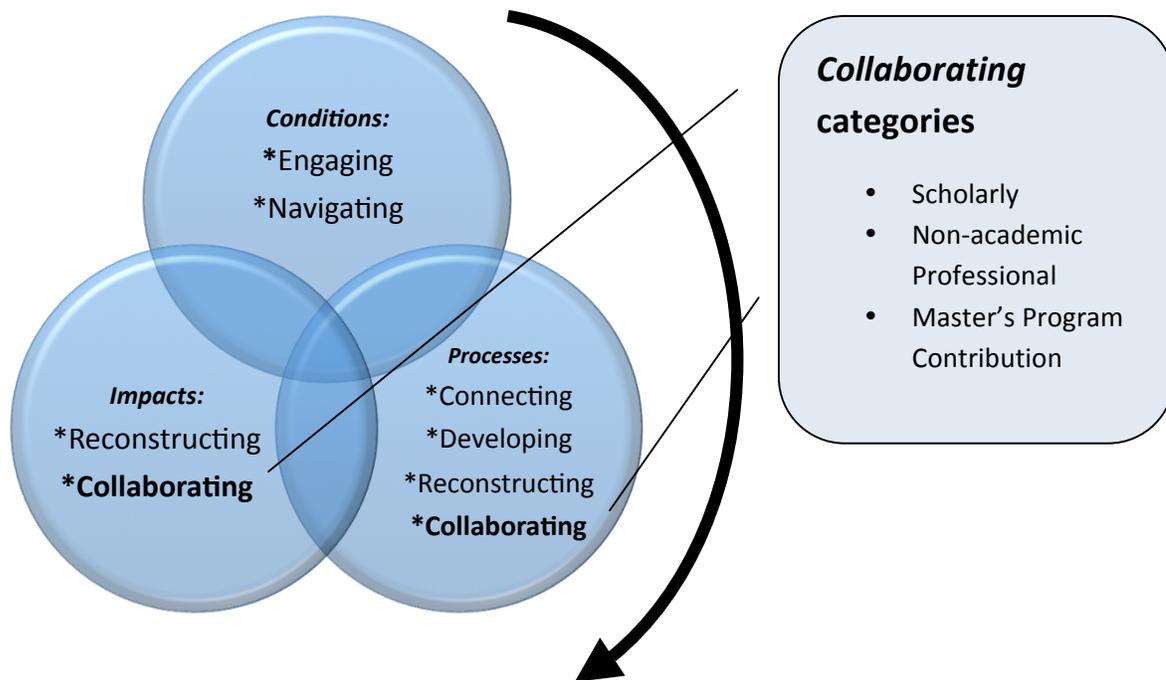
Figure 4.14. Explanatory Matrix: Student *Collaborating*

Collaborating category one: Scholarly Collaboration. As I try to assess what is interesting

about master's students and their professors collaborating on scholarly projects such as papers

and presentations, I finally come to think that perhaps these collaborations are a result of the

increased numbers of adult master's students who return to graduate study with significant

work experience in hand. Presumably, years ago when master's classrooms were more likely to

be filled with students who enrolled immediately following their undergraduate studies, the

knowledge and experience gap between student and teacher was too great for significant

collaboration. However adult students often bring substantial professional experience which

provides the potential for rich collaboration between student and teacher. Students in this study

reported working with professors on conference presentations and journal submissions. In

many cases, the collaborative relationship continues after graduation.

> *So it's not, 'Hey, thanks for the master's. It was great. Have a nice life.' It's a developing, working – much more collegial now in terms of actually probably working together. As a matter of fact, we just had an e-mail where, um, we're talking about doing a workshop or presentation together at a national conference. We're going to write an article. I've been wanting to write an article, but I can't my butt off the ground with it, and so – so, well, let's – let's write it together. (student 9)*

Another student, now an alum who holds a faculty position at another institution, mentions the possibility of collaborating with his professor again, and also alludes to that potential as a motivating force.

> *And now that I am on the tenured you know gristmill I guess, uh I hit her up a couple of months ago saying if there is anything else you want to jump in and research together, let me know. (student 6)*

Collaborating category two: Non-academic Professional. Elsewhere, a student/professor pair collaborated on community work. The student visited the professor's church to talk with the professor's men's group about the disadvantaged community in which he works. The professor helped the student (and later alumnus) network on behalf of his community work.

> *That was him saying what can we do to help? Um, not everybody can go into the streets with me and do it, but there are lots of ways you can. You can get me in touch, and this is what he's done. Um, he's gotten me in touch with people from nonprofit organizations, either similar to my own, or models for what I want to do directly; you know, no, not just people who work in the organizations, no, the people who lead the organizations. Oh, that's his gift. (student 4)*

Collaborating category three: Master's Program Contribution. Several of the alumni in this study described remaining connected with their master's program and supporting the department. Alumni provide feedback to professors who are continuing to modify and develop degree programs. Alumni also assist with recruiting new students and placing interns. Finally, alumni were asked to speak on panels at their master's alma mater, both in-class panels that dealt with professional practice, and panels for faculty members regarding the program itself.

Collaborating within the explanatory matrix. Like *Reconstructing, Collaborating* is both a process and an impact. Students are actively *Collaborating*, a process which often deepens

learning and growth. *Collaborating* can also be seen as an impact of having *Engaged, Navigated*, and *Developed*. Finally, *Collaborating* often completes the cycle (see Figure 4.14). The student returns to the beginning wherein she or he is now involved in a more mature academic relationship with the professor and must begin *Navigating* in an evolved relational context. Again, in reality, the dimensions are not as distinct as this model suggests. However, following the progression through the matrix provides a nuanced exploration of the development of these relationships.

<p align="center">*Core Dimension: Reconstructing*</p>

Just as *Advancing* may have appeared to be the central dimension of the professor explanatory matrix, *Developing* would seem to be the likely dimension to emerge as core in the student data. However, while the central work of being a master's student is learning and developing, *Reconstructing* is the most dynamic dimension and thus is the core dimension (see Figure 4.8). The *Reconstructing* experience is what animates the experience for students. In addition, *Reconstructing* may be what makes these relationships stand out for students. While students learn from other professors, perhaps it is the experience of Reconstructing, either external knowledge or self knowledge, that most compels these students, motivating them to continue and deepen the connection with these professors. It is the deep engagement in Reconstructing self and world that these students feel most challenged and changed. Clearly, it is in the act of Reconstructing that these students are most actively engaged in the learning process and this deep level of engagement is motivating, energizing, and fulfilling. Finally, this dimension illuminates the richness of master's-level education. While master's education is often overlooked in terms of its significance within the higher education community, this dimension exposes the deep engagement and learning that occurs on this level.

Pairs

What goes on in relational practice between master's students and professors? How could I study " the between" if I did not interview both partners within the dyad? Working with matched pairs has added complexity and work to this study. In retrospect, if I had it to do over again, I would again choose to work with matched pairs. Interviewing both students and professors who have been in relation with each other has provided data that is compelling and full of potential. Analyzing the professors and students separately was a rich and worthwhile endeavor. And now that I have analyzed both constituents in the dyad, I will move on and explore the pairs as pairs and the pairs as a collective.

Having worked from the coded level up through explanatory matrices in order to provide a data-driven picture of the professor experience and the student experience, I then considered the professors and students in the context of their matched pairs. First, I sought to analyze whether any demographic factors influenced the pairs (see Table 4.1). Next, I looked at the stories that emerged from the pairs. I considered whether within any pairs, the professor and student offered vastly different narratives of the relationship. I also reflected on the joint narrative created by each pair (when both narratives were considered together) to explore whether any pairs emerged as outliers (see Table 4.2).

Demographic Influences

Initially, I did not invite participation based on any demographic information other than age of students. Later in the process of recruiting participants, two professors offered choices of alumni they might ask to be involved in the study. In both cases I employed purposeful sampling and chose the student who fit a demographic that I had not yet fulfilled. In one case, the professor had offered two students, one who was African-American. At that point I did not yet have any African-American students in the study, so I responded accordingly. In the other case,

the professor had suggested one male student and one female student. I encouraged the professor

to ask the male student as I did not yet have a pair with a female professor and male student.

pair	race	gender	age noted by participant	Socio-economic/cultural noted by participant	Student describes self as outsider	Demo diff mentioned (w any substance)
a	d	s			y	y
b	s	d				
c	s	s	y both	Y both	y	y
d	s	d				
e	s	d				
f	s	d				
g	s	d	y by student		y	y
h	s	s				
i	s	s		y both	y	y
j	s	d				

Note. Within race and gender: s = same and d = different. Throughout the table: y = yes.

Table 4.1. Demographic influences

Race

There were two African-American male students in this study. One was paired with an

African-American male professor and the other with a white professor. Both mentioned that

being in the minority in their programs contributed to the importance of their connections with

their professors. This generated a theoretical sampling decision. Literature points to the

importance of mentoring for minority students (Lynch, 2002 cited in Sedlacek, 2007; Sedlacek,

2004a, cited in Sedlacek, 2007) however I decided not to engage in further theoretical sampling

regarding race. I thought about this deeply and consulted with my chair several times. I

compared these pairs with other pairs in the study who had noted other differences such as age

and socio-economic class. I determined that the pairs involving racial minority members

revealed descriptors that were similar to those emerging from other types of minority-influenced

pairs and I chose to follow this analytical thread rather than one that was race-specific. My

decision was further informed by my sense that to begin to sample based on race would be a significant departure from the original intent of the study, that this departure would seemingly begin a new study, rather than extending the current project. I had noted that other minority students, who viewed themselves as outside of the mainstream within their programs, also indicated that their relationship with their professor was important and I chose to follow this theme in my analysis, rather than expanding the sample and altering the study.

Gender

This study included all possible female/male combinations among professor and student pairs. Gender was referenced in one pair by both the professor and student as they reflected on their relationship. The professor noted that she was probably close to the age of the student's mother and wondered if her acceptance in that context was an element of the relationship that was compelling for the student. The student commented (in a separate interview of course) that she saw the professor as a strong woman. In addition, the African-American male student who was paired with an African-American male professor, noted that this connection with an African-American man was important to him. Aside from these two pairs, gender was mentioned minimally throughout these interviews. When discussing boundaries, a few participants indicated that discussion of boundaries inherently includes an awareness of sexual relationship boundaries however they seemed to be indicating an awareness of the issue in the abstract and not anything that was part of their own experience; neither professors nor students in this study indicated any sense that boundaries were crossed in their relationships. Other than this abstract reference and the two pairs who mentioned gender, no other pairs referenced gender with any significance.

Age

Age was another demographic factor that was barely mentioned throughout these interviews. One student suggested that her connection with her professor was enhanced by being

approximately the same age as him and thus having common cultural reference points. She also indicated that most other students in the class were much younger. The professor noted the age similarity in his interview but said he thought it had minimal impact on the relationship. One other pair discussed age, particularly the professor who noted what she saw as a significant age difference between her and her student. For her, this was a factor that made her curious about the potency of the relationship.

Socio-economic Status

Two students and their corresponding professors discussed the class differences within their pairs. All participants seemed to believe that this difference brought value to the relationship as the professors gained insight into the students' communities as the students shared their experiences.

Outsider Status

While not a formal demographic category, students' experiences of being an outsider within their programs is worth discussion. Four students identified as being outside what they considered to be the mainstream culture of the students in their master's programs. Two of these students attributed this to race, one to age, and one to her alternative cultural identity. All four of these students suggested that their connection with their professor was particularly important because they experienced themselves as outsiders within their programs.

Demographic Influences Conclusion

While there were demographic differences within and among pairs, none of these differences emerged as significant. One could imagine a scenario wherein a student talked at length about how working with a professor of the same race was important. This scenario did not surface in this study. As noted, some students discussed demographic factors, however these factors did not

dominate any of the interviews. Teaching and learning and personal development were the prevailing topics among these students and professors.

Professors and Students: Similar Stories

As I embarked on this study, I was very interested to see whether both members of the matched pairs would tell similar stories about their relationship. As noted previously, students tended to recall the relationship in more detail and more literally. The professors tended to discuss these relationships with less specificity and more conceptual thinking. In addition, the students viewed these relationships as more singular and the professors viewed these relationship in the context of their career and relationships with other students. I will discuss this more thoroughly in Chapter Five. Despite these conceptual differences, both members of each dyad essentially described the relationship similarly. Both professors and students recognized some of the same elements of the relationships, same points of collaboration, and generally exuded a similar feel for the relationship. There were no pairs in which this was not true. The similar relational perception revealed by the matched pairs in this study is noteworthy. Literature from other fields including counselor supervision (Putney, Worthington, & McCullough, 1992) and nursing (Shanley & Stevenson, 2006) suggest that two people in a supervisory or training dyad may be more likely to perceive the relationship differently.

Outlier Pairs

Stepping back from the coded data and looking for general commonalities and differences among pairs, I decided to focus on the essence of the pairs' mutuality or what was their connecting point (see Table 4.2). Using this lens, I determined that all of the pairs connected around academics and eight of the pairs connected around professional or community involvement. Three pairs also indicated a strong personal connection and one pair described a primary friendship.

pair	academic	professional	community	personal	*friend
k	x		x	x	
l	x	x			
m	x	x		x	
n	x	x			
o	x	x		x	
p	x	x			
q	x	x			
r	x				
s	x				
t	x	x			x

Table 4.2. Pair Overview

There are two pairs wherein the connection was essentially experienced around academic pursuits and did not include significant career or community connection and I view these pairs as outliers. Both of those professors teach courses that are not within the discipline of the degree program; one teaches writing and the other teaches research. This may explain why despite a strong connection with their students, there was not significant discussion around collaboration outside of the academic arena.

Regarding friendship, all pairs described or at least exhibited qualities of friendship. However one pair really spoke of primary friendship and I consider this pair to be an outlier. Both people in this pair noted activities in their relationship that support their perception of friendship, including that they meet for coffee regularly and that the alumnus has attended dinner parties at the professor's house. I have postulated several reasons why this pair has found a friendship that seems unique among pairs in this study. First, they share a very similar background and now both teach on the college level. Because they both teach at universities, they are positioned as colleagues in a way that other pairs in this study are not. They also attribute part of their connection to the fact that they live in the same neighborhood. While both members of this pair referenced their friendship several times throughout their interviews, both student and alum still

acknowledge that there is a mentoring component to the relationship. The professor still concerns herself with the alumnus's professional development, going as far to say she needs to push him to publish. The alumnus stated that he continues to seek advice from this professor and is cognizant of not leaning on her too much. While true friends might push on and rely on each other in these ways, this professor and alumnus still speak to that mentoring aspect of their relationship as true mentoring and not as a peer-based exchange. Having explored the essence of these pairs as they described themselves and their relationships, a consistency emerges. While there are outliers, there are logical explanations for these outliers such that they do not suggest a need for additional theoretical sampling or otherwise call the data and findings into question.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As I begin chapter five, I return to the curiosity that first inspired this study. For years, I have wanted to know more about the space that I share with my students. More specifically, I have yearned to understand more deeply the energy, the unspoken connection. Why is it that I find these relationships so important and invigorating? What keeps my students engaged and wanting additional connection? I did not study my own relationships per se, instead I interviewed others and sought to understand their deep connections. I imagine that my comprehension of the relationship between professor and student will continue to evolve as I pursue my work as a teacher, researcher, and learner. This dissertation marks the formal commencing of this journey.

To begin to develop a comprehensive understanding of what goes on in relational practice between master's students and professors, I have developed a composite picture (See Figure 5.1) which evolves from the dimensions. Figure 5.1 depicts the outer layer of this story including the professors' and students' context and roles. Please note that context in this figure represents the students' and professors' life context and not the context of the study which was depicted in the explanatory matrices in Chapter Four. Returning to the theoretical modeling in Figure 5.1 and moving in from the outer context, the next level is the context provided by the master's program. Within this contextual frame, sits the orienting space wherein professor and student work and relate. Within the orienting space, professor and student engage in a number of processes that work in concert to create a holding space. The professor is *Self-organizing, Valuing,* and eventually *Bounding,* while the student is *Navigating* and *Connecting.* This holding environment creates an intimate relational and generative space in which the professor and student engage in *Advancing* and *Developing* respectively (see Figure 5.2). Through this *Advancing* and *Developing,* professor and student experience mutuality and collaborate. These processes lead

the student to *Reconstructing*, and the professor to *Regenerating,* the core dimensions. Finally, the professor returns to the beginning of the process and the student either returns or exits the relationship.

Seeking to enliven the models, I have crafted a composite narrative of professor and student. I begin this story with the professor. The story begins with the professor for two reasons. First, in this model, the professor sets the context for the relationship. And second, the professor's story portrays a longevity, a history, a career punctuated by relationships with particular students. Conversely, the student story is more contained, the student story describes this singular important relationship with a life-changing professor. To make the next section less cumbersome, I will use female pronouns in telling the story. This is a story that reflects the composite stories of both women and men who participated in this study.

The professor starts her day amidst an invisible field of influences that establish the context for the relationship. This field consists of the *Orienting* influences. She has her subconscious sense of self, her understanding of her position in the lives of students, and the structure and culture of the master's program within which she teaches. These influences are with her whether she is teaching in the classroom, meeting with a student off campus, or sitting at home and talking with a student on the phone.
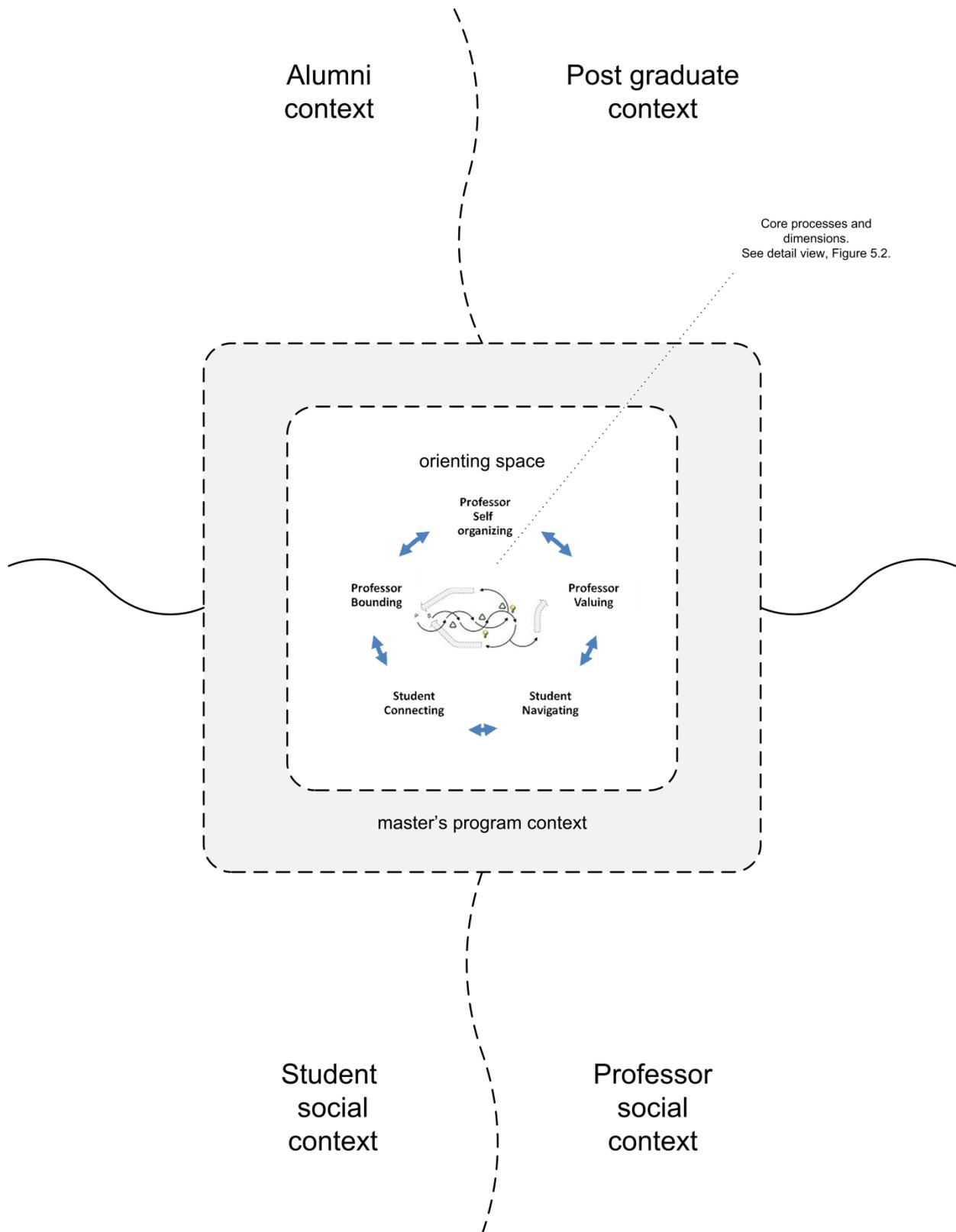
Figure 5.1. Theoretical Modeling

The context that the professor creates is further enriched as she engages in *Valuing*, or activating her values in these relationships. Does she value authenticity? If so, how will she bring forth her humanity? How does she extend and take in respect? What does trust mean in the context of these relationships?

With all of these contextual factors in play, some subconsciously and some consciously, the professor engages in the practice of teaching. To capture the richness of all that teaching involved for the participants in this study, I named this dimension *Advancing*, as it extends well beyond the conveyance of course content. This professor teaches and at the same time learns from her students. She intends to bolster students' development beyond the understanding of theory and the curriculum per se; she is devoted to helping her students become more confident and develop their careers. When her students get stuck, she supports them. When they need a push, she encourages them. She uses humor, sometimes to gently push a student to work harder, and other times to turn down the stress. She brings energy to the work and is energized by her students. She mentors. And with a few students, she collaborates, perhaps writing a paper or co-teaching a summer seminar.

The nomenclature *Advancing* represents not only the student's growth or forward progress, but also the further development of the relationship. As student and professor engage, disclose, struggle, overcome, teach, learn, energize, and collaborate, their relationship deepens. The professor's responsibility to maintain the holding environment continues and may become more profound. With this near visceral mutuality, with the honest expression of emotions and deep connection and friendship, the professor is concurrently *Bounding* the relationship. *Bounding* obviously represents the containing of the relationship, the maintaining of boundaries that protect the integrity of the relationship and preserve the positionality, both which are essential for the

student's risk taking and growth. *Bounding* also represents the forwarding of the relationship; these professors move forward toward the boundaries, thus expanding the connection.

There is one more dimension in the professor story, however first, I must begin the student story.

While the professor story begins with *Orienting*, the student story begins with *Engaging*. The student meets the professor or takes a first class with the professor. Or perhaps the student is struggling and reaches out for help. Or, the professor, sensing the student's potential, provides a push and the student responds.

Once the relationship commences, the student begins *Navigating*. The student consciously and subconsciously senses the professor's characteristics and actions. The student assesses the positionality inherent in the relationship. The student makes meaning of the space and time of the relationship. What does it mean to meet off campus? The professor agrees to meet for two hours on a Saturday, how does the student make meaning of this time commitment?

P   Professor Advancing

S   Student Developing

    Collaboration

    Mutuality
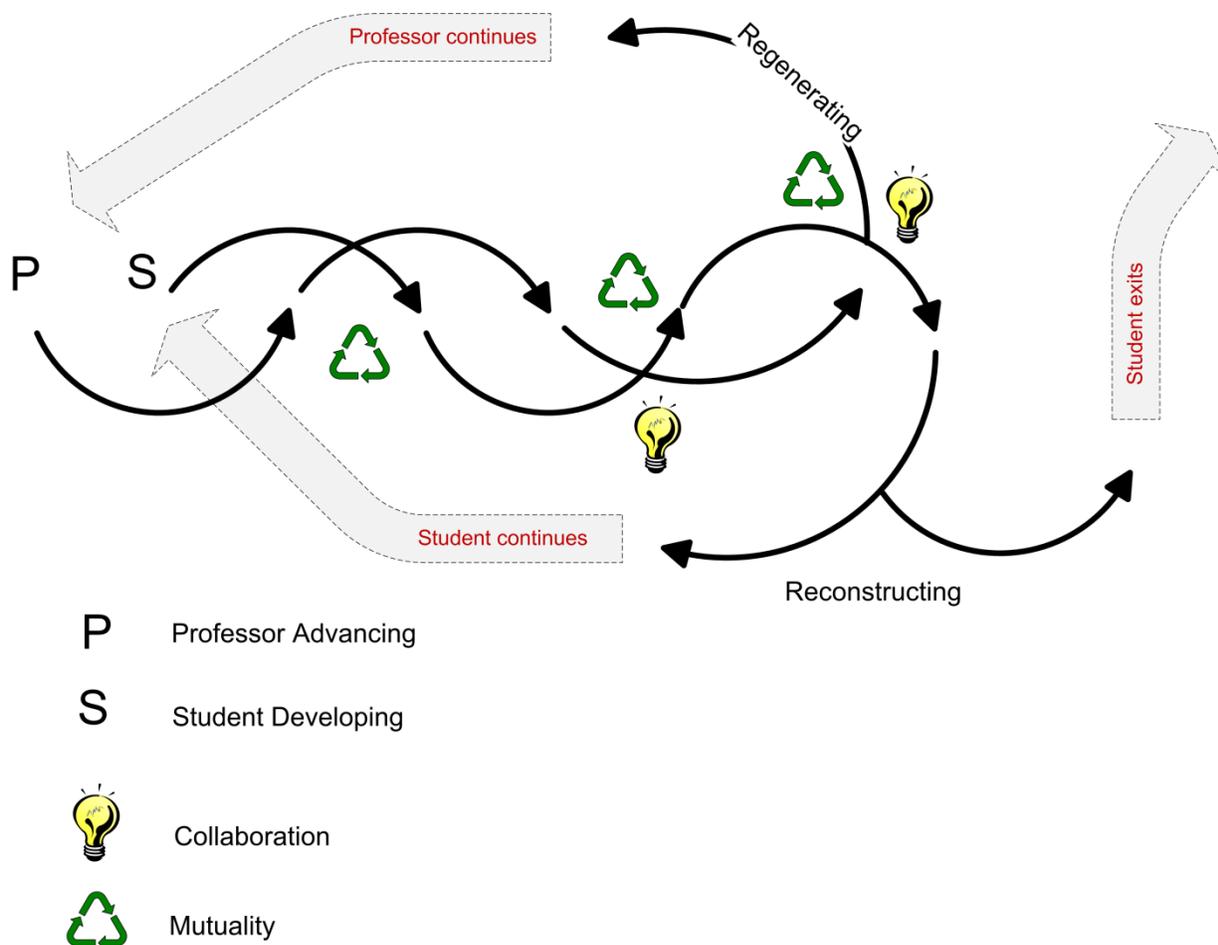
Figure 5.2. Theoretical Modeling Detail

Now the relationship is in motion (See Figure 5.2) and the core dimensions, *Regenerating* and *Reconstructing* are illuminated. The student is *Developing* which includes the teaching and learning, the obvious raison d'être of the relationship. *Developing* is also powered by the professor's work as an advisor (formal or informal) and coaching vis-à-vis the student's career. Teaching, learning, and engaging in advising, and coaching represent the obvious work of the student, to navigate the program, and progress academically and professionally. However in these relationships, this all occurs in a *Connecting* context that moves these actions beyond the range of instrumental exchanges to something with more energy, depth, and durability (see Figure 5.1). In *Connecting*, these students are supported and encouraged. They know that their professor cares; trust is mutual. Student and professor energize each other.

While I have depicted this in a linear fashion, the reality is of course that theses dimensions are all much more fluid, overlapping, and interactive. The professor starts her day in the field that is her context. She engages with the student who navigates the relationship. As the pair engages in teaching and learning, the relationship deepens and the professor continues to bound the relational space that they share. As the professor maintains the boundary, the student re-navigates. All of this is in motion.

Figure 5.2 also depicts the core dimensions: *Regenerating* and *Reconstructing*. For the student, the transformational moments of the relationship are the experiences of *Restructuring*. These are the moments wherein the student puts together the pieces of the theory and understands the whole, or risks being a little bit different in the world and finds that this slight shift in self works (e.g. "I can see now that I am a leader in my workplace," or "This paper was good, maybe I will submit it for presentation."). These are the moments that generate tremendous energy for the student. Sometimes the professor sees these moments and takes in the richness of the small but important transformation and sometimes the student returns and thanks the professor later. Either way, these moments are connected to the *Regenerating* energy of the relationship. The professor remembers her own moments of discovery, often supported or catalyzed by one of her most important professors. Or, the professor knows that as the student goes forth with new knowledge she will make important contributions in the lives of others, thus extending the work of the professor to touch even more lives. These are the *Regenerating* forces of the relationship, these moments rejuvenate and re-inspire the professor. Just as other dimensions feed each other, the professor's *Regenerating* is not only fueled by the student's success, but sometimes by *Collaborating* and the learning element of *Advancing*. These adult students bring substance to the table. They are out in the field and current in their professions and as such have much to teach their teachers. This too is a *Regenerating* force.

Advancing, Developing, and *Collaborating* all continue to activate the relationship. These forces also return the professor to *Self-organizing, Valuing,* and *Bounding,* which in turn return the student to *Navigating*. And the cycle begins again.

Theoretical Propositions

Six theoretical propositions emerge from this study and deepen the modeling. These propositions emanate from the data and subsequent modeling, and then take the analysis to a new level of abstraction. Stated more visually, the modeling serves as a platform from which I dive back into the data, to the coded interview passages; I then rise to a more abstract level and develop the theoretical propositions. These propositions are both of the data, and the result of a final circling back to the data having gained the perspective of the modeling. The first theoretical proposition, energizing the relationship, is presented with sub-sections and a brief summary. The remaining five propositions are: teaching and learning are bidirectional, difference is potential, asymmetrical primacy, working close to the boundaries, and the connection paradox.

Energizing the Relationship

> *Student: And there were only ten of us in that class. It was, um, a marvelous experience, because of the people who happened to be in the course. There were no grumblers there. And um, a roomful of invested people, led by a person who is extraordinarily invested and incredibly passionate, just makes for a unique and privileged experience, like I think by the end of that semester we were all just like so, so excited about life, and the nature of therapeutic work, and um, helping people, and making a difference and making the world a better place, and all those things that people can get really passionate and excited about. And he really facilitated that experience for us. (student 7)*

The Early Work

First, to be clear, the professor has much work to do as a teacher, the work of teaching: planning courses and classes, facilitating class, making assignments, and evaluating student work. In addition though, in the context of the relationships explored in this study, the professor also does significant relational work, that is, the establishing and maintaining of conditions that

create a space in which there is potential for these relationships. After this space has been established, the student enters and may engage in relationship.

The Middle Work

Once student and professor have engaged, the relationship will only continue (as an educational relationship) if the student does her work (or engages in addressing her inability to do the work). While the student has some amount of relational work in the relationship (*Navigating*, initiating, *Connecting*)*,* her primary responsibility and the most energizing force she brings to the relationship over the long term, is that she engages intellectually and professionally with the work, the program and the professor. It may sound obvious that students need to do their work. However this runs deeper, this is about the energy that keeps the relationship going. If the student chooses to disengage from the work, eventually there will be no cause for the student and professor to remain in an educational relationship. The student does not do the work simply to maintain a relationship with the professor, however if she does not do the work, the reason for the relationship disappears. If the student is unable to do the work, she can still continue the relationship by *Engaging* in the process of assessing what is blocking her from working, and then attempting to get back on track; in these ways, she remains engaged in the process.

A Metaphor for the Early and Middle Work

This description of the early and middle work is artificially linear. I provide these descriptions to portray the weight or proportion of the work and not a definitive progression. The work of a coach and a basketball team provide a good metaphor. The coach sets the context for the athletic endeavor. Once the game begins, the coach is on the sideline and the athletes are on the court, playing the game. There is still interaction; the coach calls instruction from the sidelines, players look to the coach for guidance. Moreover, the coach continues to regulate the parameters of the game; the coach takes players in and out of the rotation, calls specific plays,

encourages and corrects. However, on the court, it is the athletes who must run the offenses and defenses, they are the only ones who can put the ball in the hoop. There are additional factors, beyond the coach's control, for example, a player might get injured. However, overall, the coach orchestrates and the players play. There is a fluidity to this endeavor; the coach provides structure, the players respond, the players improvise, the coach responds, and so it continues.

The Later Work

With all dimensions in motion, the pair works in mutuality and sometimes literal collaboration. At this point, the relationship is powered by the parallel efforts of professor and student. The early work and the late work continue and the weight of the relational work of professor and student continue to shift. The professor maintains her effort to hold the relationship and manage boundaries. The student also has a role in maintaining the relationship: she plays a part in understanding and working within boundaries. The student continues to be a generative collaborator, however she is not alone in this. The professor too, produces. There is an ebb and flow between professor and student, relational work, and academic or professional work, Bounding the relationship forward and containing it for protection and integrity.

Summary

Those who would deny the importance of the relational work of teaching might imagine that it weakens the teaching mission. In fact, the professors in this study who created and managed rich relational spaces with students were highly impactful teachers. The students in this study were asked about relationship, and yet they talked a great deal about teaching and learning. Relationship provides an important context, yet teaching and learning remain the essence of what goes on in the space.

In addition, those who doubt the importance of relationship might see relational work as putting the bulk of the educational experience on professors. The model that emerges from this

study shows that while the professor may set and to some degree maintain the relational context, the relationship does not continue as an educational relationship unless the student does her work, and not only her relational work, but her intellectual and developmental work. The student's work is the force that fuels the relationship.

Teaching and Learning are Bidirectional

Professor: One of her practicum goals was improving her coaching – you know, improving her ability to work with adults, and so there was – it kind of created a – um, an opportunity for us to have a kind of – a very metacognitive, uh, kind of conversation, because as I was coaching her, we were able to kind of – uh, unpack that….I think that, you know, having an opportunity to, um – to talk with somebody so clearly about, uh, the coaching experience as it relates to adults, helped me to, um – to think about the ways in which I coach adults. (professor 10)

This idea begins to shed light on the richness of master's education. In the context of undergraduate education, teachers typically have far more experience and knowledge within their chosen discipline, than do their students. In doctoral education, there are the politics and complexities of research relationships. In addition, doctoral candidates are more likely to be scholars than practitioners and so soon their experience base mirrors their professors'. However, according to the professors in this study, their students, as master's students, are active practitioners. As such, they bring a wealth of professional knowledge that helps energize the professors and keep them current in the field. This is not to suggest that there are no politics in master's education, but rather that the absence of the dissertation process and other doctoral-level research endeavors removes one of the complexities of relational practice.

Difference is Potential

Student: And when it – I think that I probably helped her open up to a whole 'nother world because my background is very different from hers as far as like I'm the city kid who has this – with roots in the, like, in the underground punk scene and the activist scene here, which she didn't have much experience with. (student 3)

Research has shown that students and mentors may be drawn to and most comfortable with counterparts that are similar, particularly in race or gender (Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, &

Ferron, cited in Sedlacek et al., 2007). However several pairs in this study revealed that there can be attraction and richness when students and professors who are clearly different, engage with each other, and even vis-à-vis their differences. Regarding racial and class differences, the professors who engaged around these issues expanded their own understandings and world view. These minority students, in welcoming their professors into their worlds, experienced not only increased self-esteem, but knowledge of the complexity of the majority experience as well. In at least one pair, not only were the professor's assumptions challenged, but the minority student revisited her assumptions as well. In summary, students and professors who arrive from different cultural identities and experiences, have significant challenge and learning to offer each other.

Asymmetrical Primacy

Student: All the rumors that we had heard about her before we had her, because we were there for a full semester before we actually met her. [I: Uh huh.] They were all true; you know, she was tough, um, she'd call you on the carpet, um, nothing would ever get by her. She would forget absolutely nothing. She was just so tough, that she was the toughest teacher that you would ever love. (student 2)

One of the unexpected findings of this study emerged from examining the ways in which professors and alumni told their stories. The students discussed coming to know their professor, specific memories of working with the professor, ways in which they were different before and after various moments with their professor, and their experience of the relationship at the time of the interview. The professors had fewer specific memories of the students. It was clear that the professors were connected with and generally had a vivid sense of these students/alumni, but the memories were not as specific. In addition, the professors shifted back and forth in their stories between referring to the specific student and talking more generally about their work with students in the cohort or in the course of a career. Again, the professors did not experience these students as just random students in their lives; these were special students. Moreover, professors

and students essentially told similar stories, however they told the stories quite differently. The students talked specifically; the professors talked conceptually.

For example, the following two quotes emerge from the same pair, regarding the student developing confidence. First, the student describes his final presentation, summarizing his learning in the program, and then he acknowledges the role of his professor:

> *In fact, when I did my final presentation, that is another culminating, um, event of the process is, uh, we do a – it's a 15 or 20 minute presentation of, well, what did you get out of this – at the end, um, and that was unbelievable. It really was, because then I really did get a chance to stand flat-footed, and with all the confidence in the world I can share it with anybody, um, really what this leadership thing was all about, and with the best of them. It really didn't matter. I mean, I've got all the back-up I need. I've got the expert standing right behind me, um, showing the way, and then I can just follow along, but that confidence that I had as a student here is certainly the result of the person who sort of guided me through that entire process. (student 8)*

Conversely, his professor mentioned during the interview that he saw this student develop confidence. Asked to describe his experience of watching his student develop, he replied:

> *Very rewarding, ah, very ah, ah, affirming of [a] the program and [b] my own efforts, humble as they are, to, ah, bring something to the students. Umm, I feel very strongly that there are at least two levels of, ah, of growth in the students. Certainly there's one in the material, which we share. But there's another one in the personal level, their personal level. And, ah, so it was in that sense that I saw him gain this confidence, that, umm, you just have to rejoice that this is happening. It's not alone with him. There was another couple in that same cohort that I could also have talked about. (professor 8)*

I believe that both professors and students experience each other as important and as standing out or having special significance. Yet, the descriptions diverge. I propose that professors and students are primary or prominent to each other, but that the primacy is not symmetrical (See Figure 5.3). A student experiences his mentor professor as a "one," that is to say, the one (or main) mentor in his master's program or the one professor who really saw his potential and pushed him. Clearly, this student may have had professors on the undergraduate level who were significant as well as other mentors at work and in the community. Nonetheless, he sees his

graduate school mentor as unique, as holding a singular position in his life. When he talks about his professor, he rarely references other mentors, the relationship is contained within itself.

Conversely, the professor holds the student as important and experiences him as someone who stands out among other students the he has taught. And yet, when he discusses this student, he often does so in the context of his work with students in general. I suggest that this is not because ultimately the student does not stand out, but rather because the professor approaches this student as he approaches others so sees the relationship in that larger context. The professor will most likely have a series of notable relationships with students throughout his career. So to some degree, this student is one of many (one of all students the professor has taught and will teach) and to another degree he is one of a few (one of a few stand out students), however he is not a "one."
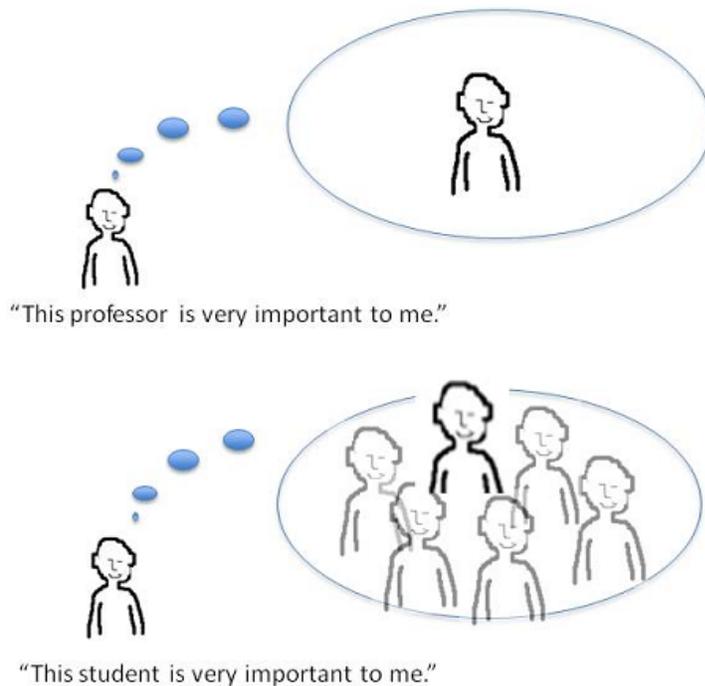
Figure 5.4. Asymmetrical Primacy

This theoretical proposition seems important and yet I think I am only beginning to understand why. The obvious implications are for professors to understand that for students, they hold a primary and unique role. That while an appointment with a student may be one of three appointments that day for the professor, the appointment, for the student, is the one advisory appointment of the day. I suspect there are deeper implications of asymmetrical primacy and this construct is well suited for additional research.

Working Close to the Boundaries

> *Student: I mean, and he will always be Dr. (Dave). I will not call him ('Dave'). Um, and that's – so, I have that respect, but sometimes like your principal, or your boss, you always get back to that, okay, Mr. So and So, or whatever, Dr. (Dave) is not that way. He's been a colleague from the moment I started with him, and until the two of us are gone from this earth I think it will be the same thing....Because that's a respect; that's – I mean, he has earned that – that title, and um – and though he's my friend, he's still collegial – I mean, that's – and that's just how I am. (student 5)*

The professors in this study worked close to what might be considered the conventional boundaries of relationships between teachers and adult students. A few professors discussed disclosing in a manner that shared their vulnerability. These professors still maintain a boundary. While they disclose, they do not begin to need emotional support from the student and thus they remain the holders of the relationship. Another professor attends a community meeting with her student. However respecting the boundary of what is her student's work and what is her own, she listens more than talks, and following the meeting, does not join the group. Yet another professor invites his student to his church group. And while he could be seen as the receiver of the student's gifts, he continues to imagine the student's future beyond what the student can see, maintaining his position as a mentor of vision. Finally, a professor occasionally invites her student to her home for dinner parties. While this appears as a sign of friendship, this professor

continues to push this student to set substantial academic and professional goals; friends or not, she maintains her positionality as she pushes him to reach higher.

While the professors set, and move back and forth, to and from the boundaries, the students also play a part in this dynamic of being able to work and relate close to the edge while maintaining an ethical relationship. The student's role in this was not revealed with great clarity in this study, however a few ideas emerge. These students show a vivid awareness of the positionality in the relationship. They may consider their professor to be their friend, but they never seem to lose sight of the fact that professors are in their lives first and foremost, as educators. Additionally, these students respect their professors. Several of these students, upon becoming alumni, continue to use their professor's formal title rather than beginning to call her or him by a first name. Even when the classroom relationship has ended, they continue to convey their respect.

Finally, these students manage a friendship contradiction. While they may have moments of wishing that the relationship could move in the direction of social friendship, they seem to know that the existing boundaries serve to hold these relationships as unique and important. While the students may want *more* friendship, they also seem to realize the relationship is *more than* friendship.

As professors, we have learned to be careful of boundaries. There are the obvious boundary concerns, such as engaging in inappropriate relationships, and so being careful to manage these boundaries is vitally important. However, this study helps us explore more subtle boundary issues. To what degree does self-disclosure bring humanity to the relationship and what is the tipping point at which it shifts the focus from the student's needs to the professor's? To what degree can we self-disclose and maintain our position as the holder of the relationship? When

does a change of venue (e.g. meeting off campus) strengthen the bond and when does it confuse the relationship?

This study also helps us consider friendship with our students. How do we connect deeply, engage in friendship and still retain our positionality? Is there a difference between hierarchy and positionality?

Further, these questions of boundaries may also bring to mind the idea of engaging in what may be seen as the emotional work of teaching. To what degree do we support and encourage and at any point, does that diminish our positionality, our ability to be able to critically evaluate our students' work?

The Connection Paradox

Student: I am an absolute huge believer that learning and teaching is a relationship, and that without that relationship, you know – and so, I was – it seems almost like a paradox of – you know, he – he asks questions, and that's how he pushes you…he is willing to be what you need him to be in the moment. In other words, if you need pushing, and you need – 'no, you figure it out'. Or he likes to joke some that his MO is to, you know, push you off the cliff, and catch you just before you hit bottom, you know, because he believes you're going to fly. (student 9)

These questions lead me to propose the connection paradox. Conventional wisdom would suggest that the closer we get to our students, the less able we are to set limits on the relationship, critically evaluate their work, and push them to work harder and reach higher. Along the same lines, one might assume that the closer we get to our students, the less able they are to see us in the context of our positions, the more casual they might treat the relationship, and even the lazier they may get regarding the work. I suggest that the inverse is true. Up and to a point (the line between a relationship that is ethical and one that is not), closer connection asks more of us, not less. Closer connection calls upon us as teachers to work harder at maintaining boundaries than we need to with the students with whom we are less connected. In the work of challenging students, closer connection is one factor that creates a safe space so that amidst the

challenges we present to our students, the ones who feel safer may be more inclined to take bigger risks. Moreover, students who have experienced powerful connections with faculty have a taste of the richness of mutuality and collaboration, this is a motivating force which can evoke more and better work. Finally, students who experience and value these close connections with faculty, see the importance and uniqueness of these relationships and consciously express their respect for the positionality and boundaries that maintain the strength and definition of the relationship. Connection does not ask less of us as teachers and students, it asks far more of us all.

<div align="center">Returning to the Literature</div>

In this section, I will connect my findings with six aspects of the relevant literature. The first section is the most straightforward; I relate my findings to Kram's (1983) phases of mentoring. Then I tie the findings of this study back to contemporary writings on authenticity in teaching. In the following section, I consider the *Restructuring* and *Regenerating* dimensions in light of literature regarding generativity and possible selves. Next I contemplate mixed-gender pairs and then I reflect on aspects of Daloz's work that inspired this study. Finally, I consider this study in light of related relational theory and positive psychology literature.

<div align="center">*The Phases are Fluid*</div>

I purposely chose to explore relational practice rather than mentoring per se, via this dissertation. Nonetheless, mentoring remains a related construct and perhaps the one most often used to identify these kinds of relationships. A seminal mentoring study, Kram's (1983) *Phases of the Mentoring Relationship*, is a frequent model employed by higher education researchers seeking to explore mentoring in the university setting (Mullen, 2007). Kram conducted her study in an industrial context (1983) and yet it is a standard reference point across mentoring sub-disciplines. Kram (1983) suggests four phases: initiation, cultivation, separation, and

redefinition. Higher education mentoring researchers have proposed that the phases are not as linear as Kram suggests but instead may work concurrently (Johnson & Ridley, in Mullen, 2007; Mullen, 2007).

In particular, my study challenges Kram's theory that redefinition occurs only after separation. Kram discusses the separation that occurs when something structural shifts the relationship (1983) and both mentor and protégé are capable of responding to this shift by redefining the relationship. Applying this construct to master's students and professors, redefinition would only occur after the student graduated or otherwise left the program. However, the participants in this study described several experiences that likely caused some shift in the relationship. Several of the professors described instances where their students provided them with new professional knowledge such as updates on the application of current best practices in the field. In addition, in at least two cases, professors engaged with students meaningfully in the community; this was likely to momentarily shift the positionality of the relationship. These experiences of teachers learning from students are not definitive relationships changes in the same manner as the student's graduation, yet these experiences seem to impact the positional relationships, the professors' and students' perceptions of each other and of the relationship. These experiences did not completely erase the hierarchy inherent in the relationship, however they moved the professor and student beyond the most obvious constructs of teacher and student. I suggest that in these cases, professor and student engaged in an ongoing redefinition of the relationship, and that this was occurring before the notable separation caused by graduation.

This proposition also points to another unique aspect of master's education. Why do master's professors and students experience shifts that are likely to call for redefinition even in the midst of their academic time together? How do master's professors and students negotiate these

redefinitions? These adult students bring significant, ongoing, and valuable experiential knowledge to their relationships with professors. Unlike the participants in Kram's (1983) study, professors and students work in a context wherein development is a priority. Perhaps the lack of workplace dynamics and politics allows for more fluid relationships. Considering this fluidity within the higher education context, the construct of professional master's education also creates a particular set of parameters. Unique in the graduate study context, master's students keep one foot firmly planted in the professional practice world throughout their studies, unlike traditional doctoral students who are likely to be immersed in academia. In addition, several of the professors in this study considered their relationships with their students to have a peer-like element. Perhaps this says something about the differing ego needs of those who choose to teach on the master's level, as opposed to those who teach undergraduates and doctoral students and may wish for a more clear hierarchy. Interestingly, among the pairs in which the professor described her or his relationship with the student as peer-like, most students clarified (unprompted) that they did not consider themselves to be peers of their professors. So perhaps it is possible for professors to extend the mutuality and respect of peer-like relations and still retain the hierarchy and positionality needed for effective teaching relationships.

Authentic Teaching – "An Ally and an Authority"

The findings of this study mirror and affirm the authenticity in teaching literature on several levels. Cranton and Carusetta defined authenticity in teaching as including: the professor's sense of self, understanding others, relationship with students, teaching context, and critical reflection of one's practice (2004, pp. 278-280). Their categories relate closely to several of the dimensions identified in this dissertation. Elsewhere, Brookfield (2006) explored authenticity and power and concluded that the authentic teacher must be both "an ally and an authority" (p. 5). This balance and tension is also reflected in the findings of this dissertation. Finally, Kornelsen (2006)

considered authenticity and presence. He suggests that "teaching with presence means teaching in a way that encourages openness, imbues vitality, and sometimes abandons order" (2006, p. 74). According to both the professors and students in this study, these professors often encouraged openness, brought energy to the work, and remained flexible.

Students Validate Where Professors Are, Professors Affirm Where Students Hope to Go

The *Regenerating* dimension which includes paying it back and paying it forward reveals the importance that these professors place upon passing on their knowledge and experience. This suggests that relationships with students play an important developmental role in the lives of professors. Generativity is one of six adult life tasks (Vaillant, 2002). Generativity "involves the demonstration of a clear capacity to unselfishly guide the next generation" (Vaillant, 2002, p. 47). These professors clearly gained deep satisfaction from passing on their gifts and seeing the reach of their work extended through their students. It is as if each student who manifests the transmission of knowledge through her or his practice, affirms the professor's devotion to a life of teaching.

Likewise, many of the students in this study gained validation for their future aspirations via their relationships with their professors. An obvious instance of this is the professor who encourages the student regarding her or his potential to contribute and achieve professionally. However, more subtle experiences of affirmation were students who witnessed their professors' life work and saw that as affirmation for their own career goals.

Mixed-gender Pairs: Exceptions to the Rule or Shifting Norms?

For years, the prevailing theories regarding mentoring relationships in graduate school stated that women students and male professors were extremely unlikely to be able to engage in effective, bounded, and lasting mentoring relationships. Writing in his foundational adult development work *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (1978), Levinson stated that most relationships

in which a male professor mentored a female graduate student resulted in romantic involvement and often marriage (which was sometimes later ended when the woman established a more autonomous identity and outgrew the power imbalance of the relationship). This notion was later supported by The *Seasons of a Woman's Life* (Levinson & Levinson, 1996) which suggested that career women who attempted mentoring relationships with other women were largely unsuccessful because too few women were available to mentor and the ones who engaged, were tremendously competitive. Sheehy's work which was originally published in 1974 (2006) supported both ideas that there were too few women in leadership positions to serve as mentors and also that women and men who worked together in mentoring relationships often confused the sexual boundaries of the relationship. More recently, the Turban et al., 2002 study (cited in Johnson, Rose, & Schlosser, 2007, p. 53) reported "that doctoral students were more likely to be in helpful mentorships with faculty advisors who were similar to them in both race and gender."

The combinations in this study suggest that mixed-gender pairs can be effective and retain boundaries and also that women can mentor other women effectively. This study included ten pairs and six of them were mixed-gender. One pair included a female professor and male student. Five pairs consisted of a male professor and female student. These were obviously self-selected pairs who were responding to a call for pairs with meaningful academic relationships. I did not seek out mixed-gender pairs that had experienced difficulty. Nonetheless, these pairs serve as examples of effective mixed-gender pairs in the developmental or mentoring context. These pairs revealed little if any discussion of their gender differences or concern about potential boundary confusion. In addition, this study included two pairs wherein female professors mentored female students. In at least one case, having similar gendered experiences of dealing with life challenges served as a point of connection. Finally, this study included only two male-male pairs, long thought to be the most likely and frequent mentoring match.

Given that this study used purposeful sampling to seek pairs, the findings do not suggest that mixed-gender pairs no longer face boundary confusion and challenge. Nor does this research suggest that women no longer have trouble finding mentors. Rather, this study provides examples of successful mixed-gender and female-female pairs.

Reflecting on Daloz

Laurent Daloz's unique and pivotal *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners* (1999) is a cornerstone of the adult learning literature and continues to serve those who work with adult master's students very well. Given the position of his work in the canon and the influence it has had on my own research and practice, I will reflect on wonderings that I had about his work when I began this study.

In Chapter One, I expressed concern over the hierarchy conveyed by Daloz when he suggests that the mentor "gives voice" (1999, p. 123) to the student. I believe that generally, Daloz describes a mutual relationship and is not overly hierarchical so I am conscious that I may be putting too much stock in this particular statement. Nonetheless, his statement, my discussion with my committee at my proposal hearing, and subsequent dialogue with my chair have prompted me to examine more deeply my views on hierarchy in these master's teaching relationships.

I have finally come to believe that my struggle with Daloz's words is that I think they indicate an uneven amount of agency between teacher and student. Similarly, I think that my resistance to the concept of hierarchy is the suggestion of rank. I am more comfortable with the notion of positionality. I believe it acknowledges positional differences (in the case of this study, that student and professor were involved in an evaluative relationship) and differing levels of experience and knowledge. However I think positionality also allows for equal amounts of autonomy and agency in both professors and students.

In Chapter One, I also noted that Daloz's work was published before email was a prominent communication tool. I wondered if mentoring adult students would look vastly different in the context of not only email, but also texting, social networking, and other technology influences. The pairs in this study referenced occasional email and texting communications, however, the richest moments that the participants conveyed during the interviews were moments when professor and student sat together in the same space. Several aspects of this study corroborate Daloz's (1999) treatise, however for the sake of balance in this reflection of the literature and the fact that I was not intending to somehow test his model, I have chosen to comment only on the aspects of his work that caused me question at the start of this study.

The Power of Relationships and the Power of the Positive

As with returning to Daloz's work, I find that reflecting on this study in light of the literatures I covered in Chapter Two regarding relational cultural theory, positive psychology, positive work relationships, and energy evokes a multitude of similarities. Several of the sensitizing concepts that informed the beginning of this study, were substantiated. Among these professors and students, relationships were a force for growth and forward movement, as is proposed in relational cultural theory (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Second, positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005) played a role in these relationships, also setting the stage for risk-taking and development, and further, fueling the relationships for more good work. The mentoring episodes construct (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007) was not upheld by this study as all participants were engaged in longer-term relationships. This study does not dispute the mentoring episodes construct, however given that all of the pairs were in longer-term relationships, I am unable to apply the mentoring episodes construct in terms of episodes as distinct from an on-going relationship.

Relational Cultural Theory

First, one of the important early statements that Miller and Stiver (1997) made was that relationships enhance personal growth, they do not stymie it. Prevailing theory before Miller and Stiver proposed relational theory, suggested that people only grow and reach higher states of development, when they increased their autonomy. Instead, Miller and Stiver (1997) saw relationships as having tremendous potential to generate growth. Relational cultural theory suggests that we grow through relation as we impact each other in terms of increased energy and self-worth, increased knowledge and capacity to act, and desire for additional connection. I believe that the pairs in this study provide additional support for relational cultural theory, growth-in-relation.

Positive Psychology

Positive psychology has the feel of stating the obvious; if you are happy, life must be good. However positive psychology researchers bring a deep level of sophistication to explaining the theories emerging from their relatively-new discipline. I hope that this study adds to that literature. For example, the pairs in this study, certainly benefitted from what Fredrickson describes as broaden-and-build (Fredrickson, 1998; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Within pairs, professors' and students' positive experiences of and with each other positioned them both for increased learning (in both academic and professional contexts). In addition, several students, through the encouragement and positive support of their professors were able to resolve personal crises or stuck moments to move forward successfully in their studies. Most, if not all, of the positive psychology and energy research has been conducted in the workplace. My intent is that this study will bring a new context to this important field.

Substantiating Sensitizing Concepts, a Few Final Thoughts

Realizing that my findings reflect ideas contained in several of my sensitizing concepts, I am left wondering if I have merely affirmed my previously-held beliefs. I began doctoral study with a vague notion of the energy between my students and me. And then, as I encountered literature that put language to my experience, I yearned to understand these relationships even more deeply. I also remember believing, at the start of this dissertation, that if I simply proved myself "right" that is, if I simply confirmed that others valued relationships and found them energizing, I would be disappointed. Some researchers may set out to prove a theory; I wanted no such thing. I wanted to have my assumptions shaken. I wanted to learn something new. I wanted to be surprised.

While there was no overwhelming aha experience in the course of this study, I did encounter several surprises, several ideas and moments of insight that have broadened and deepened my understanding of these relationships. These experiences of increased insight and understanding were invigorating and fueled my work in this study per se, and also my teaching practice.

I realize now that my sense, prior to this study, of the energy of these relationships was still vague. I emerge from this study with a clear sense of the regenerating energy experienced by professors and the energy of the reconstructing experience for students. In addition, I had never previously isolated that moment of reconstructing sense of theory or self, for myself as either a student or teacher. This study puts language to these vivid and powerful moments when we reconstruct something that was confusing or something that we thought we already knew. In fact, without knowing it, this was exactly the experience I was seeking in this dissertation in that I wanted my assumptions to be shaken, I wanted to be surprised. I wanted to reconstruct. And I have.

In addition, I have long been interested in working with students in a context of mutuality that reduces the inherent power differentials in these relationships; I do not believe I ever intended to seek complete equality in the teacher student relationship, but I remained uncomfortable with my prevailing notions of hierarchy. The reading that I have engaged in for this study and the subsequent research have helped me begin to work out for myself, the relationships between mutuality, hierarchy, authority, and positionality. I now have a clearer vision of a mutuality that includes authenticity, appropriate self-disclosure, and collaboration as balanced with a more tangible embracing of authority and respectful positionality.

Finally, I have also deepened my sense of working near the boundaries. I have, for much of my career, been comfortable working close to the boundaries with my students. Hearing the students in this study discuss the importance of being challenged, of knowing they are being pushed and are working hard, has increased my awareness of the need to balance my strength as an ally to my students with my role as one who can challenge them to think more deeply, work harder, and achieve more than they thought possible. Again, I think I had a vague sense of this part of the teacher role, but now it is more vivid and I employ it much more intentionally in my practice.

<div align="center">Implications for Leading Change</div>

Are teachers leaders? Can relational practice in the teaching context contribute to or even propel students in their leadership development? How does Fletcher's (1999, 2004a) work regarding relational practice as disappeared relate to this study? These are the questions I explore in this section.

<div align="center">*Teachers as Leaders*</div>

The teaching endeavor, as described by the professors in this study, mirrors ideas found in many leadership theories and related writings (Fletcher, 2004a; Greenleaf & Spears, 2002;

Heifetz, 1994; Holloway, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, as cited in Northouse, 2007; Lawrence-

Lightfoot, 2000; and Parks, 2005). In addition, the work of Margaret Wheatley (1999) helped me

frame the professor data.

The professors in this study described teaching approaches and styles that echo many

elements of contemporary leadership theory. Reflecting aspects of postheroic leadership, the

professors and students in this study exhibited a fluidity of expertise and an ability to share and

move between the roles of teacher and student; this is similar to the interactive process proposed

by postheroic leadership (Fletcher, 2004a). Fletcher writes:

> In addition to the recognition that leading and following are two sides of the same set of
> relational practices, this focus on specific interactions suggests that positional leaders and
> followers must have the ability to use the full range of skills and move easily from one
> role to the other even while their positional authority remains constant. (Fletcher, 2004a,
> p. 649)

Fletcher's description fits well with the stories told by professors and students in this study.

Elsewhere, Greenleaf's description of the core of servant leadership calls to mind the

professors' obvious attention to student development as well as the less obvious Pay It Forward

category.

> The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do
> they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely
> themselves to become servants? (2002, p. 27)

The professors in this study exhibited priorities similar to Greenleaf's such as listening and

understanding (p. 30), acceptance and empathy (p. 33), foresight (p. 37), and awareness and

perception (p. 40). The work described by these professors also contains elements of adaptive

work and reflects the importance of the holding environment (Heifetz, 1994). In addition, these

professors mirror the Kouzes and Posner model of transformational leadership (as cited in

Northouse, 2007): model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to

act, and encourage the heart (pp. 188-189). The similarities seem clear, with the possible

exception of challenge the process which is more subtle, but surfaces as these professors work

close to the boundaries of the relationship. And, echoing work on transformational leadership

Holloway (2006) discusses transformational mentoring, a frame which also fits with the findings

of this study. Many of these professors provided transformational mentorship which created

modeling for the students to develop as leaders. These students acknowledged that they

intentionally followed the lead of their professors in the ways that they went on to teach and lead

in other contexts.

Moving away from leadership theory per se, Lawrence-Lightfoot provides a deep exploration

of respect in her book of the same name (2000). Her views on respect are echoed in the stories of

these professors. Lawrence-Lightfoot writes:

> I focus on the way respect creates symmetry, empathy, and connection in all kinds of
> relationships, even those, such as teacher and student, doctor and patient, commonly seen
> as unequal…. Respectful relationships also have a way of sustaining and replicating
> themselves. (pp. 9-10).

Lawrence-Lightfoot's words call to mind the *Regenerating* dimension. The work of Sharon

Daloz Parks also serves to elevate the practice of these professors.

> It is one thing to teach knowledge of the field, and it is quite another to prepare people to
> exercise the judgment and skill needed to bring that knowledge into the intricate systems
> of relationships that constitute the dynamic world of practice. It is yet another challenge
> altogether to prepare someone to practice leadership within the profession and the
> community it serves…. (Parks, 2005, p. 5).

Finally, the influence of Wheatley's (1999) application of scientific models to leadership has

also influenced my reporting of the data. Her work on fields helped me conceptualize the

professors' experiences. Her writings regarding the essential nature of relationships and the need

to expand boundaries have also informed my thinking.

Students as Leaders

The students in this study are leaders in their communities and workplaces. A few of them see

themselves clearly as leaders working to effect change and described their work in their

organizations or local communities. This student depicts her role in her community and related

ways in which her relationship with her teacher is important. In this quote she also reveals the

importance of her sense of similarity with her professor.

> *Most of my friendships with women especially, but also men, are people who are younger than me. And I'm more of an elder in my own community and I really appreciated sort of our similarities and also what she brought to that relationship that I don't have access to anywhere else, so sort of – it sound hokey, but this wisdom that she possesses, this life experience, and especially coming from a place where she's interested in the same field that I am, that she is sort of, umm, kind of built the same way as well, emotionally. (student 3)*

Other students did not describe themselves as leaders, but told stories of involvements that would

be seen as leadership, either formal or informal, such as working to effect change in the

community, bringing new theoretical models to the workplace, and serving on state committees.

Further, many of these students, through their collaborations with their professors, took on

leadership roles and influenced their professional communities. This student co-wrote a paper

with his professor, receiving visibility and recognition for the work.

> *We wrote a paper and presented it at a conference in Toronto [uh huh] back in 2006 and won Best Faculty Paper. And then we submitted it to a journal and got it published and we won some kind of um Leadership Ethics thing and won $2,000 for that. So we had a really big run on this one paper. (student 6)*

While most of the master's programs represented in this study were not leadership programs per

se, this study surfaces elements of leadership development that are inherent in professional

practice master's programs.

Disappearing Relational Practice

Fletcher's work regarding relational practice and the disappearing of relational practice provides a final and important reference point for this study.

Fletcher describes four types of relational practice undertaken by participants in her study of female engineers: preserving, mutual empowering, self-achieving, and creating team (1999, 2004b). Her study focused on relational practice in the organizational context while my study focused on relational practice within teacher-student dyads. Thus her four types do not translate literally to this study, however there are parallels. The principles underlying the four types include: commitment to the work, mutuality, the importance of connection to others, and creating conditions in which others can flourish (1999, 2004b). These same principles are evident throughout this dissertation.

Fletcher's findings regarding the *disappearing* of relational work in the organizational context apply even more directly to this dissertation. Fletcher describes relational practice in the engineering organization she studied:

> It is not just invisible – it 'gets disappeared.' This happens because behavior based on a model of growth-in-connection violates many of the assumptions underlying this culture, assumptions that reflect a different model of growth, development, and achievement, one rooted not in connection but in independence and individuation. (2004b, p. 284)

The same can be said for relational work as practiced by teachers in higher education. Teachers are evaluated for promotion and tenure on the basis of some combination of teaching, research, and service. While the prioritization of these three endeavors varies from school to school based on institution type and campus culture, teaching, research, and service remain the undisputed cornerstones of promotion and tenure. Relational practice is often seen as the domain of student affairs personnel in higher education's gendered division of labor. Teaching and research are positioned, privileged, and are also evaluated on the masculine model of work. Promotion and

tenure criteria, and thus the place of teachers in the academy, are based on the valuing of "individualism, independence, and the hierarchical separation of functions" (1999, p. 91). Student affairs practice is often seen as less central to the mission and sometimes even as less serious, though inevitably necessary. It is not a far stretch to see the work of student affairs which includes student health, safety, and personal and career development, as positioned as women's work. Professors teach and research and student affairs staff take care of the kids. And professors who engage intentionally and actively in relational practice, the art of helping students grow through connection, are rarely recognized or rewarded for this work.

Finally, a consideration of the professors in this study and relational practice as gendered. None of these professors complained about a lack of recognition or reward for their work. They are intrinsically motivated and did not indicate there was any cost to their commitment to the relational side of teaching. None of these professors teach in institutions that would be considered major research universities and I speculate that they were not forced to make choices between time spent conducting research and seeking grants, and time spent in relation with students. In addition, in the context of this study, the gendering of relational practice points to the positioning of the work and not the gender of who is doing the work. Of the ten faculty who volunteered for this study, seven are men. These men exuded a clear enthusiasm for their relational work with students, as of course, did the women who I interviewed. Ultimately, I hope that this study, and subsequent research will begin to illuminate the profound connections between relational practice and good teaching and thus elevate the status of this important work.

<div align="center">Limitations of this Study</div>

Three limitations emerged in the course of this study: interviewing alumni rather than students, self-identification of pairs as engaging in a meaningful academic relationship, and a theoretical sampling decision.

The only unintentional limitation regarding the design resulted from the shift from interviewing current students to recent alumni (necessary for ethical reasons). Had I sought pairs where both professor and student were active in the master's program, I suspect that I would have had more pairs that originated from the student's identification of a professor with whom she or he had a meaningful academic relationship. However, seeking recent alumni and faculty pairs, the locating of alumni was difficult and as a result nine of the pairs were identified first by the faculty member. An additional limitation caused by working with recent alumni instead of active students was the inability to capture mentoring episodes as separate from longer-term relationships. In addition, working with recent alumni meant that all recounting of the student experience was retrospective and thus possibly different than an accounting that would have been given in real time. Along with these trade-offs, the decision to interview recent alumni had an unanticipated benefit. The interviews with both alumni and professors revealed glimpses into the evolution of these relationships beyond the student and teacher experience. This study provides a view of how these relationships continue and shift after the students have graduated.

A second limitation was the result of my intent with this study. Some might suggest that the self-identification of the pairs and the framework of "meaningful academic relationship" meant that I would not encounter pairs who had experienced significant conflict or complication. However I intended to interview pairs with meaningful relationships, not to do an overview of the various degrees of relational effectiveness among master's students and teachers. Some might see this as a limitation though I see it as a design decision.

Finally, I decided late in the study, not to pursue theoretical sampling regarding racial minority experiences. As noted previously, I interviewed two African-American men who both suggested that their experiences as minorities in their programs contributed to the importance of their connection with a professor. Given the time constraints of this study and the vision of a

second larger study, I decided not to conduct additional theoretical sampling to further explore the role of race in these kinds of relationships. However, this points to the need to additional research in this area, that would continue to explore the experience of African-American students (expanding the study to include female students) as well other racial and ethnic minorities.

Suggestions for Future Study

This study focused on matched pairs within the professional practice master's program context. Future research regarding relational practice in the master's domain might consider relational practice in other types of master's programs that tend to stand separate from doctoral programs, including: nursing, fine arts, and business administration. In addition, further exploration using the matched pairs construct might seek pairs that feature intentional sampling regarding race, gender, and sexual orientation. Finally, two of the ten pairs in this study were working within low-residency programs (though the students were located near the schools and had access to faculty when desired). Future studies might explore relational practice in low-residency programs (wherein students are located at a greater distance from faculty) as well as in purely online programs.

Along with changing the sample, future researchers interested in relational practice in the master's context might endeavor to design a study that could be conducted while the pairs are actively engaged in a student-teacher relationship. It seems that a well-constructed, sophisticated research design, wherein the researcher would have an extended period of time for the study (and thus not need to access data immediately) could overcome the ethical barriers that prevented me from working with pairs of faculty and current students. Another benefit to researching active pairs would be the possibility of exploring the mentoring episodes model.

In addition, the asymmetrical primacy construct calls for additional research. The obvious implication of this finding is for professors to understand the singular primary place they have in

their students' lives and for students to keep in mind that they are always one of many who professors must consider in a given moment and over the course of a career. However, there may be other implications for practice given this construct; a study that explores asymmetrical primacy more directly would deepen our understanding of this proposition.

Finally, I encourage future researchers in the areas of relational practice and mentoring to consider working with matched pairs. This sampling decision is rare in the literature. While it adds complexity and work to the study, the challenges are not nearly insurmountable and the richness of the data is clear.

Conclusion

I began this study intending to understand what goes on in relational practice between master's students and teachers. This research endeavor has deepened my understanding of relational processes, boundaries, inspiration, and generativity. I move on from this research having gained insight into my own teaching and with challenges and ideas to improve my practice.

In addition to all that I have learned about relational practice and teaching and learning, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the role of master's education and for those who choose to teach on the master's level. As has been noted in this dissertation, few researchers explore the master's education domain. In addition, publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* focus far more on undergraduate and doctoral education than on master's education. Among higher education thinkers, master's education is often overlooked. While statistics show that far more students engage in master's education than doctoral education, thinkers remain less interested in master's education than in other branches of higher education.

Along with the trends that show increased involvement in master's education, I hope that this study reveals the richness of study in this domain, study as conducted by researchers and

practitioner professors, and of course the academic enterprise itself. While undergraduate

education is viewed as the time for greatest personal growth, my study reveals that adult master's

students also undergo significant personal and professional transformation. In addition, while

doctoral education holds obvious collaborative potential for faculty via research, this study

shows that there are ongoing and significant opportunities for professors to learn from their

students and for both professors and students to collaborate on meaningful endeavors.

Finally, an unspoken truth in higher education is that teaching on the doctoral level holds the

most prestige and that teaching undergraduates is also critical work. Master's professors may be

viewed as teachers who do not wish to work with undergraduates and yet lack the ambition to

work with doctoral students. This study reveals the import and depth of teaching on the master's

level with all of the tremendous potential that it offers for student and teacher alike.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Antioch University
PhD in Leadership & Change
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Informed Consent Statement

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Harriet Schwartz, a doctoral candidate in the Leadership and Organizational Change program at Antioch University, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

This study will consist of interviews with master's program alumni and teachers from professional practice programs.

For this study, I agree to engage in a minimum of one conversational interview to be scheduled at my convenience. I understand that the interview will be recorded. A third-party transcription service will transcribe the interview and then I will have the opportunity to review the transcript for accuracy. In addition, I will have access to the final reporting of this study.

I understand that the researcher will attempt to protect confidentiality via the following strategies:

1. Offering me the opportunity to review and correct the transcript of my interview
2. Utilizing a third-party confidential transcription service
3. Removing my name and other identifying information from the transcripts and final report
4. Destroying the electronic recordings and transcripts upon completion of the study

There is no financial remuneration for participating in this study.

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may discontinue participation at any time. I have the right to express my concerns and complaints to the University Committee on Research Involving Human Participants at Antioch University (Dr. Carolyn Kenny, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Ph.D. in Leadership and Change, Antioch University, ckenny@phd.antioch.edu, Tel. 805-565-7535).

I understand if I have any additional questions regarding my rights as a research participant, I can contact the investigator, Harriet Schwartz, or her advisor, Dr. Elizabeth Holloway, (Professor of Psychology, Antioch University (eholloway@phd.antioch.edu, 512-263-1416).

If you have any questions about any aspect of this study or your involvement, please contact:

Carolyn Kenny, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Ph.D. in Leadership & Change
150 E. South College Road
Yellow Springs, OH 45387
805-565-7535
ckenny@phd.antioch.edu

Name of researcher (please print)

Signature of researcher

Date

Name of participant (please print)

Signature of participant

Date

Appendix B

1081 free nodes

accustomed to not sharing

activated

affect of program wonderful

affirm

alum and prof both initiate contact

alum and prof discuss parenting

alum attends alum association

alum doesn't feel like peer

alum feels complimented

alum felt could talk to prof

alum gets hope

alum has concern

alum has moped

alum has trouble calling prof by first name

alum hopes to share with other students

alum informs prof

alum interested in teaching

alum is grateful

alum laughs

alum making connections

alum not bothered

alum respects prof

alum sees prof as asset

alum sees prof as down to earth

alum sees prof as genuine

alum sees prof as mentor

alum sees prof experience

alum sees prof make changes

alum sees prof stronger

alum sees prof tough time

alum sees prof with academic accomplishments

alum sees self as needing help

alum spreads word of program

alum starts to see prof

alum still sees prof as director

alum toned down

alum views prof as similar

alum wants to emulate teaching style

alum will get licensed

alum won't hesitate to tap into prof

analysis

anything we needed

attitude

authority

awkward

backward contact

barrier came down

being a mom

best we can

both crying

break down

build up

built the same way emotionally

caring

catching up

challenges

cheerleading

class proud

close contact

collision of two different worlds

comforting

could always go to prof

could call prof about class

course provides benefit

crisis

crying

dialog ok

different from friendships

different worlds

dilemmas

discourse creates something

drawn to

easy to maintain relationship

email

end of the world

evaluation process

everyone will finish

exchange

exciting

experience and outcomes

falling into place

first met

first met in class

first professor

first time felt like mattered

foundation of relationships

freeform it

friendship

friendship but more

fun to get caught up

gender

generational difference

gentleman

genuine

get coffee

gets easier to contact prof

give and take

glorify God

go through this with me

go to prof for anything

go to prof for financial question

go to prof for personal issues

good example

got to know each other

grad school is supposed to be

grads teach

grads welcomed as colleagues

great lady

grow intensely

guiding light

hard to say goodbye

healthy relationship

help

how can I help

human approach

hurdle

I know what you're going through

impact

important that prof cares

in that office

in your shoes

informality

intensity

Irish-Polish

it was different with prof

keep in contact

keep in touch

keeping connected

keeps perspective

laugh together

learn about personal philosophies

learned from each other's differences

learned from each other's style

learning teams

less casual

life experience

like when undergrad

long term

lost trust

majority of contact

make sure student can stay

make the most of it

meeting of the worlds

mentor

met early morning

met in first class

method to teaching

ministry for students

ministry in perspective

ministry perspective

ministry through education

modulate

more human side

more personal level

more relaxed

more than academic venture

more than paycheck

more than profession

morphed over time

mutual respect

mutuality

natural

navigating life

need something

nice

nice memory

nice relationship

no check in with other profs

no favoritism

no shortcuts

no way student not succeed

non-coercive program

no-nonsense approach with soft hands

not a paycheck

not just students, people

not perfection

nothing gets by

one or two every class

one step at a time

one week at a time

one-on-one contact

ongoing joke

ongoing relationship

open up new world

opportunities endless

other classes too easy

out of the ordinary

outsider perspective

overwhelmed

part of how student thinks

partnership

path of learning

peer to peer relationship

people not just academics

perceived as supportive

percieved as helpful

percieved as willing to step in

personality differences

phone conversation

pick it apart

pit titles aside

plate was full

play off differences

playful relationship

pleasant transition

positive interaction

power

power dynamics surprise

preparing student

pressure

process changes in terms of role

process not intrusive

prof brings it full circle

prof a person first

prof a tremendous person

prof about student as person

prof adjusts to students

prof admires student

prof advises student about another prof

prof allows leeway

prof allows student be more tolerant

prof allows student open up

prof allows student to self-develop

prof amazed with students friends

prof analyzes own experience

prof and alum discuss credentialling

prof and alum get together

prof and alum meet for coffee

prof and alum meet in the middle

prof and alum not in each other's social world

prof and promises

prof and student discuss boundaries

prof and student discuss dual role

prof and student discuss experience

prof and student discuss field placement

prof and student discuss training

prof and student discusss appearance

prof and student grapple with research

prof and student had something special

prof and student have fun

prof and student tease

prof as go-to person

prof as human

prof as leader

prof as observer

prof as untouchable

prof ask students to answer own questions

prof asks alum about professional life

prof asks questions

prof asks student

prof asks student for ideas

prof asks student to contribute

prof asks students to trust

prof assigned as preceptor

prof assigned to cohort

prof assures

prof attends student meeting

prof available one-on-one

prof aware of appearance

prof bakes

prof becomes official advisor

prof believed in student

prof believes in power of discourse

prof big on encouragement

prof boundaries

prof brings students around

prof broaches topic

prof calls alum

prof came in specially

prof can inspire leaders

prof can maintain role difference

prof can relax roles

prof can sees friendship

prof can't relate

prof cares

prof challenge students to question beliefs

prof checked in

prof checks in

prof commitment

prof compares alum and another student

prof compares self to other profs

prof compares self with alum

prof compares self with student

prof compares with own experience

prof compliments student

prof concerned with application

prof concerned with more than academics

prof connects student

prof conscious of background

prof considers student meaning making

prof constant

prof contacts alum

prof crying

prof curious about alum settling down

prof demonstrates it will work out

prof did a good job

prof didn't give answers

prof didn't have emotional response

prof didn't have fire

prof didn't have to be there

prof didn't know how student would see her

prof didn't teach through course

prof discusses standards

prof does therapy

prof doesn't compare students

prof doesn't do student work

prof doesn't forget

prof doesn't judge

prof doesn't misuse authority

prof doesn't see alum as best friend

prof doesn't take too seriously

prof doesn't tire

prof doesn't want alum to lose her fire

prof doesn't want to lose touch

prof dress

prof empowers

prof encourages

prof encourages alum

prof encourages doable

prof encourages responsibility

prof encourages student

prof encourages student talk with supervisor

prof encourages students

prof encourages students be involved

prof encourages students to engage

prof encourages students to hang in

prof encourages students to think

prof enjoys relaxed time with alum

prof evaluated

prof expects students to graduate

prof experiences adventure

prof explores student response

prof exposes to variety

prof expresses appreciate of work

prof expresses belief in student

prof feels honored

prof feels like fish out of water

prof feels privileged

prof feels responsibility

prof feels sticking out

prof feels suburban

prof finds work gratifying

prof flexible

prof focus on progress

prof formal with students

prof gave student chance to prep

prof gets to know each student

prof gets to know group

prof gets to know individuals

prof gets to know personal background

prof gets to know professional background

prof gets to know student

prof gives advice

prof gives her all

prof gives latitude

prof gives progress

prof gives student orientation about people

prof gives students idea

prof goes to hear alum sing

prof good at reading diversity of group

prof go-to guy

prof great lady

prof grounded with students

prof guided us

prof guides

prof guides student to evaluate

prof had contact through coursework

prof had contact through project

prof had continuous contact

prof had models

prof had no hesitation

prof has boundaries with student

prof has comfort level

prof has experience in the field

prof has seen it hundreds of times

prof helps alum stay true

prof helps connect research to career

prof helps develop sense of understanding

prof helps reduce stress

prof helps student figure out

prof helps student figure out needs

prof helps student get perspective

prof helps student get through first hurdle

prof helps student hold dreams

prof helps student look ahead

prof helps student look at beliefs

prof helps student move forward

prof helps student narrow research

prof helps student negotiate

prof helps student process

prof helps student see patterns

prof helps student see perspectives

prof helps student trying to stay in program

prof helps student understand

prof helps student understand extremes of diversity

prof helps student with authority

prof helps student with power

prof helps student with research

prof helps students get other help

prof helps students look at career

prof helps with personal

prof hesitant

prof holds students accountable

prof holds title

prof honored to recommend

prof hopes alum doesn't lose fire

prof hopes alum doesn't settle

prof hopes alum nurses passion

prof hopes for positive experience

prof hopes help students avoid negative

prof hopes student see her effort

prof humanness

prof immediately thought of me

prof impressed

prof in charge of destiny

prof in own experience

prof inspired by students

prof instructed us

prof interested in academic and applied

prof interested in alum perspective

prof interested in more than degree

prof interested in student formed response

prof interested in student success

prof invited to meeting by student

prof invites alum and family

prof invites alum to house

prof invites alum to panel

prof is advisor

prof is authentic

prof is caring

prof is committed to program

prof is contact

prof is first teacher

prof is flexible

prof is guiding light

prof is herself

prof is inspriing

prof is mentor

prof is program director

prof is resource person

prof is rewarded

prof is supportive

prof is understanding

prof is unofficial advisor

prof is welcoming

prof jokes

prof jokes with group

prof keeps confidence

prof keeps in contact

prof keeps student from crossing line

prof keeps wheel steady

prof kept in contact

prof kept us on track

prof kind of person like to have around

prof knows students

prof knows when back off

prof laid out paper

prof laughs

prof leader of the pack

prof learns about own resiliency

prof learns depth of compassion

prof learns from alum

prof lets student get it all out

prof lets student in

prof like dto be one of the guys

prof like us

prof living vicariously

prof lot to learn from student

prof makes students laugh

prof makes sure students know his role

prof makes sure we on track

prof meets student off campus

prof meets students friends

prof mentors

prof met student first night

prof more believable

prof more vested

prof no problem with angry students

prof no problem with intensity

prof not answer all questions

prof not formal advisor

prof not judgemental

prof not like us

prof not paid to hang out

prof not perfect

prof not primary tutor

prof notes class differences

prof notes not easy

prof notes reputation

prof noting change

prof offers examples

prof offers opportunity

prof open to student looks

prof open to student motivation

prof opens up

prof perceives acceptance

prof perceives alum as do it differently

prof perceives alum as freeing to watch

prof perceives alum as nervous

prof perceives alum being who she is

prof perceives alum courage

prof perceives alum perception

prof perceives alum settle down

prof perceives alum trust

prof perceives student as comfortable

prof perceives student as respected

prof perceives student as skeptical

prof perceives student as suspicious

prof perceives student concerned re acceptance

prof perceives student has moving experince

prof perceives student hesitation re authority

prof perceives student mistrust

prof perceives student perception of him

prof perceives student strong feelings

prof perceives student understanding changed

prof percieves student hesitation to call

prof picked up on that

prof povides calm

prof prepared

prof presents self

prof promise to remember dissertation process

prof provides other perspective

prof provides personal connection

prof provides security

prof pushed student

prof pushes students

prof puts it back together

prof reassures student

prof recalls being duped

prof recalls class setting

prof recommends alum for teaching

prof refers alum to supervisor

prof reflects on experience

prof reflects on student choices

prof remembers episode

prof remembers impression not definition

prof remembers not being judged

prof remembers role model

prof remembers student

prof remembers student appearance

prof remembers student as articulate

prof remembers student as intense

prof remembers student as interested

prof remembers student has important episode

prof remembers student presentation

prof remembers student process

prof remembers student reaction to reading

prof remembers student thinking developed

prof remembers student work

prof reputation

prof requests from alum

prof respects student

prof response to student

prof responsibility

prof retains details

prof reviews reflection papers

prof saw student trying

prof says all wounded

prof says alum doing it

prof says cohort supports

prof says don't demean self

prof says education social equilizer

prof says it's doable

prof says like parenting

prof says must be in students best interest

prof says relationship continues through opportunities

prof says student not excited

prof says student was special

prof says student worthy of confidence

prof says students obligated to pass it on

prof sees alum angst

prof sees alum as colleague

prof sees alum as good mom

prof sees alum become teacher

prof sees alum caught in middle

prof sees alum complexity

prof sees alum encourage growth

prof sees alum encourage perspective development

prof sees alum grapple

prof sees alum issues

prof sees alum known

prof sees alum mature

prof sees alum mellowing

prof sees alum nervous

prof sees alum parenting

prof sees alum potential

prof sees alum respected

prof sees alum tough image

prof sees alums take influence into classroom

prof sees boundary

prof sees future orientation

prof sees grad school impact

prof sees human development

prof sees learning change lives

prof sees mentoring

prof sees other side of alum

prof sees outcomes

prof sees own emotions

prof sees personal growth

prof sees possibility for change in self

prof sees professional growth

prof sees relationship as important

prof sees role

prof sees role reversal

prof sees self in student

prof sees spiritual growth

prof sees student as advocate

prof sees student as artful

prof sees student as example of development

prof sees student as example of growth

prof sees student as funny

prof sees student as off grid

prof sees student becoming more aware

prof sees student bravery

prof sees student come into own

prof sees student counter trends

prof sees student courage

prof sees student desire

prof sees student determination

prof sees student development as gratifying

prof sees student growth as gratifying

prof sees student having anxiety

prof sees student having difficulty

prof sees student interest

prof sees student look for application

prof sees student look for meaning

prof sees student need

prof sees student potential

prof sees student struggle

prof sees student take risks

prof sees student trust

prof sees student values

prof sees student vulnerability

prof sees students as validating

prof sees through BS

prof self-reflects

prof shared more

prof shares day-to-day

prof shares difficulty

prof shares experience

prof shares home life

prof shares overcoming struggle

prof shares struggle

prof shows everyone there

prof shows her ok to share

prof shows student

prof shows student security

prof shows student strengths

prof sincere

prof sincerely cares

prof smiley

prof spends individual time

prof stands front room

prof still sees role issue

prof strives for genuineness

prof suggests talk to other students

prof suggests tutor

prof supports

prof supports alum

prof supports student

prof supports student beliefs and values

prof surprised

prof surprised student lacks confidence

prof takes advantage alum resources

prof talks about dog

prof talks through it

prof talks with alum about system

prof teaches by example

prof teaches to critique

prof teases student in class

prof teases students in class

prof tells alum to protect job

prof tells student experience profound

prof tells student got it

prof tells student learned lesson

prof tells student to take a break

prof tells student where to go

prof there every step of way

prof thinks alum better prepared to teach

prof thinks alum influenced by pedagogy

prof thinks its cool

prof thinks of alum for teaching

prof thinks progress is wonderful

prof thinks respect is cool

prof thinks students need champion

prof thought student lot to offer

prof to challenge

prof too enabling

prof too endearing

prof took hour of time

prof treats students like colleagues

prof tries help students avoid mistakes

prof tries to minimize role

prof tries to repay dissertation chair

prof understands bad feeling

prof understood

prof uses alum as reference

prof values dialog

prof values learning

prof wanted to engage

prof wanted to teach

prof wants respect

prof wants student respect

prof wants student success

prof wants student to succeed

prof wants students be successful

prof wants students stay in touch

prof wants to be seen as guest not expert

prof wants to challenge student ideas

prof wants to see alum live dream

prof was afraid of student

prof was challenged

prof was comfortable

prof was curious

prof was on fringe

prof was respectful

prof was school principal

prof was tough

prof was wanna be

prof what academics needs

prof willing to be open

prof willing to intervene

prof wishes for alum

prof wonders how alum will grow

prof won't let students diminish other's experience

prof won't talk about other profs

prof would ask student

prof would ask what's up

prof would come to life

prof would protect

prof wouldn't discuss relationship issues

prof wouldn't gossip or vent

professional ministry

prof's book group would wonder

profs challenge to move beyond comfort zone

prof's conduct

profs give feedback

prof's goal to develop meaningful experience

prof's goal to develop skills

profs guide others

profs hope for reoriented to life

profs offer sense of connectedness

prof's path not perfect

prof's response

profs see student thinking	same professional interest
profs work friends would accept alum	schedule issues
program can impact	see it through
program good choice	see what you're about
program good fit	sees prof as enthusiastic
program life changing	self-awareness issues
program more than study	self-suffiency
project	sense of assurance
project intentions	sense of humor
punk scene	sense of reassurance
put back together	service orientation
questions	setting the bar
rare gift to help someone	shared values
raw	should have no fear
reach outside yourself	slicing into life
real gift	social event
real life events	some students don't need
real relationship	some students overwhelmed
reflection	still have relationship
reflection part of grad education	straightforward
relationship	stress
relationship natural	struggle
relationship ongoing	student and authority
relationship professional	student and prof connect
research proposal	student and prof connected
running dialog	student and prof invite each other
safety net	student appeared disconcerted

student appreciated similarities

student appreciates structure

student asks to see prof

student assumes other conversations

student aware dancing line

student believes encouragement

student believes prof

student brought to profs attention

student calls prof

student can express frustration

student cares about prof

student cautious about letting people in

student changes job

student complains about another prof

student confidence

student connects professor

student desires to teach

student didn't experience much care previously

student didn't feel like peon

student didn't feel pressure

student didn't see prof as person

student didn't think was possible

student discusses conflict

student divulges personal life

student doesn't feel part of system

student doesn't feel prof imposed

student doesn't follow direction

student doesn't get upset

student doesn't want be seen as vulnerable

student doesn't want to interfer

student doing fine

student doubting self

student drops in

student emails prof

student emotions took over

student enjoys prof company

student excited when asked

student expectations

student experience of authority

student experienced growth

student experiences safe place

student explores own boundaries

student expresses anger

student feels better

student feels calmed

student feels can't do it

student feels challenged

student feels close to prof

student feels comfortable with prof

student feels compimented

student feels encouraged

student feels intimidated

student feels pressure

student feels recognized

student feels respected

student feels validated

student felt less anxious

student felt less worried

student felt more confident

student finds new way healing

student fooling people

student gets informed perspective

student gives prof input

student goes to prof when not satisfied

student grateful

student had self-doubts

student had struggles

student has ill family member

student has illness

student hopes to be like prof

student in five-year program

student interested in teaching

student is comfortable

student is exhausted

student learned could do it

student learns better when prof cares

student like a ping pong ball

student may disagree with author

student mentions other professor

student needs evidence

student never felt abandoned

student never felt on own

student not used to both roles

student open

student open to learn

student overwhelmed

student part of underground

student perceives prof

student perceives prof as comfortable

student perceives prof as genuine

student perceives prof as ok with sharing

student perceives prof boundaries as similar

student perceives prof's life

student perceives self on edge

student perception of faculty

student reaction to content

student receptive

student relates to relationship with bosses

student respectful of boundaries

student respects prof

student responds to authors

student saw prof as one dimensional

student says too much coddling

student seeks career info

student sees own judgements

student sees prof as authority

student sees prof as brilliant

student sees prof as charged up

student sees prof as cog in wheel

student sees prof as example

student sees prof as gentle

student sees prof as genuine academic

student sees prof as not intimidating

student sees prof as not threatening

student sees prof as person

student sees prof as solid

student sees prof care

student sees prof desire higher ed survive

student sees prof frequently

student sees prof has life

student sees prof in charge

student sees prof loves what he does

student sees prof want people to succeed

student sees prof want to open own world

student sees prof want to share

student sees self as stoic

student senses prof

student spoke up

student stressed about classes

student studies center

student surprised prof disclosed

student talks about struggles

student talks about underground group

student talks with class

student talks with prof

student talks with prof about another prof

student tapped into coddling

student tearful

student tells prof what experience meant

student tends not to share

student texts prof

student thinks prof intuits how far to push

student thinks prof intuits limitations

student thought about appearance

student to thank prof

student trying to be creative

student trying to have good answers

student understood prof as

student vents to prof

student views impacted

student wanted masters

student wants to meet

student was intimidated

student wasn't expecting connections

student wonders selling out

student worries profs not honest

student would box people

student would stereotype

student's family needs her

students know prof upholds her end

students know quality expected

student's stereotypes challenged

student's world view

student perceives prof as interested

stuff at home

support

talk rather than email

talked to as person

teacher and student partnership

that's a good faculty member

that's the process

that's when you need me

the most personal thing

thinking about connection

time structured

times of need

toolbox

toughest teacher you would love

transition

trust

two-way street

unbelievable support

unique

update

upstanding person

vicarious

visual evidence

vulnerable

warm conversations

we are similar

we connected well

we don't know what we don't know

we straightened out student perception

weekly conversations

welcome to community of scholars

we'll work with you

we're gonna do this

we've stayed connected

what prof brought

when students need prof

wisdom

wonderful opportunity

world view changing

written comments

you go girl

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