

Utilizing Academic Advising to Cultivate Adaptability in Students Changing Majors
within the Education Field

by

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ABSTRACT

In college, students are continuously learning and maturing, prompting transitions, as they grow to enhance their academic, vocational, and personal development. As such, institutions of higher education must also consider how to support students in these transitions. At the Teachers College at Southwestern University, 59% ($N=86$) of students in Educational Studies, a non-certification major, transitioned from teacher certification majors. In an ecology that centralizes students pursuing teacher certification, students majoring in Educational Studies do not receive the adequate support, particularly in addressing their concerns and curiosities regarding their future career trajectories.

This qualitative study drew on Bronfenbrenner's ecological models of human development and Moos' ecology model as the theoretical underpinnings to examine how students cultivated adaptability amidst the transition of changing majors. On the forefront of support as students change majors, this study utilized academic advising to highlight a career advising program designed with an ecological approach to reimagine academic advising support in proactive and responsive ways.

Findings from a grounded theory approach suggested students adapted through a network of support, network of information, and network of self-concept. The career advising program designed to draw upon multiple systems in one's ecology capitalized on the reciprocal dynamic between an individual and their ecology. Cultivating adaptability addresses economical, societal, and personal goals and needs, economical, societal, and personal needs.

DEDICATION

To our Princess Evelyn Rose. Baby girl, this is for you.

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CHAPTER 1

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Introduction and Context

In the last 40 years, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) has learned college students pursue higher education for reasons based on their background characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, and prior experiences (Pryor, Hurtado, Saenz, Santos, & Korn, 2007). According to the CIRP Freshman survey conducted each year from 1976-2006, the top two reasons of perceived importance of attending college by students were “to learn things that interest me” and “to get a better job.” During this time, the response of needing “to be able to make more money” increased from 49.9% in 1976 to 69% in 2006, emphasizing the importance of finding a job that will allow individuals to make such income, thus, creating a culture where individuals see the purpose of college as obtaining a job and salary.

The reasons students attend college are reflective of society’s economic and social needs (Bok, 2006; Arnett, 2016). Graduates who exemplify career building skills and self-management continuously based on learning and being adaptable maximizes their employability to meet the demands of society’s economic and social needs (Bridgstock, 2009). As such, higher education institutions must consider the college environment in which students learn and develop (Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989). Furthermore, institutions need to factor the environment outside of the college context where lies the true concerns and purposes for why students attend college in the first place. In viewing college as an environment of emerging adulthood for students between the age of 18-25 (Arnett, 2007), higher education institutions have opportunities to create

an environment to help students adapt to grow and change in college and prepare them for life after graduation. Adaptability is defined as the capacity and readiness to manage concern, control, curiosity, and confidence of an experience prompted by transition (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Savickas, 1997, 2013). The staff contributing to the college environment can provide information and resources and cultivate skills, such as adaptability, to help students navigate the complex educational system of college and further a student's academic, vocation, and personal development (Baxter Magolda, 1999; Chickering, 1994; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Crookston, 1994; Gordon & Steele, 1992; Grite & Gordon, 2000; O'Banion, 1994, 1997). Specifically, support services such as academic advising can support student development (Crookston, 1994) and can consider the ecology and systems within the institution to enhance the support provided to students to best serve their needs (Stebleton, 2011; Tukey, 1996).

In addition to job obtainment and increased salaries, students choose to attend college for other reasons such as developing interests or critical thinking skills or preparing to live in a globalized society (Bok, 2006). Moreover, students seek camaraderie from others in their own age group, to be inspired by others (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), and most importantly, experience personal transformational growth (Arnett, 2016; Baxter Magolda & King, 2008). Personal growth and development results from the multitude and magnitude of student learning (Astin, 1984; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Raushi, 1993) that are often prompted by transitions and decision making opportunities that influences one's future life course. Transition is the process to which the degree one's perception of an experience changes their roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006; Schlossberg, 1981).

Examples of transitions include high school-to-college, changing majors, or college-to-work. Transitions require individuals to adapt to changing conditions, which subsequently initiates learning and development (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2009; Raushi, 1993; Savickas, 2013). Cultivating or further developing existing adaptability skills will help individuals manage transitions and provide a valuable skillset for their future career development and other life circumstances in which one may encounter transitions (Creed, Fallon, & Hood, 2009; Savickas, 1997, 2011). In a society that is constantly evolving and individuals hold multiple jobs and careers throughout their lifetime, helping individuals become adaptable can prepare them for multiple professions rather than one vocation (McMahon, Watson, & Bimrose, 2012; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012, Savickas, 2013).

A primary goal of higher education institutions is to equip students with the necessary transferrable skills, knowledge, and tools to obtain a job and instill a level of social responsibility and impact (Baxter Magolda, 1999; Chickering & Reisser, 1993). To meet the goal of higher education institutions, support services such as academic advising is a consistent point of contact in a student's college career and can leverage the relational and structural aspects of advising to support students' development. As such, developmental advising is defined as the use of interactive teaching, counseling, and administrative strategies to facilitate a partnership between advisor and student to help the student achieve specific academic, vocational, and personal goals (Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Crookston, 1994). From an ecological perspective, such as Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model of Human Development (1979), a reciprocal nature exists between the development of the individual and their environment. The subsequent

literature based on Bronfenbrenner's model centralizes the development of the individual rather than the potential evolving nature of the environment to support one's personal development (Dey & Hurtado, 1999). Currently, the research on academic advising emphasizes how support from academic advising can help an individual change and grow but less emphasis on how advising can adapt to meet the needs of students. However, adaptability can be viewed and understood by examining the environment in which an individual develops which can be flexible to meet an individual's needs (Savickas, 2011, 2013). As emerging adults between the age of 18-25, college students are at an age of identity exploration, age of instability, self-focused age, age of feeling in-between, and age of possibility (Arnett, 2004, 2007).

The age of emerging adult is critical junction in human development (Astin, 1984). Student growth and development are often prompted by transitions and decision-making opportunities that influences one's future life course. Although transitions may include high school to college or college to work, a common transition many students experience in college is changing majors. In the context of higher education, institutional support from professional staff, such as academic advisors or counselors, can examine adaptability in the context of a transition and how it influences students' academic, vocational, and personal development (Chickering, 1994; Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989).

Higher education institutions such as Southwestern University (SU) require students to select a major on their admission application. Upon admission, the university organize students based on their selected major to determine where they live on campus and what courses they take. As a result, students identify with their selected major and

interact with other students in their same or similar major. Such initiatives support the university's efforts of increasing student retention and graduation. The research and literature on college students and higher education advocates connecting students with similar interests and goals to create learning communities to increase student involvement and commitment to the institution, resulting in higher retention and graduation rates (Tinto, 2003; Rocconi, 2011). However, students changing majors must also change the courses they take, the individuals they commonly interact with, and their future vocational and life goals. Changing majors disrupts development in the college environment and requires the individual to renegotiate their identity and goals.

Students often make decisions regarding college major based on potential career options (Germeijns, Luyckx, Notelaers, Goossens, & Verschueren, 2012; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). At Southwestern University, students may have already selected their future career during the admission application process. For instance, students in professional program majors that teach skills and knowledge towards a specific vocation, such as becoming a teacher, have identified teaching as their future profession at the beginning of their college experience. In an international study that included the United States, the top motivators for individuals to select the teaching profession for intrinsic and altruistic reasons that include enhance social equity and make social contributions (Watt et al., 2012). Kyriacou and Coulthard (2000) defined intrinsic reasons as, aspects of the job activity itself, such as the activity of teaching children, and an interest in using their subject matter knowledge, and expertise" (p. 117).

During college, students may decide to change majors out of professional program majors, like teaching, if they are no longer motivated by their initial reasons in

choosing the profession. As such, students may shift in how they view themselves and their identity as individuals who opt into becoming teachers often intertwine their professional and personal identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Hammerness, et al., 2007). Consequently, students who choose to leave the teaching major must reestablish their academic, vocational, and personal goals. Specifically, students tend to be most concerned with their vocational development because their initial major choice had predetermined career options due to the nature of the degree.

Student concerns with their vocational goals post-graduation can be supported through cultivating adaptability to manage the transition of changing majors. Adaptability can teach and prepare students for the career and life transitions that will ensue once they leave the college environment (Savickas, 2011, 2013). Also, adaptability will allow students to better manage career related tasks such as career exploration, planning, and decision making (Lent & Brown, 2013; Savickas, 1997). In understanding the complexities of such transitions that prompt student learning and development, institutions of higher education can provide a supportive environment for students as they learn and develop (Chickering, 1994; Evans et al., 2009).

College services such as academic advising supports students when changing majors and helping students renegotiate their academic, vocational, and personal development (Grites, 2013). As a consistent point of contact in a student's college career, academic advisors can leverage the relational and structural aspects of advising to support students' development. As such, developmental advising is defined as the use of interactive teaching, counseling, and administrative strategies to facilitate a partnership between advisor and student to help the student achieve specific academic, vocational,

and personal goals (Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Crookston, 1994). Although academic advising advances these three aspects of development, this study will focus on how academic advising supports a student's vocational development since students are often most concerned with vocational goals when changing majors.

At Southwestern University, advising involves providing academic progression plans, having one-on-one dialogue on academic, vocational, and personal goals, and referring students to support services that can address students' needs. In this regard, academic advising is viewed as a reactive experience conducted in isolation between advisor and student. Rather, a proactive and social developmental advising approach that considers the interactions between individuals and their environment can representatively address the complex nature of changing majors. Strategies of utilizing individuals and structures in the college environment can create a multifaceted approach to advising. Resultantly, it constructs a learning environment that is bidirectional between the social and structural aspects of a system (Datnow, Hubbard, & Mehan, 1998). Thus, students will adapt to changing majors as they interacting with the multiple layers of their environment.

The literature supports advisors as facilitators that guide the connection of academic and personal interests, promote and support student academic and career planning, and promote a student's rational decision-making process (O'Banion, 1994, 1997; Crookston, 1994; Lowenstein, 2005). Although a co-constructed learning environment can occur between the advisor and student, greater value will ensue with students interact with other students who share the same experience. As individuals engage in their environment in multiple ways, they begin to perceive themselves in

relation to the environment and are more likely to adapt under changed circumstances, resulting in growth and development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The social construction of learning helps students manage the transition and engage in career exploration, planning, and decision-making (Lent & Brown, 2013; Savickas, 1997). The integral role of higher education institutions to build an environment that cultivates adaptability in student development can lead institutions and students to success in achieving their respective goals.

Leadership Context and Research Positionality

Southwestern University is a large public research university committed to student success, access, and excellence. The university is organized by 14 different colleges, each housing majors specific to that field, at the undergraduate and graduate level. When students apply to the university, they are required to select a major to pursue. To ensure students select a major and make progress in their chosen major, the institution provides major maps that outline the necessary courses to complete a specific major. Additionally, the university has degree tracking system to monitor students are on-track to graduate in a four-year timeline. Tools such as major maps and degree tracking align with the institution's goals of 90% retention of all students which serves as an indicator of graduation rates and university success.

The Teachers College at Southwestern University primarily offers teacher certification majors at the undergraduate level and will serve as the setting for this study. In terms of student population, the Teachers College is the ninth largest college at the university. In fall 2017, the Teachers College enrolled approximately 2,582 students in undergraduate programs, 77% (n=1,982) of students in teacher certification tracked

majors and 23% (n=600) in the Educational Studies major. Students in teacher certification majors aspire to become teachers and must seek certification through the state's Department of Education. The Educational Studies degree is the only undergraduate major offered by the Teachers College that does not lead to teacher certification. Students in Educational Studies aspire to work in the education field outside the traditional classroom context or in related areas such as counseling, social work, and youth development. I serve as an Academic Success Supervisor and oversee an advising team and advise for the Educational Studies program. The Educational Studies program is also the only undergraduate degree offered fully online and on-campus. In the advising aspect of my role, I advise students in the Educational Studies on-campus program and responsible for advising students towards degree progression and completion.

The Educational Studies major launched in 2012 and has grown to be the largest and fastest growing Teachers College undergraduate major. The growth is attributed to the offering of the Educational Studies online program, comprising of 63 students when the program debuted in fall 2014 to 453 students in fall 2017, resulting in a 619% increase in enrollment. Generally, my advising approach varies for on-campus and online students because of the differences in student demographics. Students in the online program are generally individuals returning to college with years of working or professional experience. Contrastingly, on-campus students typically attend college the academic year following high school graduation and perceive college as an opportunity to explore and establish careers rather than seeking career change or advancement through the obtainment of a degree. This study will examine the students in the Educational

Studies on-campus program because I advise this student population. Table 1 provides demographic information about the Educational Studies major, specifically information regarding the on-campus student population.

Table 1. *Demographics of Educational Studies On-Campus Student Population*

Educational Studies	Number	Percentage
On-campus	147	25%
Online	458	75%
Total	600	100%

Ethnicity (on-campus only)	Number	Percentage
White	56	38%
Hispanic/Latino	22	15%
Mixed Ethnicity (Two or more races)	23	16%
Black or African American	10	7%
International	20	14%
Asian	11	7%
American Indian	5	3%
Total	147	100%

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	112	76%
Male	35	24%
Total	147	100%

Class Standing	Number	Percentage
Freshmen	11	7%
Sophomore	26	18%
Junior	37	25%
Senior	73	50%
Total	147	100%

The table outlines how the on-campus students contribute to approximately one-fourth of the overall student population in the Educational Studies major. Most of the individuals in the on-campus are females and hold junior or senior class standing.

Through my personal academic advising philosophy, I believe my role is to help students navigate the complex system of higher education through developmental advising to help student define their academic and vocational goals and outcomes through the exploration of their personal development (Crookston, 1994). As an academic advisor, I developed my advising philosophy on my experience and understanding of how my personal development in college influenced my academic and vocational goals. Through my own

reflection of not pursuing teacher certification but still desiring to work in the field of education, I strive to support students in their personal discovery and help them adapt to changed circumstances through advising.

My role as a practitioner influences my role as a researcher. According to Herr and Anderson (2015), a researcher may hold multiple positionalities depending on how the researcher views their roles in relation to the roles of the participants. As an advisor, I am on the forefront of student interactions, holding advising appointments to provide information on course scheduling, career guidance, personal development, and university resources. In my advising approach, I build relationships with students to enlist trust and collaboratively engage with students to address questions and concerns. Through my advising approach, I engage students in a co-constructed process of learning where I collaboratively work with the student to address and support their goals and needs. As a researcher, an outsider lens provides a broader and holistic vantage point on the problem of practice, aligning my other responsibilities as a practitioner such as supporting student persistence, retention, and graduation from the institution. Additionally, the literature used to inform this study provides an outsider's positionality that can be applied into my context of academic advising.

Problem of Practice

As part of Southwestern University's goals and charters to increase educational access and produce more college graduates, support services such as academic advising plays an integral role in guiding students through various transitions they may encounter in college such as changing majors. When students change majors, they commonly meet with an advisor in the department that houses their desired major to learn about degree

requirements and graduation timeline. In some cases, students change majors within the same department or college. In the Teachers College at SU, students commonly change from teacher certification majors to Educational Studies, a non-certification major for individuals interested in working in field of education or related area such as youth development, non-profit, or social work. In my role, I observed a prevalent trend of students in the on-campus program who changed from teacher certification tracked majors to Educational Studies. This study will focus on the Educational Studies on-campus students because they are the students I advise.

In fall 2017, out of 147 students in the Educational Studies, 59% (n=86) of them transitioned from a teacher certification tracked major. Approximately 83% (n=71) of students of the 83 who changed from teacher certification majors held junior or senior level status in which they completed 56 or more college credits according to SU credit classification. Additionally, 57% (n=49) of the 83 who changed their major to Educational Studies changed their major within the last calendar year. From an initial examination of the data, I highlighted the fact that most students in the Educational Studies on-campus program intended to become a teacher for approximately half of their college career.

In previous cycles of action research, students changed their major to Educational Studies for three primary reasons: academic, career fit, and financial and time. Students change for academic reason due to difficulties to meeting or maintaining the admission criteria for the professional teaching program. Career fit means students realized they no longer want to pursue teacher certification as their future career. Lastly, students may change for financial reasons or reasons related to time such as limited scholarship

funding or financial aid, which makes the time to graduation a critical factor in changing majors. When students change to Educational Studies, their prior education related coursework is applied towards the degree, resulting in a graduation timeline comparable to their teacher certification tracked major.

In understanding the commitment and mindset these students had to the teaching profession, changing majors to Educational Studies disrupts their academic, vocational, and personal goals. Students' transition from a certification to non-certification major, a structured curriculum to a flexible and ambiguous curriculum, and defined career options to Educational Studies, a major with broader and less defined career options. All these changes are compounded by the fact that individuals often attribute their future vocation with their personal identity (Hammerness et al., 2007). In the formative years of college, the implications of changing majors in addition to having limited time to graduation and anticipate the college-to-work transition, students often feel overwhelmed managing multiple transitions while redefining their identity and vocational goals.

Although the students I advise when changing to Educational Studies express a desire to work in the field of education, they often perceive teaching as the only career option in the field. Many of these students articulate a lack of knowledge regarding career options and according to Lent and Brown (2013), have not engaged in career adaptability tasks such as career exploration, planning, and decision making, because they envisioned becoming teachers. A lack of knowledge results in concerns regarding their future.

In the transition of changing majors, students themselves change in a multitude and magnitude of ways. Aspects of the ecology remains the same, such as desiring to

still work in education, remaining at SU and the Teachers College, having opportunities within the Teachers College through involvement, or being taught by some of the same faculty with prior PK-12 teaching experience. However, students perceive themselves their environment differently as a result of the transition. At the core, the students feel different because of their diminishing professional identity of a teacher. Remaining in an environment that emphasizes a profession these students are no longer pursuing magnifies their questions regarding their purpose and direction in college. In recognizing the needs for this student population, the Teachers College should support students in the transition. Unfortunately, the ecology in the Teachers College currently has limited support and opportunities intended for the students in the Educational Studies major. The teacher-centric nature of the environment results in a lack of focused support for Educational Studies majors due to the broad and ambiguous nature of the major.

Furthermore, support services such as academic advising do not adequately support students due to the varying factors and needs when changing majors. Advising practices are often reactive and isolated interactions between advisor and student by putting the onus on the student to seek and utilize support offered by the institution. However, amidst complex transitions, students may not know or be aware of the support they need. As a consistent point of contact, leveraging the potential of academic advising as a structure, environment, and practice in the context of a transition and reconfigure its current practices can help the adequate support for these students. In taking a holistic developmental approach to advising, examining how the ecology can transform to support students in the transition by drawing on multiple systems in the environment can ultimately help students adapt to new career trajectories associated with their major. The

cultivation of adaptability will help students manage the transition, have clear vocational goals, be prepared for the economic and social societal demands upon graduation.

Purpose of Research and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine how an academic advising career program focused on cultivating adaptability considers the social-ecological environment on students transition into the Educational Studies major. The research questions for this study are as followed:

RQ1: How do undergraduate students describe their transition between majors into Educational Studies?

RQ2: How do undergraduate students describe their experience with the services from an academic advising career program designed to help them identify and adapt to new career options?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE LITERATURE

To understand how academic advising cultivates or further develops students' adaptability, I will discuss the existing literature. First, I will provide context to understanding the ecology and adaptability by providing an overview of the transition literature. Afterwards, I will review the ecological perspectives in relation to higher education to understand how adaptability is discussed in the research literature. I will then discuss the academic advising literature and the potential it has to account for the ecological factors in supporting students' adaptability, specifically in the context of their career development. Lastly, I will integrate ecology, adaptability, and academic advising in an integrative model to inform the research design of this study.

Transition

In this section, I will provide a brief overview of Schlossberg's Theory of Transition and the context in which the theory is used. I will then present the literature related to transition in different contexts as it relates to the problem of practice.

Theory of Adult Transition. Schlossberg devised the transition model to understand how an individual's experience changes in their lives. Her initial work on transition began in 1981 but since then has gone through multiple iterations to refine the highly integrative model informed by multiple theories and frameworks (Evans et al., 2009; Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Schlossberg broadly defined transition as "any event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles" (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006, p. 33). Individuals constantly experience transitions, as they are continuous and ongoing. The transition

process comprises of three phases: moving in, moving through, and moving out. Moving in to a transition includes new roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions, a hangover identity to their previous self, and learning the parameters of their new circumstance. Moving through a transition could entails a period of liminality, grappling with new their new circumstance, neutrality periods of confusion, and a sense of renewal and hope. Moving out of a transition includes separating from their old circumstance, and disengaging with previous roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions. A transition does not end but rather, individuals learn to live and integrate the transition as part of their lives.

The individual's experience is influenced by how one reacts to the transition by the type, context, and impact of the transition (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Type refers to the whether the event or non-event is anticipated or unanticipated. The context refers to the circumstances in which the transition occurs. Impact constitutes the extent in which the transition disrupts one's roles, relations, routines, and assumptions. As Schlossberg's research has evolved, one's perception of the transition and how such perception influences one's ability to manage the transition became a prominent aspect of transitions.

In knowing individuals constantly experiencing multiple transitions at a time, Schlossberg's theory affirms the need to help individuals devise ways to cope and manage the transitions. Schlossberg's suggest four factors influence one's ability to cope with transition: situation, self, support, and strategies (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006; Schlossberg, 1981). Situation refers to the context of the transition such as triggers, time, role change, and considers prior experiences. The variable of self

considers personal factors such as age, gender, and race in addition to psychological factors such as outlook, ego development, and resilience. The support variable examines the type of the support and the function that support serves for the individual. Also, the measurement of that support is considered, such that the support is stable or changing. Lastly, strategies come in three forms of modifying the situation, control meaning, and managing the stress. As such, transitions are complex and require the consideration of multiple factors to guide individuals through the transition. Depending on the type and extent an individual possesses, these four factors may serve as liabilities or assets to propel and impede one's ability to move through the transition. The Theory of Transition integrates multiple theories to create an understanding of transitions, which are complex and involve social, personal, and environmental factors.

Due to the integrative nature of Schlossberg's theory of transition, the theory is relevant to college-aged students (Evan et al., 2009). Specifically, Chickering (1994) describes the role of academic advising in assisting students as they transition to college. In a study that interviewed students on their transition to college, transitions were described: "The process is a highly interrelated, web-like series of family, interpersonal, academic, and organizational pulls and pushes that shape student learning (broadly conceived) and persistence." (Terenzini et al. 1994, p. 61). Although Schlossberg is primarily discussed in the literature related to transition, the concept is also discussed in a multitude of ways.

Transition in Context. The existing literature also presented transition as a state of limbo or liminality (Brown & Olshansky, 1997; Gonzales & Vargas, 2016). The state of limbo refers to negotiating two states, identities, or context, but not feeling a part or

belonging with either state, identities, or contexts. In sharing the lives of undocumented students, the intersection of illegality and belonging are complex, resulting in a yearning for inclusion or community (Gonzales & Vargas, 2016). The toll on straddling two worlds result in strained or broken connections which results in withdrawal, worry, and apprehension. In a grounded theory study that examined the transition to the primary care nurse practitioner, the conceptual devised a process called “From Limbo to Legitimacy” (Brown & Olshansky, 1997). The model encompassed four major categories: Laying the Foundation, Launching, Meeting the Challenge, and Broadening the Perspective. The model was highly contextualized to the nursing professional but may inform the school-to-work transition in other professional programs such as teaching. The multifaceted views of transitions help to shape how to understand the contextualized nature of students who change their major from teacher certification majors to Educational Studies.

Transitions are also discussed in higher education from an ecological perspective. Gale and Parker (2014) urge the need for more research to be done on transition from a sympathetic perspective by exploring the concept of ‘transition as becoming.’ Such concept described transition from a rhizomatic perspective that embeds flexibility. The dynamic of the transition involves “navigating multiple narratives” and viewing “crisis as neither period/stage specific or necessarily problematic” (p. 738). According to Gale and Parker, this different view of transition has potential for further exploration and understanding as transitions are described is non-linear, fluid, and comprise of parts on one’s pursuit of becoming. As such, the researchers called upon institutions to change and adapt to the perceptions and realities of students. Staff at institutions need to

consider the multiplicities in the lives of students they work with to center their experiences, interests, and perspectives to provide relevant and effective support in transitions. Specifically, counselors or staff in comparable positions can assess the coping factors students possess and how to leverage their assets to help individuals navigate the transition. The most common theme emerged from a study examining the college-to-work transition was the presence of social support, specifically from family and friends, in facilitating a smooth transition (Murphy, Blustein, Bohlig, & Platt, 2010). Conversely, lack of social support reported in lower their sense of well-being and their experiences associated with the transition. Additionally, participants displayed optimism in their future despite difficulties in their current circumstance.

Transitions to college are also discussed in the literature in regards to major selection. In a study by Malgwi, Howe, and Burnaby (2005) that surveyed incoming undergraduate business students, findings revealed students chose the major primarily for the interest in the subject. In delineating genders, men were found more likely to select the major based on future career opportunities. Reasons for selecting major may have implications in the future as students move towards graduation and develop new interests or lose interest in their current majors. As such, the researchers believed the lack or change of interest results in the necessity of changing majors. In addition, understanding students also choose majors based on career outcomes is another important consideration if students choose to change their major later in their college career. The current literature is limited in addressing the experiences and challenges students who transition to a new major later in their college career. The research would vary in considering the

situation, self, support, and strategies a student may have at the beginning and towards the end of their college career.

Further studies explored the implications of major choice and fit. In a study that examined adaptability and major fit, results suggested that individuals who were more adaptable believe they fit in their major over their less adaptable counterparts (Wessel, Ryan, & Oswald, 2008). The study concluded that adaptability plays an integral role in college success and major fit. Consistent with the career literature, individuals are more career adaptable can more easily adapt to changed circumstances or unexpected situations that may ensue.

In summary, transitions are complex and as a result, are contextualized to the individual and circumstance. Transitions are integrative and numerous factors need to be considered to understand the nuances and best support individuals who experience transitions. Although literature exists on transitions in the context of higher education, there is potential to expand the literature on examining the ecology of transitions in a higher education context and the depth to which adaptability manifest in the various contexts. To further explore the ecology of higher education, the next section will present the literature on ecology.

Ecology

Ecology is the study of living things and their environment (Sutton & Anderson, 2009). This action research study will utilize human ecology frameworks to understand human interactions with their environment. Specifically, the research is intended to understand how students who change their major to Educational Studies become adaptable in their environment. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human

development serves as the foundation of human ecology models and this study. I will also examine how Moos' social ecology model is another theoretical perspective that provides a deeper understanding to the interrelations of individuals and their environment.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Models of Human Development.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological of human development provided an understanding of how an individual's development is influenced by the environment and vice versa (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). More specifically, the ecology of human development conveyed that an individual does not develop in isolation and even goes beyond the immediate environment. In the ecological context, development is regarded as how one grows and changes in their environment. The environment may include dyad, role, setting, social network, institution, and culture. The interrelations between individuals and varying systems are reciprocal. In his model, Bronfenbrenner described how the ecological environment extends beyond an individual's immediate surrounding but that the individual is interconnected within multiple systems.

The following types of systems, each shape an individual's development and become progressively distal in its influence on one's development: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. The mircosystem included the activities, roles, and relations of a developing individual in their environment. The mesosystem examined the interrelations between two or more settings in which a developing individual partakes in. The exosystem included one or more settings in which the developing person is not actively participating in but indirectly influences the setting of the developing individual. Lastly, the macrosystem examines the consistency of the

lower systems (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem) that exists at the subculture or culture level along with the beliefs of those consistencies.

In the context of Educational Studies majors, the act of changing majors would be described by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as when “a person’s position in the ecological environment is altered as the result of a change in role, setting, or both” (p. 26). In the context of a transition, one’s development is viewed as a change in roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006), which subsequently sets expectations for one’s behavior that ensues from the transition. When an individual understands the systems in which they operate, they adapt to sustain or change current landscape of their environment.

After the introduction of Bronfenbrenner’s model, he created new iterations to his model. One of Bronfenbrenner (1986) major addition was the dimensionality of time, or chronosystem, to his model to understand how past histories have impacted one’s development and how they operate within their ecology. In his third and most recent iteration of his model, Bronfenbrenner titled his model as the bioecological model of human development. Bronfenbrenner addressed the criticisms to his older model, which considers the process, which is explained as, “the connection between some aspect of the context (culture or social class, for example) or some aspect of the individual (e.g., gender) and an outcome of interest” (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009, p. 199). Specifically, Bronfenbrenner utilized the term proximal processes, which he defined as, “enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment” (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, p. 6). He further provided examples of proximal processes:

“problem solving; caring for others; making plans; performing complex tasks; and acquiring new knowledge and know-how.” (p. 6).

Resultantly, Bronfenbrenner contrived the bioecological model of human development. Such model is often referred to as the Process-Person-Context-Time Model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). This model simultaneously examines the proximal processes and the developing person. The person aspects referred to “force characteristics are those that have to do with differences of temperament, motivation, persistence” (Tudge et al., 2009) which may manifest in ways such as being proactive, independent, and curious (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Context referred to the environments in which individual engages with. Context specifically referenced Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model of human development with the nested systems within the environment. Lastly, time referenced the historical context in which constancy and frequency occurred and how it influenced one’s development.

Although this model has evolved over time, researchers still utilize any one of Bronfenbrenner’s three iterations of his model (Tudge et al., 2009). Criticism of some researchers (Tudge et al., 2009), argue the use of one model and suggests using the most current model as it provides more context to the dynamics between an individual and their environment. Overall, research can use the iteration of Bronfenbrenner’s model most applicable to the context if consistency of use is ensured of the specific iteration in the research. Bronfenbrenner also described the contextualized nature of his new model and further research should explore the use of his model.

For this study, I used Bronfenbrenner’s initial model, ecological model of human development, to inform the design of this study. Bronfenbrenner’s initial model gave

context to the structure of the environment. In conjunction with Moos' Social Ecology theory (1979), which considered ways in which the environment can be adaptive and responsive to the individual's development, aligned with the problem of practice and context for this study.

Moos' Social Ecology. Moos' Social Ecology research examined environments, specifically, the physical and social aspects to maximize human functioning and development (Insel & Moos, 1979). According to Moos (1979), the environmental and personal systems can directly affective behavior. From the influence of the environmental and personal systems, individuals construct perceptions of their environment and appraise the nature of the environment (i.e. harmful, beneficial, irrelevant). Furthermore, individuals assess their resources to cope and adapt to the environment. Adapting and coping to changes in the environmental or personal systems result in student stability or change in behavior, attitude, or overall development.

Moos (1979) conceptualized environmental systems in four major domains: physical setting, organization settings, human aggregate, and social climate. The physical setting includes architecture and physical design of the setting. Organization factors refer to how the organization is structured in which individuals operate. Human aggregate describes the characteristics of the individuals most relevant to the setting. The social climate examines the perception of the environment by the group in the setting.

The four domains can be viewed specifically through educational environments. For example, the size of a classroom can influence what kind of instruction occurs in such classroom. Perhaps the size of the classroom and the equipment in the classrooms lends to more collaborative work rather than independent work. The physical

environment influences the organizational setting. Smaller class sizes at the institution and may value students visiting professors during office hours, which may attract specific populations of students to attend such institution. These domains shape the social climate at the institution. Although domains of physical setting, organization setting, and human aggregate can evaluate education settings, these domains influence the fourth domain, social climate (Moos, 1979). Social climate is a mediator for the three other domains of an environment. Thus, Moos' research focuses on the social climate of environments to gain a deeper understanding of how factors of the physical environment influences students development but also how it can be mediate through the social environment.

To examine the social climate of an environment, Moos (1979, 1984) identified three broad categories or dimensions of patterns seen in environments: relationship, personal development or goal orientation development, and system change or maintenance. The relationship dimension examines the extent to which individuals are involved and provide support to others in the environment. Personal growth or goal dimension assess the potential or opportunity for personal growth and development between environments and goals of the environment. Lastly, system maintenance and change dimensions examine the clear expectations, control and responsiveness of the environment to change.

Bronfenbrenner's model is used to understand that multiple systems affect an individual's development helps to contextualize how the role of the physical and social environment presented by Moos. Specifically, assessing social climate through the interrelations between the relationships, personal development, and systems can help understand how to best support individuals as they encounter changed circumstances.

The social ecology model presented by Moos is utilized in a variety of fields. The social ecology model has been primarily used in the higher education context by residential housing by examining the climate on living on campus with University Residence Environmental Scales (URES). In one of his initial studies utilizing the URES, findings showed the tool helpful in understanding students' perceptions and insight on climate, programming, individual impact, architecture, and person-environment interactions (Gerst & Moos, 1972). Such feedback allowed institutions to make modifications and improvements to the residential climate and environment. In a more recent study, a small liberal arts college utilized items from URES to examine sense of belonging and relationships with the architecture of dormitories (Devlin, Donovan, Nicolov, Nold, & Zandan, 2008). Findings showed how the selected architecture design appeared to be community building, such as with dorm rooms in clusters or suites configuration counteracts the sense of community per student feedback. The feedback was valuable and allowed institutions to reconsider future architecture plans. Moos utilized a methodology for facilitating social change with four basic components by eliciting feedback about the environment, take feedback to devise a practical plan based on feedback, and once changes are implemented, assess and adjust as needed (Moos, 1979).

In addition to higher education, social ecology has been studied in K-12 education and in the health field (Moos, 1979). The social climate was examined in 19 high school classrooms in relation to student absenteeism rates and average final grades of the teachers. The results concluded that climate, grades, and absenteeism were affected by other variables such as course content and grade level. The findings from this study were

preliminary but made connections to the nature, strength, and availability of social supports of an individual (Moos & Moos, 1978). Social ecology is emerging to as a perspective commonly used in health care settings. Stokols (1992) was one of the first researchers to look at healthy environments by utilizing a social ecology lens by looking at not only just the individual but also the collective. His research assessed the interplay of resources in the environment with behavior. Enhancing one's well-being is the primary focus of Stokols, he found that supportive interpersonal relationships can enhance one's emotional and physical well-being.

The literature regarding social ecology is limited and dated, particularly in the context of higher education. An exploration of social ecology through the integration of Bronfenbrenner's work can shed light on new ways to examine the college ecology and how it can influence students' adaptability and overall collegiate experience.

Adaptability

In the context of this study, adaptability is defined as the capacity and readiness to manage concern, control, curiosity, and confidence of an experience prompted by transition (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Savickas, 1997, 2013). This section will provide context to how adaptability is studied in multiple disciplines to help inform the use in this study.

Adaptability in Ecology. Adaptability is viewed, understood, and contextualized in multiple fields. The core context of adaptability is rooted in ecology, the study of the interactions of living organisms and their environment. (Sutton & Anderson, 2009). Accordingly, human ecology emerged to specifically examine how humans interact within their environment. Human interactions with their environment are complex,

resulting in numerous perspectives in how human ecology is studied. Some of these perspectives acknowledge the critical role of interactions with the environment and other individuals in the environment. Thus, social factors attribute to an enhanced understanding of the systems or how individuals develop in the systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Moos, 1979; Walker, Holling, Carpenter, & Kinzig 2004).

In sustainability science, social-ecological systems studies adaptability through the resiliency in systems. Resilience is defined as “the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks” (Walker et al., 2004, p. 6). Adaptability is then defined as “the capacity of actors in a system to influence resilience (p. 7). Resilient systems are adaptable and will transform into a new system regardless of prior ecological, economic, or social in current system. Although resilience is the capacity of the system to manage change, adaptability studies the actors in the system to transform and manage change. Systems navigate social-ecological transitions when a disruption to the system requires management of change leads to further opportunities for growth and development of the system (Folke, Carpenter, Walker, Scheffer, Chapin, & Rockstrom, 2010). Concepts such as resilience, adaptability, and transformation in relation to transitions parallels to individuals because they operate in varying ecological systems.

Sustainability science social-ecological systems seek stability by retaining their function, structure, identity, and feedbacks (Walker et al., 2004). In humans, examining one’s resiliency inevitably results in one adapting or managing the change, thus changing the scope of their development and identity rather than retaining it. As human actions are

predominant in social-ecological systems, adaptability is a function of the social component of individuals and groups working to manage the system (Walker et al., 2004). The management of ecosystem services in the sustainability science field has incorporated the understanding of social processes like learning, memory, adaptive capacity, and transformation (Folke, 2006). Considering the social processes of adaptability informs ways management and researchers can develop adaptability within the individuals in the system.

In summary, the actors of ecological systems have an influence the adaptability of the and resiliency of the system. Recognizing that both systems and actors change prompts change and further development, requiring the systems and actor to adapt to then become resilient. Such central ideas on adaptability in from an ecological perspective helped to form other context in which adaptability is studied such as in career adaptability.

Adaptability in Career Counseling. Adaptability is used in career counseling field and is specifically described as career adaptability. In 1957, Donald Super devised the Theory of Career Development in which he examined career development over one's life-span (Savickas, 1997). Mark Savickas built upon the latest iteration of Super's theory with the Career Construction Theory, studying adaptability in the context of their career development.

Theory of Career Development. In his initial work, Super examined career development from the perspective of human development in how an individual matures throughout their life-span. According to Ebberwein, Krieshok, Ulven, and Prosser (2004), career adaptability was initially conceived by Super and Knasel (1981) as

“readiness to cope with changing work and working conditions” (p. 195). Super and Knasel’s Theory of Career Development examined vocational maturity, or growth of career attitudes and competence of a developing individual incumbent upon personal and environmental factors through the various life stages. The five stages included growth (age 0-4 years old), exploration (age 15-24), establishment (age 25-44), maintenance (age 45-64), and decline (age 65+).

Additionally, individuals experience nine life roles during their stages of growth. The nine roles include child, student, leisurite, citizen, work, and parent (Super & Knasel, 1981). Individuals growth into each of these roles and stage varies on the personal and environmental factors. Personal factors included awareness, attitudes, interests, values, biological heritage. Environmental factors included social structure, employment practices, school, community, and family. Super addressed the reciprocal nature of interrelations between individuals and their environment, reinforcing the same idea from human ecology literature (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Moos, 1979). The working conditions, or environmental factors, not only influences one’s development but also one’s development changes the working conditions. Additionally, the Theory of Career Development assumed individuals develop, through learning and decision making, at varying rates due to the multiplicity of personal and environmental factors.

According to Super’s initial theory of career development, individuals experienced certain life events at certain times in their lives, prompting their development over their life span (Super 1980). For example, the age of 15-24 constitutes the exploration phase where individuals learn about opportunities. Also, this age range aligned with when most individuals commonly attend college, move away from their

parents for the first time, and explore interests that shape future learning, decision making, and development (Astin, 1984; Super, 1980). As such, higher education institutions have opportunities to support the multiple facets of student development during one's exploration life phase. In the 1960's, research about human development emerged and applied to several fields including college student development (Astin, 1977, 1984; Chickering, 1994) and career counseling (Super & Knasel, 1981). With the prominent research on child and adolescent development at the time, research began to include adult development. For example, Schlossberg (1981) conceptualized the Theory of Adult Transition to study how adults changed their roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions prompted by an event or non-event (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006; Schlossberg, 1981). Eventually, concepts such as adult learners, transition, and higher education environments converged through research on how to improve higher education environments for adult learner experiencing transitions (Chickering, 1994; Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989; Terenzini, Rendon, Upcraft, Millar, Allison, Gregg, & Jalomo, 1994; Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008).

A criticism to Super's initial theory referenced how the use of the term maturity implied that individuals act on developmental tasks at a certain point in their maturation and development, Super introduced the term career adaptability to demonstrate individuals to be "responsible agents acting within a dynamic environmental setting" (Super & Knasel, 1981, p. 199). Soon thereafter, Super added a component of self-concept to his initial theory, in which he explored self-efficacy and self-esteem. Self-concept is defined as one's perceptions of themselves, specifically through experiences in their environment (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). The literature regarding self-

concept suggested its difficulty in measuring due to its broad nature and multiplicity of factors contributing to how it is studied (Betz, 1994; Shavelson et al., 1976). Betz (1994) urged for more research to apply the theoretical and practical aspects of self-concept but Super (1990) mentioned the application of self-concept has been seen in studies with the aim of building confidence. As he continued to build upon his theory, Super added a contextual perspective to this career development theory to consider the environment in which the individual is developing and adapting.

Amidst the research focused on development, Savickas (1997) expanded on Super's work to define career adaptability as "the readiness to cope with the predictable tasks of preparing for and participating in the work role and with the unpredictable adjustments prompted by changes in work and working conditions" (p. 254). Savickas' definition of career adaptability accounts for the preparation needed in career development and the unpredictability of changes that may occur in one's career development due to transitions. Also, Savickas built on Super's concepts and argued the idea of replacing vocational maturity with career adaptability. Although Super first discussed career adaptability, the emerging literature on human development viewed growth as a process versus maturity as a fixed entity (Super & Knasel, 1981). Savickas' definition acknowledged the nature of transitions as a constant and a process managed by individuals. In the current social environment, one's career development constantly changes as individuals tend to hold multiple jobs and careers in their life time, requiring one to manage transitions by adapting to the changing environment (McMahon, Watson, & Bimrose, 2012; Savickas, 2011; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Career Construction Theory. The predominant use of technology to enhance efficiency in society has shaped the landscape of jobs and careers (Savickas, 2011). Individuals must adapt to the new working conditions to not only obtain a job but from different jobs and careers in their lifetime. In this regard, preparing individuals to be adaptable in their careers helps individuals in all aspect of their lives. The application of adaptability in career counseling stems from Savickas' Career Construction Theory (2013) of utilizing a career narrative to develop individuals as an actor, agent, and author. Individuals develop as actors by construction a self from their environment, specifically from other individuals like family members and modeling behaviors from those individuals. An agent can move in and out of different education and career conditions allowing for social integration. When individuals learn about themselves as actors and agents, they become authors of an identity narrative that reflects their career goals and past experiences to inform their future career aspirations. The role of career counselors is to cultivate agency in individuals to bring forth their roles as actors to reflect and make meaning.

Agency involves the process of moving forward, especially when a vocational plot is disrupted, halted, or lost (Savickas, 2013). Three social challenges can prompt change: vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas. Vocational development tasks relate to the social expectations about career development. In the exploration phase of career development, individuals between 15-24 are highly influenced by culture and active people in their lives about how to prepare for their career. As such, college students tend to select their college major based on potential career options (Germeijs, Luyckx, Notelaers, Goossens, & Verschueren, 2012; Lent,

Brown, & Hackett, 1994), intertwining their professional and personal identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Wenger, 1998). Oftentimes, students often perceive their identity in the context of their profession (Bejaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004), meaning they identify who they are as a person in the context of job or career. Occupational transitions, when an individual move to different jobs due to wanted or unwanted and planned or unexpected circumstances, can alter one's perception of their identity. Work traumas include transitions due to unwanted or unexpected circumstances. In recent years, career counseling has taken a narrative approach to help students understand individuals with their vocational development of career exploration, planning, and decision making (Germeijs et al, 2012; Lent & Brown, 2013).

Through a narrative career counseling approach, counselors and clients can construct narratives, deconstruct the narratives, and reconstruct future-oriented stories that support adaptive and flexible responses to help one anticipate changes (Brott, 2001; Cochran, 1997; McMahon & Watson, 2012; Savickas, Nota, Rossier, Dauwalder, Duarte, Guichard, Van Vianen, 2009). Such approach is utilized for career development but also helps one plan for future life goals. Accordingly, a group of researchers coined a life-design perspective to narrative career counseling can help individuals beyond career fit and interests, but pinpoint deeper concerns related to career development (Savickas et al., 2009). A study by Hughes, Gibbons, and Myatt (2013) utilized a life-design approach in underprepared college students. By facilitating student construction of their own narratives to understand how past experiences and perceptions of oneself influences their

major selection and career goals. Such approach resulted in students creating career and life goals from new perspectives to help them persist in college.

In another study by Brott (2001), after facilitating the co-constructing narratives with her client, the counselor further engaged the client in a variety of activities such goal setting, strengths and interests' inventories, and career and life mapping. Activities to engage individuals results from apply meaning to past experiences to see life circumstances with new perspectives to create a life-design plan (Savickas et al., 2009). Although counselors acknowledge the complexity of one's transition and how operates in changing environments, few studies have leveraged other resources in the environment to help individuals construct their narratives to formulate career adaptability. One study utilized a group career counseling approach with students from diverse cultural background to leverage the contributions of cultural and other environmental factors influencing their career development (Clark, Severy, & Sawyer, 2004).

Additionally, adaptive dimensions in the career counseling context included concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Savickas, 2013). Career concerns mean a future-oriented perspective. When individuals show attitudes of planfulness and optimism, they are prepared for anticipated or unanticipated events. Students who display career adaptability tend to make more career-related decisions with less concern than students who had lower adaptability levels (Creed, Fallon, & Hood, 2009). Control means self-discipline to be deliberate and conscientious in decision making to perform developmental tasks and occupational transitions. Curiosity is the initiative to be inquisitive and exploratory. Confidence involves one's belief of their abilities to carryout

specific tasks related to one's educational and vocational choices. Studies have measured dimensions of career adaptability in both qualitative and quantitative measures.

A study examined the dimensions of career adaptability in a qualitative study on women in three countries through interviews to understand how they coped and adapted to career-related transitions (McMahon, Watson, & Bimrose, 2012). The research utilized qualitative descriptions for concern, control, curiosity, and confidence to analyze the interview transcripts. Findings showed the participants displayed career adaptability through their interviews but manifested in different ways amongst participants, demonstrating how individuals are deeply embedded in different systems which influences how one navigates and adapts through changes. More recent publications have also quantitatively measured the dimensions of career adaptability with the Career Adapt-Abilities Scales (CAAS) created by a team of international researchers from 13 countries (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Porfeli & Savickas, 2012). The refinement with the scale involves generalizability of the instrument that takes into cultural ecology and variation amongst countries. A qualitative approach to examining career adaptability can provide a deeper insight and takes into consideration the context of the transition that is required one to adapt.

Although career adaptability is studied through concern, control, curiosity, and confidence, implications of cultivating adaptability helps individuals prepare for their life. As such, career construction theory applies a life-designing approach to career counseling. Savickas (2013) recommends interventions of life-design should include elements of adaptability, narratability, activity, and intentionality. Thus, life-designing

approaches that focus on career adaptability will help individuals be adaptable in any life circumstances.

Adaptability is studied from multiple perspectives such as ecology and career development. The ecological perspective aids in the understanding that adaptability is not isolated and happens through the interactions between the individual and multiple systems of influence. Specifically, the social aspects of the environment can greatly influence one's development (Moos, 1979). Career adaptability helps to understand aspects associated with one's development. Dimensions of career concerns, control, curiosity, and confidence can help researchers study adaptability and to account for the social-ecological factors that support individuals in transitions. In the context of higher education, academic advising is a support service in a student's immediate environment that fosters adaptability to help students in transitions such as changing majors.

Academic Advising

In this section, I will discuss the role and function of academic advising. I will then review the literature on varying approaches and the theoretical underpinnings of academic advising. Additionally, studies will be presented to demonstrate the role and function of academic advising, specifically in changing majors, transition, and career development. Lastly, I will provide insight on different perspectives and function of academic advising.

Function and Role of Academic Advising. Academic advising has become a prominent support role for students in their collegiate experience. The emergent use of student development theories in the 1960's greatly influenced the varying perspectives on the role of advising in the context of higher education (Kuhn, 2008). The literature

traditionally views the role of advising as prescriptive, in which advisors provides the courses a student needs to take towards degree progression (Creamer & Creamer, 1994; McEwen, 2003; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Student development theories and research expanded the role and function of academic advising to include time management and decision making or support students vocational and personal goals (Kuhn, Gordon, & Webber, 2006). Holistically, academic advising supports students' academic, vocational, and personal development.

Academic advising can help support students in their academic, vocational, and personal development. Academic development is the facilitation of student learning, improved achievement, and access (Galassi & Akos, 2011; Goodlad, 1984); vocational development is the compilation of career exploration, planning, and decision making to obtain jobs and establish careers (Germeijs et al, 2012; Lent & Brown, 2013); personal development focuses on how the individual evolves as a result of academic and vocational growth in their environment (Crookston, 1994; Grites & Gordon, 2000; O'Banion, 1994). The next section will provide context to two predominant approaches to academic advising: prescriptive and developmental.

Prescriptive Advising. The function of prescriptive advising aligns with the broader definition of academic advising: the support of the selection process of program major and courses and exploration of vocational and life goals (Crookston, 1994; O'Banion, 1994). The dynamic between advisor and student in prescriptive advising tends to be unidirectional because the primary role of the advisor is to prescribe courses and advice to a student. The onus is on the student to follow through with information

and tasks but limited consideration is taken on the environment and the systems that influence whether the student completes tasks.

Additionally, prescriptive advising gives students few opportunities to actively partake in their own learning and personal development. One postulate of Astin's (1984) involvement theory on student development describes how the amount of learning and personal development is directly proportional to the amount of time and quality of student involvement. Thus, student involvement is critical in learning and development, particularly for traditional aged college students of 18-24 years old (Astin, 1977). The focus on student development in the 1960's in higher education gave rise to developmental advising. In academic advising, engaging students in discussions about courses and goals can help to develop rational processes, behavior awareness, problem-solving, and decision-making skills (Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Crookston, 1994). Although individuals will develop and grow by attending college or not, recognizing the multitude of transitions an individual encounter during this life stage gives reasons to why colleges and universities need to support student development within the higher education institution. As a result, developmental advising is another approach to support students in their academic, vocational, and personal goals.

Developmental Advising. Developmental advising is defined as the use of interactive teaching, counseling, and administrative strategies to facilitate a partnership with advisor and student to help the student achieve specific academic, vocational, and personal goals (Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Crookston, 1994). The literature consistently describes the advisor and student working on developmental tasks, which may include “(a) talking to students about problems with family and friends, (b) offering

encouragement, and (c) sorting out conflicting values, beliefs, and attitudes" (Fieldstein, Scoles, & Webb, 1992, p. 10). In contrast with prescriptive advising, developmental advising is a shared learning output amongst advisor and student rather than a unidirectional flow of information (Crookston, 1994). A key aspect of developmental advising is the relationship dynamic between the advisor and student (Crookston, 1994; Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Grite & Gordon, 2000). Advisors may use counseling strategies to understand the student and the factors influencing a student's academic success. Furthermore, in understanding students on varying academic, vocational, and personal levels, an advisor can help students to modify conditions that affect learning.

Developmental advising is most used advising approach, which is reflected in the literature and practice. The literature and research in advising is primarily conducted by practitioners in the field and although the research and knowledge contributes to the field, academic advising is an interdisciplinary field, utilizing theories and frameworks from various disciplines to create development and diverse strategies in working with college students (Schulenberg & Lindhorst, 2008).

Student Development Theories. In the 1960's, student development theories typically fell into one of three theory families: psychosocial development, cognitive-structural development, and person-environment interaction (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Psychosocial development theories examine an individual's development based on achieving developmental tasks that occur chronologically in the life cycle (Creamer & Creamer, 1994; Hagen & Jordan, 2008; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Psychosocial theories study the overall development or identity formation of an individual and how it is influenced by factors such as age, gender, psychological, or sociocultural. Cognitive-

structural theories describe the processes of change based on how an individual perceives and interprets their experiences (Hagen & Jordan, 2008; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). These types of theories examine how meaning is structured through sequential, hierarchical, and irreversible stages, each one serving as a pre-requisite to proceed to the next stage of development. Lastly, person-environment interaction theories examine how an individual interacts with the environmental conditions and attributes of people in the environment that in turn, influences how one develops (Pacarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Although psychosocial, cognitive-structural, and person-environment interaction theories are used to understand student development from multiple vantage points, the developmental nature of psychosocial theories has been discussed most frequently in the academic advising literature due to the understanding the age in which student commonly attend college is influential in shaping their future goals and development (Astin, 1977; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Crookston, 1994). Limited research exists on connecting cognitive-structural and person-environment interaction in the context of academic advising. A potential area of research is to examine academic advising from a cognitive-structural or person-environment interaction perspective. A varying perspective can inform a new perspective of the role and function of academic advising. The remainder of the

Changing Majors. At Southwestern University, students must engage with academic advising in order to change majors. To better understand how and why students their majors, an examination of the literature revealed limited research. Although the literature existed on the selection major process (Malgwi, Howe, & Burnaby, 2005; Porter & Umback, 2006), only a handful of studies revealed factors that

account for a student's decision to change majors. A study by Firmin and MacKillop (2008) conducted 20 semi-structured interviews of undergraduate students to learn about their decision to change majors. Results found that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors played a role in a student's decision to change majors. Students demonstrated a lack of self-awareness and confidence in making decisions; however, decisions and awareness are brought forth by individuals in a student's immediate environment such as friends and family. The importance of personal development needs to be considered in addition to social-ecological factors. Due to the limited literature on understanding why students change major, related literature on major decision-making provides valuable insight on the students experience when they change their major.

A quantitative study in which researchers examined the results of two questionnaires to devise decisions making profiles of students who were selecting a major in college (Germeijs et al., 2012). Results found that students with a foreclosed identity (Marcia, 1966) about their future career, meaning they demonstrate low exploration but high commitment to major had lower career decision-making self-efficacy. Another study explored the impact of major on college persistence among freshmen in professionally-oriented majors such as business, engineering, teaching, and nursing (Leppel, 2001). Findings show student persistence is based on the extent of one's goal commitment, self-image effects, social forces, and subject-interest.

In the context of students who transition to Educational Studies from teacher certification majors, students may not have explored many other majors or careers during their college experience but demonstrate high commitment to the teaching profession. The transparency by the Teachers College at Southwestern University informs students of

their commitment to the teaching profession. In such environments, the culture assumes all students want to be teachers and may not encourage major and career exploration. When students leave a professional program major into a non-professional major within the education field may influence one's level of goal commitment, self-image effects, social forces, and subject-interest may influence how one views themselves and their decisions to stay in college and their overall personal development.

Academic advising has expanded to support students in their academic, vocational and personal development in which advisors facilitate conversations and critical thinking to guide students in making major or career related decisions pertinent to their future. The use of developmental advising and building a partnership between the advisor and student to achieve academic, vocational, and personal goals can help students during the change of major transition by connecting students' interests to majors to increase the value of university resources. Gordon and Steele (1992) suggested institutions create alternative academic advising programs for students who are selecting or changing majors. Such students may have earned more than 60 credit hours and not making progress in their current major, denied admission to a selective program, unsuccessful in completing pre-requisites for a specific major program, and hold junior standing and still undecided about their major.

Overall, both intrinsic and extrinsic factors can inform a student's decision to change majors. The reasons for changing majors and the extent of those reasons are vast which can make the decision difficult because they result in change. When students make decisions, they understand the short and long term implications of changing majors.

Transition and Advising. In my understanding of Schlossberg's theory, I have defined transition in the context of this study as the degree at which an individual's perception of an experience changes their roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions (Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson, 2006). Transition focuses on how an individual perceives the experience and how well-equipped the individual is with resources to cope. The literature on student transition was in the context of transition to college for specific student populations or college to career transition. Schlossberg, Lynch, and Chickering (1989) studied adult learners in the higher education, specifically students outside of the age range of 18-24 years old. Older students deciding or return to attend college have different needs and perspectives because they bring work and life experiences to the college environment. Understanding the context of the transitions helps higher education institutions better support students in the return to school transition.

The recent literature on transition in higher education utilizing the Theory of Transition is about veteran students' transition from service and duty to school. In a case study seeking to understand veterans' transition to community college, findings showed students coped with transition better when there was a balance of the situation, self, support, and strategies factors (Wheeler, 2012). Additionally, renegotiating relationships upon return to normal civilian life were complex but allowed veterans to do so in meaningful ways to support their transition. The study displayed the complexities of the transitions and how they vary depending on the studied population. University support services have an opportunity to provide the appropriate resources to help manage transitions. As a first and consistent point of contact for students, academic advising can serve as a support services to build a relationship with at the institution. Other literatures

in higher education examine the college-to-career transition. A study on newly working professionals indicated participants conveyed the importance of social support and networking and adaptability and resilience to cope with the college to career transition (Murphy et al., 2010; Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008). These studies exemplify how students seek social interactions in their college career, supporting their time in college and life thereafter.

With the use of the theory of transition as a framework, academic advising with a developmental approach can help students explore, understand, and cope with the transitions they may face in their college career (Chickering, 1994). When students encounter transitions, advisors can help students navigate the transition effectively by helping students take inventory of their situation, support, strategies, and self. Also, it is important to understand the type, context, and impact of the transition based on the student's perception of the transition. When transitions change a student's roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions, the transition also changes their academic, vocational, and personal goals. In the context of this study, I will focus on how academic advising supports students' vocational development.

Vocational Development. A student's academic development begins with the selection of a major upon entering college. Institutions such as Southwestern University require students to identify their major during the college application process. Educational choices such as choosing a major are often decided based on the potential career options (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). In understanding that advising influences a student's academic development, advisors also have an integral role in a student's vocational development, which is defined as the compilation of career exploration,

planning, and decision making to obtain jobs and establish careers (Germeijs et al, 2012; Lent & Brown, 2013). Literature on career advising and career counseling demonstrate how advising and counseling services supports a student's vocational development (Ledwith, 2014). Career counseling deals with strong emotional challenges individuals face in the academic and career decision-making process. Moreover, career advising helps students understand the complex dynamics between their academic experiences and career fields and encourages self-exploration, gaining academic and career information, and decision-making (Gordon, 2006). The outcomes career advising aligns with O'Banion's advising model (1994). The sequential five-dimension model provided a framework for advising in community colleges and is can be adapted for four-year institutions. The five dimensions include "(1) exploration of life goals, (2) exploration of vocational goals, (3) program choice, (4) course choice, and (5) scheduling courses" (O'Banion, 1994, p. 10). The model supports the notion that college is intended for exploration of vocational and life goals. Once a student can envision their future life, major selection and appropriate courses will align with such goals.

Southwestern University require students to select a major upon entering college. For students who are undecided, they may select the exploratory major option. In understanding that adolescents make educational decisions, such as major choice, as foresight into their occupation choices (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), requiring incoming students to select major sets a precedence of having already defined career goals and aspirations upon entering college. At the inception of their college career, students work with academic advisors to ensure they complete the degree requirements for their specified major.

In the exploration of one's academic, vocational and personal goals, students may decide to change their major. A study by Kramer, Higley, and Olsen (1994) found that in a two-year span, the percentage of freshmen who changed their majors at least once in their first-year in college increased from 46 to 69% (as cited in Firmin & MacKillop, 2008). Advising can provide insight and resources to help students explore various majors and career options (Gordon, 2006; Ledwith, 2014). In a study examining students' decision to change majors found that intrinsic factors included challenges with making long-term decisions, seeking a major that complement personal interests, and satisfaction with the major (Firmin & MacKillop, 2008). Additionally, extrinsic factors such as lack of familial guidance and direction and knowledge regarding majors and future careers also influenced a student's decision to change their major. In understanding students exploration academic, vocational, and developmental goals in college that may result in changing majors, O'Banion's (1994) advising framework affirms the need to explore life and vocational goals prior to selecting a major.

In understanding that students must select a major upon entering Southwestern University, academic advising can expand current practices to consider the environmental factors contributing the student concerns, control, curiosity, and confidence when changing majors. Specifically, in the context of students changing majors from teacher certification to Educational Studies, current advising practices are insufficient in supporting students in the transition. Thus, an advising approach accounting for the multiple systems influencing a student's development in changing major, can influence how students cultivate adaptability.

Integrative Model of Social-Ecology and Academic Advising

The model in Figure 1 integrates Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development and Moos' social ecology theory. Additionally, the model includes my context as an academic advisor at the Teachers College at Southwestern University.

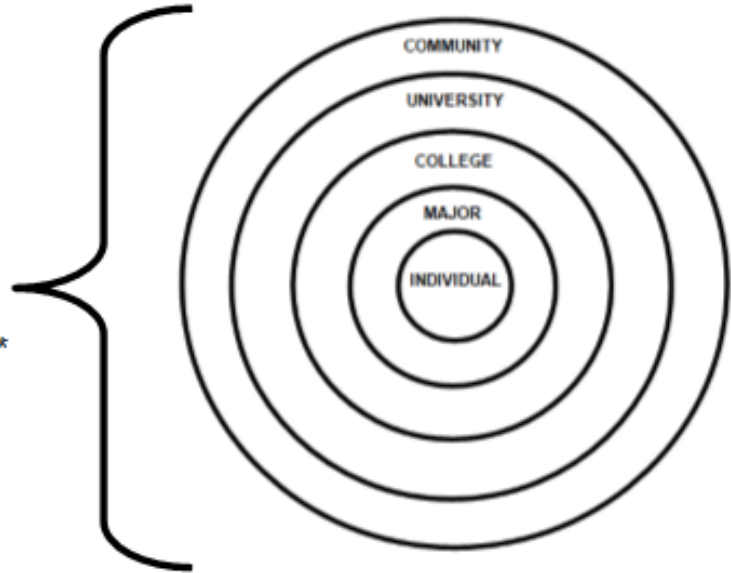
In understanding students are part of multiple systems that influences their development, Figure 1 outlines the systems that influences the development of students who transition from teacher certification to Educational Studies: community, university, college, major, and individual. Additionally, the model acknowledges the pivotal role academic advising can provide service and support to students that considers the layers of systems. In viewing academic advising from a social ecological perspective, services and support can include the following three dimensions as described by Moos (1979): relationship, self-concept, and system maintenance. The relationship dimension examines the extent to which individuals are involved and provide support to others in the environment. Self-concept, or personal growth assess the potential or opportunity for personal growth and development between environments and goals of the environment. Lastly, system maintenance and change dimensions examine the clear expectations, control and responsiveness of the environment to change.

Figure 1. *Integrative Social-Ecological Model for Academic Advising*

Academic Advising

- Relationships*
- Self-Concept*
- System Maintenance*

*(*Concepts from Moos, 1979)*



The integration of Bronfenbrenner's and Moos' ecological models considers the environmental factors that influences one's development. A supportive environment will cultivate adaptability or further develop existing adaptability in students, specifically those who transition into Educational Studies. The existing literature was synthesized into this integrative model to understand the context of this study. As such, this was model was used to inform the design of the intervention for this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, I will discuss the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the intervention of a career advising program followed by the research design, specifically, the methodology, setting, sampling, role of researcher, and data collection. Subsequently, I will describe the trustworthiness of the study and the methods for data analysis.

The purpose of this action research qualitative study was to examine how an academic advising career program factoring the social-ecological environment cultivated adaptability with students who changed from teacher certification tracked majors to Educational Studies. As students learned to become more adaptable in their development, the study examined how students engaged in career exploration, planning, and decision making. The study was designed to capture students' perceptions and experience in an advising career program and how their adaptability was cultivated or enhanced as a result. Participants of this advising career program were expected to further develop or support the cultivation of their adaptability in the transition of changing majors.

This study addressed the following research questions:

- 1) How do undergraduate students describe their transition between majors into Educational Studies?
- 2) How do undergraduate students describe their experience with the services from an academic advising career program designed to help them identify and adapt to new career options.

Intervention

This study examined the ecological landscape of academic advising in supporting students' transition of changing majors and cultivating adaptability to inform their career development. The advising program aimed to cultivate adaptability in students who change their major to Educational Studies structured an environment that incorporates the social climate through relationships, self-concept, and system maintenance (Moos, 1979) and the ecology of multiple systems of the individual, major, college, university, and community. Also, the program was designed to capture participants' perception of their ecology on how they view and understand their adaptability across multiple systems of their environment.

The career advising program included three 90-minute sessions over a span of six weeks. The design of each session broadly align with one of the three components of the career construction, life design model: construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of stories to inform one's career adaptability (Savickas, 2011, 2013). Furthermore, the intervention considered the reciprocal nature between varying systems in the environment and an individual's development as described by Bronfenbrenner (1979). To cultivate adaptability in participants, the program must also be adaptive and flexible to respond to the needs of the participants. At the start of the program, an outline of activities were planned for each session but changes were made to the outlined as informed and modified by the participants' feedback. The first session was informed by the literature and by participants' feedback prior to the start of the program. After enlisting feedback in each session, the subsequent session was organized based on topics of interests expressed by the participants.

Career Advising Program. The academic advising career program took place between July 2017 to November 2017. In the program, a total of nine participants agreed to be a part of the study and engage with career related activities and guest speakers. Table 2 outlined each session was planned prior to the program, however, the agenda for each session evolved as participants shared the topics and activities they wanted to engage in subsequent sections.

Table 2. *Overview of Academic Advising Career Program*

Session	Guest Speaker	Topics and Activities
Session 1 – Construct past experiences	1) Educational Studies Alumni (Melanie)	1) Wandering map activity (to reflect on past experiences)
Session 2 – Deconstruct past experiences	1) Community Member (Stefa)	1) Strengths test
Session 3 – Reconstruct new experiences	1) Community Member (Lizzie) 2) Career Services Representative (Jane)	1) 5-year resume activity

Additionally, a guest speaker was invited to attend each of the three sessions. The intent behind the guest speakers was to incorporate the community system into the intervention to connect and inform the program participants. The participants were recruited from my own network and were identified by myself as having a compelling career journey that could support the goals of the career advising program. The guest speakers were asked to share their experiences in navigating their career paths into the positions they hold today. The guest speakers were given prompting question to help prepare the speaker to generate content to share with participants. The prompting questions were as followed:

1. What is your current position? What education and previous positions led to this current position?
2. How and why education?
3. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
4. What advice would you give undergraduate students as they pursue jobs after graduation?
5. What will make someone successful in finding a job and career they are passionate about?

Each session as it was carried out will be detailed in the following sections.

Additionally, the guest speakers are briefly described in chronological order of the intervention. The guest speakers were schedule during sessions that most accommodated their schedule and availability.

Session 1. The career construction approach utilizing a life design approach begins with construction or co-construction of one's past (Savickas, 2013). The overarching goal of the first session was for participants to reflect on past experiences to guide and inform areas of interests and potential career options. The first session, with all 9 participants in attendance, started with the introduction and expectations of the program. By convening participants who may not know each other, I wanted to make sure all participants felt comfortable with me as the advisor and facilitator and with each other. Additionally, the first session was intended to have the participants trust the process of this program and to identify areas of concern, curiosity, control, and confidence regarding their career exploration, planning, and decision making. The information shared by participants in the first session informed the topics and content of

the following sessions. Participants shaping the sessions provided an opportunity to shape their environment that best served their needs in relation to their own vocational development.

Session 1 guest speaker: Melanie. An alumnus of the Educational Studies, Melanie was also in her last semester of graduate school pursuing a Master's in the field of higher education. Melissa described how she changed her major four times within the Teachers College before she chose and graduated from Educational Studies. As she settled into Educational Studies, Melanie felt herself begin to thrive and clarify her career goals and aspirations. Such clarity informed her decision to pursue a Master's in higher education. Currently, she holds an entry level job at SU. I chose Melanie as a speaker because she was a graduate of the Educational Studies major and shared relatable experiences to the participants.

Following the introduction of Melanie, participants engaged in a *Wandering Map* activity outlined by Brooks (2010) where individuals mapped out significant, memorable, and meaningful events or experiences in their lives. Participants were given a list of prompting questions to help generate responses. Sample of prompting questions included, "What significant events or experiences can you remember from when you were very young?" or "What are you most proud of in your life?" After participants generated responses, they organized their events and experiences into categories and then into themes. A group discussion followed regarding the traits and skills utilized to accomplish the events and experiences on the wandering map. The intent of this activity was to help participants draw out past experiences and the meaning those experiences had in their lives. The themes of the events and experiences guided participants to

acknowledge past experiences and begin to generate new meaning. The session concluded with a group debrief where participants were asked questions regarding their reflections and thoughts about the session and how it relates to their career development (Appendix D). In the debrief, participants were asked what they are curious or concerned about to inform the topics that would be addressed in the next session.

Session 2. The goal of this session was for participants to deconstruct past experiences to create new meaning. The content of this session was shaped by the participants as a group in Session 1. The topics of interests identified by the group were personal strengths and resume writing. Although other topics were mentioned in Session 1, this session was designed based on topics that could be covered within the timeframe allocated for the session. Additional topics would be integrated into Session 3. Of the 9 participants, seven students attended. The two participants who did not attend informed me prior to the program regarding familial obligations.

Session 2 guest speaker: Stefa. Although Stefa pursued a psychology degree for her undergraduate degree, like Melanie, also earned her Master's in higher education. Upon graduation from graduate school, Stefa worked at SU and teaching a class on social entrepreneurship. Shortly thereafter, she was given opportunities for several non-profit organizations with her expertise on entrepreneurship. Such opportunities led to her current position as a lobbyist for an educational advocacy organization that focus on supporting teachers in the field. I selected Stefa as a speaker because her educational background was not in K-12 education but developed a passion in education advocacy. Stefa's story was intended to help participants understand a college degree does not have to lead to specific career options.

After engaging with discussion and asking questions with the speaker, participants engaged in three activities: mapping out their strengths, completing a questionnaire about work environment preferences, and engaging in a resume writing activity.

Participants were sent an email three days prior to Session 2 to complete an online personal strengths test and to bring their results to the session. For the activity, participants divided a piece of paper into five columns and labeled each column with their top five strengths identified in their results. Participants were then asked to reflect on past experiences in which they displayed each strength in the appropriate column. The strengths activity was intended to give participants the opportunity to think about their past experiences in a different way. As Savickas (2012, 2013) described, after an individual constructs their past experiences with meaning, they can begin to reconstruct those experiences to explore new meaning. The next activity was a questionnaire to have participants think about potential settings and cultures they would be interested in working. In conjunction with the strengths activity, participants engaged in a discussion regarding various types of settings they would be interested in working. The session concluded with a resume activity. Participants were given a job listing for an undisclosed entry level job. They had to generate descriptive sentences about their past experiences in alignment with the information given on the job listing. Due to time constraints, the activity was not fully completed in the session but was completed in the Session 3. The group began an initial discussion about how they felt doing the activity. Similarly, to Session 1, this session concluded with a group debrief. Following the session,

participants received a reminder email about joining LinkedIn and the Educational Studies group.

Session 3. The goal of this session was for participants reconstruct new experiences by thinking about future and career possibilities. The content of Session 3 was informed by participant feedback in Session 2. Session 3 included two guest speakers. The first guest speaker was from Career Services at the institution to explain resources available for students. The second speaker was an individual who was a teacher for five years but decided to change her career trajectory. Her career journey can help individuals see how they can enter a different career field and acquire strategies on how to navigate the transition of changing careers. A total of 7 participants attended the final session.

Session 3 guest speaker: Lizzie. The last speaker, Lizzie, was a teacher for five years but now currently works in a sales job for a startup company. In her story, Lizzie described her reasons for entering the teaching profession and her desire to change her career trajectory and leave the profession. As such, she discussed the tribulations and unwavering compromise to not settle for anything less than what she wanted. Through Lizzie's story, participants may realize if they had chosen to stay in their teacher certification major, they may have still found themselves at a career crossroads years after graduation.

Session 3 guest speaker: Jane. Jane is employed at SU in the career services department. Although Jane was a guest speaker, she served a different purpose and role at the institution. Academic advising often refer students to support services on campus but students may not follow through or take advantage of such services. By

incorporating Jane at the end of the intervention to discuss services offered by the institution, I hoped that participants would gain relevance and understanding to how these support services can them as they transition out of college. This was also an opportunity to incorporate the institution system into the intervention.

After the guest speaker, the session continued to discuss the resume activity, where participants were given a job description for an undisclosed position. The discussion ensued from the activity helped participants understand how to strengthen their resume by learning how to tailor experiences to a specific job and how to extract the skills from past experiences as leverage for future job opportunities. After working with the job description, participants were given time to work on their resume and make improvements. During this time, participants had the opportunity to work with peers, advisor, or alumni to address specific questions in their resume. After the activity, I gave a presentation about graduate school. This was a topic of interest for participants and how that factors into their career plans. The session concluded with some reflection activities about their future career plans. Participants were given index card and were asked to write down three words that described what they learned in the session. Each participant was asked to share what they learned and how they continue to work towards their career development after this session.

In addition to activities and guest speakers, I was present for each session to serve as a facilitator and as an academic advisor to address the college system in the environment.

Research Methods

In this section, the methodology, setting, participants and sampling, and role of the researcher will be discussed. Furthermore, I described the action plan, data collection resources, and timeline of the study. Lastly, I discussed the data analysis process.

Action Research. Action research is the collaborative and systematic cycles of inquiry and actions done by or with individuals of a community in a reflective way to address situations or challenge resulting in changed individuals or environments (Herr & Anderson, 2015). At the core, action research creates knowledge to improve practice (McNiff, 2016). In this study, I integrated action with both with theory and participation to develop solutions to challenges in the context of the environment (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) of students changing majors in the Teachers College. The use of action research aligns with the adaptively responsive nature of this study to support students who transitioned into the Educational Studies major. Furthermore, action research has meaning beyond the local context but in communities and greater society (Bradbury-Huang, 2010). The implications of this study go beyond the primary context of developing students' adaptability to a new major but in the multiple nested systems of their environment.

Constructivist Theoretical Perspective. Constructivism emphasizes how individuals make meaning of their experiences (Jonassen, 1991). The perception of reality lies in the individual based on their introspective self-consciousness. Constructivism acknowledges one's relations with other individuals and to their environment in addition to how one makes meaning and operates in the world. The academic advising career program aligned with a constructivist epistemology by examining how individuals make meaning with other individuals and their environment.

To understand the complex nature of transitions, helping individuals adapt to a changing environment influence how one develops and operates in that environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Qualitative Approach. To understand the influence of a social ecological approach to academic advising on students' adaptability as they transition to a new major, this study was designed with a qualitative approach to address the research questions. According to Creswell (2015), qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon or explore a problem. Qualitative research is valuable in obtaining participants' perceptions and essences of an experience. This research study was designed with a constructivist epistemology, in which knowledge and meaning is constructed in a social context between individuals and the environment (Crotty, 2011; Flick, 2014).

The study captured the complex nature of the multifaceted layers of a student's perceived environment and how it influences their transition experience and their level of adaptability, particularly in their vocational development. The qualitative research collected was inductive and emergent in nature based on the data collected by the researcher (Creswell, 2015). Data collection entailed capturing students' experience of an advising program to understand how it influences their adaptability in a one semester study.

Setting

Southwestern University is a large public research university committed to student success, access, and excellence. The university is organized by 14 different colleges, each housing majors in that specific field at the undergraduate and graduate level. Students are required to select major upon application submission to the

university. To ensure students make progress in their chosen degree, the institution provides major maps outlining the necessary courses to complete. Additionally, the university has a degree tracking system to ensure students are on-track to graduate in a four-year timeline. Tools such as major maps and degree tracking support the institution's goal of obtaining a 90% retention rate of all students, which serves as an indicator of graduation rates and institutional success. The setting of this study is the Teachers College, which is the ninth largest college at the university located on three out of five campuses. The institution calculates student enrollment and retention numbers based on 21st day data because it represents the students who retain in courses for that semester. The Teachers College houses over 5,000 students, with 2,582 students in undergraduate programs. In the total population of undergraduate students, approximately 77% (n=1,982) of students are pursuing teacher certification majors, learning skills and knowledge for the teaching profession. The remaining 23% (n=600) of the student population are in the Educational Studies major.

Educational Studies is the largest major in terms of student enrollment. This is primarily attributed to students enrolled in the online form of the degree. In fall 2017, approximately 76% (n=453) students enrolled in the Educational Studies major are online while 24% (n=147) are enrolled in the on-campus program. Specifically, the central campus enrolled 119 students. Although the curriculum objectives of both programs are the same, each program format attracts a specific student population. The students in the on-campus program at the central campus will be the focus of this study.

Overall, 65% (n=95) of students in Educational Studies changed from teacher certification majors across all campuses while 67% (n=80) of students changed at the

central campus. Although students change majors, they are still part of the Teachers College resulting in difficulties adapting to a familiar environment in ways to support their new vocational development. This study will take place in the Teachers College's central campus, specifically with the Office of Student Services in which advising is housed. Academic advisors are assigned to work with specific majors in the Teachers College. Each major is assigned to two advisors. Due to the comparatively smaller population of students in the in-person Educational Studies, one academic advisor is assigned to that specific caseload.

Student enrollment at the central campus fluctuates throughout the semester but have consistently average out to 120 students in the past three years. Students changed to Educational Studies all throughout the semester to increase enrollment; however, because change of major students are often juniors or seniors, approximately 25%-33% will graduate every semester. Although enrollment has been as high in 150 at the end of fall 2015, the number of students graduating reduced the enrollment back to around 120. Students who change to Educational Studies are encouraged to meet with the Educational Studies advisor to change major, develop a course schedule, determine a graduation timeline, and discuss career options.

Recruitment and Participants

The participants for this action research study were recruited using purposive sampling, a non-representative subset of the student population (Creswell, 2015). Although approximately 65% of students changing to Educational Studies from teacher certification majors also hold junior or senior standing (i.e. earned at least 56 credit hours), any student changing majors from teacher certification earning at least 45 credits

was eligible for the study. The data in previous years indicated that students who changed majors to Educational Studies in the sophomore year (24-56 credits) recognized they would not meet admission criteria to the professional teaching program at 60 credit hours. As such, academic performance and timeliness to graduation contributed to students' decision to change majors to Educational Studies. Sophomores with 45 or more earned credits are eligible participants because they have spent an adequate amount of time in the teacher certification major to identify with the teaching profession and are approaching junior standing of 56 or more credits.

Selection criteria for this study included students who changed majors from teacher certification tracked to Educational Studies who earned 45 or more credit hours. A total of nine participants out of the 78 students recruited participated in the study. A study with nine participants ensured enough data was collected to address the research questions.

Participants were recruited in three cycles from late July to the beginning of September. The first phase included students with 45 or more credits but had not completed a full semester in the Educational Studies major. Students who recently changed their major may have concerns related to their potential career goals and plans. As such, they may have expressed interest in working towards new career goals. The second recruitment phase included students with senior standing because graduation is often a primary concern. Lastly, all students with junior standing were recruited to participate in the study. In total, 78 students were recruited via email for the study, 24 recent change-of-majors, 37 seniors, and 25 juniors. Recruitment emails (Appendix B) were first sent to change-of-major students at the end of July with the consent form

attached (Appendix A). A follow-up email was sent three weeks later in understanding students have varying schedules and access to emails in the summer. Concurrent to the follow-up email for phase one, the first recruitment email was sent to all seniors followed by an email to the juniors two weeks later. All seniors and juniors were sent a follow-up email a week after the initial email had been sent. A week prior to the study, I visited two classes that represented a captive audience of the targeted Educational Studies population to explain the program and encouraged students to enroll.

Potential participants were asked to provide a video introduction describing the reasons for partaking in the study (Appendix C). Participants' spot in the study was confirmed upon submission of their video and consent form. If more than 12 participants submit consent forms and introduction videos, the first 12 submissions were considered for the study and the remaining potential participants were placed on a waiting list. The vacancies would be filled based on the order the introduction video was submitted. At the end of the study, participants selected a pseudonym to keep their identity anonymous.

A total of 9 participants were recruited for the study. All participants held senior standing and will graduate the same semester as the career advising program or the following program. Table 3 provides information on each participant of the study.

Table 3. *Participant Profiles*

Participant Name (pseudonym)	Gender	Class Standing	Semesters Until Graduation	Major Prior to Ed Studies	Class Standing When Changed to Ed Studies
Andrew	Male	Senior	1	Elementary Education	Junior
Brittany	Female	Senior	1	Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education	Sophomore
Frankie	Female	Senior	1	Elementary Education – Bilingual/English as a Second Language	Senior
Harper	Female	Senior	1	Early Childhood Education	Sophomore
John	Male	Senior	1	Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education	Senior
Lisa	Female	Senior	< 1	Secondary Education – English	Sophomore
Rose	Female	Senior	< 1	Elementary Education – Bilingual/English as a Second Language	Senior
Sam	Female	Senior	1	Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education	Senior
Taylor	Female	Senior	1	Elementary Education	Junior

Six out of the 9 participants held junior or senior standing when they changed majors to Educational Studies. The three participants who held senior standing when they changed their major all participated in the student teaching experience, in which they were fully

integrated into the classroom and serving as a co-facilitator of primary instruction. The majors the participants changed from varied across many teacher certification majors.

Role of Researcher

I will oversee the study and facilitate the intervention as a researcher and practitioner. Through the consent form and recruitment emails, the participants were aware their choice to participate in the study did not affect the services they would have been given otherwise. Students who opted into the study continued to receive services under the scope of my daily duties and responsibilities such as discussing degree progress, referring students to university support services, career counseling, and other related administrative duties. The intervention restructured career-related conversations with an ecological approach by incorporating university support services, alumni from the major, academic advisor, community members, and current students in the major.

In addition to the roles of researcher and advisor, I was also a participant of the program. As a facilitator and participant of the program. I provided insights to my own personal experiences and engaged in dialogue with the participants. To document my various roles in this study, I documented my reflections in a researcher's journal (Janesick, 1999). In the journal, I reflected on the process and the practice of carrying out the intervention to promote and understand all facets of the research project (Borg, 2001). Also, the journal allowed me to acknowledge my experience as an individual who pursued a teacher certification major but did not pursue teaching as a career and my personal experiences. In my practice and reflection, I documented my role of authority at the institution and power dynamic between me and the participants. As a researcher, I sought to engage students in inquiry to create a collaborative dynamic to help students in

cultivating or further developing adaptability in the context of changing majors and their vocational development.

Data Collection Resources

In this study, the data collection tools included an introduction video, session debriefs, discussions in LinkedIn, letters to future participants, and semi-structured interviews. Data collection commenced in July 2017 and ended in October 2017. Table 4 presents the research questions and the corresponding data collection tools.

Table 4. *Research Questions and Data Collection Tools*

Research Question	Data Collection Tool
<u>RQ1:</u> How do undergraduate students describe their transition between majors into Educational Studies?	1) Video introduction 2) Audio from session & debrief 3) Semi-structured interviews (after program)
<u>RQ2:</u> How do undergraduate students describe their experience with the services from an academic advising career program designed to help them identify and adapt to new career options.	1) Audio from session & debrief 2) LinkedIn group discussions 3) Semi-structured interviews (after program)

Video Introduction. To partake in the study, participants submitted an introduction video to explain their reasons and desires to be participate in the program. The video allowed participants to express themselves with minimal pressure because they were not directly speaking to a researcher, advisor, or their peers. The five-question prompt can be found in Appendix C. One prompt includes, “Describe the reasons for changing your major to Educational Studies.” Another prompt is, “What do you hope to

gain in this program?” The application is submitted in a form of a video because it will allow participants to be recruited during the summer while classes are not in session. Responses from the video served as an understanding of participants’ sentiments for selecting to participate in the program and changing their major to Educational Studies in addition providing information to how the first session was structured.

Audio from Session and Debriefs. The audio from session and debriefs were conducted in a group format, resembling an informal group interview. Although an agenda was set for each session, as a facilitator, I posed questions to participants throughout the sessions to gain a deeper insight of participants’ thoughts about the topic of conversation. Discussions led to additional topics of conversations and insights to support the research questions for this study.

At the end of each session, participants participated in a group debrief to capture their experiences of each session. The debriefs were formatted similarly to a focus group by convening a group of participants who can answer questions and provide feedback (Creswell, 2015). Session debriefs took on a focus group interview format. The prompts asked participants to reflect on the session and provide insights they gained from their participation. The debrief was facilitated by the researcher and was audio recorded to capture the responses. Examples of debrief questions included, “How has this session influence how you think about your potential career options and trajectories? or “Describe your ability to adapt to the Educational Studies major and to new career options?” Additionally, participants had the opportunity to include any additional feedback, insight, or reflections beyond the prompts. Two questions will provide insight to the researcher on content for future sessions. The prompts include, “Describe your

curiosities and concerns as a result of this session” and “What recommendations do you have to make improvements to the session?” The session debrief questions are found in Appendix D.

LinkedIn Group. In between each session, participants engaged in a LinkedIn group where participants could ask questions or share any findings from their personal research on potential career opportunities. Participants were asked to create a LinkedIn account as part of their participation in the study. Specifically, all participants were added to a private group called “Educational Studies” for the participants of the study by the researcher. After each session, participants were sent a follow-up email reminding them to create their account so they could be added to the group. As the researcher, I added opportunities, relevant career articles, and prompts to obtain more specific information about participants; career interests. The protocol for the LinkedIn group can be found in Appendix F.

Letter Writing. After the last session, participants wrote a letter to a future participant of the program. The letter writing approach is a method to capture stories and one’s inner voice to how they interpreted their experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Penn & Frankfurt, 1994). The letter was intended to provide a deeper understanding of the participants’ stories and experiences and how it facilitates their adaptability to navigate their career goals in the context of changing majors. Participants were given a prompt for writing the letter to describe what they have learned from the program and how the program informed their future career trajectories, which can be found in Appendix G. The purpose of the letter was to allow the participant to reflect on their experience with the advising career program. Participants engaged in this reflective

exercise to address their emotions associated to the intervention experience in understanding their letters will be shared to provide insight to individuals in future iterations of the program. Samples of letters are found in Appendix J. In the final interview, individuals were asked about the process and content of their letters.

Interviews. This study concluded with semi-structured interviews to understand the perspective from the subject's point of view to reveal the meaning of their experiences (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Interviews were viewed as social practice through the engagement of both the interviewer and interviewee that can help the interviewee make new meaning of their experiences. As such, the relationships in an environment can support one's development. The study included one semi-structured interview for participants to reflect on the program. Specifically, the interview addressed participants' perception of the social climate in relation to their adaptability and vocational development. The participants' insights were utilized to inform future advising practices for students changing their major to Educational Studies. Sample question about the social climate includes, "Describe how you adjusted in the transition from a teacher certification major to Educational Studies" or "Describe the individuals you interacted with in this program and how it contributed to your experience?" Additionally, the interview included questions regarding adaptability and vocational development include, "Describe your feelings on your major and potential career options" or "How have your future career goals and plans been shaped after participating in the advising career program?" The full interview protocol can be found in Appendix H.

Timeline and Curricular Sequence

In the designing the study, I designed an adaptable career advising program shaped by the participants in the program. Also, I developed protocols for the data collection tools. Additionally, I kept a researcher’s journal to document my insights about the program and about the research throughout the semester. Table 5 outlines the timeline for the study and the estimated time participants committed to each aspect of the study.

Table 5. *Study Timeline and Sequence*

Period	Data Collection	Length of Time
July 24 – September 13	Recruit participants for study – video introduction	5 minutes
September 14	Session 1: Construct past experiences	120 minutes
September 14 to September 28	Linkedin Group Discussions	30 minutes
September 28	Session 2: Deconstruct past experiences	120 minutes
September 28 to October 12	Linkedin Group Discussions	30 minutes
October 12	Session 3: Reconstruct new experiences	120 minutes
October 13- November 1	Letter writing	30 minutes
October 13- November 1	Final Interview	60 minutes
Total Participant Time Commitment		8.5 hours

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using grounded theory which is described as, “a way of thinking about and conceptualizing data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 275). Charmaz (2014) defined grounded theory as, “methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data

themselves.” (p. 1). The findings and conceptual model created are grounded in the data, hence the name of this method. Grounded theory was developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967), who described grounded theory as systematic, with the use of a comparative analysis approach.

Glaser and Strauss established grounded theory as a form of research in the mid-1960’s in an era where quantitative research with a positivist approach served as the primary way of knowing (Charmaz, 2014). The positivist approach to research contributed to Glaser and Strauss’ work in exploring other ways of knowing through a systematic way of qualitative research. Throughout the evolution and refinement of grounded theory, they agreed on the emergent nature of discoveries and processes. Over time, Glaser and Strauss diverged in their research on grounded theory. Strauss alongside Corbin published works on the emergent processes on the technical aspects of how to do grounded theory research while Glaser argued such work contradicts one of the primary considerations of grounded theory, which should focus on emergent discoveries that cannot be formulaic in nature (Charmaz, 2014). In the early 2000’s, Kathy Charmaz developed the concept of constructing grounded theory in which she believes data and theory are discovered in the data but rather constructed by the researchers. As such, her research suggests flexible guidelines rather than rules and requirements. According to Charmaz, “Grounded theory serves as a way to learn about the worlds we study and a method for developing theories to understand them.” (p. 17).

To learn about the worlds we study, we must recognize the role of context in our understanding. Strauss and Corbin (1994) described the contextual nature of the analysis as a central feature to grounded theory. As a way to integrate complex concepts,

researchers have adapted grounded theory to meet the contextualized needs of their research (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). One of the primary concerns of researchers who utilize a grounded theory methodology is discovering processes versus focusing on individuals or stages. The complex nature of this study with the utilization of an ecological lens to understand transitions and adaptability, which considers a multitude and magnitude of factors aligns with the use of a grounded theory analysis approach.

Although the findings from traditional grounded theory emerge from the data, this study utilized an adapted version of analysis to help manage the volume of data collected in the study and to ensure the findings address the problem of practice. In the adapted version, the data was reviewed and extracted based on how the three primary concepts of this study that address the research questions: transition, adaptability, and social climate. The definitions of each of these terms presented in previous chapters served as a baseline for how I interpreted the data. The extractions were divided into three separate documents and were then analyzed using traditional grounded theory methods. After the data was organized by concept, it was analyzed through multiple rounds of coding utilizing open, axial, and selective codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In each round of coding, I used the constant comparative method, where I compared codes with previous codes, to group codes and inform the next level of coding. The comparison of codes and concepts helps to verify concepts in alignment to theory and the generation of new concepts (Glaser & Holton, 2004). Selective coding, the final round of coding, is where the researcher organizes the categories by themes to determine how they relate to one another and establish what story is told.

The last aspect of the grounded theory analysis process is building the conceptual model. The conceptual model includes relationships and connections across a set of concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The model for this study was built based on the selective themes as the major findings in the data. The axial codes served as descriptors of how the selective codes were described and defined in the data. Once the conceptual model was devised, the data was then reviewed through the conceptual model to ensure the model was reflective of the data.

In Chapter 2, an integrative model was presented to use as the framework to design the career advising program. The intersectionality of transition, adaptability, and social climate in the context of changing majors is limited in the research. As such, a grounded theory analysis provides a way to integrate and create new understandings of these concepts. Additionally, a grounded theory approach supports the multiple data collection tools in the study that will allow for themes to emerge from the data. This approach was selected to ensure the participants' voices and perceptions are considered and used to construct a conceptual model to understand their experiences in relation to their adaptability. The conceptual model was conceived through analytic memoing and a constant comparative approach reviewing the codes. Memoing is a critical step in the analysis process to capture how I worked with the data alongside the connections, comparisons, and directions in the data, which also captured how codes and themes emerged (Charmaz, 2014).

In utilizing the constant-comparative method and memoing through the multiple rounds of coding, I noted the overlap of the selective codes in terms of how participants described the codes. For example, codes such as 'make meaning of information,' 'seek

enjoyment in career,’ ‘desire to not be stuck,’ and ‘hearing and seeing others figure it out/navigate,’ had multiple vantage points in how it was described by the participants. As such the findings display the overlap and interconnectedness of the codes.

Trustworthiness

This study centralized participants’ perceptions of their transition and experience in a career advising program. Due to the contextualize nature of this study, findings do not attempt to seek truth, replicability, or generalizability. As such, Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasized the importance of establishing trustworthiness of the findings to understand the validity within qualitative research. Establishing trustworthiness includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Lincoln and Guba further described the importance credibility and how researchers can achieve transferability, dependability, and confirmability through credibility. As such, triangulation and member checking. To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, credibility was built through triangulation and member checking. Triangulation is commonly discussed as considering multiple sources of similar data in the analysis process to develop themes and findings (Creswell, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In alignment with the literature, this study collected sources of similar information such as through audio recordings of the session, letter writing to future participants, and the post-program interviews to determine how participants described their experiences with the transition to Educational Studies and with a career advising program. Member checking is a process to include participants in the analysis to ensure the data is representative to the participants’ thoughts and ideas (Creswell, 2015). Participants were given excerpts of the analysis and the transcript for review.

In alignment with the data analysis method of grounded theory, confirmation is also an important aspect of establishing trustworthiness. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), confirmability is established through data products that show how categories and themes were organized and produced. Confirmability can be shown through memos, coding trails, insights to the analysis process. In my analysis of the data, I created coding trails of initial, axial, and selective codes. A sample of the coding trail for the network of information can be found in Appendix I.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

A career advising program aimed to cultivate participants' adaptability to help manage the transition of changing majors to Educational Studies and their concerns with career goals and options. To understand how participants described their experience in the career advising program, I will first present the findings on how participants described their transition to the Educational Studies major. Understanding the transition of the participants will help to contextualize the findings in subsequent sections regarding how individuals engaged and developed three networks, support, information, and self-concept, through the systems of their ecology of individual, major, college, university, and community.

Transition as Context

In the transition of changing majors, an individual's perception of their roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions changed because they no longer desired or envisioned being a teacher. As such, participants' perception of their ecology changed; thus, their environment changed. Specifically, this section will discuss how individuals and the environment changed as a result of a transition as a state of limbo and as an iterative and nuanced process.

Transition as a state of limbo. A transition reflects a state of limbo, or liminality, where individuals move from one stage or status to another (Brown & Olshansky, 1997; Gonzalez & Vargas, 2016). Participants described their transition experience comprising of a weak sense of belonging, feelings of being stuck, and being an inauthentic version of oneself.

Rose, a graduating senior changed her major to Educational Studies one semester prior to participating in the career advising program. In a letter to future program participants, Rose wrote about her transition to the Educational Studies major,

I know you might be feeling different emotions because you just have made the transition into the Educational Studies program. Don't worry, you're not alone...In the middle of the semester of my junior year, I started to question myself on this decision of wanting to be a teacher. I realized that I loved being an "instructional assistant" because that was what I was doing during my first internship. I then questioned myself if I could see myself being a teacher, teaching 25 or more students, making lesson plans on a weekly basis, and be able to take my work home. Once I started to face the reality that I could not imagine myself being a teacher, I immediately felt a rush of different emotions. I felt horrible, feeling like I was lying to the students I was helping.

During her junior year, Rose began to question her decision to be a teacher, which led to feelings of doubt. Amidst such feelings, she began to grapple with her sense belonging in the elementary education major with an emphasis in bilingual education and English as a second language. Despite feeling doubtful and not belonging, Rose changed her major nearly a year later during her student teaching experience. Her decision to stay in the major for nearly a year is associated with feeling stuck in a liminal state. Rose felt like she did not belong, but she did not where to go or what to do, especially in her last year of college. In this time, Rose acknowledged she "felt horrible" and "feeling like I was lying to the students I was helping." Such feelings noted sentiments of an inauthentic self, or imposter, shaping a distorted identity that formed as a result of her feelings of doubt.

The context of Rose's experiences and feelings triggered strained or broken connections to the teacher identity and initiated the beginning stages of her transition of changing majors. Transitions come in many forms such as anticipated or unanticipated events or non-events (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Although Rose

perceived her transition as an event, such as changing majors, her transition in fact began junior year when she initially expressed doubt. Rose recounted the beginning stages of her transition when she changed majors, which included new roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions and the notion of hang-over identity, in which an individual holds residual views of their pre-transition self.

Furthermore, the reaction (i.e. type, context, and impact) of a transition has a tremendous influence on an individual's experience (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Rose wrestled with feelings of doubt for nearly a year before she changed her major to prolong her role as a teacher. In that duration, Rose felt isolated and stuck in her major, which resulted in feeling inauthentic and altering her relationships with the students she worked with.

As Rose changed her major, she experienced a transition through her routines and assumptions. Her routines of going to her student teaching and engaging with her peers in the same major changed. Also, the assumptions she made about herself and her future of being a teacher altered, which left Rose to figure out how she fitted in her new major. These are the ways Rose experienced the transition of changing majors.

Through Rose's story and experience, her transition parallels a state of limbo in which participants feel inauthentic and as they negotiate their time between two majors. As such, participants no longer felt like they have a network of support within their major in the form of a community to cultivate relationships and enhance their sense of belonging. Such finding illuminated the environment in which students are changing majors and how support services such as academic advising can assist students in this transition. Other participants described a transition experience similarly to Rose.

Frankie, a senior in her second to last semester, described her initial feelings of changing majors. She stated,

I still have a passion for education and helping others, I just cannot see myself in charge of a whole classroom. When I first made the decision to make the change, it was hard on me. I had worked so hard and focused on being a teacher for years and all of the sudden I felt completely lost.

In her transition, Frankie learned she wants to work in education and help others but not in the context of the classroom. Prior to changing majors, Frankie acknowledged feelings of doubt and being in a state of limbo. When prompted to talk about her thoughts when deciding to change her major, she stated,

So I started [student teaching] and I was like, “Okay, this is okay,” but I was still having doubts. I guess it was just with all of the stress with student teaching, and everything I had to do, and me not being motivated I just, felt like I just had to do this.

Frankie contended her feelings of doubts for a little over a semester before changing her major to Educational Studies. She discussed further,

In the previous semester when I was like, wow I ... Like I could just, I was there and I just wasn't feeling it. Like I saw everybody being all excited and for me I was like, I have to go, and I have to ... But I thought it started when I was in a middle school so I was like, okay well maybe I just have to give it some more time, maybe it's just the age. Because I still liked education, and everything we were doing in the classes. Just when I was there, I just wasn't feeling it.

Frankie differed from Rose by describing her feelings of doubt in relation to other students in her cohort, who had expressed excitement in their student teaching experience. Attempting to be authentic to herself, Frankie could not express the same sentiments as her peers, which heightened her feelings of not belonging. Oftentimes, a sense of belonging is relational; thus, the feelings of not belonging manifest into feelings of isolation (Strayhorn, 2012) and displaying essences of an imposter by pretending to

show excitement or engagement. To justify reasons to stay in her student teaching despite feelings of apprehension or feeling stuck, she stated, "I still liked education" and "maybe I just have to give it more time." Over time, feeling isolated and stuck in the major led to strained connections to the teacher identity and increasing the amount of stress and pressure. Frankie continued,

So I was kind of in that mentality but it got to the point where is as just stressed and I wasn't enjoying anything at all. It was a really bad weekend I guess, just stressful. And then I finally got to go visit my brother in Mexico. And I was talking to him and he was like, "Have you ever thought about actually not continuing on? Or maybe graduating but working in something else?" And I was like, are you kidding me? I haven't thought about anything but teaching.

Frankie drew on her network of support, such as her brother, to engage in an honest dialogue about her strained connections to her major and to seek assurance. In gaining a new perspective, Frankie continued to justify her decision to stay in student teaching. The following week as she was student teaching, Frankie emailed her site supervisor, a staff member with the role of supporting students in their student teaching experience. In the email, she shared her feelings and thoughts to gain further insights. Unbeknownst to her, the site supervisor came to visit a few hours later at school. Frankie recounted,

So the kids went on lunch, and I stayed in there with them, and all of a sudden I'm crying and it just all came out. So, once I realized I was that way I was like, okay, I ... this is really it.

Frankie's candid emotions forced her to confront her reality of the strained and broken connections to her major and the teacher identity. In speaking with her site coordinator and mentor teacher, Frankie felt good about her decision to change,

She [mentor teacher] was like, "Hey, if there's time, if you want to do something else," she was like, "Go for it. Because I don't think it's fair for you, it's fair for the kids." And so we all kind of talked. It was really sudden. Because I wasn't expecting for anything to happen yet, at least not this semester. So, I guess just

talking to them and being more open and really clear about everything... Yeah, so it was a sudden change I think. But I feel really good about it.

Frankie felt good about her decision to leave student teaching because she no longer felt burdened with being inauthentic. Additionally, leaving the student teaching experience created space to explore career options and potential associated with the Educational Studies major.

Although Frankie displayed thoughts and emotions as seen at the beginning stages of the transition, she did not acknowledge her thoughts and feelings until she started crying which prompted her to change majors. The impact of the transition on her future compounded by the context of time so close to graduation resulted in self-imposed pressure to have her future planned out. Although Frankie displayed signs of transitioning a semester prior to her when she changed her major, her perceptions of the transition came to life the moment she started crying. Once Frankie admitted her feelings and changed her major, she spent the subsequent time negotiating new perceptions regarding her roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions in opportunities such as the career advising program.

Through her acceptance, Frankie began moving into the transition to now moving through the transition by negotiating new roles, routines, relationships, and assumptions (Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson, 2006) and focus on how optimize her learning and contribute energy towards gaining information and exploring options in her new major (Chickering, 1994). In this new stage of the transition, Frankie was supported by her site coordinator and mentor teacher when she changed her major. She was also supported by the advising staff in the transition. However, in understanding transitions

are continuous, Frankie joined the career advising program for further support.

The stories of Rose and Frankie's transitions encapsulated the experiences of other participants. Individuals experience multiple stages in a transition, which include moving in, through, and out of the transition (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Aspects of moving through a transition include a period of liminality and reaching for new roles, routines, relationships, assumptions. Both Rose and Frankie demonstrated these aspects prior to changing majors. In understanding individuals may experience multiple transition simultaneously, such qualities of moving through a transition may be a result of a pre-transition context or a different transition altogether. As participants' move through the transition, they described their experiences as nuanced depending upon the reactions and the strategies in place to manage the transition throughout this stage.

Transition is iterative and nuanced. A transition is continual and nuanced depending on the context and the individual's ability to adapt in the transition. Participants described the iterative nature of a transition after changing their majors and how their response to the transition was influenced by the career advising program.

John, a senior graduating the following semester, had also changed his major when he was student teaching. He gave insights to his transition in his letter to future participants,

I know it was tough for you making the decision not to be a teacher anymore...There are many jobs you can earn that doesn't have to do with teaching but still maintaining an education grip...When I left the teacher program I thought it was going to go down hill for me. But after switching to Educational Studies major and participating in the career advisement program they really opened my eyes. Now I'm more confident that I will be able to find a job that's fits my skills and interest.

John anticipated things "to go down hill" after he changed his major. As such, John

perceived changing his educational pursuits as inferior and a negatively consequential option to being a teacher. He highlighted the concerns and fears with the unknown or uncertainty of his future. One aspect of cultivating adaptability is managing concerns, specifically, being planfulness, future oriented, and connecting the present and future (McMahon, Watson & Bimrose, 2012). As such, John demonstrated a lack of ability to manage concerns. Changing his major and participating in the program changed his outlook on his future trajectory, resulting in John expressing confidence. As individuals transition, they first show symptoms such as worry or anxiousness but eventually gain confidence and information to support their transition experiences (Brown & Olshansky, 1997). Through this understanding, John attributed the career advising program to help him navigate his transition. In the same way, Rose attributed an easier transition by participating in the program.

The transition was a bit intimidating because I did not know what to expect. Now, I am about to graduate this December and I feel like I have made the right decision of changing my major into Educational Studies. I have been able to take a variety of classes that have helped me focus on the area I want to specialize in. There is a wide range of classes to choose from and I like that about the program, you are able to explore other areas within education. What also made the transition easier was participating in the career advising program.

Rose initially felt intimidated of the unknown. Through Rose's coursework and participation in the career advising program, she gained information to feel at ease in her transition. The unknown and uncertainty associated with the future is a concern for participants because their prior envisioned future in a teacher certification major led to

defined career goals and aspirations of being a teacher. Both Rose and John attributed the program as a support in their transition and knowledge of options. For John, he also gained confidence in his ability to find a job.

Although participants like Rose, Frankie, and John changed their major to Educational Studies in their senior year, others had spent several semesters in the major. Sam, a mother of a toddler, recalled the birth of her daughter and her decision to change her major to Educational Studies.

I really was animated about the [teaching] program, like, it felt like I had failed because I couldn't continue with the program...But just being pregnant, and passing out at one of the programs, you know, and I decided like when she was born, I would go back to school. But then, I started to talk to my husband, and then it's like the [teaching] program is so rigorous all of the time. I would never be able to spend time with her, and that's the reason, I needed that push. So, when someone told me about Ed Studies. Someone told me about Ed Studies a long time ago. I was like "eh."

The teaching program included two academic years of teaching method courses and internships and student teaching. Although Sam student taught for around a week, she had gained classroom experience through her internships. Sam described her transition, "So it wasn't an easy ... it was a hard transition for me personally because again I thought I wanted to be in a classroom." When prompted to rate her desire to be a teacher on a scale of one to 10 at the time she changed her major to Educational Studies, Sam stated confidently a 10. In her post interview, she rated her current desire to be a teacher is a two. From the time she changed her major, Sam came to accept her decision. In her letter to a future participant, she shared,

I was like, I was so focused on teaching, I wanted to be in a classroom. I wanted to be you know, I was so focused on that I didn't even think about other possibilities... So, when I went there, it was like starting me to think of, okay,

yeah you wanna teach, but there's other ways of teaching now. There's not just classroom teacher.

Sam admitted her narrowed scope towards career possibilities because of her fixation of being a teacher. She has since found comfort in broadening her scope of options aside beyond teaching. Knowing options helped to ease and assure individuals like Sam and in the program. Other participants were not as attached to idea of being a teacher.

Andrew changed his major to Educational Studies two years ago. Andrew described what he hopes future participant get out his letter,

I hope they calm themselves and reassure that I'm confused, I'm not sure, but based off this person they're like okay, they've been through it. They're saying not to worry so I'm not going to worry as much or stress out about it. That's how I was at first, when I first got in this program. I was like ah, man what am I going to do after graduation? I don't know. Now after hearing everyone's story activity, it's like I have an idea of what I want to do now and the process that it takes to get there. I'm just hoping I can share that with someone else.

Andrew acknowledged feelings of confusion, worried, stress, and uncertainty in being in the Educational Studies major and thinking about his future. In his experience in the major and through the program, he provides assurance to future participants. He shared his transition experience in his letter to future program participants,

Like you, I wanted to originally be a teacher. I started out as a Special Education and Elementary Education major. I thought I wanted to make a difference by working with kids in special education. However, after doing some reflecting I realized that I wasn't cut out for that position. I also didn't want to be in a classroom. I knew I wanted to work with kids because I really enjoy working with them I just didn't want it to be in a classroom setting. This is where Educational Studies came in. It was the perfect major for me and will be for you too. It allows me to work with children without being a teacher in a classroom. However, it still allows me to be an EDUCATOR! I have found this transition to be simple and very enjoyable. I love this major and I think you will enjoy it as well.

Andrew described his decision to change his major based on his perceptions and

knowledge of the teaching profession and its fit to his future career trajectory. In comparing whether to be in the classroom or not, Andrew decided to change his major because he could not look beyond the major itself and the direct career potential of teaching. Andrew's perceptions and knowledge are consistent with other participants in comparing whether to be a teacher or not, which informed their decision to change their majors.

Moreover, a key aspect of transition is the individual's perception of the experience (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Transitions do not have an end but are continuously managed and integrated into the lives of each individual. As such, Andrew perceived his transition to be simple and enjoyable. In his post-program interview, he described his reasoning when writing his letter, "I think the biggest thing that I put in there and talked about was letting someone know that hey, if you're nervous or scared it's okay. That's how I was." Andrew indicated he felt nervous and scared in the transition despite it being simple and enjoyable. As he articulated his reasons for joining the program in an introductory video, Andrew stated he wanted, "information on what to do after I graduate. The scary part of not knowing what to do after graduation." Andrew's feelings reinforced the fear of the unknown associated with Educational Studies due to its broad nature. After participating in the program and writing a letter, Andrew now perceives his transition in positive and manageable ways in his life.

Consistent with Andrew's perception of an easy transition, John shared similar sentiments:

The transition wasn't hard to adjust to because I finally found the classes that I was looking for. These new classes weren't strictly about how to become a teacher, but how to become an educator and the many different ways that you

can do it. Throughout my undergrad and being in the educational studies major, I discovered my passion in working with non-profit organizations and being an advocate for postsecondary education in the three internships that I was granted. There are so many opportunities and pathways to take as an Ed Studies major and it soon became overwhelming to choose a specific career field.

Since changing majors, John explored different career options to learn his strengths and what he would enjoy in a future career. He discovered multiple passions which has helped him narrow down his future career management process, which is described as one's ability to navigate and manage the career building process (Bridgstock, 2009). At the core of the career management process lies lifelong learning and adaptability. Through the program and learning about what is unknown and about himself, John had adapted towards the career management process and now perceives his transition as easy.

Summary of Transition. Participants' transition experiences were expressed through feelings of isolation, being stuck, and living an inauthentic version of self. Additionally, transitions are continuous and nuanced by the individual and their perceptions of the transition. Participants like Sam, John, and Andrew either associated negative thoughts or feelings of worry and scared as they changed their majors to Educational Studies. However, learning about potential career options prompted individuals to change and feel more comfortable in changing their majors, which resulted in perceptions of the transition as being easy or simple. Yet, participants strongly associated majors with career options, initiating a major change without fully understanding skills in career adaptability (i.e. career exploration, planning, and decision-making) as they transition out of college.

In understanding the reciprocal nature between individuals and their environment participants' perception of their transition experience influenced how they viewed their

ecology in the context of changing majors. As such, the subsequent section highlights how participants described their network of support in the varying levels of the environment, which includes their major, their academic college, the university, and the surrounding community.

Network of Support

Through a network of support, participants described how the career advising program helped them to adapt to new career options. Participants described their network through seeking a community with others in their major, leveraging relationships and interpersonal skills, and desire to support others like themselves.

Seeking community with others like them. The career advising program created a space for Educational Studies students to engage with others like themselves. In seeking a community of others like them, participants were assured through commonality and addressed their concerns and curiosities through community.

Assured through commonality. Participants expressed how being around peers was comforting and meaningful to them. Prior to changing her major to Educational Studies, Frankie contemplated whether she wanted to finish her student teaching experience. She recounted the support from her peers and her feelings in her prior major.

I think because the rest of my cohort was like, "But you're so good at being a teacher!" I was like, I just can't ... I just felt like I wasn't good enough to be a teacher, or something. But I realized it's not that I couldn't, it's just that it wasn't really what I wanted to do...

Although Frankie's peers expressed confidence in her abilities to be a teacher, Frankie did not view herself in the same way. For student teaching, students are placed into cohorts in which they take classes and often student teach in the same school with their

peers. The program structure is intended to provide a community of support for students throughout the student teaching experience.

In recalling her transition story, Frankie noted the feelings of excitement expressed by her peers regarding their student teaching experience. Frankie felt supported by and close to her cohort described the support she felt from her cohort. She stated,

My cohort, we're like really, really close. It was 14 of us. And we would still like all do a lot of stuff together and ... So I would talk to them but I felt kind of guilty almost, because I wasn't thinking the same way they were anymore.

Through support from her peers, Frankie felt a sense of guilt and isolation because she believed she was the only one who felt disconnected to her student teaching experience, resulting in feeling like an outsider. Additionally, Frankie felt pressure to maintain a level of excitement and engagement to fit in with her cohort, reflecting an inauthentic version of self. The importance of peer support was emphasized when Frankie began to make comparisons to her new network of support through her peers. She stated,

I guess it helped me ... When it comes to like, feeling comfortable. Like it was more ... Because it was all new, it was like welcoming to me. Like it was like, okay this is my new group. Because I was still like with my cohort. So, this is kind of like ... These are people that are thinking the same way I did...I felt like being able to talk to a group of people that are in the same boat as I am, was kind of nice. So, I guess just welcoming, and then also being able to talk about different classes. Hearing what they have to say. Hearing about their plans.

In contrast to her previous major, Frankie was assured by individuals who think the same way she did. In this sense, Frankie felt like she belonged. As such, Frankie also learned from others by hearing their insights and plans about the future. The welcoming feeling expressed by Frankie translated to what several participants who had enjoyed about the program because they had the opportunity to engage with others in the

Educational Studies major. John, who changed his major during his student teaching, expressed his enjoyment,

I enjoyed the people that we got to interact with and see. Then, I really enjoyed our connection that we all had because we all were there for the similar thing. We were all there because we knew how vast the opportunities were, but we all wanted an answer of how to get to those opportunities, and what we need to do, and the areas we need to look at to get to those opportunities. I just think that we all were on the same page with ... We want to do something, we know what we want to do, but how can we do it, what can we do with it?

John shared the desire to engage with others going through similar circumstances was communal amongst participants. Also, he noted that others' reasons for joining the program were similar to his own. The connections to others influenced one's perceptions of their transition and experiences in the program. John highlighted knowing what opportunities existed and how to get those opportunities.

Consistent with John's views, Brittany, a senior graduating next semester, also shared her enjoyment of the program,

And then I think another thing that I enjoyed was just talking to people who were all in the same boat. All of us, we were kind of scared to admit that we don't really know what we want but once we all admitted that, that's when we kind of just started helping each other and some of the talks started getting more intimate. I think that's what I really enjoyed, because that's something that you don't really talk in your classes, but it was just kind of a space for us to work through what we want. Just planning things out for the future.

Brittany described how participants became more comfortable with each other as they learned they shared similarities in their feelings of uncertainty regarding their futures.

Like John, Brittany enjoyed engaging in dialogue to learn others felt similarly to her. She also described how through dialogue, participants began to organically help and lift each other up. Brittany further detailed,

Another thing that I enjoyed were meeting peers that like me, don't exactly know what I want after we graduate. We formed this little family within the workshops and found out that we are not alone in the fact that we sometimes get lost and confused along the way of searching for what we want. It is comforting and motivating to know that I am not alone.

Through the program, Brittany exemplified the feelings of other participants in the desire to connect with peers in their major. Although participants did not attribute their reasons for joining the program to interacting with other peers in their major, they described how they were assured by knowing that others in their major encountered similar transition experiences. Such experiences and insights were shared throughout the program, which also helped to address the concerns and curiosities participants held regarding their future careers.

Addressing concerns and curiosities through community. In the program, participants felt comfortable dialoguing their concerns and curiosities and sharing their firsthand experiences. To manage their concerns and curiosities to enhance their adaptability, participants supported in each other in address such concerns and curiosities. Brittany described the feeling of forming a family within the program, where participants felt secure in sharing their concerns and curiosities regarding the Educational Studies and the potential career options with the degree. Harper, a senior highly involved in student organizations on campus, shared similar thoughts in the desire to build community amongst Educational Studies majors,

I really like just being able to build community and knowing that other students feeling the same way. I think it could be cool in the future, like we were talking about having an induction into ed studies and just allowing for that space of people to work together and have someone that's going through the same thing as them. But also to be able to talk about, "What are you thinking about?" Like, "Hey, here's this job opportunity." And for someone that doesn't want to teach and feeling like there's some sort of connection and community within our major.

Both Brittany and Harper spoke to a space, or community for students to address their concerns and curiosities. A community mitigated feeling isolated and provided comfort in having support from others like them.

The yearning for a community highlighted a gap in current practices in the multiple systems of a student's college environment. A community within the major or college system of the environment currently do have programs or supports to convene students in the Educational Studies major. This factor compounded by a non-cohort model created difficulties for students to engage with one another. The community created through the program, addressed the gap on the major and college level of the environment and influencing the landscape of students' transition experience. A communal space allowed individuals to address concerns and curiosities influenced one's ability to adapt to new career trajectories. The community created through the program also helped participants learn to leverage relationships and interpersonal skills.

Leverage relationships and interpersonal skills. In the program, participants described their sources of support and how they drew upon such sources. In addition to seeking a community of peers in their same major, this section will outline how participants described sources of support within the institution and outside of the institution.

Sources of support within institution. Although participants described their network of support within the institution through their peers, they also discussed sources of support through the college and university. Considering their participation of the program, participants learned the importance of networking and understanding

institutional support.

Importance of networking. Through the program, participants learned about the importance of networking as part of their network support as they adapt to new career options. The Educational Studies curriculum requires students to complete a service learning course which entails a community service internship. In retrospect, Brittany described the opportunity to capitalize on the internships. She stated,

Thinking back, I kind of wish I'd picked internships that we kind of based around SU. Kind of what I did with SU SPARKS. I know that there were other programs I could've chosen, but I wasn't really ... I don't know. I didn't really push myself to jump on them as soon as possible, so they were the first ones to close. The programs that were with SU.

Brittany desired to work in higher education after graduation. In the last year, Brittany selected an internship with SU SPARKS, which has reinforced her desire to work in higher education. In earlier semesters, she was not concerned about finding internships parallel to her career aspirations. She now understands the importance of looking within her own network to seek opportunities. The essence of timing factored into her concerns and her adaptability in the transition to Educational Studies. In addition to her internship with SPARKS, she also worked with American Indian Student Services. She shared,

Yeah, advising was also something I was currently thinking about. Specifically, working with American Indian Student Services, because I know all the people who are running that place, and a lot of them, they advocate for higher learning for Native American. So, it's kind of connecting what I want to do in one. It's working with education, it's working with my own people, and it's working at SU. It's kind of like, three things that I want to do in one.

Her experiences she has gained in higher education has informed her future career goals. She understood how she has a network she can leverage the connections and opportunities for herself. Andrew has also learned the importance of leveraging his

network and connections with his service learning internship at Boys and Girls Club. He said,

Being around the Boys and Girls Club it was like talking to some of them a little bit, but not much. I was like well, I think I'm observing them, I think this is what I want to do. Now ... the other day I was looking around, looking at job openings and reading the requirements, I'm starting to talk to more people at the Boys and Girls Club where I'm going to capstone at. It's just like what kind of degree did you get or asking a little bit more questions and finding out, but I don't think that really did much.

Andrew acknowledged he did not take advantage of the opportunity through his internship to ask questions to gain career insights. During the program, Andrew began to display curiosity regarding his career and took initiative to ask questions and understanding how to leverage that information for his career management. An aspect of adaptability examines one's ability to manage their curiosities towards career options and goals (McMahon, Watson, & Bimrose, 2012). Curiosity is seen as investigative, explorative, self-reflective, and future-focused. In his post-program interview, he stated,

Then I think networking is probably one of the biggest things I'm starting to do a little bit more of. Talking to people about their experiences, what they do, how do they get into it and seeing what path they took to see if it matches mine or if it's something that's similar. Then I have someone to talk to help or ask questions.

Andrew learned the importance of networking and how to use his current opportunities to explore potential career aspirations by asking questions and expanding his current network. In doing so, he was investigative by asking questions and understanding how his interactions with others could potentially serve as a source of support in the future.

The program served as a space for participants to connect multiple systems in their ecology. In the case of Brittany and Andrew, they connected their service internships as part of their academic curriculum to information and insights gained

through the program to have a deeper understanding of how to apply the information in the real world. Although their service internships stemmed from the curriculum in their major, such a structure allowed individuals to connect their major and college context to the community system within their ecology. The program helped to facilitate new connections or deepen connections between the multiple systems.

In addition to the service learning internships, participants described the support from staff within the institution influenced how they view the concept of networking.

John discussed,

Yeah, and another thing I feel like I've accomplished too is ... I'm not sure you remember, but I told you I wanted to build a better relationship with you, an advisor. Because I felt like before I felt like I didn't. I feel like I didn't address a lot of things, so that's how I ended up in a bad place because I wasn't very vocal and didn't communicate well. So, I thought ... I took this program as well as an opportunity to get to know you better and to learn and stuff. So, I definitely felt like I've built a better relationship out of this advisor thing.

John used the career advising program to better connect with his advisor to further develop a professional relationship within his network. He learned throughout his college experience how advising services provided support in his career journey and in planning for his future career. He recognized his advisor as support and a potential network connection, particularly with his aspirations of working in higher education.

In several ways, participants referenced how networking touched upon all layers of their higher education system. Participants described how the curriculum of the internship from the major and college system, allowed for them to network and connect with community partners from the community level of their ecology. The intertwining connections from the multiple systems within their ecology were reinforced through the program, which gave insight to how they saw their development and adapting to new

career options.

Understanding institutional support. Participants referred institutional support primarily through career services. Holistically, the career advising program elicited connections and knowledge by convening multiple layers of a student's ecology to help them draw on their personal network and utilize support services to enhance how to best grow and leverage such networks.

The context of time played a role in participants' meaning of institutional support. The career advising program was designed to bring in a speaker from University Career Services in the last session to share resources and tools to assist students in the career management process. Career Services was scheduled in the last session after students have gained information and knowledge related to career management. The intentionality with the timing of this information related to student's lack of action towards utilizing career-based support services at institutions. Although Lisa was aware of career services, she found the guest speaker as the most enjoyable aspect of the program. She shared,

I always saw the emails and stuff, and I always was just like, "Ugh, whatever. It's so cheesy." Then, I think the lady telling us, "You know what? This is your time to start applying for jobs. You should start looking at jobs. You need to get on this website. You can use it as an alumni." That made me really like, "Okay, I can keep using this." It's people who actually want SU graduates. Once I made my profile and I started looking, the opportunities are endless.

With graduation on the horizon, Lisa built a profile for a university platform offered through career services that served as a resource for students to network, job search, and an overall tool for the career management process limited to students of SU and potential employers of SU graduates. Lisa built her profile after the last session. The prior

sessions in the program served as a foundation for participants to learn more about themselves and feel comforted and supported with others like themselves. In the last session, participants gained relevance to the support services offered by the institution and how to maximize their effectiveness and usefulness in their lives. Lisa described her utilization of the platform further,

There were so many things I matched with, so many jobs. It's saying, "You have all the things that this employer was looking for." It tells you if you have some or a little experience. It connects you with ... You can sort from connects very well, or to not so many qualifications. That was the best part of it. Learning how to use it has really helped me because after that career advising appointment, I was on it for like three days.

Lisa took the initiative to learn how to use the tool and found it to be beneficial in exploring new career options. After learning more about herself and drawing meaningful connections to her past experiences, Lisa knew how to maximize her use of this platform. Consistent with Lisa, John described the representative from career services to be the most enjoyable aspect of the program for him. He stated, "Yeah, that definitely helped. The [career platform], those resources were a helpful way of finding those jobs that are like ... And how it has all of those filters where it's applicable exactly to you." The timeliness and relevance of the tool was a factor in how participants were responsive.

Interestingly, the intervention was designed to use of a group page on LinkedIn for participants in the program. This was an opportunity to support participants outside of the session and served as an opportunity to explore career options, ask questions to peers and advisors in a supportive and communal way. Although LinkedIn offer the same type of information as the platform offered through career services, the context in which the platform offered through career service held greater meaning to the

participants. Participants described about their intention to use the page. Andrew described,

I have not used it, the biggest reason is I've been so busy with school and other personal things that I just haven't had any free time. However, going forward I plan on using it more. I think just having resources on there that I can refer to would be the biggest way I would use it. Whether it is tips and tricks on interviewing for example to networking.

Consistent with Andrew, Taylor stated, "...not yet. I would like to see myself make connections with employers and help me expand my professional network." Rose said, "Not yet but I plan to do so. I would like for us to post any job openings or to introduce any business we might be interested in." Participants were prompted to give a mid-program feedback after the second session on how they utilized the LinkedIn page. Due to the immediate concerns of classes and other obligations, most participants shared they had little to no interactions with the page.

The implementation of the LinkedIn lacked connection and value to the students. The additional steps and effort required to engage with the platform did not encourage students to use the tool. The design of implementing this tool reinforced the traditional notions of academic advising of referring students to resources and support services outside the jurisdiction of class scheduling. The passive nature of these referrals also assumed students follow through with the recommendations. In the lack of response to the students' need in the environment, the career advising program addressed the concerns and curiosities of the students before leveraging support services in the intervention. Additionally, incorporating an expert from career services on the job search tool demonstrated the benefit of bringing in individuals from distal layers in the environment to help one make connections to people and knowledge. The context of

time in relation to graduation also helped participants recognize and understand the importance and benefits of having access to such services.

Harper acknowledged the value of support services offered at the institution. She stated,

I think as cheesy as it sounds, me and all my friends growing away from each other. A couple of my friends are a year younger, so at least I'll have them. But I think just maybe having that kind of thing, change. Like having my best friend not live down the road. And then, also, just not having the institutional support that you have as a student. Being able to meet with an academic advisor, or my advisors in my organizations, I think could be a challenge.

While Harper will miss the close proximities of her friendships, she illuminated foresight on the transition from college to work. She understands the institutional support, such as her academic advisor and student organization advisors, at her current disposal and expressed concerns with not having access to such services after graduation. In maximizing opportunities offered by the institution, Taylor stated in her letter to future participants,

My advice to you is this: if someone is offering help to you for your benefit, take it. Don't let opportunities that are for your benefit pass you by, and if someone is offering to help you find a job and help you reach your full potential with your degree, you'd be a fool to not take it. The career advising program will not only help you identify your strengths and figure out what type of work would be best for you to pursue a career, but will also help get you in the right direction of where to find that dream job. This program offers you the opportunity to network and meet new people who were in the same position as you, and you might just even get in contact with the right person who wants to offer you a job. As I mentioned early, people are here to help set you up for long-term success, and you don't want to miss out on such a beneficial opportunity! It's never too early to start thinking about the future, and don't wait until after graduation to start thinking about it!

The advice Taylor provided to future participants support how the career advising program brought a multiplicity of information, people, and resources for participants.

Considering the timeliness of the programs, participants saw the benefits of the opportunity could help them in their future career endeavors. In conjunction to the sources of support within the institution, participants also described sources of support outside of the institution.

Sources of support outside the institution. Participants had sources of support towards their academic, vocational, and personal development in college. The participants described how family played a dominant role in their network of support.

Family as support. Andrew, a first-generation college student, described the support from his parents when he considered changing majors. He shared, “They're pretty supportive. I told them I don't want to be a teacher, I don't want to be in a classroom, they're like oh that's fine. If that's not what you want to do, don't do it.” When prompted to describe what he would say to a student thinking about changing their major to Educational Studies, Andrew stated,

I would tell them to really think about it, what you want to do and not to be afraid to change it. Sometimes, in my case, my parents, I'm a first-generation so it's like wait, you're going to do what? It's kind of unknown, it's kind of scary.

As the first person in his family to go to college, Andrew referenced how he is scared of the unknown as he ventured into territory that his parents has not experienced. Although Andrew spoke to the limitations of his parents’ support. He stated,

They just didn't know ... we just didn't know the system and how it worked. It's like wait, are you sure you want to do that? Are you going to be okay? They just want to see me graduate, really. They just want to see me graduate and do whatever I do. They don't know what I want to do. They just know I want to work with kids.

Although his parents supported his decision to change his major, their lack of information about the system of college left Andrew scared of the unknown. Yet, their support in

Andrew's holistic development and pursuing his passions was steadfast. To give context, Andrew shared his parents' career trajectory,

I think a lot of it is I seen my parents work at jobs that they don't like. They do well, but I know my dad doesn't ... they work in hotel industries and he's a general manager. I've seen him go through hotel to hotel. He even took a job in California this past two, three months and he would be gone for three weeks, come back for five days, go back for three weeks. I knew he didn't like it, but he got laid off so he had to take that job. I know he didn't enjoy it and I know he's starting to ... He's like I wanted to open up this and I wanted to have my own restaurant. He's throwing out these ideas and I'm like well, do it. Don't get stuck.

In sharing his dad's work experience, Andrew observed how the dutifulness and work ethic his father exemplified to make a living superseded his need for enjoyment in his career. Through his father's career story, Andrew learned to not be stuck. In watching his father go from job to another, he saw a lack of options or choices in the work his father could pursue. The lack of options stifled passions and aspirations of Andrew's father starting his own business, which was attributed to the lack of college going capital and the belief that a college degree leads to options and opportunities. In understanding the opportunities that result from having a college degree, both Andrew and his parents wanted to Andrew to have the opportunities and enjoyment in his future career. The example of his parents' story their support served as a source of motivation to graduate and finding a meaningful career. As graduation approaches, Andrew shared, "I'm still nervous because I think you can always be nervous; you don't know what the future's going to hold for you." Despite feeling nervous, he is hopeful for the future. He said,

Also, excited and kind of ready to be done with school and get in there now and make a difference in something. I just want to do something that I enjoy really at this point. I think overall I'm excited to just start putting everything together that I've used and learned and just get out there.

Participants described their family as a source of motivation in their college experience. Like Andrew, Lisa is also the first one in her family to graduate from college, which adds to her motivation to persist. She described her feelings and excitement in graduating,

I always get excited because ... Oh god, I don't want to get emotional. I'm the first person that's going to graduate from my family, so it's always exciting when I ... It's always been exciting since we came to SU to think about my future, so I've always thought about my future, since I was in high school, what I can do more. When I was in high school, I always thought, "Okay, I'm gonna graduate early." Then, I come to SU and, when I met you, you were like, "Here's how to graduate early." That was like, "I'm gonna graduate early. I'm gonna do it."

Lisa expressed the excitement associated with being the first in her family to go to college and the self-motivation that ensued, "Then, getting into SU and valuing my education, and knowing that I was gonna be the first one to make a change for my family line was a big motivator for me, for my future." Lisa's high aspirations and expectations of herself manifested into self-imposed pressure to succeed by figuring it out. Although the pressure can serve as a source of motivation, it can cause students to crumble under the pressure. John described the role of his grandparents as a source of motivation and the pressure he placed on himself. He shared,

My grandparents. They've had a college fund for me since I was a baby. They've built that for me and so I used some of that to pay for school and stuff. So, it's just like when I told them that I was changing majors they were like, "What's going on?" They thought something was wrong. And it was wrong. Something was wrong with me. And then when I told them I wasn't going to school for like a year it's because of all that stuff going on. They were really upset, or like just very disappointed. And they've been through thick and thin with me and stuff so I felt like I disappointed them. And I'm not just doing this for myself, I'm doing this for my grandparents as well so they've been in my life. I definitely feel like once I've accomplished that I feel like it's like the, what's it called? Off your shoulders?

As a funding source for his college career, John felt pressure to not disappoint his grandparents. John described the role his grandparents had in his life and the respect he has for them. Despite the pressure, he used his grandparents as a source to motivation to keep on going in school, even when he took a year off from school.

Both Lisa and John described familial support as a source of motivation but also how it resulted in self-imposed pressure to succeed. Overall, they were able to channel the pressure into further motivation to keep on going.

The career advising program provided an opportunity for participants to make meaning of their network of support sourced from both inside and outside the institution and how it can be leveraged to inform their future career plans. The delineation of the sources of support necessitate drawing connections from varying systems to cultivate adaptability. In addition to acknowledging and leveraging their network of support, participants expressed a desire to be a source of support to others, particularly those experiencing similar circumstances as themselves.

Desire to support others like them. Through the program, participants expressed a desire to support others who are or will encounter similar experiences as themselves. Lisa, a graduating senior, had focused goals for joining the program compared to her peers in the program. She pointedly stated, “I really hope that I can build my resume and the skills that I need to create a new position in my school district that I work for right now.” Despite her initial desires for joining the program, she realized how she could mentor and help other participants. Lisa was asked to describe how individuals in the program contributed to her experience. She recalled,

The other people ... I had Brittany, who's in my USL [class]. It was really nice seeing her there because now I know we can bond about that. Just other people who are younger in the program. I hope that ... I would love to be a green light for them, too, because I have so much experience already, and there's people who are just starting this program. I get it, and I've been through it since I was a freshman. It was just so nice even having them ask me questions or being able to give them advice on how to do interview things. Just hearing some of the things, like people not knowing how to do interviews and stuff like that, that was shocking to me because I'm like, "Come on, you guys are adults. How do you not know this?"

Then, at the same time, it's like I would love to help them out more.

Lisa felt like she could help students who have recently changed their major to Educational Studies by providing guidance and sharing her wisdom from her own experiences. Lisa expressed her desire to "be a green light" for others. This term was referenced by me, the advisor, in one of the session about finding individuals in one's personal network to serve as advocates in their career trajectories. The extent to which Lisa wanted to help others like herself extends beyond peers in the Educational Studies major.

A year from now, my sister's going into her senior year, so I would love to be someone that can help her in finding her path of schooling and stuff, and what she wants to do. That's a big point for me, is helping her go to college.

Lisa witnessed the influence of going to college on learned information, career exploration, and her own development. As such, she expressed the desire to help and mentor others to make the most of their college experience, whether it was her peers or family members.

The desire to help and support others are rooted in the need to connect and relate with others. Lisa exuded this by helping peers in the program and her sister. Also, Frankie shared her encounter with a classmate in her previous major, who expressed

changing majors to Educational Studies. Like Frankie, she expressed doubts in the major but justified staying in the major. Frankie recounted the dialogue, “Well anyway, so I talked to her and ... But she was saying that she was just going to stick through it, she's like, "We've already been so far, I just want to get it over with.”” Frankie recounted a discussion after she changed her major with the same peer, who expressed similar sentiments to Frankie herself. Frankie stated,

Yeah, and that brings me to the student that I'm talking about. That she was in my cohort and she's in that ... Wanting to switch, wanting to -...But she says that she doesn't want to feel like she failed at being a teacher. And that's one thing that I couldn't stress to her enough, you're not failing, you're just realizing that you want to go in a different direction... You're going somewhere else. And I was like, plus it's really common! You're not the only one.

In her discussion, Frankie attempted to normalize her peer’s feelings by assuring she is not alone. Such assurance was pivotal in Frankie’s transition and she made sure her peer had the same support. Students who consider leaving teacher certification majors often perceive themselves as failures, especially considering the time and energy dedicated to the major and teaching profession. Considering this perception compounded by an environment that promoted and elevated students who choose the noble profession of teaching leaves students feeling inferior if they leave the major. Such feelings persisted for students who stay in the Teachers College but in a different major, such as Educational Studies.

Support from others and having a sense of belonging is instrumental in cultivating adaptability and creates a desire to help others. Sam, a senior and a mother to a toddler, approached her letter writing to a future participant of the program with a friend in mind. She recounted,

When I read the prompt, it says, future student ... it just didn't fit for what I was ... and I really put someone specific because I learned something. And so, she's my friend, you know, we have this pact that we started. We've known each other since we started.

She further detailed her relationship with her friend, who is also in the Educational Studies major, “So we made that pact that we're in it together. If I need help with homework, I reach out to her. And if needs homework ... if she doesn't understand, she reaches out to me.” Sam and her friend relied on each other for support and accountability. The support originated from finding commonality, building relationships with others, and heightening her sense of belonging. As such, Sam found greater meaning in writing a letter to someone she knew and connected with during her time in the Educational Studies major. She stated, “And so we always say we're in this together...And so, the program meant something to me, and so I wanted to share that this is something that I think that she should take.” In writing this letter to her friend, Sam shared the personal meaning to the program had to herself and how she adapted to new career trajectories.

Summary of the Network of Support. Overall, participants described their interactions with their peers in the same major by being part of a community with others who shared similar feelings and experiences. The desire to be part of a community was informed by the expectations set in their prior teacher certification tracked majors. The desire for community provided a sense of comfort and assurance. Engaging with peers and other individuals prompted an increasing awareness of the importance of networking and leveraging support both within and outside the institution. Consistent with a study that examined the college-to-work transition, the findings emphasized the role of

relational support in the transition (Murphy et al., 2010). As a result, participants described how their network expanded through their desire to support others like them through a network of information. Forming a community with relatable peers helped participants manage their transition while simultaneously supporting others in their transition. As students felt a sense of belonging through the community formed by the program, participants began to address the concerns and curiosities they held related to their career management.

Network of Information

Upon changing majors to Educational Studies, students are given a career grid, a handout that outline potential careers and options to explore after graduation. Although the handout is not comprehensive, it serves as a tool to kick start ideas and options. After changing majors and obtaining the handout, students still had questions and felt uncertain about their future career post-graduation. The findings informed how participants gained information from a career advising program to address their questions and uncertainty regarding their future through comforting options, storied knowledge, and navigational strategies.

Comforting options. Participants described comforting options as a source of information in their transition of changing majors and cultivating their adaptability in a career advising program. This section will discuss how participants described options in reference to jobs and careers. Participants hoped the concerns and curiosities regarding career options career would be addressed in the program. As a result, participants described feelings of comfort associated with career options.

Defining options as jobs and careers. Participants described options in several ways. Prior to the start of the career program, Rose described her reaction to the career grid handout when she changed majors to Educational Studies, “I was shocked. I didn’t know that there were so many options. It’s not like teaching is my only, I guess option, you can say because that’s what it was initially.” Rose compared Educational Studies to teacher certification majors.

You get the overall aspect of education, you have way more opportunities, you have so much more opportunities given to you because you're learning not a certain content of subject, a certain subject content, you're learning everything about education. You're learning about the ideas behind education, history of education, policy of education. You're learning everything surrounding education. If you're just wanting to go in and teach one subject, then you should be a teacher. But if you're not interested in any of the subjects, and you feel like you still love education, then ed studies is for you.

Rose distinguished teaching certifications majors as simply teaching one subject. In comparison, Educational Studies encompassed greater opportunities for learning about a wider range of topics in contrast to teacher certification majors, which are associated with a narrower career scope. Taylor, a senior graduating next semester, shared consistent sentiments as she articulated her thoughts to a student in a teacher certification degree who is considering the Educational Studies major.

[I] Would ask them like, “What do you want to do after college? Are you interested in education? If you are, do you really see yourself being a teacher in the classroom, being in elementary or secondary ed major?” If they didn’t want to be confined to that, I would let them know that ed studies is more broad and that there’s many different options that you could take with that.

Both Rose and Taylor perceived being a teacher as a limiting career option with a teacher certification degree, yet, viewed Educational Studies as a degree that leads to more career options. Harper, expressed similar thoughts as Rose and Taylor about the career

specificity of a teacher certification degree. In a letter to future participants of this program, Harper explained her thought process:

I talked about how the career program would help a lot with knowing that that's okay and being able to explore some options. And then also, of course, why I ended up switching my major and just the fact that it's helpful to get some ideas as to what the degree can lead to, because it's not a degree that leads to a specific job like a teacher prep program would.

While Harper expressed a desire to know about options, she also stated in her introductory video to her reasons for participating in the program, "I know what I want to do but not sure how to do it. And to have back up ideas." From her statement, Harper identified what she wanted to do but could not identify the steps to get there.

Concurrently and contrastingly, she wanted to have backup options. Harper demonstrated curiosity in learning about options but expressed concerns towards the career exploration, planning, and decision-making process. She also displayed a lack of confidence in her ability to navigate the career management process to reach her career aspirations. As such, the program was an opportunity for Harper to cultivate her adaptability to manage her curiosities in meaningful ways, address her concerns, and increase her confidence. Harper was asked in what ways the program did or did not meet her expectations. She responded,

I am not really an expectation kind of gal. But, I think it definitely, I was hoping to be more okay with where I am with it and have some more ideas. I definitely feel much more confident in going to a website and finding nonprofit jobs and just applying for them. Versus before I think I was very concerned about how do I do all the things I want to do in one job? And how do I make that into something that I make money from? And I think now I feel more confident that I'll find something and that I have ideas of places that I would want to work. I think that that's more ... I'm more excited about that than scared.

As a result of the program, Harper felt more confident by satisfying her curiosity with career options and how to find and apply for jobs. Additionally, she described her concerns of having a career trajectory that appeared to be one-tracked like teacher certification. Rather, she learned about options with the Educational Studies major and felt confident in finding a job upon graduation despite not knowing have a defined job in mind in the program. Overall, Harper demonstrated her adaptability through her management of her concerns, curiosity, and confidence.

In alignment with Harper, John, another senior graduating next semester, also spoke about options, “This program can help me think about other career options and I hope to have a decent living.” Both Harper and John spoke to learning and thinking about options in specific relation to jobs and careers.

In the transition to Educational Studies, participants expressed their desire to learn about options as a reason for joining the career advising program. The idea of options was frequently discussed in the context of jobs and career. As such, participants firmly hold the connection of jobs and careers as an outcome and expectation of degree attainment. Such connection is informed by the broader ecology by bridging a student’s major to the larger societal, or community context. Facilitating opportunities such as the career advising program helped students make connections across systems. In understanding the broader implications about jobs and careers, participants expressed concerns and curiosities about career regarding career options.

Concerns and curiosities about career options. Participants described options in relation to jobs and careers and how they hope to gain insights to these options through the career advising program. Their perceptions that teacher certification degrees have

confining career options sculpted Educational Studies as an appealing major choice. Contrastingly, the attractiveness of having career options with an Educational Studies degree was also a concern for participants because they did not know what options existed.

Prior to the program, participants described the extent of their research regarding their future career and options. Taylor responded,

Not that much at all really. I haven't really been thinking about it lately, just because I've just been focusing on graduating, then I've realized I need to figure this out. That's why I joined the program and everything, but I've really never had searched for a job. I had never really searched for careers or what I could do.

Taylor shared how she has never searched for a job or possibilities for the future because of her focus on graduation. Interestingly, Taylor spent most of her college career as a full-time college student while holding a full-time job. While in college, Taylor was offered a job at the apartment complex where she resided and eventually worked her way as a manager, in which she worked 40 hours a week. Soon thereafter, Taylor applied for the same role but at two different apartment complex. Although Taylor has worked multiple jobs, she held the perception she has never searched for jobs. Such perception reinforces the notion that a degree leads to specific careers and jobs because Taylor believed her past experiences are unrelated to her future career plans. In recognizing her work commitments compromised her academic performance, she currently does not hold any type of employment so she can focus on graduating. In terms of her focus on graduation, Frankie shared similar thoughts,

Oh so I want to do the research and I guess ...Well right now I really want to focus on graduating just because I want to see if I can talk to a leader also about the classes that I'm taking, you know?... So we'll see, yeah. So that's what I would do and then really focus on applying.

Frankie had changed her major to Educational Studies the day before the career advising program commenced. As such, she was curious to learn from her classes to gain insights about her future. Other participants, like Andrew, have been in the Educational Studies for several semesters, expressed his lack of research but gave initial insights to his future career.

None. I wouldn't say none, I guess I would say very little. I was kind of like I think I want to be a counselor, I think I'll work a nonprofit. Being around the Boys and Girls Club it was like talking to some of them a little bit, but not much. I was like well, I think I'm observing them, I think this is what I want to do.

During the program, Andrew's scope of his career research began as he reflected on his current employment and the possibilities of working there after graduation. Andrew shared his interests in basketball and coaching. Although he would love to consider coaching as a career, he recognized the limited availability of coaching positions and the realistic nature to sustain a living on such an income. Through this understand, Andrew wanted to learn about other opportunities that could bring as much enjoyment and satisfaction as coaching. In summary, Taylor, Frankie, and Andrew admitted to having done little research on careers and either prioritized graduation over their career research or attributed their current experiences to potential career options.

Although several participants conducted limited career research prior to the program, other participants described the research they conducted. For example, Lisa, a graduating senior, described, "It was always on Indeed or just Googling different organizations or companies and looking at their hiring pages." Lisa described her research in a general and broad way by "Googling" or using search engines in addition to job search websites such as Indeed. Similarly, John mentioned his research tools, "I

looked at like Indeed, Craigslist. I'd always put educational studies degree and then just look at jobs and stuff.” He described his research further when he used educational studies degree in the keyword search,

Yeah. There it's more like teacher stuff because it's education, so it takes that group out of it. But then I just started putting like student affairs or kind of keywords and kinds of just playing around and seeing what I could find, or corporate instructor or just different things, education.

John conducted research first by broad job websites such as Indeed or Craigslist but soon realized he was not eliciting the result he wanted. As such, he began narrowing down his scope by typing specific keywords; however, the extent of his research left him unfocused and curious to know about other tools and knowledge from the career advising program to help him in his search.

Overall, participants articulated their lack of research regarding career knowledge and options despite their concerns and curiosities to learn, think, and know about career options. Although several participants admitted to having done little research, the participants who did conduct research did not yield fruitful results. The lack of research or results prompted individuals to seek options through the career advising program. Prior to the program, some participants described their limited career research, demonstrating a lack of concern regarding their future career trajectory; however, participants expressed curiosity to learn more about career related options as graduation approaches. Other participants, while concerned about their future careers, focused on managing their concerns related to graduation. Students who transition to Educational Studies often managed concerns and curiosities related to both their graduation and future

careers, highlighting the need to support students in their ability to manage their concerns and curiosities.

In associating their major with future career options and the concerns and curiosities that ensued, participants had perceptions of a disconnect between their major and the community of how they could apply their degree after graduation. These perceptions informed the need to help students understand how their college degree can support their career aspirations. In drawing on other support in the ecology, such as institution support at the major and college level, students can gain insights and comforts to potential career options.

Feelings of comfort associated with career options. In experiencing the program aimed to address the concerns related to career options, participants described their feelings in conceptualizing options in a broader and productive context. Rose described her thoughts in writing a letter to future participants of the program,

And then I also stated when I changed my major to ed studies and then how transition was and then how career program made me more aware of different routes that I can take and different resources I can take advantage of, just because we start with one major doesn't mean we have to follow through it and that there is other options and there are just other ways that we can go and find a career, even in places that we might not even know of or have thought of.

Consistent with her own experience, Rose discovered options she would not have thought of without the program. Her perception of options expanded beyond the options themselves but the process of exploring options. Furthermore, Rose discussed her comfort with knowing options.

So it was just comforting to hear different resources and different jobs that I can find, just like I think a bachelor's degree in general just gives me many opportunities and I know that I will find a career and I won't ... I don't know how to explain it. I know I'm not going to be stuck with no job or anything, no career.

Rose, who was initially shocked when she changed her major to Educational Studies and learning about the various career options she could pursue, found comfort in hearing options of different resources and jobs. As a result, she did not feel like she would be stuck without a job or career. The notion of being stuck aligned with her perceptions of her teacher certification major leading to one job and career. This perception compounded by her student teaching experience where she questioned her commitment to the teaching profession, prompted Rose's decision to choose Educational Studies, a major that had options.

Additionally, Andrew described his feelings as he learned about career options through the program.

I'm scared to commit, almost, to one thing. I noticed that lately. I'm scared to commit and say I'm going to do this only. Hearing them ... it kind of ... there's comfort in that. If I don't ... say I want to work in nonprofit that's what I'm saying, and then I don't like it, I feel comfortable where it's like I'm not going to be miserable. Some people went through that experience as well where they didn't enjoy teaching, or whatever it is, and then they moved to something else. I'm like, okay, if this doesn't work out for me, I know someone's been in the same shoes as I have been and they succeeded, so I can go move to something else.

Andrew described his comfort in knowing that others changed their career trajectory if they did not enjoy what they were doing. In this way, seeing how others exercised options gave Andrew the comfort that he could do the same. In comparing to how Rose described her comfort and not being stuck, Andrew illuminated parallel sentiments of comfort with the mentality of moving on if things do not work out.

Similarly to Rose, Harper had the perception that teacher certification degrees led to limited career options. Through the program and listening to guest speakers, Harper also found comfort.

Yeah. I definitely feel more comfortable. I can, of course the AEA is really cool, but I could apply for a position with them, but I can apply for positions in other areas like in nonprofits and things and just see what happens and see where I end up and not have to be worried about, "Really, I have to work for the AEA right off the bat." Because I could work somewhere else and then one day work for the AEA or by that time want to work somewhere else where another opportunity can present itself.

Harper was particularly intrigued by Stefa, a guest speaker who worked as an educational advocate, because they shared similar interests in educational advocacy, "I switched [majors] because I realized that I wanted to do more to combat the barriers that were facing children related to education equity versus just being a good teacher." Harper further discussed the potential of working in various positions and nonprofits, expanding her ideas of career options and paths rather than a specific job or organization.

Participants found comfort in options because it addressed their concerns of potentially feeling stuck in a job or career. As a result of the program, participants' perception of options extended beyond the context of a job. Although participants, like Rose and Harper, sought specific job options as a reason for joining the program, they also believed a teacher certification degree had restricted career options. In changing their majors to Educational Studies, they still sought to learn about options but found a level of comfort and satisfaction in knowing options exist. The notion of comforting options was assured by the guest speakers and their stories of how they created, leveraged, or navigated options.

Storied Knowledge. Participants described their experiences with stories and insights from participants and guest speakers in the program that served as a source of knowledge within one's network of support. Personal stories from others was a source of

knowledge about the career management process and gave insights to new perspectives and personal connections.

Gaining perspectives through stories. The information gained through stories were acquired by multiple individuals associated with the program. John shared how his knowledge came from multiple individuals.

I definitely gained some knowledge from you [advisor] and from a couple of other people that there are things that you can do. But once I actually got on to the program, those people that came in like the guest presenters they really gave me the perspective which I wanted...

Consistent with John's description on the sources of knowledge, Taylor mentioned the role of other students and guest speakers.

Just hearing how the other students felt and what they're going through helped me realize that I'm not alone in this, and hearing their different ideas or perspectives of everything was helpful, and listening to the guest speakers and stuff like that helped trying to see, maybe grad school's an option...

Both John and Taylor mentioned the different and new perspectives they gained through others in the program. Andrew summarized the role of guest speakers in providing new and different perspectives.

Because you can hear how people think differently and what their viewpoint is on a topic. Like graduate school, some people were like you should wait and other were like well no, I think I should go right now. It gives you a different point of view so you can take all that in and process it yourself. I think the more people that are there to communicate with the more information there is. Everyone thinks differently, they have something to say. It's nice to gather all that up and from there you can decide what you want to leave or what you want to do.

Andrew expressed the benefits of hearing others' perspectives to then process the information internally to make meaning. Taylor mentioned graduate school as an idea generated through the perspectives gained from others. Andrew described how such ideas are internalized for one to determine how to operationalize the information they

obtain. Sources of perspectives came from peers, academic advisor, and guest speakers, which included working professionals and a representative from career services at Southwestern University.

In particular, the guest speakers had a profound influence on participants and the knowledge they acquired. John stated,

And then the guest speakers, those were phenomenal. I definitely felt that more opportunities and more ... I thought outside the box more, like the [Lizzie's company] or the policy. I felt like there's lot more opportunities like even more, and there's probably still more that I don't know of there.

Stories triggering reflective insights. Through the personal stories of the guest speakers, participants gained insights on career management process. For example, Lizzie was a teacher for five years but now works at an online car dealership company as a customer associate. Through her story, in which she presented a shift in her career trajectory, participants responded in various ways. Andrew, who had conducted little research on careers prior to the program, articulated Lizzie's story as aspect of what he enjoyed the most about the program.

The guest speakers the most. It's easy to tell people this and that, which I actually have someone come in and say, oh, I went through this. I started out just like you not knowing or I started out as a teacher then I went to, whatever ... yeah, [Lizzie's company]. Those different experiences help me realize there's different path to get where you want to be or it might take you a path that you never thought about.

Andrew described the different paths to be options he never thought from the guest speakers. Lizzie's story resonated with Andrew.

Yeah. The biggest one was that [Lizzie's company]. I keep going back to that, where first you think it's just selling cars, but then she was saying I'm teaching people how to apply for different loans or applying for this and you have to walk them through it. That's where that aspect of her teaching experience came into play.

As a result of Lizzie's story, Andrew expanded his idea of what it means to teach and educate.

Teaching's not just teaching kid, could be teaching adults, teaching how to walk someone through online like she was talking [her company]. That's still educating. It opens up my mind a little bit. Now I'm like wouldn't have to stay at this job, I could go find something else.

Andrew's reflection on Lizzie's story reinforces participants yearn for comforting options and not being stuck in a job or career. The idea of options expanded through the storied knowledge of others.

Furthermore, Lisa, a graduating senior, gained knowledge from Lizzie's story. Lisa works at a behavioral specialist aide at a school district where she had invested two years and hopes to gain full-time employment after graduation. Her plans swiftly changed during the program, as her district informed her that due to funding, they could not afford to give her a raise in salary upon graduation.

when I first started the program I was kind of just going in as what other options do I have. As soon as some things happened in my life that made me start really doubting towards the last session, that I was freaking out. Then, I met Lizzie, and she really gave me a lot of hope. I talked to her and she gave me a lot of advice about how it's okay to leave this school district.

The power of personal accounts recounted by guest speakers resulted in one's ability to relate to others. Through her story, Lisa learned Lizzie used to work in the same district she currently works in. As such, she was able to relate to Lizzie by making deep connections to aspects of her story, specifically the teaching culture that prompted her to leave the teaching profession.

In addition to gaining knowledge through the guest speakers, participants gained knowledge and insights from their peers. For example, Lisa shared her struggles with her

employment with other program participants. Sam, a senior who was opened to learning as much as she could from the program, recalled Lisa's story.

We were comfortable enough with her to give her our opinions on what she should do. Because if we had met her, and like, you'd be like "uh, I don't know." But by the time we were comfortable enough to, you know, say, "Hey, no. Think about this, this, and this." But that's something else, you know that (laughs)

Yeah (laughs), but I think if we had first met her, we wouldn't wanna be like, "No, I wouldn't take that job." But we were like, "Okay, think of the bigger picture. Yeah you may love it there, but they're not showing your value. You know your worth." But we were all comfortable enough to voice our opinions.

In her introduction video, Sam described how through the program, she hoped to gain "confidence about myself and do what I say I can." The program nurtured a level of comfort with the group to be honest and supportive with each other. In such ways, Sam gained insights about her confidence and voiced her opinion. John also gained insights from Lisa's story.

I was intrigued a lot by her. Like just she seemed like she had a lot of her stuff going on and then stuff. And how easily something can kind of go wrong, and as you have that big ultimatum to make. Like you love your school and you created this program or this position, but they're not going to compensate you, even with ... That just kind of put awareness in my head just like there's going to be situations like that. I don't know, it doesn't honestly have to do with the great amount of resources and all that stuff, but I just learned a lot from certain individuals through their stories and how I put that into perspective when I make my own decisions.

Lisa's story is one account of how it helped participants like John gained perspective and awareness of situations he may encounter as he pursues his career interests. Through the discussions with his peers, he reflected on the career decision-making process if he encountered the same situation.

By gaining new perspectives and relating to others through storied knowledge, participants developed personal connections to enhance their information on careers. The

connections often stem from their systems within their environment. As a behavioral specialist aide, Lisa began making connections to what she learned in the program and what she saw at her employment site. Lisa talked about the hiring process within the district when expressing what she learned about herself in the program.

Exactly, because even at my job, we'll put teacher jobs up just because they're on maternity leave because by law they have to do that, but they're not hiring for that position in reality. That kind of stuff makes me like, "Oh." You never even know if this job's really hiring. They just have to do it by HR, or something... That was something I recently had found out. I had been super discouraged about looking at certain jobs. Now, knowing a different perspective of a hiring person, seeing how sometimes they'll just post things just because they have to.

The connections to Lizzie's story and the shared feelings and experiences helped Lisa look at her employment predicament from the broader perspective by understanding the hiring process in her district. Brittany, also, connected her volunteer experience with the storied knowledge from Melanie, a guest speaker who graduated from the Educational Studies major and is pursuing a career in higher education.

Going in the workshop, that's where I met Melanie and I had a few classes with her. She was a few grades ahead of me and I didn't know that she graduated. I didn't know she was also an ed studies major. I thought she was going into teaching, and then I found out what she was doing in her career field.

So that really put everything into perspective and it just kind of showed me like, this is what I could also do. I don't know, just seeing her do it, I'm like, I could do something similar. I really like that she was working within the Southwestern University (SU) program still, and I think that that's something I also want to do. I've worked with SU SPARKS, and I really liked it, and I just want to know what other programs are kind of similar to that. So just being in that workshop, that's when it directed me. Like, "Okay, I think I want to work within the SU. The SU program.

In hearing Melanie's story, Brittany related to the fact they shared the same undergraduate degree and career trajectory in higher education. Melanie's ability to navigate her career helped Brittany gain the belief she could do it too. Another aspect of

adaptability is confidence, which is exuded as being self-perceptive, self-confident, reliable, and proud (McMahon, Watson & Bimrose, 2012). In this case, Brittany felt more confident in her future plans because she witnessed Melanie sharing a similar story.

Participants gained storied knowledge related to their career their others' recounts of past experiences. Through others' perspectives and insights, participants made connections extending beyond the environment of the program. Inviting guest speakers from the community into the program provided an opportunity for participants to make connections between their major and the community in which they plan on gaining employment. Through the program, participants thought about career options differently through their major system peers, the college system of the career advising program, and the community by bringing guest speakers from the greater community. Connections across system allowed for deeper connections and understanding of the knowledge they acquired.

In gaining perspectives and insights from others, participants also gained navigational strategies through comforting options and storied knowledge.

Navigational Strategies

Participants described how comforting options and storied knowledge inform how they employ navigational strategies in their career management (i.e. career exploration, planning, and decision-making). Participants felt assured in the ability to explore within one's career journey. Additionally, the acquisition of strategies help participants connect the "what" and "how" questions related to career management.

Explorative nature of the career journey. In her post-program interview, Frankie discussed what she enjoyed about the program experience and how it helped her to conceptualize the idea of a career and potential options.

The job part of it just because when I got the paper [career grid], I don't even have it with me, but the paper that says you can use your degree in all of those. And I was like, well how? Like it sounds good, but I couldn't see it. And I felt like once we were there [in the program], just talking about different jobs either that they've had or that they want to get, or where they've been or who they've worked with. Like being a lobbyist from being in the...like working at the university, which is like, all things that I would be interested in, so it's like just actually seeing what they have, or different organizations.

Frankie referenced a career grid, a handout given to students that lists potential career fields and options. She expressed a curiosity in how her degree in Educational Studies translated to a variety of jobs and careers. The knowledge she was given with the career grid was enhanced through comforting options and storied knowledge, particularly from guest speakers. Frankie stated,

Like thinking about what...well first of all, the jobs that are out there. Like really knowing about actual like jobs that - that are ... really seeing how all of them ... it's been kind of ... they haven't gone on this straight road to where they want to be. It's like ... It curves and it goes like, they said it's like up and down, and loops around...

Frankie learned that career trajectories are non-linear and can take various paths. Her insights were informed by Stefa, who described her own career trajectory, "My career has gone this way, that way, up, down, upside down, everything I've been, everything and everywhere." In understanding that multiple paths exist with a degree, Frankie's experience in the program and engaging in discussions with others, helped to generate ideas for her future career. Similarly, Harper described the meaning of the career program to her,

I think that as me in the career program and hearing from other people and knowing that just because you have one degree, or you have one job doesn't mean that's what you always have to do. Being able to hear some ideas of different things that other people have done to talk about the possibilities and how different things can lead to each other.

Harper illuminated how her degree does not lead to one job and knowing of possibilities can help her connect one experience to another. She further described Stefa's career trajectory,

When Stefa came in and talked about the different things she's done that led her to where she is and how she didn't start off in her dream job, I think also just helps you understand that, okay, so it's not always you graduate college and you have this job and then you retire and then you do whatever retired people do. I think that that was really helpful as far as my experience because, I don't know, I have a lot of things that I want to do that I'm passionate about, but it's hard to realize what does that look like as far as job and how you get paid to work with homeless people and things like that.

Harper expressed multiple interests and possibilities of careers. She also understands her dream job may not be attainable immediately after college. She continued,

And then also I think like I said earlier, Stefa's, her job is so cool, and it's cool that she does different things and that she, like I said, didn't just jump into that job right after she graduated. I think that that definitely helps me start to think about, "Okay, maybe I'll do this, and then if I don't like it, then I can just do something else." And knowing I can experiment with that and that I don't have to have the specific idea right off the bat.

As Harper thought about possibilities, she is navigating the multiplicity of ideas and possibilities in her mind to narrow and focus the scope of her career research and pursuits. The thoughts and feelings Harper explored in the program summarized the feelings and sentiments of other participants of the program.

Assurance in career journey. The storied knowledge from others helped to provide assurance to the explorative and evolving nature of one's career journey. In light

of knowing options and gaining storied knowledges, participants described their feelings in regards to their future. Rose shared,

And then now, I just feel more comfortable. I know what I want, I know what are the steps I need to take. And now I just know where my next steps are or what my next steps are.

Upon the conclusion of the program, Rose was a month away from graduation and felt comfortable in what she needed to do next in her career journey. Andrew shares similar feelings towards the future,

That part of the program it's like I feel comfortable now where if change or challenges in my way or in my career, I feel comfortable going at it because I have people that I can talk to. I've learned about what they did and things like that, so it kind of like eases me, assures me.

Andrew attributed his comfort to learning from others and hearing their stories. Comfort gives participants confident in exploring, discovering, and shaping their future career trajectories, especially when knowing shared similar experiences. Confidence helps individuals take risks and know that other paths exist if one does not work in their favor.

Andrew attribute some of his insights to the program.

I think it definitely came from the program. If I didn't take this program and I took a job ... if the first job that came at me I'd probably be like oh yeah, let me take that because I have my degree, you need this degree, we're a fit right there. That's all. Now it's learning about myself in this class, hearing everything. It's kind of like no, don't just take the first job that's there and available. Look for the one that's a perfect fit for you, not a perfect fit, but a good fit for you to start out. Then you can make it a perfect fit from there.

Prior to the program, Andrew would consider taking the first job he was offered upon graduation. Through insights informed by the program, he gained confidence to navigate his future career by not settling for a job that is not a good fit for him. John, also gained insights from the program when he said,

I've learnt through this program that there's multiple jobs and just like how you said, how you swing and apply your abilities and skills to those jobs but you can bring the education side to almost anything.

John applied his knowledge into how he thinks about navigating his future career interests and options.

The experience. That's really all I can do. That's why I want to experience, not just admissions but I want to learn some more stuff about advising financially because that makes more qualified, more accessible, actually I worked in this, that and that. I tried to apply for careers in transfers kind of like how...kind of like something like that at my community college.

Consistent with John, Brittany also applied her knowledge gained from the program.

It really ... I don't know if I can say this enough, but it opened my eyes. It opened my eyes into new things that I wasn't aware of before. I don't know what else to say about that. Probably just take like ... how to get into your career field. How do you make the connections during your undergrad, and then graduating and then being like, "Okay, I want to work with these people." Kind of how Melanie did, she made all these connections throughout her undergrad and then once she graduated she just automatically went into the workforce with SU. I think just building the connections was something that really opened my eyes.

Both John and Brittany described how they want to navigate through their current work or volunteer experience. John mentioned transferrable skills as way to connect past and new knowledge and experiences. Brittany, emphasized the importance of networking and making connections to a variety of areas of interest.

Connect the “what” and “how” questions related to career management. In acquiring navigational strategies, participants’ feelings and thoughts were encapsulated by their desire to connect the “what” and the “how” questions related to career management. While participants understand that options existed with the Educational Studies degree, they needed to see how this plays out in the real world. John described,

Well in ed studies, I remember you gave me a sheet and it was like a small sheet maybe a list of type of employment opportunities type things. But it was still like not vague, but it was very limited. And I realized back when I went to the program it brought it to life, things that you can actually do. I think it was the ed policy. I forgot her name. I think it was Stefa. She kind of brought it to life. You might not be necessarily like you want to be a teacher, but you can still bring those qualities that in education and apply it to things like that. Before I didn't realize that, and now while I was in that it just kind of like molded in my brain like you can still do things like this. You can still be an advocate for others and children and whoever you want to be really, and it just doesn't have to be in an education classroom.

Oftentimes, advising appointments with students changing their major presented questions such as “*What* are my career options with this major?” or “*What* do I need to do to graduate and get a job?” Less often, advisors addressed the how related questions such as, “*How* do I look for a job?” or “*How* do I narrow down my career ideas?” As such, Frankie, Harper, and the other participants connected information to their “what” and “how” questions during the program, providing a more holistic understanding of their career knowledge. Consistent with John’s sentiments, Frankie shared how she understood her career options when she started to hear the stories of the guest speakers. what she enjoyed about the program.

Although Frankie understood some things related to her career options, she stated how the guest speakers helped her connect the “how” related questions, “Like being a lobbyist from being in the ...like working at the university, which is like, all things that I would be interested in, so it's like just actually seeing what they have, or different organizations.” Prior to the guest speakers, her curiosities and concerns related to future career options grew while her confidence and control decreased. Through the career program, Frankie had the opportunity to hear guest speakers and how they navigated their careers to help minimize her curiosities and concerns and increasing her confidence. In

these ways, Frankie became more adaptable and better equipped to in her future career pursuits.

Summary of Network of Information. At this stage of the transition, the narrative of the participants began to shift. In understand participants are in a state of limbo during their transition, participants view the need to know about options will pull them out of a liminal stage where they feel isolated and an imposter. The comforting options, storied knowledge, and navigational strategies served as part of their network of information that helped participants see the options and potential career trajectories. In this way, the career information served as way to anticipate and become aware of challenges and situations they may encounter as they begin their careers upon graduation (Murphy et al., 2010; Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008). The various forms of knowledge acquired helped participants form a network of information used to cultivate their adaptability in the transition of changing majors and their future careers. The source of information originated from one's network of support. Together, both networks also inform how an individual develops a network of self-concept.

Network of Self-Concept

In the career advising program, participants learned more about their network self and network of information to address the concerns and curiosities they held regarding their adaptability in Educational Studies and their future career trajectories.

Gaining confidence. In expanding their network of information with comforting options, storied knowledge, and navigational strategies through the program, participants leveraged that knowledge to shape their confidence. In this section, findings will

demonstrate how participants gained confidence in themselves and their circumstance of adapting to new career options with being in the Educational Studies major.

Gaining self-confidence. With self-confidence, participants learned about themselves. Oftentimes, participants expressed feelings such as worriedness, anxiousness, and nervousness regarding their future. However, they expressed self-confidence and how it was influenced by the program to help them become more adaptable. John talked about his feelings about the future as a result of the program. He stated,

More relief. I deal with the anxiety stuff so it's like before I was like, "I don't know what I want to do, it's scary." And now I'm like chill pill about it. Just like I know I don't need to worry about it now because I know I have so many great resources. Like now, I'm not super worried about it.

In mentioning he deals with anxiety in his life, John felt scared about his unknown of his future. To consider the management of his anxiety in the transition to Educational Studies, John may need additional strategies or support to manage the transition and adapt to new career trajectories. As supported in the literature, an individual's ability to cope with a transition is determined by the situation, self, support, and strategies (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Through the program, John had support from other who changed majors like him, while doing activities and having discussions to learn about himself and acquire strategies towards his career management.

Consequently, he worried less and became more confident in his situation knowing the resources available to him. As such, building confidence can serve as a strategy to help individuals adapt in transitions.

Furthermore, individuals can build self-confidence by creating new understandings of and within their ecology. For example, Taylor often compared herself to her friends who have graduated college. Friends who have already experienced the college to work transition have served as a source of support and information in Taylor's transition. She described,

Some people that ... I relate to the people that ... Used to relate to people, we'd talk about, "All right, what I'm I going to do after college?" Now I've realized that there's other career paths that I could take and what not, and I just don't want to be stuck like one of my friends who graduated from college, and it took them almost a year to find a job, a real job and not just bartending or serving that they did throughout college.

Taylor perceived her friends to be stuck because they carried the same job they had in college once they graduated. In describing their transitions to Educational Studies, participants illuminated their purpose for attending college was to obtain employment. As such, Taylor feared her career trajectory was similar to her friends, which triggered feelings of being scared. In recognizing her time leading to graduation as pivotal, she attempted to draw on her resources and support to educate herself about the career management process. As a result, she joined the career advising program and began to view her friends and their circumstances and herself differently. Taylor stated,

It used to scare me a lot, now not so much because it's starting to feel more of a reality. All my friends are graduated from school and are growing up and I'm starting to see so it's not as scary as it used to be as before but now I'm starting to feel more confident like, all right I'll be able to do it. It won't be that bad. Let's hope.

The program provided a space for participants to create new meaning to past experiences or notions they held about themselves, their ecology, and their future. In addition to gaining confidence through the program, Taylor expressed having control in her future

because of the connections and information she gained. Resultantly, she had hope in her future, which was rooted in her confidence and knowledge in knowing the steps to take next. In reflecting on her confidence in the present compared to the past, Rose described her confidence when she first started college to now. She said,

I think I'm now more confident that I was before. Like I said, initially coming to SU, I had some doubt and just questioning myself. And then now, I just feel more comfortable. I know what I want, I know what are the steps I need to take. And now I just know where my next steps are or what my next steps are.

Although Rose felt uncomfortable in the unknown throughout her time at SU, she built confidence through the comfort of gaining knowledge and insights about the future. Rose also found comfort in being planful and knowing the next steps towards her career exploration, planning, and decision making. Indeed, she felt confident and in control of her future. Throughout the program, participants gained confidence in themselves but also in the circumstance associated with the transition of changing majors.

Confidence in the circumstance. Participants described their confidence beyond just within themselves but in the circumstance of adapting to the Educational Studies major. For example, participants felt confident about the career research process after participating in the program. Harper described,

But, I think it definitely, I was hoping to be more okay with where I am with it and have some more ideas. I definitely feel much more confident in going to a website and finding nonprofit jobs and just applying for them versus before I think I was very concerned about how do I do all the things I want to do in one job? And how do I make that into something that I make money from? And I think now I feel more confident that I'll find something and that I have ideas of places that I would want to work. I think that that's more ... I'm more excited about that than scared.

For most of her college career, Harper centralized her concern about finding a job upon graduation that encompasses all of her desires and interests. Her lack of career

knowledge was evident, reinforcing the notion that the purpose of going to college is to get a job. Fortunately, in the program, Harper gained knowledge and insights from the guest speaker's lived experiences. Specifically, she recalled Stefa's story:

And then also I think like I said earlier, Stefa, her job is so cool, and it's cool that she does different things and that she, like I said, didn't just jump into that job right after she graduated. I think that that definitely helps me start to think about, "Okay, maybe I'll do this, and then if I don't like it, then I can just do something else." And knowing I can experiment with that and that I don't have to have the specific idea right off the bat.

Harper's willingness to explore and embrace the uncertainty associated with her future relates to the confidence she has in herself and career trajectory. She further described her feelings towards the future:

I thrive off of just jumping around. Yeah, so I'm excited. I would be excited to jump around in jobs. It's scary because it's real world. But, at the same time, I feel very ready to just start doing what I want to do and not have to go to class at a certain time and then go to a meeting at a certain time.

Harper previously stated her fear associated with not having institutional support upon graduation but through the program, her concern was addressed by leveraging her network of support and information gained regarding storied knowledge and learning about options. As such, she has confidence in the unknown associated with her future by exuding an eagerness and positive outlook. She further stated, "I feel good. I think that once I get my foot in the door somewhere I feel like I am confident that I could build off those experiences."

Participants utilized information they have gained throughout the program to increase their confidence in knowing how to navigate their career. Consistent amongst participants, the confidence in navigating one's career helped to mitigate the self-imposed pressure of finding an all-encompassing job after graduation. Rather, participants like

Harper can seize opportunities after graduation to explore potential career paths and options. Gaining knowledge throughout the program helped participants manage their concerns and their confidence, resulting in them becoming more adaptable. Frankie applied her knowledge regarding the job search process. She stated,

Well I guess just do a little research. I guess ... The big thing that stood out to me was, I can't quote it because I can't remember exactly how she said it, but, pretty much don't settle. If you have a degree. If I see something that says, "High school diploma," or something, I want to just discard it, I want to know my value or whatever. I worked for this, I want to make sure I get something that requires a degree and then I don't want to settle just to get a job. I want to do something that I like. Especially now knowing that there's so much out there, I guess trying to really figure out what ... Look into jobs and see if what it is that I want to do.

Frankie exuded confidence in knowing her value. Moving forward, she intends to focus on finding a job she will enjoy rather than settling. Although she is still figuring out what she wants to do, Frankie knows her worth with a college degree. Like Frankie, Lisa recognized her self-value through the program. Confidence was the byproduct of recognizing her self-value that she then exercised at her current employment. She explained,

I think that the career program made me really vocalize my needs and wants because I realized my worth again and that, talking with you and talking to other students, I was like, "You know what? I'm worth more than \$10.79 an hour and I need to vocalize that and negotiate to my principal what my needs are."

In knowing her value, Lisa had the confidence to negotiate her salary with her principal. Her recognition of her value came from talking to other students in the program. Lisa also shared insights on the career search process, specifically with the guest speaker from career services. She recalled,

I always saw the emails and stuff, and I always was just like, "Ugh, whatever. It's so cheesy." Then, I think the lady [guest speaker] telling us, "You know what? This is your time to start applying for jobs. You should start looking at jobs. You

need to get on this website. You can use it as an alumni." That made me really like, "Okay, I can keep using this." It's people who actually want ASU graduates. Once I made my profile and I started looking, the opportunities are endless.

Entering the program, Lisa already had plans regarding her future. Although Lisa joined the program to answer a few questions and to learn about career options, the program highlighted concerns Lisa was unaware that she had. Engagement in the program brought these concerns to the forefront and created a sense of urgency for Lisa to consider in her own career management. Fortunately, the program provided support and motivation in addressing the concerns and building confidence. Lisa discussed further,

I feel more confident than I used to because I used to just be like, "Oh, I'm just gonna go to Indeed or whatever." I feel like now, sitting into the career program, it was almost like a slap in the face like, "Look, you're a senior. You need to get it together." I think now I just have to ... I'm more motivated now to just get it together and follow through with things because, if I don't, I'm just gonna regret it at the end of the day or I'm going to lose those opportunities. I have to. There's no option. I don't have school to fall back on and be like, "Oh, if I don't have a job, I'm still going to school." That's not an option anymore. I have to get a job.

Lisa exemplified the consistent finding of exuding a self-imposed pressure to figure out her future. The program helped Lisa realize the importance of following through with tasks related to her career and future. She attributed her reasons for the self-imposed pressure to the perception of diminishing options over time as she is farther removed from college. She further detailed,

The future's not always guaranteed. That was a big thing for me to remember even though I have these dreams, it might not be guaranteed, so here's the tools that you need just in case I don't. Things get mixed, or those challenges come along, or the struggles come along. Here's your tools, here's what you can do in your future. It helped me rethink about why I want to do this, what I want to do, and what my goals are. It just all helped me reinforce my future goals and the tools I need for those goals.

Other participants had a different view of the future and options from Lisa. As such, Andrew's confidence in his future resulted from the increasing options as he moves further along in his career. In his letter to future participants, he wrote, "The biggest thing I took from everything I put in the letter was if you don't know what you're doing, it's alright. It's just a process. Whatever you decide now it might not be something that you do later." Andrew exuded confidence in embracing the uncertainty that lies in the future to alleviate the self-imposed pressure. He stated,

Just going back to those conversations, all the activities that we did. I was just like ... we don't know what we want to do yet, we have an idea, but we kind of narrow it down, but it's okay if you don't know exactly what you want to do.

Learning about oneself served as another source of confidence in themselves and their future career trajectory. Andrew stated,

Yeah, because I think a lot of it's just confidence. I'm a basketball coach, so you'd think I'd be a good leader, but I really don't like to ... I'm still getting comfortable talking in front of people, leading. It takes me a while to really ... I have to get to know people to really start coming out.

Andrew recognized more about himself in the context of his job and how that can be a source of information about potential career options. Andrew has conducted limited research on careers and recently began looking into the Boys and Girls Club as a potential employer. Andrew described his consideration of the Boys and Girls Club as a potential future employer. As such, he may have settled to simply what he has exposure to without further exploring opportunities that open as a result of having a college degree. Yet, Andrew described his pickiness with the job selection process. He shared,

If I didn't take this program and I took a job ... if the first job that came at me I'd probably be like oh yeah, let me take that because I have my degree, you need this degree, we're a fit right there. That's all. Now it's learning about myself in this class, hearing everything. It's kind of like no, don't just take the first job that's

there and available. Look for the one that's a perfect fit for you, not a perfect fit, but a good fit for you to start out. Then you can make it a perfect fit from there.

Like Andrew, John described how prior to the program, he would have accepted a job beyond his desire and passion for the job. He said,

Yeah, I think I would have been like I just want the money and I was like I want to make as much money as possible. But more now more for my mental health, I need something like you said. I think you recommend something that's not high pressure or for me, one of my own things. And I was like yeah, let me take that into consideration. Why am I going to stress myself out and put myself into bad situations? Or I want to be successful at the end of the day so I think that kind of resonated in me. I was like I want to find something that's going to lead me to being successful, financially, physically and mentally and all that stuff. Professionally.

He continued,

Yeah, like I was like, I've got to make at least what I was going to make if I was a teacher and stuff like that at the very least or more. But now I'm just like all right, I'm cool with taking just like five, ten thousand dollars less to start because I know that what I'm doing is something that I want to do, something that I know I can grow in and improve. You know? Step up.

John was reflective in learning more about himself and his limitations, particularly with his mental health. To manage his anxiety, he began to realize through in with me as his academic advisor in the program, that his desire to be successfully and healthy became a priority in his pursuit of building his career. Through a deeper understand of career management, John is no longer motivated to find a job based on money and goes as far to say he would take a salary lower than a teacher salary if it meant he was happier and could leverage that position to grow his career. As a result, John demonstrated self-confidence

Furthermore, Lisa gained a deeper self-awareness in the program, reminding herself on how to leverage her skills, experiences, and assets during the career search process. She stated,

I think being in this program helped me really tell myself I can start my career now and, as I grow, get my certification. That gave me that confidence to have that talk with my principal and say, "I'm doing this now, which is the same thing this other person's doing." The pay and everything ... That really helped me reiterate that this is a career, not just a job, for myself and for my principal. And make her know, "I'm all for this organization, but I need the compensation to stay here."

In learning and becoming aware of herself, Lisa leveraged her assets to build confidence to ask her principal for greater compensation. Although Lisa attributed the confidence stemming from the program, she also described how her college instructors named Laurel contributed to her confidence level. She recalled,

Yeah, [Laurel]. I remember she mentioned a book one day and I emailed her about like, "Oh, can you send me the information for this book?" It was about how women don't ask for higher wages. It gave me a lot of confidence when I read that, so I'm willing to try to renegotiate up for my experience that I already have. Then, I want to see what they offer me. Then, my district also offered me a stipend, so I'm going back and forth.

Participants also gain self-awareness by drawing on past experiences to inform how they plan and navigate for their future careers. Also, Lisa used stories about previous experiences as stored knowledge from her network of information to then apply to her current employment situation.

In the context of this study, participants exuded confidence by demonstrating through their belief in their future success. As referenced by Savickas (2013), "In career construction theory, confidence denotes feelings of self-efficacy concerning one's ability to successfully execute a course of action needed to make and implement suitable

educational and vocational choices” (p. 161). As participants gained confidence in themselves and in circumstances of changing majors and on the brink of graduation, they described how they strive to be happy in the future jobs and lives.

Pursuit of happiness. As a result of leveraging their network of support, acquiring information, and building confidence, participants ultimately described their pursuit for happiness in their future.

The program was an opportunity for Taylor to learn about herself, specifically her strengths and how those can be used and applied to inform her future career decisions. In what she learned most from the program, she shared,

I would say doing the strengths portion of it and reflecting back on what have I done in my life that would benefit me for a career, what I'm good at and what experiences show that and just getting info on that and talking with everybody about their different personalities and what not.

Through these activities such as a strengths assessment and the debriefs that ensued gave participants the opportunity to dialogue about with peers. Understanding what Taylor learned about herself contextualized her strengths and areas of improvements. When asked about what challenges she expect to face as she work towards her career management, Taylor stated,

I would say being able to stick up for myself and what I want. Not let myself get pushed around and if I am not happy in a job saying all right, I'm going to find something else and be willing to make changes to make me happy.

In understand herself and gaining insights from peers and guest speakers, Taylor put her desire to be happy on the forefront of her career-related decisions. Taylor described a self-awareness to stick up for herself and want she wants to protect her happiness.

Furthermore, she understands she may have to change jobs or her career trajectory to be

happy. Taylor spoke to changing jobs or career plans as necessary to manage feelings of nervousness or fear of the unknown associated with her career trajectory.

When prompted in her post-program interview, Taylor delved into how she envisions her life one year from now. She shared,

A year from now I don't expect to be really rich and making all this money at some great job but I hope that I am working and able to support myself completely and have a job where there's potential for me to grow in something that I'm happy doing and although it'll probably be an entry level position and what not, I want to be able to work for somewhere that I'd be able to move up and everything.

Taylor seeks a job that allows her to be happy and independent. She also realized she may not have dream job upon graduation. She emphasized the importance in finding a job and career that has potential for growth and opportunities. She further described her vision of her life five years from now. She stated,

In five years I'd hope to see myself potentially with the same job or working for the same company. Moved up by then hopefully or if that first job didn't work out at least I have made a switch and been at another job for a good period of time and a little bit more financially stable and just working on ... I don't know. Growing in my career.

In retrospect, participants attributed their desire to be happy to their decision to change majors to Educational Studies. Rose described her thoughts in writing her letter to future participants,

What I included it was something that I would have liked to hear when I was transitioning. So, I could have just included my experience, I talked to a friend and he kind of helped me realized if you're feeling this way then you should make a decision that will make you happy in the long run.

Rose credited her network of support to help her realize and make sense of her feeling of not belonging, being stuck, and being an inauthentic version of herself. Through the program designed to consider the ecology of students by bringing together multiple

systems of the environment, Rose gained insights about herself and her confidence. She explained,

About myself, well, I guess just knowing my value. Lizzie was saying that she knew that ... the jobs that were offered to her, she knew that she didn't want to take because it didn't fit her and because she just felt like it didn't fit. So, that's what I also found out too, just if it doesn't fit then I shouldn't participate in it as well. So, just knowing my value and finding something that will actually make me happy because at the end of the day, it's my life and my decisions that I'm depending on.

Recounting Lizzie's story helped Rose to make sense of her thoughts and feelings she could articulate. Such information through stories contributed in nurturing Rose's self-confidence. On a broader scope, Rose began to understand her happiness hinges upon her life and the decisions she makes. As such, Rose demonstrated a greater sense of control of her life and her future through her confidence and understanding her self-worth. Although the decision for Rose to change her major was difficult, she had faith in knowing she would be happy in the long term. Rose affirmed her decision to change her major to Educational Studies. She said,

A little bit, but then I knew in the long run I would be happy in the career, even though I'm feeling this right now, I know it will make me happy in the future. So just thinking about the future is like what I try to do all the time.

As a result of her experience of transitioning majors, Rose is empowered to take control of her future, thus demonstrating her adaptability from the program. Having gone through the transition and having faith she made the right decision in the long run, she was affirmed through this experience and serve as stored knowledge for when she encounter transitions in the future.

In learning about oneself and having a greater sense of control of their future, participants expressed their desires for the type of work they want to do. At the core, a

source of participants' happiness derives from having social impact. Lisa initially chose to major in secondary education English because she enjoyed writing. Nearly a month later, she discovered Educational Studies and changed her major because she wanted to have a broader perspective on education. In her letter to future participants, Lisa emphasized one point:

One important things to remind yourself and others when they question your choice about switching programs is: we all share a common goal in the Teacher's College, we want to help change the world. It doesn't matter how we are doing it, what matters is that we know where it starts...with education.

Despite the difficulties associated with the decision to change majors, Lisa made a salient point regarding the common goal of changing the world. As such, she displayed optimism in her future and the potential impact she can make in her career. Consistent with the literature, individuals display optimism in the future regardless of currently difficult or challenging circumstances (Murphy et al., 2010). Lisa encouraged participants to not lose sight of their initial reasons for selecting and pursuing education. As such, Lisa has demonstrated through her personal journey, her ability to remain steadfast and tenacious in her pursuits to change the world. These qualities display control and confidence to remain strong despite moments of uncertainty or being in a liminal state.

In understanding her work and career trajectory may change over time, Lisa reinforced her focus on making change through her work. She stated,

A year from now, I would love to see myself working in behavior still, and still working with kids. That's ideal, but if not, I would love to see myself still doing something in the realm of educating others and helping others learn.

Consistent with Lisa, Harper also wants to make an impact with her career.

Harper compared her thoughts of initially choosing a teacher certification major:

I think before I was really focused on like when I thought I wanted to be a teacher and I feel like I was focused on the big picture of wow, I could be in the classroom and I love learning and I love education, I love kids. But not really thinking about every day I have to go to this school and I'd be with these eight-year olds all day long. And, I'm responsible for their learning and then I have to send them home to whatever the situation may be. I think that now when I think about I could be going to work and talking to people, making connections between organizations and helping create this event to help people get their kids better school supplies or whatever. Those kind of small, day to day tasks make me more excited than the job title. Versus being a teacher was exciting, but not necessarily the day to day job of a teacher.

As Harper became more familiar with the teaching profession and engaged in self-reflection, she focused her reasons for choosing education were from a broader perspective of engaging with others, making connections, and helping others in the context outside of the classroom. Such alternative provided excitement compared to being a teacher. Further described further,

I'm not very in touch with myself. I think that maybe just knowing that for me it's really important that I'm doing something that I love and even if that's not my big dream goal, but still being able to ... Like, if I'm able to work with an underserved population, then I'll be happy. So, yeah I think that.

Although Harper stated she is not in tuned to her thoughts, she has demonstrated a level of reflection the considerations towards her future. Indeed, she has displayed a level of control in her aspirations. Specifically, Harper mentioned her happiness sourcing from work with underserved populations. As she envisioned her future, she said,

I think just doing something that I'm happy doing. Being able to work with people and yeah, just having a job and having a better idea of some of the things that I want to do. And, just being a standup human and adulting a little bit better than I am right now.

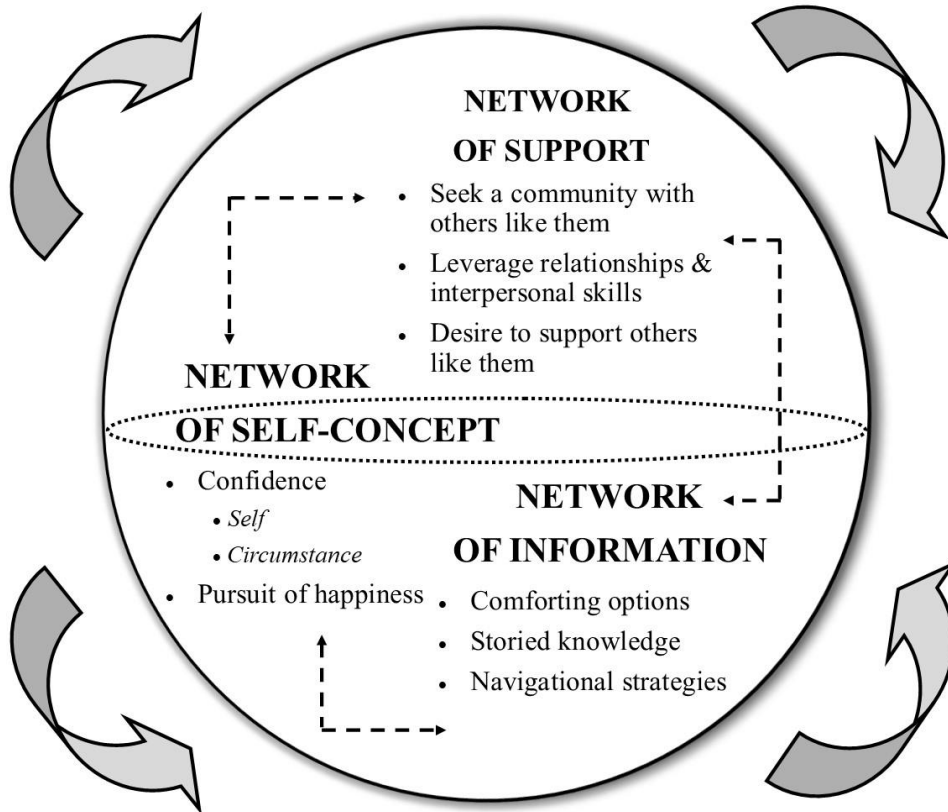
Undoubtedly, Harper wants to make a difference and help others, which ultimately reiterates participants' aspirations for social impact fuels one's happiness.

Summary of the Network of Self-Concept. Participants described their network of self-concept primarily through gaining confidence in themselves and their circumstance. A lack of confidence stemmed from feelings related to the concerns regarding their future. By creating new understandings, participants gained control and hope for their future. In the circumstance of changing majors, participants learned about themselves by becoming more aware and knowing their self-value. As such, participants felt more confident and in control of themselves and their future circumstances. Informed by their confidence, participants described their pursuit for happiness in their future. Participants continuously seek of career options precipitated from their desire to be happy in their future careers. Indeed, the initial interests and reasons for pursuing a major in education remained steadfast. Participants confidently asserted their desire to seek careers that enact social change that will lead to their happiness and enjoyment in their career and life. A summary of the three networks will be presented through a conceptual model in the next section.

The Transition-Adaptability Model

I synthesized the findings of this study by constructing a transition-adaptability model. The context of the transition informed how participants described their adaptability in relation to their future career trajectories. The transition-adaptability comprises of the network of support, network of information, and the network of self-concept. Figure 2 presents how the networks of information, support, and self interplay with one another and the multi-dimensional environment.

Figure 2. *Transition-Adaptability Model*



I will provide an overview of the structural elements of the communal adaptability model. The structural elements include networks and connections, dimensionality, and movement and directionality. After providing an overview of the structural elements of the model, I will reiterate how the three networks work together to cultivate adaptability.

Networks and Connections

At the core of the transition-adaptability model lies connections between the network of support, network of information, and network of self-concept. In the context of the findings that emerged from the data, a network refers to the interconnectedness of things and or people that help to inform one’s adaptability. The network of support, information, and self in the model comprise of elements, or axial codes, that were

incorporated into the descriptions of each network. Elements were subcategories derived during the analysis process of how I viewed the data while an attempt to stay true to the ideas and thoughts of the participants.

In building and leveraging their network of support, such individuals also served as sources of information. The information was presented most often through storied knowledge, giving participants comforting options and navigational strategies to apply towards their future. Due to the reciprocal nature of the environment, a robust network information helped participants understand how to leverage their network of support in their career management process. Having an increased knowledge helped participants gain confidence in themselves and the circumstances ensued by the transition which results in their pursuit of happiness. As participants gained confidence and awareness, they could expand their network through navigational strategies to give themselves options and avenues to explore potential career paths.

Although each network is distinctive, all networks operate interdependently through connections, as denoted by the lines in the model, made by an individual or group of individuals. The connections are bidirectional and continuous in nature between the different networks to cultivate adaptability. Participants described their experience in the program and their adaptability by connections that were informed, supported, and intertwined with more than one network. Connections also imply the idea of building upon what is already in existence. Resultantly, as an individual makes connections to information, people, and themselves, both themselves and their environment also grows and evolves over time. The networks are situated in the space within the circular shape of the model and represents the environment that one or more individuals are situated in.

Dimensionality

The environment is represented by a circular shape, specifically a sphere. The dimensionality depicted in the sphere represents the depth and complexities of the multifaceted environment. The representation of depth further explores Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development, specifically in the context of the change of major transition and the cultivation of adaptability. In his more recent iterations of the human development model, Bronfenbrenner (1986, 2005) incorporated a dimension of time (chronosystem) to account for development as a process of continuity and change while considering past experiences and the context. The transition-adaptability model further translates the dimensionality from Bronfenbrenner to consider not only the aspect of time but to understand how varying systems of the environment swirl with each other. Rather than a pragmatic depiction of multiple layers of the environment in Bronfenbrenner's model, the transition-adaptability model contextualizes the varying levels of engagement and interactions with the multilayered environment through networks of information, support, and self rather than by layers of systems. While these aspects are connoted by the dimensionality according to Bronfenbrenner, it is not visually explicit in his model. As such, the outer arrows in the communal adaptability model emphasize the continuity and change of the environment as a result of the connections amongst networks through varying systems as represented by the element of dimensionality.

Movement and Directionality

The four arrows outside of the environment denotes evolution through movement. As individuals are groups change and grow by continuously making connections to

expand their networks through varying systems, the environment itself is ever evolving. The movement represents the transformation of the environment over time. The direction of this evolution is subjective as every individual varies in how they perceive and operate in their environment. As such, this model does not reflect a specific direction but rather continuous changes to the landscape of the environment.

Summary of Transition-Adaptability Model

The transition-adaptability model provides a framework to understand how participants describe their transition to the Educational Studies major and their experience in the career advising program. The environment cultivated by the program is complex and multifaceted as individuals make connections between networks of information, support, and self across the layers in their environment (dimensionality). The model considers the continuity and change in the individuals and resulting, the environment.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This action research study focused on exploring a career advising program for students who transitioned from teacher certification majors to Educational Studies and how they adapted to new career options. The transition to Educational Studies currently provides limited support for students, particularly in addressing students' perception that a college major and degree leads to specific jobs and careers. As students transition from teacher certification majors, with defined career outcomes, they find themselves concerned and curious about their future career options but lack confidence and control in their future. To cultivate adaptability in students who experience this change of major transition, the career advising program was designed to consider students' ecology within the college environment to provide the necessary resources to cultivate adaptability. As such, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do undergraduate students describe their transition between majors into Educational Studies?
2. How do undergraduate students describe their experience with the services from an academic advising career program designed to help them identify and adapt to new career options?

This chapter will present a summary of the findings and a discussion that ensued from the career advising program, its implication on future research and practice, limitations, lessons learned, and future research.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study were incorporated to build a conceptual model on communal adaptability, which includes a networks of support, information, and self. To understand the model, it is imperative to first understanding how participants described their transition to Educational Studies.

Transition of changing majors. Participants described their transition to Educational Studies as a state limbo. In a liminal state between two majors, participants felt a weak sense of belonging, stuck between their two majors without knowing of potential career options, and felt like they were portraying an inauthentic version of themselves.

In the transition to Educational Studies, participants sought to be part of a community to cultivate relationships and connections with others like themselves to enhance their sense of belonging. As supported by the literature, sense of belonging is relational and reciprocal amongst and between individuals and the environment (Strayhorn, 2012). The relationship amongst peers in their major was important to participants, both when in teacher certification majors and Educational Studies. A lack of community and adequate support led to students feeling concerned and curious and having a lack of control and confidence in their future career trajectory.

Prior to changing majors, students felt stuck between two majors. Although participants expressed doubt and felt isolated in their teacher certification major, they were reluctant to enact change. Concurrently, participants also feared changing majors because of the unknown and uncertainty in the future and becoming a new iteration of themselves. The fear of the future manifested into concerns and curiosities with new career trajectories. The perception that a college major and degree leads to specific

career options limited the scope of how career trajectories are understood by participants. As such, this perception attributed to a hesitation by participants to embrace the unknown and uncertainty. This perception also informs why participants chose being an imposter, portraying an inauthentic version of self, over facing a transition perceived to have negative consequences of having concerns and fears in the becoming someone else.

Although participants felt inauthentic in their teacher certification majors, they eventually experienced strained and broken connections to the teaching profession that prompted them to change majors to Educational Studies. Through the findings, participants noted the start of their transition to the moment they decided to change their majors; however, they described characteristics of the transition in this context prior to changing majors. Participants felt like imposters by being dishonest to themselves, classmates, professors, and the students they engaged with. The literature explains how transitions are shaped by the perceptions held by the individual (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Although the participants described their transition in retrospect, noting the nuances of a transition in advising interactions can help students be reflective and understand their feelings and thoughts related to their college experiences.

Understanding the nuanced nature of the transition can help academic advising how to help students adapt to the transition. The literature acknowledges the role of others in helping an individual adapt in a transition (Schlossberg, 1981; Murphy et al. 2016), yet, refers to the support as static mechanisms in the environment. The findings from this study contributes to the literature by examining the fluidity of the ecology to create space for exchanges between the individual and their environment. The study adds

a dimension to the literature by bringing together a group of individuals who encountered the same transition and how they support each other in managing the transition.

The culture of the Teachers College at SU acknowledges and instills pride in individuals who decide to become teachers. Such culture compounded by the lack of opportunities to build community with others in the major often makes students perceive their decision to change majors to Educational Studies as an inferior option. One's ecology at varying levels can influence one's ability to manage the transition and adapt to a new career trajectory.

Cultivating adaptability within the ecology. The career advising program was designed to consider students' ecology by exploring the reciprocal nature between students and the systems within their environment. The findings formulated the transition-adaptability model, which comprise of a network of support, network of information, and network of self-concept. Participants cross-reference to make connections between networks through varying systems within their ecology.

Network of support. Participants sought a community with others like them, leveraged their relationships and interpersonal skills, and had a desire to support others like themselves. Participants described the experience of changing their major an isolating experience. Although participants had support from their family, friends, and significant others outside of the college environment, they felt isolated in the context of their college environment. In alignment with literature, Strayhorn (2012) described a lack of belonging as isolation. In choosing to not become teachers, students felt like they lost part of their network of support because they were no longer part of the majority of students within the college but were constantly reminded by their established network of

peers or taking classes from faculty who were K-12 teachers themselves. Additionally, support services and opportunities did not consider the needs of this student population. As such, they felt disconnected to their major and their professional identity.

The career advising program cultivated a community of individuals in the Educational Studies majors. The participants expressed their enjoyment, comfort, and assurance in being around peers who experienced the transition into Educational Studies. Additionally, in the program, participants were uplifting and supportive of others while addressing their own concerns and curiosities. Resultantly, programs felt like they belonged.

Furthermore, participants learned the importance of networking and leveraging existing connections and building new ones through class internships and peers in the program. With limited to graduation, participants were motivated to take advantage of institution support services and opportunities like the career advising program. As such, participants had an opportunity to network within the program alongside guest speakers, support staff, and their peers.

Outside of the institution, family provided motivation and encouragement to earn a degree and to have career options and opportunities, countering students' perception of being stuck. In having limited to no career options or opportunities, being stuck leads results in jobs and careers with no growth and a lack of enjoyment and happiness. In understanding the feelings of isolation, learning the importance of network, and leveraging existing connections, participants also showed a desire to help others who experienced the same transition of changing majors.

In terms of cultivating adaptability, a network of support provided a foundation for participants to alleviate their concerns of feeling isolated by drawing on support of individuals both inside and outside the institution. Specifically, participants learned the importance of networking with others to support their future career endeavors. In learning from their network of support, participants desired to help others like them. The network of support also served as a source of information to address the concerns and curiosities participants had related to their future careers.

Network of information. Through their network of support, participants acquired information to support their career adaptability. The network of information helped to address the concerns and fears associated with the unknown, as described in their transition experiences. In leveraging a network of support, participants described their network of information through comforting options, storied knowledge, and navigational strategies.

Prior to the program, participants detailed their concerns through reasons for joining the program as learning and knowing of options related to jobs and careers. Seeking to know about options related to their perception that a college degree leads to a job. As such, they had concerns and curiosities about their future career because their career trajectory was no longer perceived as linear, such as becoming a teacher.

Through the program, participants were exposed to various guest speakers from the community who shared their career stories and how their trajectory evolved, providing an expanded view of what options means in the context of a career. As such, the stories from others served as a source of knowledge and a form of stored knowledge that will help the participants as they experience transitions in the future. From the

stories, participants also learned navigational strategies to help them in moments of feeling stuck. Consistent with the career counseling literature, stories help individuals craft identities (McMahon & Watson, 2013), connect to others despite differences in background or experiences (Clark, 2004), and recount and leverage past experiences to inform future plans (Savickas, 1997, 2013). Through stories, participants acquired strategies to navigate the career management process. Traditional advising interactions often address the “what” related questions to the career exploration, planning, and decision-making process. The navigational strategies informed by stories helped students connect the “what” and “how” related questions through the acquisition of navigational skills.

Overall, the program helped to shift the inquiries of participants away from wanting to know about career options to finding comfort in options because they were equipped with storied knowledge and navigational strategies. As such, participants are better prepared to manage their concerns and curiosities because of a network of information and a network of support drawn upon multiple layers of their ecology. As such, the program helped to further shape the adaptability of the participants amidst the transition of changing majors by making participants aware of their network of support and build upon participants’ network of information. In knowing about comforting options, storied knowledge, and navigational strategies, participants exuded greater confidence in their future to attain their overall goal of happiness.

Network of self-concept. This network examined how participants developed and changed through the program to cultivate a greater level of adaptability amidst the

transition of changing majors. Specifically, participants described the network of self-concept as gaining confidence and seeking happiness.

Participants discussed the confidence within themselves and their circumstance of changing majors. Self-confidence comes from learning about oneself and cultivating a self-awareness, through activities, discussions, and self-reflection from the program. Learning about oneself is consistent with the career counseling literature of a narrative approach where individuals construct narratives from the past, deconstruct past narratives to create new meaning, and reconstruct past stories to create a story for the future (Brott, 2001; Cochran, 1997; McMahon & Watson, 2011; Savickas et al., 2009). Such approach has helped individuals become reflective and responsive to changes and focus on creating goals towards their future.

As a result of self-confidence, participants also grew confident in their future career trajectory by drawing on their network of support and network of information. Specifically, participants discussed the confidence they have in their future and to utilize their network of information to support to help them make decisions regarding their futures. With confidence, participants displayed control in relation to their career management by not settling less for what they want. As discussed in the literature, exercising control includes sticking up for oneself and what they believe, being persistent in what they want, and making decisions (McMahon, Watson, & Bimrose, 2012).

The increased confidence in themselves and in their environment prompted participants to describe their pursuit for happiness. The desire to be happy revealed that despite moving in and through the transition of changing majors, participants' reasons for selecting an education major remains steadfast. Although participants expressed feelings

of worry and fear of being stuck and of the unknown, they ultimately strived to be happy. In terms of the career, participants wanted to make an impact in their careers by helping others. Even in the context of the program, participants wanted to help others who will be experiencing the same transition as them. In this way, participants demonstrated how they have adapted throughout the program and their newfound outlook of their future. Although participants expressed their concerns related to knowing and learning about career options, they are in fact concerned about finding happiness in their career and life after college.

Overall, the career advising program considered the ecology by having the institution be responsive to the students' needs and convening aspects of multiple systems through the program. As such, the program evolved and was shaped by the participants' curiosities and concerns related to career management, resulting in greater control and confidence in their futures. Each network of support, information and self, are interwoven with one another and across multiple systems across one's ecology. The interactions between and amongst networks demonstrates the iterative nature of one's adaptability.

Implications for Research

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development is the third iteration of his model to understand the relation between individuals and their environment (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). In his work, he noted the contextualized nature of the model and how it could operate and encouraged further research to deepen our understanding of human development from an ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, 2005). This study contributes to the literature by giving a context to understand the

bioecological model. In alignment with the career counseling literature, the bioecological approach considers the chronology of past and future experiences. Bronfenbrenner's concentric model depicts layers of the system and delineate the increasingly distal influence of the systems on one's development. Yet, the transition-adaptability model denotes the layers through dimensionality to capture the depth in which each the network of support, information, and self-concept connects with one another and operates to cultivate adaptability. As individuals continuously make connections amongst the three networks, the individuals and their ecology constantly evolve, as represented by the arrows in the transition-adaptability model.

Another implication on research is examining students who change majors after freshmen year, particularly those who leave professional program majors such as teaching. Currently, the related literature focuses primarily on students coming into college undecided on their college major (Gordon & Steele, 2003; Porter & Umbach, 2006). In understanding human development, particularly in traditional college-aged students, one's development at the beginning and end of their college career greatly varies (Astin, 1984). As such, the literature on career exploration to support student's major choice manifest differently as a student matures. Additionally, students in this study experienced two major transitions of changing majors and graduating from college. An ecological approach to examine a set of transitions and how the environment can be supportive is a fresh perspective in understanding the development of the individual. This study considered the individual's development later in their college career and how that influences their adaptability to manage the transitions.

In the literature, both adaptability and academic advising are often discussed in the literature in the context of the individual, their development, and the environment. This study contributes to the literature but providing a vantage point of leveraging the reciprocal nature of an individual, group of individuals, and the environment to help to cultivate one's adaptability. Studies on group career counseling and leveraging stories, such as Clark, Severy, and Sawyer (2004), to support one's vocational development is sparse. As such, this study contributes to the body of literature and creates opportunities for further research.

Similarly, the research on academic advising primarily speaks to the developmental needs of college students (Crookston, 1994; Grite & Gordon, 2000; O'Banion, 1994). A developmental approach has been practiced through the traditional views advising, which include support in major selection, course scheduling, future career goals between the student and an advisor (Crookston, 1994; Hemwell & Trachte, 2005; Kuhn, Gordon, Webber, 2006; Lowenstein, 2011; O'Banion, 1994). As a result, advising interactions are isolated, reactive, and passive and do not consider aspects of a student's ecology. Shifting the research of academic advising to an ecological lens results in practices that are proactive, dynamic, and draws upon multiple aspects of the ecology. As such, moving away from isolated interactions and examining the power in a group of individuals to support one another can address the developmental needs of students in transition.

Implications for Practice

Advising practices can consider the nuanced and iterative nature of transitions. As described by the participants, they were not aware of their transition experience until

an event prompted them to change majors. Advisors should actively listen to how students describe their experiences to recognize nuanced signs that may result in a transition. Gaining insights of the type, context, and impact of the transition will help advisors decipher how to best support students in their academic, vocational, and personal development. Additionally, advising is done in isolation and is passive under the assumption that the institution believes the students will come advising when they need help. However, there may be students who choose not to ask for help nor are aware that they need help. Advising from an ecological perspective considers the environment and addresses the needs and concerns of students, and ultimately, taking a proactive approach. Also, support for students extend beyond academic advising but other support services and faculty who also interact with the students.

The findings showed how students often associated a college degree with specific career jobs and outcomes. Resultantly, this perception has implications for the Teachers College. Understanding the interplay of the ecology and human development can help the Teachers College to focus more on cultivating the skillset of becoming an educator rather than placing an emphasis on becoming a teacher. In addition to advising for the Educational Studies major, I also supervise a team of advisors. The findings from this action research study has prompted broader application to advising practices within the Teachers College at SU. As a supervisor, I can create conditions within the advising culture to focus on transferable skills, career options within the education field, and emphasize cultivating educators versus teachers. In focusing on helping students persist to graduation, advisors often operate in a teacher centric mindset in their interactions with students. As such, advising practices assume students are confident and in control of

their future career trajectories as teachers and do not engage students in deeper conversations regarding their future career goals and aspirations. Ongoing training can help to widen advisors' scope of their practices beyond the teaching profession to further understand the ecology and its influence of the holistic development of students to then provide tailored support throughout their college experience.

A prominent finding from this study highlighted the need of a community for students in the Educational Studies major. Cultivating a community supports students in their transition by helping them cultivate ways to become adaptable to changes, whether it is changing majors, career trajectory, or life circumstances. This study brings forth the desires from students in the Educational Studies to have a community of students in the same major and to support each other in the change of major transition, through completion of the major, and enhancing their network as they seek employment after graduation.

Limitations of Study

The limitations of this study can be used to inform future cycles of research. One limitation is sample bias as the participants opted into the study. Participants expressed a desire to join the program because they saw the value in their future. As such, their willingness and likeliness to cultivate adaptability has considerations on the findings in this study. This study did not provide insights to students who may lack the awareness that they need support in their transition and adaptability. In parallel to current advising practices, we assumed students will ask for help when needed and capitalize on opportunities in their environment. Although participants actively chose to be part of the

program, they described the gaps in their understanding of their network of support, information, and self to engage effectively in the career management process.

Another limitation to this study is maturation of the participants. As described in the study, the multiple layers of one's ecology influences an individual's development. Although participants described how the program helped them think about their career management differently, there may be other factors in their environment that influenced their adaptability that were not captured by the study. An ecological perspective drew upon numerous aspects that no one factor alone can be isolated and be solely attributed to the findings in this study.

Lastly, the factor of time was a limitation to this study. Transitions are continuous with no end point. A semester long intervention is a snapshot in understanding and how individuals adapt to the transition through the career advising program. Participants expressed a desire to continue in the program because they felt like they had more to learn and prepare for regarding their adaptability and career preparation.

Lessons Learned

This study has informed my practices, resulting in more effective and meaningful advising interactions with students. Advising often requires dialogue with students and to articulate sentiments and perspectives the students hold. As students engage in reflective dialogue, I can work with students to unpack thoughts, ideas, and goals. In these ways, advising can cultivate adaptability in students. Additionally, leveraging students and support services in proactive ways can be more effective in meeting the needs of students. With structures and support services in place at institutions,

practitioners can be quick to assume student's low performance of a lack of ability fall on the onus of the student. Yet, the ecology is less considered in how it can

Additionally, I have a greater awareness of the students in the Educational Studies major. In three years of advising this student population, the most frequently asked question was, "What can I do with this major?" This question hinted at the desire to know about their options, hence, the creation of the career grid. Although I engaged students in discussions, I often felt like I needed to give students an answer. Over time, in an attempt to circumvent giving a specific answer because I did not know myself, I focused on giving students the skills to explore potential career options. Despite my approach, students continued to demonstrate a disconnect between their major and career outlook. In utilizing my research skills and knowledge, this study allowed me to explore and decipher the true needs of the students. As a result, my I have a heightened awareness and understanding of students' perceptions and what support they are seeking in this transition. Oftentimes, I can be inundated with the day-to-day operations and losing sight to the nuanced nature of students' concerns and curiosities, particularly in the context of transitions. As a researcher and practitioner, I have a greater awareness of the various systems within the institution and how they influence my roles and responsibilities but also the experience of students. As such, I now strive to remove barriers for students rather than creating them to ensure they are support while they are at the institution.

Lastly, I appreciate the iterative nature of action research and how it has allowed me to deeply and continuously reflect on my practices. In reflecting on my practices, I can make informed changes and improvements to better serve the needs of students. I understand how informed research can enact meaningful and sustaining changes. In

understanding action research, I have changed as a researcher from this practice and the practice has changed the ecology for the students in the Educational Studies major. That is the beauty of adaptability!

Future Research

The next cycle of research can further explore the dynamics of the ecology on an individual's adaptability by considering the ecology cultivated by the program. Through this study, participants expressed the desire to be with others in the same major. As the Teachers College considers adapting the ecology to meet this need of students, the findings from such study could help refine practices of support for students in the Educational Studies major. Further exploration can consider the communal adaptability and how the collective group supports one's development and the development of the group. Particularly in the context of transitions, the communal adaptability may be a strategy for institutions to consider in how they shape the ecology which influences the development of students.

Concluding Remarks

Although individuals hold different reasons for attending college, the role of the institution, to support students in their academic, vocational, and personal development, remains steadfast. Through this support, students develop and grow in the context of higher education and are equipped with adaptive skills to prepare them for life after graduation. To do so, institutions need to be responsive to present, yet subtle cues, communicated by students to then adapt to student's perceptions of the ecology. In response, and reciprocity, students will develop in ways to benefit their ecology to meet economical and societal needs.

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APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM

Utilizing Academic Advising to Cultivate Adaptability in Students Changing Majors within the Education Field

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Daniel Dinn-You Liou in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to determine the influence of an academic advising career program on students' transition experience from teacher certification majors to Educational Studies to cultivate adaptability that will enhance their vocational development. I am inviting you to participate in an academic advising career program that consist of the following:

- 1 video introduction
- 3 career sessions (September 14, September 28, October 12)
- ongoing LinkedIn discussions
- 1 letter for a future program participant
- 1 interview (one-on-one with advisor)

The program will occur between September and December 2017. The time commitment to this program equates to approximately six hours throughout the semester. The program is limited to 12 participants. To confirm your space in the program, you must submit a video to your advisor, Raquel Fong. The video is intended to be an informal introduction to explain your reasons for partaking in the program.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right not to answer any question and to stop participation at any time. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not influence or change the advising services and support that will provided to you. You must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

If you choose to participate in this study, your video, participation in group debrief, and LinkedIn discussions, letter, and responses from the post-program interview will be used to understand the influence of the program on one's adaptability and vocational development in the context of changing majors from teacher certification to Educational Studies. Possible benefits of your participation include engaging in activities and tasks to help inform your vocational goals and development. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

Confidentiality will be maintained by storing the research records on a password protected computer and will only be utilized by the researchers. Due to the group format of the debriefs after workshops, social media posts, complete confidentiality of said data cannot be guaranteed. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

I would like to audio record the debriefs and post-program interview. The debriefs and interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded; if you change your mind at any point, please let me know. Additionally, I will obtain a copy or picture of any worksheets, handouts, or artifacts used or created in the sessions. You will be able to keep the hard copy.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: Daniel Dinn-You Liou at dliou@asu.edu and Raque Fong at rfong@asu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788. Please let me know if you wish to be part of the study.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

Signature of participant	Date
Printed name of participant	

Signature of person obtaining consent	Date
Printed name of person obtaining consent	

APPENDIX B
RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Potential participants will be recruited via email or academic advising appointment. Participants eligible for this study are individuals who have not been in the Educational Studies more than one fall or spring semester and hold at least 45 university credit. Additionally, this study will include students who hold senior status of 87 or more credits. If additional participants are needed, any student who changed from a teacher certification major with more than 45 credits will be recruited for this study. Potential participants will be sent an email or provided information regarding the program during an academic advising appointment with the advisor/researcher. Potential participants will also be asked to submit their consent form and their video to be considered for this study.

The program is limited to 12 participants. If more than 12 participants apply to the program, the first 12 applicants will be accepted into the program. A waiting list will be maintained in the event any of the initial 12 participants opt out of the program.

Recruitment Email:

Greetings!

I hope this email finds you well! You have been selected to participate in a unique experience exclusively for Educational Studies majors. In fall 2017, the Teachers College Advising will be hosting an Advising Career Program designed to help you adapt to the Educational Studies major exploring, planning, and deciding on potential jobs and careers after you graduate. In the program, you will design your maximal resume, create and build a professional network, and identify potential jobs and/or career paths.

The program will occur between September and December 2017. The time commitment to this program equates to approximately six hours throughout the semester. Participation in the program includes the following activities:

- 1 video introduction
- 3 career sessions (September 14, September 28, October 12)
- ongoing LinkedIn discussions
- 1 letter for a future program participant
- 1 interview

The program is limited to 12 participants. To confirm your space in the program, you must submit a video to your advisor, Raquel Fong. The video is intended to be an informal introduction to explain your reasons for partaking in the program. The video does not have a specified time limit; however, the video must address the following questions:

- State your name, where are you from (hometown), what your major was before you changed to Educational Studies, and how you chose your previous major.
- Explain the reasons for changing your major to Educational Studies.
- Describe how you have been adapting to your new major in Educational Studies?

- What do you hope to gain from this program?
- How would you like to benefit from this program?
- Where would you like to yourself in five years in terms of what your life will look like and the job you will?

If you are interested in participating in this program, please reply to please submit your video or video link to Raquel.Fong@asu.edu by September 6, 2017. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Kind regards,

Raquel Fong
Academic Success Supervisor
rfong@asu.edu

APPENDIX C
VIDEO INTRODUCTION

Researcher's Name: Raquel Fong

Length of Video Introduction: 5 minutes

Location of Interview: Varied spaces, participant's choice

Data Storage Method: All data will be saved in a password protected computer

The program is limited to 12 participants. To confirm your space in the program, you must submit a video to your advisor, Raquel Fong. The video is intended to be an informal introduction to explain your reasons for partaking in the program. The video does not have a specified time limit; however, the video must address the following questions:

- State your name, where are you from (hometown), what your major was before you changed to Educational Studies, and how you chose your previous major.
- Explain the reasons for changing your major to Educational Studies.
- Describe how you have been adapting to your new major in Educational Studies?
- What do you hope to gain from this program?
- How would you like to benefit from this program?
- Where would you like to yourself in five years in terms of what your life will look like and the job you will have?

APPENDIX D
SESSION DEBRIEFS

Researcher's Name: Raquel Fong, researcher

Length of Session: 30-45 minutes

Location of Interview: Session location on ASU Tempe Campus

Data Storage Method: Interviews will be audio recorded. All data will be saved in a password protected computer.

After each session, participants will partake in a 30-45 minute debrief to reflect on the session. The questions of the debrief are outlined below; however, participants may provide additional information related to the questions in the debrief.

Debrief Questions

- I. Describe your major takeaways from this session.
- II. How has this session influence how you think about your potential career options and trajectories? Be specific.
- III. Describe your curiosities and concerns regarding career exploration, planning, or decision making as a result of this session.
- IV. How do you feel about your ability to carry out career related tasks and/or goals?
- V. What is something you want to do before the next session related to your career exploration, planning, and decision making?
- VI. Identify and describe one or more individuals and how they have been helpful to you in this session and/or in this program.
- VII. Here are the objectives for this session. In your opinion, describe how the objectives of this session were or were not met.
- VIII. What would you like to see in future sessions?

APPENDIX E

ADVISING PROGRAM SESSION PROTOCOL

Researcher's Name: Raquel Fong, researcher

Length of Session: 60-75 minutes

Location of Interview: Conference room on ASU Tempe Campus

Data Storage Method: All data will be saved in a password protected computer.

A Career Advising Program will be conducted across three sessions on three different days. Each session will be facilitated by the researcher/academic advisor and will include activities with handout and worksheet artifacts will be filled out or produced by the participants. At the end of each session, the researcher will take a picture of the artifact. Pictures will be taken with a phone camera and be uploaded to a password protected computer.

The Career Advising Program will include three activities that will be conducted throughout the workshop. The activity outlined for each session is in the following table:

Intervention		Details
Session 1	Activity: Wandering Map Guest speaker Q&A	Participants will map out past experiences and interests that will help inform their future career trajectories and goals.
Session 2	Activity: Possible Lives Map Guest speaker Q&A	Participants will map out potential career paths based on past experiences and interests to develop themes.
Session 3	Activity: "5 Year Resume" Exercise Guest speaker Q&A	Participants will engage in writing exercises to map and plan their 5-year plan and tangible steps to help them achieve their goals.

APPENDIX F
LINKEDIN DISCUSSION PROTOCOL

Researcher's Name: Raquel Fong, researcher

Length of Session: 15-30 minutes

Location of Interview: Varied spaces, participant's choice

Data Storage Method: All data will be saved in a password protected computer.

After each session, participants will be prompted to engage with LinkedIn, which is a social media geared towards career networking and professional development. Each participant will be requested to create an account if they do not currently have one and will be invited to be part of the Educational Studies LinkedIn group. The individuals in the study will be part of the group in addition to the academic advisor of the program, Educational Studies alumni, faculty, and the career services liaison.

The prompts and engagement will be informed by the participants' needs and concerns expressed during the session and in their application video. The researcher will review the application videos and integrate feedback from participants. Additionally, the researcher will be informed on prompts by observations made during the session.

Sample prompts:

- Find and post an article or resource that provides insight or tips to writing a resume
- What kind of jobs or careers are you interested in? How can we help you find opportunities?
- Find and post an article or resource on how that can help you create and/or carryout career plans and goals.
- Post a job posting that you would be interested in applying for.

APPENDIX G
LETTER WRITING PROTOCOL

Researcher's Name: Raquel Fong, researcher
Length of Session: 30-60 minutes
Location of Interview: Varied spaces, participant's choice
Data Storage Method: All data will be saved in a password protected computer.

At the end of third session of the advising career session, participants will be asked to write a letter to a future participant of the program. The letter will be due on the date of their final interview. After the session, participants will be sent a reminder email of the letter writing prompt as well as the date and time of their final interview.

Prompt:

Please write a letter that will be given to a prospective participant of this program. In your letter, please describe what you learned from the program and any advice to someone who is adjusting to the Educational Studies major and planning for their future career options and trajectories.

Email reminder:

Greetings, [insert participant's name]!

Thank you for coming to the session today! As a friendly reminder, please remember to write a letter to a future participant of this program. In your letter, please describe what you learned from the program and any advice as they adjust to the Educational Studies major and plan for their future career options and trajectories. There is no limit to the letter but consider what you would want to know as a potential participant of the program.

Please bring your letter (hard copy) or send your email to me at Raquel.Fong@asu.edu prior to your final interview. As a confirmation, your interview date and time is [insert date and time].

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you on [insert interview date].

Kind regards,
Raquel Fong

APPENDIX H
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Researcher's Name: Raquel Fong

Length of Session: 60 minutes

Location of Interview: Private space on campus, i.e. advisor's office

Data Storage Method: Interviews will be audio recorded. All data will be saved in a password protected computer.

Opening Statement:

“Thank you for participating in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to reflect on your participation and experience in an academic advising career program and letter writing exercise. Your participation in this program is voluntary and can choose to stop the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we begin the interview?”

Social Climate (Program)

1. Tell me about your approach to writing this letter.
2. Before entering this program, describe how you felt when you initially changed your major to Educational Studies and your experiences leading up to this program. (*self-concept/transition*)
3. If someone was thinking about changing their major to Educational Studies, what would you tell them? (*transition*)
4. What did you enjoy about the program? (*system maintenance*)
 - a. What has been most helpful to you in this program?
5. What have you learned about yourself from this program? (*self-concept*)
6. Describe how the individuals you encountered in this program contributed to your experience? (*relationships*)
7. In what ways did this program meet/did not meet your expectations? (*system maintenance*)
 - a. What were your expectations of the program?

Career Adaptability (Participant)

1. Before you started this program, what kind of research did you do on careers? (*curiosity*)
 - a. How did you think about the idea of a “career” before this program?
2. What are you curious to learn about now that you completed the program? (*curiosity*)
3. As a result of this program, describe the process you will go through to find a job? (*control*)
 - a. How do you feel about carrying out these tasks? (*confidence*)
 - b. How was this process you developed informed by what you learned in this program?
4. How do you anticipate managing changes in this career exploration process? (*confidence/control*)
5. What challenges do you anticipate facing as you prepare for your career after graduation? (*concern*)

- a. How do you plan on navigating those challenges? (*confidence*)
6. A year from now, how would you like to see yourself? (*concern*)
7. Where do you see yourself in five years?
8. Overall, describe your feelings when you think about your future career.

APPENDIX I
CODING TRAIL

Coding Trail (Sample)

<u>Selective Codes</u>	<u>Sub-categories</u>	<u>Categories</u>
Understand the value of gaining experiences	Comforting options	Network of Information
Talk to others about experiences		
Feel better when relating to others		
Find comfort in knowing information		
* Feels confident and reinforced by program		
* Desire to not be stuck		
Connect speakers' stories to self and experience		
Believed Ed Studies had more options		
Believed being a teacher had limiting career options		
* Displayed a lack of confidence		
Desire to learn about options		
Perceived past experiences has no relation to future career		
Lack of career research		
* Seek enjoyment in career		
* Seek satisfaction in career		
Showed curiosity to know about career options		
Comforted in hearing about options and resources		
* See how others demonstrate options		
Addressed concerns of being stuck		
Generate ideas from others' stories	Storied knowledge	
Learned from speakers' stories – not set path		
Learned career trajectories are non-linear		
* Aware of resources available		
Conduct research on desired path		
Hearing peers ideas and perspectives		
Understand real world application		
Understand how and why others make decisions		
* Utilize personal network as examples and knowledge		

Learned opportunities from guest speakers		
Understand thought process of others		
Demonstrate lack of research and thinking about future/career		
Understand career culture		
Demonstrate lack of understand of career management		
Gained perspectives through stories		
* Make meaning of information		
Reflected on stories of others		
* Strategize about career plan	Navigational strategies	
* Hearing & seeing others figure it out/navigate		
Understand how resources are beneficial		
Know how to use resources		
Learn how to apply skills		
* Draw on strategies & knowledge learned towards future		
Take advantage of opportunities		
Learned how others managed challenges		
* Belief skills can be used in different ways		
Exemplify career management skills		
Knowing “how to” reduces concerns		
Knowing “how to” reduces curiosities		
Connect to past experiences		
* Gained confidence		
Explored options		

* applicable to more than one sub-category and/or category

APPENDIX J

SAMPLE LETTERS TO FUTURE PARTICIPANTS

To Whom It May Concern:

I know you might be feeling different emotions because you just have made the transition into the Educational Studies program. Don't worry, you're not alone. I went into the teaching program back in 2016. My first internship experience was a beneficial experience even though teaching was something I no longer wanted to pursue. In the middle of the semester of my junior year, I started to question myself on this decision of wanting to be a teacher. I realized that I loved being an "instructional assistant" because that was what I was doing during my first internship. I then questioned myself if I could see myself being a teacher, teaching 25 or more students, making lesson plans on a weekly basis, and be able to take my work home. Once I started to face the reality that I could not imagine myself being a teacher, I immediately felt a rush of different emotions. I felt horrible, feeling like I was lying to the students I was helping. They would say, "Can you be our 7th grade teacher?!". I told them I was graduating in two years and they were fifth graders. I felt bad for the doubtful thinking I was going through. I then talked to one of my closest friends about it. He reassured me that everything is going to be okay. He told me that if I am having these feelings then I should change my major into something that will make me happy. He stated that it is my life I have to think about. I took everything into consideration and changed my major to Educational studies after my first internship. The transition was a bit intimidating because I did not know what to expect. Now, I am about to graduate this December and I feel like I have made the right decision of changing my major into Educational Studies. I have been able to take a variety of classes that have helped me focus on the area I want to specialize in. There is a wide range of classes to choose from and I like that about the program, you are able to explore other areas within Education. What also made the transition easier was participating in the Career Advising Program.

I was able to meet individuals who have experienced the same process as I have. These people have helped me realize it is okay to not want to be a teacher anymore and that I should not feel guilty because of my decision to leave the classroom. I was also able to hear different experiences from people who are already in the job field which reassured me that the Educational Studies program can lead me to the career I want. I am grateful for being able to participate in the career advising program because I am now aware of the numerous resources there are available to me. I honestly wished the program was longer so that I can continue to learn and hear more experiences. If you are unaware of what career to pursue or which pathway to take with your Educational Studies degrees, then participating in the career advising program will make you aware of the endless careers clarify any questions or concerns. I know the career advising program will be a beneficial experience as it has been for me.

Sincerely,

Rose

To whom it may concern:

Hello fellow Educational Study major. My name is Andrew and I too was an Ed Study major. Like you, I wanted to originally be a teacher. I started out as a Special Education and Elementary Education major. I thought I wanted to make a difference by working with kids in special education. However, after doing some reflecting I realized that I wasn't cut out for that position. I also didn't want to be in a classroom. I knew I wanted to work with kids because I really enjoy working with them I just didn't want it to be in a classroom setting. This is where Educational Studies came in. It was the perfect major for me and will be for you too. It allows me to work with children without being a teacher in a classroom. However, it still allows me to be an EDUCATOR! I have found this transition to be simple and very enjoyable. I love this major and I think you will enjoy it as well.

One thing that really helped me throughout my major was participating in this career program. I walked in with a lot of questions and very scared about what to do after graduation. I participated in this program in the fall of my senior year. This program helped me learn more about myself and traits that could potentially benefit me in my future career. This program was also amazing because there were guest speakers that came in and shared their stories with us. What I learned from the guest speakers was that whatever you decide to do after graduation doesn't necessarily mean that you will do that for the rest of your life. That first job may lead to other jobs that you may have never thought of before. I also was able to learn about graduate school. What I learned on that topic was that you want to wait and see what you are interested in before you participate in a grad program. It is okay to wait a little bit, you don't have to immediately jump into a graduate program right away.

I walked into this program very scared about my future and unsure. I highly recommend this program. There is a lot of good information that will help you in your journey. This biggest thing I would say to you is that it is okay if you do not know what you want to do. If you are unsure or scared, it is okay, that is normal. Evaluate your interests, the type of person you are and that will help you narrow down your choices of a career. Just know that whatever you choose doesn't mean you have to do that forever. You may start out as a teacher and end up advocating for teachers and schools. I wish you much success in your future study and career. Good Luck!

Sincerely,
Andrew