VALIDATING COMPLEX PROGRAM AIMS:
CONSTRUCTING A FRAMEWORK FOR THE VALIDATION OF ONE TEACHER
EDUCATION PROGRAM’S AIM TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVITY AS A
FUNDAMENTAL PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLE

by

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ABSTRACT

Educational programs are typically guided by complex overarching aims that demark broad expectations for program graduates. In practice, these aims tend to become operationalized into specific, measurable learning objectives, which form the basis for assessment of student learning. Research suggests that this practice limits the accuracy and validity of overarching program aims and may result in misrepresentation of student competency. This limitation is in part due to the use of traditional assumptions of measurement that operate on a validity of correspondence that is linear, singular, and value-free. Accordingly, through this research, I construct a framework for understanding the validity of complex program aims by drawing on contemporary validity theory. Specifically, I use an interpretive, argument-based approach to validation to connect, analyse, and evaluate multiple interpretations towards a program’s overarching aims. Methodologically, I draw on hermeneutics to collect validity evidence for the construction of a multiple perspective validity argument. I contend that this framework for validation results in a complex articulation of the quality of program coherence between program users’ interpretations of complex aims and their practices. In this dissertation, I apply this validation framework to one teacher education program and its aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. In doing so, I provide a complex description of the multiple ways inclusivity is interpreted by diverse program users (i.e., senior program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates) and through various program structures. Thus in addition to articulating a validity argument for one teacher education program, this work also contributes a framework of inclusivity towards broader educational discourse.
ACKNOWLEDGING THE PROCESS AND THE PEOPLE

When I started my doctoral program, I was not entirely sure what I wanted to study or where this degree might lead. I was sure, however, that in completing my doctorate at Queen’s, I would meet and work with people who would inspire, guide, and support my learning and that through conversations and collaborations, I would forge meaningful relationships and engage in significant scholarly work. These acknowledgments cannot nearly communicate the gravity of influence nor the number of people who have supported me throughout this process.

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When it came time to select my dissertation committee, I wanted to select individuals who could contribute not only to my area of research but also to my understanding of what it meant to be a good academic. I approached Rebecca Luce-Kapler because she brought a hermeneutic perspective to my work and because, through coursework, I had already learned so much about curriculum, research, and writing from her. I knew that through her approach scholarship, I would be pushed to root my
academic work in passion and personal experience. In doing this, I have developed a stronger, more grounded, program of research that is personally compelling and rewarding. I asked Ruth Rees to join my committee because of her experience in working as the Registrar in the Queen’s Teacher Education Program and because of her research on inclusion and equity issues. From the moment Ruth signed-on to this project, I have never once questioned her commitment to my research or learning. Ruth has brought clarity and perspective to my work through insightful and detailed feedback. Ruth and Rebecca, you have both been incredibly strong role models of academics who work with integrity, passion, and commitment.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

It was near May, and I ran to the park and sat under the budding maple to open the envelope. I could tell from its size that I had been accepted. This excited me. After reading the letter, I quickly flipped to the program calendar. On the inside front cover was the program’s mission statement. I read it through, four times at least.

Our vision of the graduate of Queen's University Faculty of Education is that of a critically reflective professional. Graduates are expected to integrate theoretical, practical, and experiential knowledge in the understanding and resolution of professional issues. We see the beginning teacher as an active agent in the development of a socially inclusive pedagogy aimed at social justice. In our vision, the critically reflective teacher is the one who asks questions that go beyond immediate pressures of daily practice, and who has a disposition to work in collaboration with other members of the profession and with all those involved in the education and development of all learners. (Queen’s University, 2003)

I understood the words, although not fully, and I wondered if I would indeed, by the end of the teacher education program, embody the vision of a Queen’s graduate.

Teacher education programs, and educational programs more generally, are typically guided by such mission statements (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008; Schiro, 2008). Embedded within these statements are program aims that demark complex skills, knowledge, and dispositions expected of program graduates (Eisner, 1967; Northfield & Gunstone, 1997; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). While these are important enduring aims, they are highly interpretable, socially-dependent, and contextually-based. As such, they tend to become operationalized into specific and measurable learning objectives that are...
often times more narrow and simplistic (McNeil, 2006; Parkay, Hass, & Anctil, 2010; Schiro, 2008). Moreover, assessment of student learning leading to graduation is based on specific learning objectives rather than on complex program aims. Research suggests that this practice limits the accuracy and validity of these program aims and may result in misrepresentation of student competency (McNeil, 2006; Volante & Cherubini, 2007; Volante & Earl, 2002, 2004). This limitation is in part due to the use of traditional assumptions of measurement that operate on a validity of correspondence that is linear, singular, and value-free (Lather, 1993). Accordingly, through this research, I aim to construct a framework for understanding the validity of complex program aims by drawing on more contemporary notions of validity.

Contemporary validity theory is a multi-faceted construct that involves situated judgments about the accuracy and appropriateness of inferences and actions that arise from various knowledge-generating activities (e.g., research, assessment, or educational programs). This definition results from Messick’s (1989) reconceptualization of validity and his assertion that validity judgments should be based on the integration of multiple sources of evidence and theoretical rationales. In contrast to traditional conceptions of validity, contemporary notions view validity as an ongoing, interpretive process reliant on multiple-perspectives (Lather, 1993; Markus, 1998; Messick; Moss, 1998; Moss, Girard, & Haniford, 2006). Methodologically, the articulation of a validity argument based on a systematic evaluation of various evidences is central to current validation processes (Haertel, 1999; Kane, 1992, 2004, 2006; Mislevy, Almond, & Steinberg, 2003; Moss, 1998; Shepard, 1993; Zumbo, 2009). Specifically, Kane (2006) suggests a double-argument structure for validity inquiries. The first argument in his approach considers
various interpretations related to the critical construct under investigation. The second argument involves an examination of how interpretations towards the construct are enacted within a specific context. As Kane’s model is widely accepted by validity researchers, I draw on it in this dissertation as an overarching structure for my framework for the validation of complex educational program aims.

While contemporary validity has been considered within research and assessment domains, its application to educational programs has been limited. Validation of complex program aims may be most closely associated with the contemporary field of program evaluation; however, I argue that my work in this dissertation does not fall directly within this field of study due to several factors. First, program evaluation is centered on a service-model of inquiry in which a client seeks information about the functionality and effectiveness of educational programming. Often times, such information entails a broad investigation into multiple program areas related to several program objectives and processes. My research on the validation of complex program aims differs from this aspect of program evaluation in that it maintains a singular focus on one program aim and its interpretation and enactment by a group of program participants. Second, while the notion of validation was originally within program evaluation discourse (see Cronbach, 1971), it appears to have been dropped within contemporary evaluation theory. The absence of validation within the field suggests that program evaluation has moved in a different direction, one that reinforces its service-orientation and broad inquiry focus. Finally, although the process of validation has traditionally maintained an evaluative component (i.e., validity as an integrated evaluative judgment; Cronbach, 1984, 1988), my conception of validation moves well beyond this strict definition to a conception of
validity that is not based on a singular judgment but instead representative of an interpretive inquiry process that results in a multiple-perspective argument. As such, my validation framework differs from an evaluative framework because it does not work within a service-model of inquiry and because it draws on contemporary validity as its theoretical foundation. Hence, rather than positioning this work in the field of program evaluation, I consider it, at this point, to fall within the domains of assessment and curriculum studies.

I position this work within the fields of assessment and curriculum studies because, through this research, I use contemporary validity theory to construct a non-reductive, systematic framework for assessing the pluralistic and value-laden aspects of complex educational program aims. Specifically, I use an interpretive, argument-based approach rooted in hermeneutics to connect, analyse, and evaluate program users’ multiple interpretations towards a program’s educational aims. Drawing on Kane’s (2006) validity argument model, my validation framework has a dual argument structure. In the first, the interpretive argument, I examine various interpretations towards a program’s aim. In the second, the validity argument, I consider how these interpretations are experienced within a specific program context. Ultimately, the purpose of this framework is to articulate a complex description of the quality of program coherence between program users’ interpretations of complex aims and their practices.

In this dissertation, I apply this validation framework to one teacher education program and use it to construct a validity argument for the program’s aim to “promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle in teaching and learning” (Queen’s University, 2008a). As such, this research seeks to provide a complex description of the
multiple ways inclusivity is interpreted and supported by various program users—senior program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates of the Faculty of Education. In addition to articulating a validity argument for one teacher education program, this work also contributes different perspectives on inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle to broader educational discourse.

Purpose

Through this dissertation, I aim to construct and explore the viability and utility of a validation framework for complex program aims. Specifically, this study has three central purposes. First, I intend to provide empirical support for the constructed program validity framework through its application to the Queen’s University teacher education program and its aim to “promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle” (Queen’s University, 2008a). Second, through engaging in this validation process, I will collect validity evidence for the Queen’s University teacher education program aim towards inclusivity in education. Finally, I will contribute theoretical understandings to the field of inclusion by delineating multiple conceptions of inclusivity as expressed by program users—administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates—in one teacher education program. The specific research questions guiding this investigation are the following:

1. How do users of the Queen’s University teacher education program (i.e., teacher candidates, faculty members, and senior administrators) interpret and support the notion of inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle in education?

2. How congruent are these understandings within and between various program users (i.e., articulation of a validity argument)?
I use a qualitative methodology rooted in a validity framework to respond to these research questions. In particular, I elicit program users’ interpretations towards inclusivity through a series of hermeneutic practices. As suggested by Kane (2006), I then compare these interpretations both within and across program groups in order to develop a validity argument for the program. From this analytic process, I articulate an overall description of the quality of program coherence towards one aim, that of promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle.

Rationale

Validating the aims of teacher education programs is an important part of the Canadian research agenda because these aims represent critical teacher capacities for beginning teachers—core knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for teaching in today’s schools (Howard & Aleman, 2008). Furthermore, graduation and certification based on successful completion of a teacher education program implies that candidates maintain these capacities and are prepared to enter the teaching profession. Cochran-Smith and Fries (2005) contend that research on teacher education programs provides fertile ground not only for understanding fundamental tenets in education but also for examining the programmatic structures that contribute towards the development of competent teachers. As such, this validity research offers two central contributions to educational research. First, it promotes deeper understandings of a program’s aims in relation to specific teacher capacities. Second, it provides an opportunity to examine interpretations of central teaching tenets within teacher education programs, which often reflect perspectives within the educational system more broadly. Specifically, this research serves to delineate inclusivity as a core teacher capacity by examining three
critical perspectives—teacher education program administrators, teacher educators, and teacher candidates.

Although little consensus exists on what educational aims are most appropriate for teacher education programs, one of the more widely cited program commitments across Canada is the promotion of inclusivity, equity, and diversity in teaching and learning (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008). Although this aim has only surfaced in the last 30 years within teacher discourse (Howard & Aleman, 2008), it continues to gain prominence as an international movement (Retallick, Cocklin, & Coombe, 1999) and is legislatively supported in Canada through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and provincial education acts (Hutchinson, 2010). Further, research on inclusive education recognizes that conditions of inclusion significantly impact the degree of student engagement, establish a sense of belonging, and support the learning of inclusive values (Osterman, 2000; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997). As now a dominant paradigm in contemporary education, the promotion of inclusivity has become a program aim for many faculties of education and is of relevance to the current teacher education research agenda (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008). Despite this movement, Howard and Aleman contend that a greater focus on inclusivity as a teacher capacity is still needed in both research on teacher education and pre-service practice, especially as issues of inclusivity and student diversity have been largely treated as separate from core teacher education curriculum (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2003; Hollins & Guzman, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996). Crocker and Dibbon concur stating, “the body of teacher education research directly addressing desirable student and other outcomes, and the conditions and contexts within which these outcomes are likely to occur, is relatively
small and inconclusive” (p. 113). Through this dissertation, I begin to address conceptions and practices related to teacher capacity for inclusivity in education with the recognition that this capacity works to create the conditions and contexts for desirable educational outcomes.

Despite widespread acceptance of inclusivity as a central tenet of contemporary education, significant ambiguity still remains over what inclusivity means and how it should be practiced (Gerin-Lajoie, 2008; Trifonas, 2003). Further, as Gerin-Lajoie recognize, the vagueness of the term “inclusivity” in teacher discourse and official documents sends contradictory signals to educators and may contribute to a lack of true inclusion within educational contexts. Further, no unifying theory for inclusivity exists within current scholarship (Trifonas, 2003). Rather, research in this area has been parsed into specific sub-disciplines including (but not limited to) multicultural education, special education, anti-racist education, queer education, and the education of women (Trifonas, 2003). Inclusion from these various perspectives holds multiple meanings both philosophically and pedagogically based on the differences represented by each group (Florian, 2005; Trifonas, 2003). Trifonas asserts that, “to date, there has been no sustained attempt, in educational theory or in its contextual grounding as praxis, to address the bridging of this gap of difference among [these] discourses” (pp. 3-4). Further, he argues that research in this area would provide theoretical validation for the legitimacy of such pedagogies. Given the multiple positions towards inclusivity, Nunan, George, and McCausland (2005) recognize that, in practice, teacher autonomy and curriculum structures enable inclusivity to be enacted in different ways, resulting in different levels of educational participation. They indicate that the practice of inclusivity
hinges on curricular orientation, content selection and assessments, use of particular learning and teaching styles, assumptions about student knowledge and experience, use of language, and covert beliefs about the nature of schooling and teaching.

In addition, notably little research has been devoted to teachers’ capacity—skills, knowledge, conceptions, and dispositions—for creating inclusive learning contexts despite the growing movement towards inclusive education (Howard & Aleman, 2008; McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008). This absence of research is particularly problematic given the increasing diversity of student and teacher populations (e.g., ethnic, racial, linguistic, and class (Gerin-Lajoie, 2008; Howard & Aleman, 2008)) and the emphasis of inclusive teaching requirements for in-service teachers. For example, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) articulated the importance of inclusive teaching through a new policy document entitled, *Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*. In the document, inclusive education was outlined as the primary means to achieving high levels of student success, reducing gaps in student achievement, and increasing confidence in publicly funded education. Specifically, it was asserted that in order to “realize the promise of diversity, we must ensure that we respect and value the full range of our differences. Equitable, inclusive education is central to creating a cohesive society and a strong economy” (p. 5). Given the increased attention on an inclusive orientation, Howard and Aleman call for studies related to teachers’ understandings and practices of inclusivity. More specifically, they emphasize a need for research that examines the capacity of teacher education programs to promote the “awareness of the social and political contexts of education and the development of
critical consciousness about issues such as race, class, gender, culture, language, and educational equity” (p. 158).

Validating program aims toward inclusivity is particularly important in generating greater understanding of inclusivity as a core teacher capacity. Through this study, I seek to provide a complex articulation of the multiple ways inclusivity is understood and supported by teacher candidates and teacher educators. Specifically, I contribute towards building a framework of inclusivity as situated within one teacher education context. The following section further delineates the educational significance of this work within the fields of validity theory, teacher education, and inclusive education.

Significance

This research bears educational implications within three domains. First, this research contributes to the field of validity by offering a framework for the validation of complex educational program aims. This framework serves to guide program validation processes by building upon key tenets of assessment validity and by incorporating a methodology rooted in hermeneutics. Further, this framework directly responds to Kane’s (2006) call for pragmatic “guidance on how to validate specific interpretations” (p. 18) within the context of education programs. In addition, by applying this framework specifically within a teacher education context, I address the need for descriptive accounts of validation case studies, as identified by Moss et al. (2006). This contribution is particularly noteworthy as few case studies have explicitly used hermeneutics to inform validity evidence collection.

Second, this work contributes towards the development of a framework of inclusivity, which is currently absent from scholarship in this area (Trifonas, 2003).
Through the different perspectives of program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates from one teacher education program, this research begins to document conceptions of inclusivity as held by different educational stakeholders. This research is an initial step towards constructing a deeper understanding of the multiple conceptions and practices of inclusivity in education with deliberate attention to the ways in which these conceptions overlap. Based on this work, future studies can expand understandings of inclusivity in theory, practice, and across diverse educational contexts. Ultimately, a framework of inclusivity may provide a comprehensive structure for bridging multiple positions, conceptions, and practices of inclusive education. Such a framework could serve to inform teacher education programs and contribute towards creating more inclusive teaching and learning spaces across educational sites.

Third, this dissertation contributes practically to the Queen’s University teacher education program by providing validity evidence related to its program aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. This information may be used to reinforce current practices and perspectives or may lead to program modifications in teacher education curricula, mission statement, or admission policy. Ultimately, this research is intended to lead to enhanced program coherence by opening a conversation about the purpose, pedagogy, and learning of one aspect of the Queen’s University teacher education program. More broadly, this dissertation will continue the dialogue about the adequacy and appropriateness of inclusivity as a general aim of teacher education programs. As Hansen (2008) noted, this dialogue “fortifies, edifies, and educates the participants in the teacher education community, such that when they interact with various society constituents…they bring to the table a richer language, a
broader vision and a deeper sense of value and justification” (p. 24). As inclusivity is a dominant focus of teacher education programs throughout Canada, understanding the multiple perspectives towards inclusivity serves to align teacher education commitments and practices while simultaneously deepening our understandings of this central teaching tenet.

Background

This research is based in a case study of one aspect of the Queen’s University teacher education program. The teacher education program at Queen’s University admits approximately 700 teacher candidates each year and leads to a Bachelor of Education degree or a Diploma in Education. The teacher education program was restructured in 1997 from a program that employed a master-teacher model of initial teacher education to one that emphasized learning from and through field-based experiences across educational settings (Upitis, 2000). The current program seeks to integrate educational theory with practice through a structure that blends practicum experiences with faculty-based courses over a eight-month period. Structurally, the teacher education program consists of up to 15 weeks of practice teaching interspersed with on-campus coursework in curriculum, professional practice, educational studies, and program focus. Teacher candidates enrolled in the consecutive program may be in one of the following program options: (a) Primary–Junior (P/J, teaching from junior kindergarten to Grade 6); (b) Intermediate–Senior (I/S, teaching from Grades 7 to 12); or (c) Technological Education (teaching from Grades 9 to 12). Further, the Queen’s University Faculty of Education offers three specialized program tracks: (a) Aboriginal Teacher Education (ATE); (b) Artist in the Community Education (ACE); and (c) Outdoor and Experiential Education
(OEE). The program tracks have additional admission requirements and maintain significantly smaller enrollments than the general P/J and I/S cohorts.

The 1997 process of program reform at the Faculty of Education went beyond simply expanding practicum periods and inserting new courses; it involved a foundational philosophical shift in how to educate teachers (Upitis, 2000). Thus the restructuring of the program led to a revised mission statement and description of program characteristics. This revised mission statement emerged from a Faculty-wide retreat in an effort to provide a “shared sense of vision for [the] Faculty as a whole, which would, in turn give purpose and energy for implementing the reformed program” (Upitis, 2000, p. 51). The current mission statement for the teacher education program reads:

Our vision of the graduate of Queen’s University Faculty of Education is that of a critically reflective professional. Graduates are expected to integrate theoretical, practical, and experiential knowledge in the understanding and resolution of professional issues. We see the beginning teacher as an active agent in the development of a socially inclusive pedagogy aimed at social justice. In our vision, the critically reflective teacher is the one who asks questions that go beyond immediate pressures of daily practice, and who has a disposition to work in collaboration with other members of the profession and with all those involved in the education and development of children. (Queen’s University, 2008a)

Further, the mission statement identifies the following specific characteristics of the Queen’s University teacher education program.
• The program sustains a commitment to academic excellence and to learning how to learn, and reflects teaching as both an intellectual and practical activity, according to Queen’s University principles.

• The program considers that all teacher candidates should possess the literacy and critical skills associated with an educated person.

• The program promotes caring as a central value in the profession of teaching, and inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle.

• The program integrates the following domains: school context, curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, evaluation and reporting, educational ends, purposes and values and their philosophical and historical grounds.

• The following themes are embedded in the program: inclusivity and social justice; collaboration and leadership; the use of information and communication technologies in teaching and learning.

• The program promotes the preparation of future educators who will address issues of sustainability in their classrooms by becoming environmentally aware, practicing resource conservation, and exploring new ways to minimize the impact of human beings on the ecology. (Queen’s University, 2008a)

One means by which the Faculty of Education fostered its mission was by developing a culture of professional growth (Shulha & Munby, 2000) through the use and application of a professional learning framework (Grant, 2000). This framework embraced the image of “teacher learning as professional, as personal, and as collaborative” with a focus on “making sense of personal and professional activities, and reflecting on real concerns, issues, and the consequences of actions” (Grant, 2000, p.
The mandatory *Theory and Professional Practice* course (PROF 190/91) is one example that highlights the program’s attempt to establish a professional learning culture. This course was designed to bridge teacher candidates’ practicum and faculty-based learning through several components including on-campus sessions, in-school practicum groups, extended family groups (EFG), an action-research project, and the development of a personal professional portfolio.

Under the revised program, central issues in teaching and learning, such as inclusivity in education, have been embedded within mandatory core courses for teacher candidates. Through the *Critical Issues in Equity and Adapting Teaching to Students with Exceptionalities* course (PROF 100/01) and the *Social Justice Module* of the *Concepts in Teaching and Learning* course (PROF 150/55), all teacher candidates gain exposure to topics related to diversity and inclusivity. In addition to these core courses that focus specifically on equity, exceptionalities, and social justice, the notion of inclusive pedagogy is embedded within other required courses (e.g., curriculum classes and professional studies courses) or included in elective courses (e.g., Teaching At-Risk Adolescents and Young Adults, Teaching for Social Justice, and Teaching Exceptional Children and Adolescents). Given this level of programming in support of the program’s aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle, there is a need to examine the effects of this programming on teacher candidates’ views and approach to issues of inclusivity.

Program reform at the Faculty of Education was originally and continues to be a developmental project. Upitis (2000) stated that “this means that we recognize that we will never have a ‘final program’ or a ‘definitive program’ or an ‘ideal’ program” (p. 58).
Rather, the program continues to be modified, primarily through systematic inquiry of program coherence, appropriateness, and effectiveness (Chin, 2000; Shulha & Munby, 2000). One approach towards such systematic inquiry is through investigations into the validity of program aims. Chin asserted that in order for robust program coherence, there must be a continued “focus on ensuring that we have clarity and unity of purpose, and appropriate pedagogy to enhance that purpose” (p. 89). Further, he noted that a significant measure of program coherence is to provide individuals and the collective with an opportunity to interpret the meaning of their experience within the program. This study responds to this call for systematic inquiry of program users’ experiences by using a hermeneutic approach to provide validity evidence for the program’s aim to promote inclusivity in education.

Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is written in seven chapters. In this first chapter, I introduced the research context and purpose of this study by articulating specific research questions, providing a rationale for this inquiry, and by establishing grounds for its significance within broader educational discourse. In the following chapter, I present literature related to contemporary validity theory and validation processes as a way of framing the specific mode of validity inquiry used in this research. I conclude the chapter with a description of my proposed program validity framework. The third chapter examines current research on how inclusivity is promoted in teacher education programs, providing a broad context for practices used in the Queen’s University teacher education program. In Chapter 4, I describe the study’s methodology with attention to participant selection, hermeneutic data collection methods, and validity evidence analysis strategies. I then present two chapters
that reflect the two argument structures associated with a validity argument: (a) the interpretive argument, and (b) the validity argument. Chapter 5 represents the interpretive argument and begins with a theoretical delineation of the critical construct, *inclusivity in education*. I then present interpretive data collected from study participants to describe participants’ multiple interpretations of inclusivity in education in relation to the theoretical delineation. In Chapter 6, I pull together data from administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates with results from the interpretive argument and with program policies to present a complex description of the multiple ways that inclusivity is promoted in and through the Queen’s University teacher education program. Finally, in Chapter 7, I close the dissertation with a conclusion in which I revisit the viability and utility of my proposed framework for the validation of complex program aims.

As prefaces to the theoretical and argument-based chapters (i.e., Chapters 2, 3, 5, and 6), I have written keywords (Curriculum Collective, 2008; Williams, 1976) related to a central construct relevant to each chapter. These keywords are intended to articulate my personal understandings towards key aspects of this research. I wrote these keywords at various stages throughout my dissertation data collection and analyses stages as reflexive exercises and in acknowledgement of my positionality and situatedness to this inquiry (MacBeth, 2001; Patton, 2002).
PREFACE TO CHAPTER TWO

Keyword: Validity

Validity is a construct that “verifies” (Kane, 2006) and “legitimizes” (Lather, 1993) the accuracy of knowledge claims, whether they relate to assessments, research, or other knowledge-generating activities. Validity offers theories and frameworks for measuring truthfulness. As an example, one might consider the accuracy of responses to the question: which line below is longer? Using a ruler, the answer that both lines are equal can be easily verified.

Validity can also be used to judge how accurate you are in naming the colours in the spectrum below. Without using a spectrophotometer, the colours blend into one another jeopardizing precision in responses and making validation more difficult. In this case, validation may involve drawing consensus among responders (validity by consensus) or matching colours to other known objects (concurrent validity). Either way, validity must push beyond its standard form of measurement with its reliance on correspondence and metrics.
But there are instances in which validity is pushed even further. Instances where you are asked to support a judgment that bears consequences and that involves multiple evidences for consideration. For example, if a woman steals money from a man to buy food for her starving daughter, is she guilty of theft? Verifying responses in this scenario is not easy. Legal systems jury these questions every day because of the myriad factors (e.g., situational, motivational, socio-personal, physical, and ethical) that give rise to different accounts of experience and different interpretations of the case. Truth in these contexts wavers.

In moving from concrete to abstract, from measurable to interpretable, traditional validity becomes a construct in crisis. In contexts involving complex, social phenomena such as love, guilt, or learning, traditional validity is at a loss. There is no measurement device that can account for all the factors that construct such phenomena or that contribute toward individual experiences of them or that account for the various consequences that might emerge from complex contexts. Traditional validation methods only render approximations of accuracy by reducing the complexity in these contexts to measurable forms. Hence I believe we need a newer method, rooted in non-positivistic assumptions, for validation of complex human conditions and socially constructed contexts.

I construe these conditions and contexts through a postmodern perspective where truth is alterable, subjective, and individual; where truth is located in the interstices of relationships, backgrounds, and one’s consciousness. Verification and legitimization of experience is found in my account and your account, not in a global account that is right
or real or accurate. I believe we each see our own truth in experiences, coloured by our unique perspectives. These truths may or may not converge.

So what constitutes validity in such a subjective and interrelational terrain? I wish to evoke a newer discourse for validity, one that draws on how we qualify experiences and individual interpretations. I also seek a structure through which to present—describe and analyse—the congruence (or incongruence) between individual accounts of experience. Kane’s (2006) validation-as-argument and Moss et al.’s (2006) use of hermeneutics provides a basis for this reframing of validity. Through hermeneutic practices, I believe we can begin to access personal interpretations towards experiences or knowledge claims and through an argument framework we can articulate the congruence between these interpretations. Hence at present, I argue that in order to capture the complexity found in socially constructed situations, validation processes and products must engage in articulating the quality of coherence between multiple interpretations and experience. In the following chapter, I situate this argument for validity with previous literature on validation practice and theory and conclude by describing a specific framework for the validation of complex program aims.
CHAPTER TWO: VALIDITY THEORY

Inquiry into the validity of educational program aims has been recognized as a highly useful activity that serves to identify and clarify program intentions, identify gaps in programming, suggest areas for program development, and promote program coherence (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Volante & Earl, 2002). However, researchers have also acknowledged that literature on how to validate program aims is relatively sparse. In this chapter, I begin to establish an epistemological and methodological basis for the concept of program validity with the aim of constructing a framework to guide the validation of complex program aims. Specifically, I examine literature related to assessment validity to structure this framework. The field of assessment offers a theoretical basis for validation processes that can be transferred to other domains of inquiry and knowledge generating activities such as research and educational programs. Hence I begin this chapter by exploring traditional and contemporary notions of validity before delineating my framework for the validation of complex program aims.

Early Validity Theory

Validity theory has evolved significantly over the past thirty years in response to the increased use of assessments across scientific, social, and educational settings (Anastasi, 1986; Kane, 2006; Messick, 1989). The overarching trajectory of this evolution reflects a shift from a purely quantitative, positivistic approach to a conception of validity reliant on the interpretation of multiple evidence sources and the recognition that validity cannot be captured by one single score (Kane, 2001; Messick, 1989; Moss, 1998). Much of early validity theory was situated in the highly scientific discourse of
psychological testing (e.g., achievement tests and IQ tests) and thus bears roots in a positivistic epistemology. In the first validity chapter published in *Educational Measurement*, Cureton (1951) characterised validity as a response to “how well the test serves the purpose for which it is used” (p. 621). As such, early validity theory was principally concerned with the ability of a test score to predict and correlate to an external criteria, content domain, or theoretical construct. In this brief review of early validity theory, I consider these three types of validity as they have been represented as central concepts in the American Psychological Association’s *Standards* documents from 1954, 1966, 1974, and 1999.

*Criterion Validity*

The criterion-based model compared test scores to external variables. Criterion measures were based on real world applications of test items. For instance, questions on a written driving test relate to actual skills (i.e., criteria) needed to drive a car. The criterion-model was strictly concerned with comparing assessment scores to criterion variables and did not typically include other evidence sources when establishing validity. Criterion validity was further divided into two forms: (a) concurrent validity and (b) predictive validity. Concurrent validity made use of proxy external variables (i.e., indirect measures) that enabled validity estimates to be obtained concurrently with test scores. A concurrent approach allowed a validity measure to be generated based on the correlation between the two test scores; however, there was obvious concern over accuracy in using quasi-criteria for validity measurements (Kane, 2006; Messick, 1989; Shepard, 1993). Predictive validity relied on a criterion of future performance, which could not be obtained concurrently with assessment scores. While ideal theoretically, predictive
validity did not enable immediate validation of inferences and was therefore impractical for data-based decision making in such cases as admissions, hiring, and licensure.

Several statistical techniques, mainly correlation and regression analysis, can be used to compare assessment scores with criterion measures to establish a validity coefficient. For example, the Pearson product moment correlation can be used to establish validity for non-categorical data and a non-parametric statistic (e.g., phi coefficient) can be used in categorical instances (Crocker & Algina, 1986). However, as Crocker and Algina caution, “for most clinical, education, or personnel uses, a single test score provides insufficient data for making important decisions about individual examinees” (p. 230). Thus these validity coefficients are not standalone indices; they must be interpreted alongside other information including the coefficient of determination (i.e., the proportion of variability in test scores), the standard error of the estimate (i.e., deviation between true and measured scores), and expectancy tables (i.e., generalised probabilities for coefficient values). Further, consideration must also be given to statistical artifacts such as sampling error and measurement reliability when using criterion-related coefficients (Kane, 2006).

**Content Validity**

Content validity established a rational link between assessment items and larger performance domains by focusing on item content. Evaluating content validity involved “showing how well the content of the test samples the class of situations or subject matter about which conclusions are to be drawn” (Messick, 1989, p. 16). In establishing content validity, individual score results were not the focus; rather, the emphasis was on the evaluation of evidence supporting inferences about test appropriateness to performance
domain. Content validity relied heavily on judgments of relevance and representation, which included whether or not (a) the assessment items were representative of the desired performance tasks; (b) the assessments were reliable measures of performance; and (c) the sample was sufficiently large to control for sampling error (Guion, 1977; Kane, 2006).

Given the interpretive quality of these judgments, statistical techniques only go so far in establishing robust validity measures. Nonetheless, several techniques do exist with the aim of relating item content with measurable objectives from a broader performance domain. These techniques include: (a) measuring the percentage of items matched to objectives of various importance; (b) weighting correlations between objectives and test items; (c) establishing an index of item-objective congruence; and (d) measuring the percentage of objectives not represented on the assessment (Crocker & Algina, 1986). However, Crocker and Algina state that, “there is no reason to suppose they [the statistical techniques] would lead to the same conclusions about the degree of fit between a set of test items and a content domain” (p. 221). This suggests that these indices alone do not offer reliable measurements of validity.

**Construct Validity**

Given the limitation of criterion and content models to address validity in complex, socially-based performance domains, a more sophisticated approach to validity was needed. In response to this demand, Cronbach and Meehl (1955) articulated the notion of construct validity by drawing upon the hypothetico-deductive (HD) model of scientific
theories\(^1\), which considered the complex networking of theoretical constructs existent within given performance domains. Cronbach (1971, as cited in Kane, 2001) explains that

The rationale for construct validation (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955) developed out of personality testing. For a measure of, for example, ego strength, there is no uniquely pertinent criterion to predict, nor is there domain of content to sample. Rather, there is a theory that sketches out the presumed nature of the trait. If the test score is a valid manifestation of ego strength, so conceived, its relations to other variables conform to the theoretical expectations. (p. 322)

Thus construct validity essentially sought to correspond assessment performance with pre-conceived theoretical explanations.

Early construct validity was theory-laden and consisted of “statistical and/or deterministic laws that tied observable properties to one another, theoretical constructs to observables and theoretical constructs to one another” (Moss, 1992, p. 233). As such, construct validity was heavily rooted in logical positivistic assumptions (Shepard, 1993), requiring a well-defined domain theory from which to base validity claims (Kane, 2006). Cronbach and Meehl (1955) also recognized this as a central limitation to their initial construct-based model: “The idealized picture is one of a tidy set of postulates which jointly entail the desired theorems...In practice, of course, even the most advanced physical sciences only approximate this ideal” (pp. 293-294). However, given that construct validity sought to address complex performance tasks, Cronbach and Meehl’s

\(^1\) Dominant in the 1950s, the HD model considers theories to be a series of interrelated axioms (i.e., nomological networks). Axioms were established by repeated observations and related through ‘correspondence rules’ (Kane, 2001; see also Hempel, 1965).
model appeared to be the best way forward for validity theory, resulting in significant refinement in the period from 1955 to 1989.

Construct validation techniques served to determine the consistency between observed assessment performance and its related construct theory. When the observed performance satisfied the networking of theoretical assumptions, both theory and measurement procedures were considered valid (Kane, 2006). Specifically, several quantitative techniques have been used to obtain construct validity measurements including (a) correlations between a measure of the construct and the designated construct theory, (b) mean score differentiation between groups, (c) factor analysis, (d) multitrait-multimethod matrix, (e) analysis of variance components within a generalisability theory framework and (f) structured equation modeling (Crocker & Algina, 1986). As these techniques depend on a well-articulated theory from which to test and falsify hypotheses, quantitative construct validation typically requires a series of studies to first identify the theoretical construct network and then to compare the observed assessment performance with theory axioms (Crocker & Algina, 1986).

Reliance on a well-defined external variable was common across all three types of validity (i.e., criterion, content and construct). In order to establish strong quantitative comparisons, external variables needed to be explicitly stated and measurable. The condition of defining measurable criterion, content, or construct variables proved particularly difficult in socially-dependent assessment contexts where constructs were interpretable and adaptable. Kane (2006) identified such conditions as weak constructs that required an alternative validation framework. He argued that a more contemporary
model of validity was required, one that could attend to socially-based constructs and engage validity within complex educational contexts.

Contemporary Validity Theory

As is typical during initial theory development and periods of paradigmatic shift (Kuhn, 1996), initial conceptions of validity held multiple lines of thought. As such, the 1980s was a period of consensus building towards a cohesive definition of validity. A unified view of validity was generally accepted, reflecting most closely the notion of construct validity (Cronbach, 1984). However, given the problematic nature of establishing strong (i.e., quantifiable and measurable) theoretical constructs in education and the social sciences, using a rigid nomological approach was viewed as less tenable (Shepard, 1993). While the aim of construct validation was still to compare observed assessment performance to a central construct, the philosophical shift from a purely positivistic orientation to a more socially-based model prompted a broader and more methodologically diverse conception of validity. The unified approach toward validity enabled synthesis of competing theories and corresponding validation techniques. This resulted in a more robust understanding of validity as a multi-faceted construct that sought out multiple evidence sources including those traditionally held within the purview of predictive, concurrent, and content frameworks.

This view was brought to the forefront in Messick’s (1989) landmark validity chapter in the third edition of Educational Measurement. Drawing on the work of Cronbach (1984, 1988), Messick defined validity as the “integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or other modes of
assessment” (p. 13, italics in original). This definition emphasized validity as an evaluative process that focused on inferences derived from assessment scores (not the assessment itself) and the actions resulting from those inferences. Messick’s work not only synthesized earlier validity theories but also expanded validity beyond a strictly quantitative, correlational understanding and moved it toward a more constructivist view. Several validity theorists have continued this postpositivistic line of thought such as Lather (1986, 2001), Messick (1998), Moss (1994, 1998), and Shepard (1997). Based on Messick’s initial reconceptualization, three specific tenets of contemporary validity theory bear particular relevance to my construction of a validation framework for complex program aims. These tenets include (a) the dynamic and value-laden nature of validity measures, (b) the centrality of a validity argument, and (c) the multiple modes of validity inquiry. I expand upon each of these three tenets to delineate aspects of contemporary validity measurements.

Validity Measures

The unified view of validity brought with it several critical conditions for validity inquiry. First, validity was no longer considered a static property captured by a single score. Messick (1989) argued that “validity is a matter of degree, not all or none . . . Validity is an evolving property and validation is a continuing process” (p. 13). Validity estimates change in response to new evidences that reflect the multiple perspectives of test users. The implication of this property of validity theory recognizes that there can be no absolute measure of validity. The best one can achieve is a conditional approximation of validity bearing the caveat that validity may be undermined in light of new evidence.
The second condition of a multi-faceted unitary view of validity involves the integration of both evidential and consequential sources of evidence. Through his *Facets of Validity Matrix*\(^2\), Messick (1989, 1998) presented a balanced and fluid approach towards validity. Evidential validity included consideration for test relevance and utility as well as more traditional validity measures relating to content, criteria, and construct models. Consequential validity considered the after effects of test interpretations and use on various stakeholders and included value implications and social consequences. The integration of consequential evidence sources served to significantly broaden the scope of validity inquiry by including social evidences in validity inquiries; however, the inclusion of consequential validity within the validity field has been an issue of contention (Crocker, 1997; Linn, 1997; Maguire, Hattie, & Haig, 1994; Mehrens, 1997; Moss, 1998; Popham, 1997; Shepard, 1997).

The final condition of contemporary validity theory I address is the recognition that validity is an interpretive, value-laden process. While there have been several interpretations of Messick’s (1989) *Facets of Validity Matrix* leading some to bifurcate evidential (i.e., factual) and consequential (i.e., value-based) validities, Messick (1998) makes clear that these two evidence sources are not exclusive within the unified view. He asserts that both evidential and consequential validity are value-laden stating, “value implications both derive from and contribute to score meaning, different value perspective may lead to different score implications and hence to different validities…This suggests that validity might be indexed to values” (p. 37).

\(^2\) Messick (1989) presented a 2x2 matrix which he termed the *Facets of Validity Matrix*. The Matrix classified various aspects of validity including evidential and consequential bases of test interpretation and test use.
Values are inherent to all aspects of validity from the development of construct theories to judgments on inference adequacy and appropriateness (Messick, 1998). This condition of validity further situates it within the domain of social scientific inquiry, where the fact-value distinction has largely been recognized as untenable (Howe, 1985). Thus the question is no longer whether values pervade assessment interpretation and use; instead, the challenge set for contemporary validity theory is to find ways of bringing values forward to be examined and considered within validity arguments (Markus, 1998; Messick, 1989; Moss, 1998; Moss et al., 2006). Markus asserts that validity arguments are incomplete unless they consider the role of values in assessment and validation processes. He states that “test users are faced with the following choice: either be prepared to offer some justification for the values inherent in your validity argument or be willing to accept that your validity judgment is not uniquely justified” (p. 80).

This understanding of the contemporary nature of validity measures is not without contest. In a Special Issue of *Educational Researcher*, Lissitz and Samuelsen (2007a, 2007b) suggested a reconceptualization for validity measurements and specifically critique elements of the unified theory, validity terminology, and the emphasis on construct rather than content evidences. Lissitz and Samuelsen (2007a) asserted that the unified theory maintains too far a reach: that external aspects of assessments such as consequences and use are beyond the scope of validity inquiries. They suggested instead that validity should be concerned with internal test construction processes with an emphasis on reliability and content representation (including cognitive complexity levels and test development procedures). Embretson (2007) agreed with the need to ensure internal validity of assessments; however, she cautioned about the limitations of using
content validity in defining test meaning. Accordingly, she noted that given the complex, shifting nature of constructs in education, item samples of content may lead to under or misrepresentation of the construct. She further asserted, “scant evidence is available that items can be reliably classified into the blueprint categories” (p. 451).

Lissitz and Samuelsen (2007a) also called for a more pragmatic, useable validity framework with clearer terminology to guide validation activities. Moss (2007) and Gorin (2007) concurred. The field of validity is still largely theoretical; although as noted by Sireci (2007), the theoretical framework, which has developed over the past fifty years, suggests priorities and domains for validity questions as well as evidence types for validity arguments. It is quite clear based on the commentaries of Moss, Gorin, and Sireci that specific operational procedures and methodologies are needed to guide validity activities across educational assessment settings and that descriptions, or what Moss terms exemplars, of validity practices are still required. In particular, Moss argued for accounts of validity arguments, which represent the current dominant structure for engaging in validation processes.

**Validity Arguments**

Central to contemporary validation processes is the articulation of a transparent, multi-perspective validity argument based on a systematic evaluation of evidence (Haertel, 1999; Kane, 1992, 2004, 2006; Mislevy, Almond, & Steinberg, 2003; Moss, 1998; Shepard, 1993; Zumbo, 2009). The aim of a validity argument is to use logical and empirical means to evaluate inferences, evidence sources, theoretical constructs, interpretive processes, and assessment consequences. The goal of most argument structures is to invoke all four facets of Messick’s (1989) matrix theory, including
evidential and consequential aspects (Shepard, 1993). Hence through an argument approach, validity evidence is collected that recognizes multiple perspectives and sources as related to specific assessment contexts.

Keeping with Cronbach (1984) and Messick’s (1989) evaluative framework, Kane (1992, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009) has been prominent in theorizing and delineating criteria for validity arguments. Kane (2006) states that to “validate an interpretation or use of measurements is to evaluate the rationale, or argument, for the claims being made” (p. 17). In his proposed argument structure, Kane identifies two central arguments necessary for validity evaluation. These include an interpretive argument followed by a validity argument. I clarify each of these argument structures below.

Interpretive Argument

The interpretive argument serves to identify assessment inferences and their sources of evidence, “laying out the network of inferences and assumptions leading from the observed performances to the conclusions and decisions” (Kane, 2006, p. 23). The interpretive argument was first operationalized by Kane (1992) and further elaborated upon by Crooks, Kane, and Cohen (1996). Crooks et al. argued that inferences and evidence must be collected from multiple stages within the assessment process, which are viewed as linked in a chain sequence. For example, they suggest collection of evidence at the assessment development stage, the administration stage, and the marking stage. Crooks et al. argue that given the chain model of assessment, validity threats at each stage of assessment need to be individually evaluated to fully support assessment inferences. Kane (2006) characterises the evaluation of evidence and inferences as providing a logical rationale to support its plausibility within the assessment program.
with a central emphasis on identifying assumptions embedded within an assessment interpretation (Kane, 2004).

Moss et al. (2006) assert the value of a hermeneutic approach on accessing stakeholder interpretations within assessment contexts and on understanding the socio-cultural assumptions underpinning interpretations. They state that hermeneutics “provides a theory and practice of interpretations; it suggests validity questions, practices, and criteria that have important analogs in a range of approaches to interpretive social science or ‘qualitative’ research methods” (Moss et al., p. 129). Originally conceived as a means to interpret texts (e.g., religious, legal), hermeneutics now considers broader text analogues including any human product, expression, or action (Slattery, Krasny, & O’Malley, 2006). While hermeneutics have been applied across various disciplines (e.g., religion, law, literature, curriculum), within the domain of validity, hermeneutics enables consideration of multiple stakeholder perspectives towards assessments through an examination of individual positions within socio-cultural contexts. In particular, two key features of hermeneutics bear importance to structuring an interpretive argument (Moss et al.). These features include (a) the nature of interpretations as value-laden, historically/culturally-bounded, and non-static; and (b) the notion of the hermeneutic circle.

Hermeneutics recognizes that interpretations are non-static, subjective, and contingent on an individual’s perspectives, preconceptions, experiences, and prejudices. In this way, individual histories are assumed to shape present understandings (Moss et al., 2006). For example, one teacher candidate may interpret the notion of caring in teaching in a very different way than another teacher candidate or another program user depending
upon their past experiences in classrooms. In an assessment context, a score of 80% may mean something different to a student who has a history of low achievement than it does to a student who typically receives marks above 90%. These interpretations are further conditioned by one’s position within socio-cultural groups including classrooms, schools, school boards, families, and broader cultural identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability). As these positions afford particular lenses for interpretation, interpretive arguments must consider the context of an interpretation in order to provide a rationale for its accuracy and appropriateness (Kane, 2004, 2006).

Underpinning this conception of interpretation is a recognition that interpretations will change over time in light of new experiences and new evidences. On the evolving nature of interpretation, Caputo (2000) asserts, “instead of arresting the play of meaning, a more radical or more originary experience of hermeneutics faces up to the inescapable play of interpretation” (p. 3). This understanding implicates validity as an always partial and evolving process, which is congruent with Messick’s (1989, 1998) and Lather’s (1993) definitions of validity. Further, these properties of interpretation identify the inherent and inescapable differences between stakeholders. The treatment of these differences in contemporary validity is not to resolve them or reduce them to a singular understanding; rather, it is to observe the similarities and differences to construct a non-singular description of inference accuracy and appropriateness (Lather, 1993; Moss, 1998). This approach is in sharp contrast to traditional attempts at validity that endeavour to attain a single score rooted in linear notions of correspondence (Lather, 1993).

Therefore, within assessment validity, a hermeneutic approach serves to construct a
complex picture of overlaying meanings towards assessment processes, assessment scores, and the use of assessment results.

The second hermeneutic concept that impacts understandings of assessment validity is the *hermeneutic circle*. The hermeneutic circle offers a methodological response to Messick’s (1989) claim that validity should be an ongoing process reliant on multiple scales and sources of evidence. Specifically, the hermeneutic circle characterises interpretation as a recursive process of considering individual pieces of evidence (or interpretations) in relation to whole-group interpretations. Gadamer (1981) conceives this process as a dual dialectic where there is not only a relationship between the single sources of evidence and the whole body of evidence but also a relationship between the evidence and the reader’s values and presuppositions. These dialectics continue to operate as new information is brought forward through reflexive activities. This hermeneutic process suggests that interpretations are repeatedly evaluated and revisited as new evidence emerges. In this way, “the hermeneutic circle expands, thus allowing a dynamic approach to interpretation” (Moss et al., 2006, p. 130). Using such a framework within validity research serves to elicit deep understandings of the multiple interpretations in a given case. Further, it moves validity towards a dialogic discourse putting interpretations at various scales and in various contexts into conversation with one another.

Moss et al. (2006) offer an example of a validity process using a hermeneutic approach. Experienced mathematics teachers and mathematicians were asked to judge teacher performance based on teaching portfolios of beginning teachers. While state evaluation criteria were available, the participants in this study did not initially have
access to it and were required to first independently and then collaboratively establish and justify their interpretations on teacher performance. The portfolios included several entries that highlighted various aspects of mathematics teaching including a statement of teaching beliefs, sample lesson plans, student demographic and achievement information, classroom assessments, videotapes, student work, and other teaching artifacts. The participants in this study were first asked to write personal narrative evaluations on portfolio submissions based strictly on their own criteria drawn from their own experience. Their evaluations were then read to the entire group with differences in interpretations discussed.

Analysis of this validation process revealed that in both discussion and the individual writing, participants engaged in a dialectic process of referencing specific piece of evidence with their personal experiences as well as with whole-group interpretations (Moss et al., 2006). Moreover, this process pushed participants to question how the evidence presented in the portfolios was selected and under what contextual conditions. Ultimately, participants were required to seek out additional evidence in order to justify and render accurate and appropriate decisions about teacher performance. In particular, participants found it difficult to judge teaching ability in the absence of socio-cultural data at multiple levels (i.e., information on classroom environment, school culture, and board policies and practices). When presented with the state assessment criteria, participants had difficulty applying their rationales with the established framework. The standardised criteria did not allow for a full representation of teacher performance or a rationale to support interpretations and judgments. This was confounded when participants were told that judgments of teacher performance were tied
to licensure. This further questioned the validity of inferences, the ethics of validation, and the consequences of such decisions. While this case does not present a complete validity argument, it does highlight how a hermeneutic practice enlarges the interpretive argument through a dialectic process that engages multiple interpretations of assessment evidences.

**Validity Argument**

The interpretive argument serves as the basis for Kane’s (2006) second argument structure, the *validity argument*. The validity argument seeks to connect, analyse, and evaluate the various components within the interpretive argument with the aim of establishing an overall position towards inference adequacy and appropriateness. Although Kane cautions that this position does not represent validity as all or none, he does assert that the validity argument provides increased confidence in validity judgments. Kane (2004) states that

> Although the argument-based approach does not lead to a simple yes–no decision about validity, it does provide a way to gauge progress. As the weakest inferences and assumptions are checked and are either supported by the evidence or adjusted so that they are defensible, the reasonableness of the interpretive argument as a whole can improve. (p. 167)

A central aim of the validity argument is to examine the coherence between the elements within the interpretive argument. Kane (2004) states “the goal is to develop assessment procedures and an interpretive argument that are consistent with each other and with the purpose of the testing program” (Kane, 2004, p. 143). Therefore, the validity argument offers a potential model that describes the relationship between evidence,
interpretations, and program purposes. The emphasis is on identifying points of congruence and incongruence between program purpose and program output (i.e., inferences derived from performance within program). However, it should be noted that this does not mean that all evidence needs to point in one direction; points of incongruence are important aspects of the validity argument. Kane argues that the aim is not to eliminate anomalous evidence or interpretations but rather to articulate a rationale for their plausibility within the validity argument.

Kane (1992, 2004) articulates a basic iterative strategy for establishing a validity argument. Based on a robust, multi-perspective, multi-evidenced interpretive argument, he suggests the development of a preliminary validity argument—a statement that describes the association between various pieces of evidence, their interpretations, and the purpose of the assessment program. From this point, one can examine the degree of congruence between these elements. Kane (2004, 2006) cautions that the most tenuous links or evidences should be evaluated in more detail and weighted against their plausibility within the program. Based on this assessment, the preliminary validity argument may be modified. These two latter steps would be repeated until all inferences within the interpretive argument were considered plausible.

Kane (2004) presents an example of how to establish a validity argument for certification examinations. His description refers to the general case of certification exams (i.e., tests that measure readiness for practice via an assessment of knowledge, skills, and judgments) rather than a specific testing scenario. Though his example is fairly broad, it helps in understanding the structure and approach for validity arguments. He begins by delineating the interpretive argument, citing five potential areas for
assumptions, inferences, and bias within testing programs. These areas include (a) the evaluation and scoring of observed performance; (b) the generalisation from observed performance to the test domain; (c) extrapolation from test domain (i.e., items) to the broader knowledge, skills, and judgment domain; (d) extrapolation from the knowledge, skills, and judgment domain to the practical context; and (e) certification decision. Each stage in the assessment sequence bears its own threats to validity. For example, within the scoring phase, particular types of items (e.g., multiple-choice) may be more reliable than other item formats (e.g., short-answer). This internal threat may lead to differences in the observed scores, contributing to subjectivity within inferences. Applied to specific case studies, each of these five areas would be scrutinized based on item information, assessment practices, and conditions surrounding individual student performance. For certification exams, the validity argument compares inferential evidence collected for each stage of the assessment with the overarching purpose of the examination. For example, it would be necessary to interrogate the degree and reason for misalignment between an essay test item and the aim of a testing program towards fully standardised conditions. For certification examination programs, concerns center on whether or not the evidence is explained or plausible within the structure of the assessment program and the degree of coherence between the evidence and the standards for licensure.

Shepard (1993) also presents several validity case studies that further highlight the role of a validity argument. One case concerning the placement of students in special education programs arose from the realization that boys and visual minorities were overrepresented within such programs. Placement of students within the state’s special education programs was largely based on a test of general IQ. A special task force was
convened to assess the evidence supporting the placement process. The task force examined existing research pertaining to learning theory and special education with the conclusion that placement in special education programs may bear significant social stigmas but may serve to advance students academically through a high focus on metacognitive skill development. In addition, the task force examined reliability properties across the empirical measures used in the placement process and recognized that general IQ measures may have cultural biases for certain populations. Further, the task force also examined (though minimally) the historical and cultural context of schools with special education programs. The task force’s judgment on the placement process involved a combination of inferences from various sources including research, instrument analysis, and a description of the socio-cultural contexts of state schools. These inferences were compared with the state mandate that favoured inclusion. The result of this comparison was a revision of the placement process to include first a thorough examination of the child’s learning environment and second a comprehensive battery of assessments that considered biomedical, behavioural, and academic aspects.

Though these case descriptions do not present fully robust validity arguments (i.e., the complete interpretive and validity argument), they do serve to highlight the relative role of each argument structure. In the following section of this chapter, I draw together contemporary principles in validity theory and Kane’s (2004, 2006, 2009) notion of a validity argument to construct a framework for the validation of complex educational program aims.
Program Validity Framework

This research draws on assessment validity theory to construct a theoretical framework for validating the complex aims of educational programs. In particular, I use Kane’s (2004, 2006, 2009) validity argument as an overarching structure for this framework. The aim of a validity argument in this context is to systematically document, connect, and analyse the inferences, evidences sources, theoretical constructs, and consequences that arise from educational programs. In this framework, inferences, constructs, and consequences related to the program’s intended educational aims are of main importance. Ultimately, through a study of program validity, program stakeholders may have a better understanding of the cohesion between program purpose and the teaching and learning that occurs in the program. This information may be used to support current practices and perspectives or may lead to program modifications in the areas of program structure, curricula, educational aims, staff hiring, or admission processes.

In the following sections of this chapter, I articulate a framework for validating educational programs. First, a definition of validity as rooted in contemporary notions is asserted to provide a basis for my understanding of validity measurements. I then reframe Kane’s (2004, 2006, 2009) notion of a validity argument for use with educational programs. In addition, within this description, I make explicit links between the theoretical framework and the procedures for validation.
Definition of Validity

The definition of validity used in this research is based on contemporary concepts from assessment. Reframed to apply within the context of educational programs, these concepts are the following:

1. Validity is a unified multi-faceted construct that considers the adequacy and appropriateness of program aims in relation to program teaching and learning (i.e., program coherence).
2. Validity considers the relevance, utility, value implications, and social consequences of inferences and actions that arise from educational programs.
3. Validity measures for social and educational programs are not singular; rather, validity is an ongoing, evolving, dynamic, and interpretive process that recognizes evidence as variant, subjective, and value-laden. Hence validity descriptions are always partial and temporally dependent.
4. Validity descriptions may be based on multiple and varied modes of inquiry and are dependent on multiple sources of evidence.
5. Validity descriptions are rendered through an argument-based approach that systematically documents, connects, and analyses program inferences, evidence sources, theoretical constructs, and consequences.

Ultimately, this research subscribes to a contemporary, interpretive notion of program validity: a qualitative description reflecting the complex networking of inferences derived from educational processes as well as the consequence that arise from educational programs.
Validating Complex Program Aims

In this dissertation, I reframe Kane’s (2004, 2006, 2009) validity argument structure for application towards the validation of complex educational program aims. I specifically draw on both argument structures—the interpretive argument and the validity argument—to present a framework for validity inquiry into the coherence of program users’ interpretations and experiences of complex aims. I delineate each of these argument structures below.

Interpretive Arguments for Complex Program Aims

The interpretive argument documents program users’ multiple interpretations to complex program aims with consideration for how the aim is understood and represented at various program stages. These stages may include (a) program planning and development, (b) admissions, and (c) implementation and enactment. Users of an educational program may include administrators, faculty members, and students. Validating an entire program would involve documenting and analysing interpretations towards each program aim. In addition, a central component of the interpretive argument involves mapping program users’ interpretations of the program aim onto a theoretical delineation of the critical construct represented by the aim. Hence, in this dissertation, I focus solely on validating one aim of the Queen’s University teacher education program, that of promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle in teaching and learning. Hence I begin by articulating an interpretive argument, combining both theoretical conceptions and participant interpretations towards the critical construct, inclusivity in education.
In order to determine program users’ interpretations of program aims, I follow Moss et al.’s (2006) application of hermeneutics. Within the context of educational programs, hermeneutics provides a framework for program users to articulate and analyse their understanding and position towards educational aims. Specifically, the integration of hermeneutics within validation inquiries serves two functions: first, it provides a philosophical basis that reframes validity as an interpretive inquiry process; and second, it provides guidance for the selection of methods and the design of validation studies. In reference to hermeneutics as an interpretive framework for educational inquiries, Smith (1999) states that

The hermeneutic imagination throws open the challenge to inquire into what we mean when we use words like curriculum, research and pedagogy. We are challenged to ask what makes it possible for us to speak, think and act in the ways we do. From the perspective of postmodern hermeneutics, the project is even more searching, namely, a concern for how we shall proceed pedagogically after we have given up the presumption of ever being able to define in unequivocal foundational terms all of the key referents in our professional lexicon. (p. 28)

A hermeneutic lens allows for questioning of the fundamental tenets of teaching, such as inclusivity in education, opening tensions of interpretation and creating opportunities for critical dialogue on the meaning of educational aims (Smith, 1999). Placed within the program validation framework, hermeneutics enables a deep analysis of program users’ interpretations of complex program aims. These interpretations and their evidence sources form the basis for the interpretive argument, which is then used to construct a validity argument.
Validity Arguments for Complex Program Aims

The function of the validity argument is to analyse the connections and disconnections between the interpretations of various program users towards specific program aims. This analysis serves to create a preliminary model for the validity argument based on multiple interpretations from program users. This preliminary model is then further analysed with connections and disconnections scrutinized for their plausibility within the educational program. This analysis is guided by questions such as (a) Why does a program user maintain his/her perspective towards a particular program aim? (b) In what ways are the interpretations of various program users and groups of program users similar or dissimilar and why? (c) How do interpretations from different program stages contribute towards a model of program coherence? and (d) Are there alternative possibilities/models that render a more plausible explanation of interpretations?

As noted by Kane (2006), the process for constructing a validity argument is both iterative and recursive as the validity argument is modified in light of alternative, plausible connections and disconnections. Further, drawing on newer notions of validity, this process of validation will always be partial and ongoing (Lather, 1993; Moss et al., 2006). Statements of validity will continue to change as new evidence and new interpretations emerge, as program users move through the program, and as individuals enter or exit the program. While the aim of a validity argument is to articulate points of cohesion between program users and to describe the nature of that cohesion, a statement of validity is always limited by the available evidence and is always dependent on a temporal phase.
Keyword: Inclusivity

This keyword is a personal articulation of the critical construct in this validity inquiry. Early on in my dissertation planning, I framed the notion of inclusivity in education as an active verb—as something that teachers could do in their classrooms to welcome and accommodate diverse learners. As a result of engaging in what I considered to be an inclusive learning environment this past year, a musical theatre production, and as a result of thinking more deeply about my own experiences of inclusion, my conception of inclusivity has now shifted. I now think of inclusivity as a noun—it is about people, their dispositions and relations; it is about places, those physical, emotional, and cognitive; and it is about the abstract thing we call belonging. A teacher does not do inclusivity, like he or she might do guided reading or math manipulatives. Rather, inclusivity centers on the way people relate to one another and the way in which individuals are validated within those relationships. In education, inclusivity is also about the quality of learning that emerges from states of inclusion. Inclusivity is a place for being and for becoming. This dissertation is about sharing the places of inclusivity occupied by educators—teacher candidates, teacher educators, and teacher education program administrators. It is also about sharing my evolving conception of inclusivity as both an educator and student of education. This keyword reflects where I am right now, my current understanding of inclusivity, before hearing and analysing the views of the participants in this study. I trust that by the end of this dissertation and throughout my career, my thinking will change again, and I will enter into a new understanding of what inclusivity means in education.
My conception of inclusivity is rooted in notions of normativity—in what we, or I, or you call and accept as normal. More specifically, I am concerned with how notions of normalcy limit one’s capacity for learning and for being in this world. Here I draw on Doll’s (2008) understanding of capacity. Capacity, she says, “suggests wideness, not narrowness; openness; space for possibilities not yet even imagined, or if imagined, done so with a tremble. Capacity puts aside the correcting mind with its focus on the gold, the known end.” She continues, “capacity holds room for unknowingness and peculiarity. Capacity is fearless in its embrace of the other inner side of things” (p. 223). In inclusive learning, notions of normalcy expand and the peculiar is erased. Learning happens in an open place where students and teachers have room to express themselves, to share their inner sides, without fear of judgment or fear of difference. I believe that too often, these fears are linked. However, I also believe that, when allowed, light can shine into interstices, illuminating fragments at first, then wider into a space of possibility. Through inclusivity, we are invited into newly imagined spaces of being and of becoming. This for me is what learning is all about.

My conception of inclusivity is rooted in my early experiences. When I was child, I never liked the sweaters my mother would buy for me. They were always brown, or grey, or navy blue, and my favourite colour was yellow. I used to enjoy cooking and baking—fudge chocolate cakes, oatmeal-raisin cookies, and deep dish brownies. I had fun spinning the mix, once so fast that it leapt out of the bowl hitting the walls and cupboards along the way. And, I sang often, using markers as microphones and toy bears as patrons. It was no surprise that I was quick to get involved in community theatre groups—singing, acting, and dancing. I kept all of this out of my school life. I was afraid
of what my elementary friends might think of me. This was not normal boy behaviour. Indeed, I quickly found out that singing in the schoolyard could leave bad black eyes and playing skipping with the girls encouraged name-calling. The schoolyard was not a very inclusive space.

As I grew, I began to realize that my interests were not aberrant in all contexts; what was considered weird or strange in elementary school was acceptable and normal in other communities. During musical rehearsals this past year, it was easy for me to stand center stage singing out loud and dancing. Others were quick to join in, both men and women. Stereotypes slipped away. People were invited to be themselves. This gave rise to creativity, much laughter, and joy. However, most significant for me was the realization that such an inclusive space allowed me to construct understandings about myself differently. I became less dependent upon the discourses of normalcy to shape what I thought of myself. As a result, I was able to understand myself in a more genuine way.

Inclusive spaces provide safety for this being and becoming, for learning about ourselves as different than the normal, and for enacting more authentic representations of who we are. Inclusive spaces validate these representations and encourage us to step into our capacity as learners. We are called to bring forward our unique view of this world and to share it with others. It is out of these shared relationships that we learn. It is for this reason that schools, classrooms, and schoolyards need to embrace inclusivity as a fundamental value and an interminable goal. Further, as sites for the preparation of teachers, teacher education programs serve the critical function of promoting inclusivity within the teaching profession.
CHAPTER THREE: INCLUSIVITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

In this chapter, I review literature related to teacher education and inclusivity in order to provide a basis for my validity inquiry into the Queen’s University teacher education program aim to “promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle” (Queen’s University, 2008a). Specifically, I begin by considering the context of inclusivity as an aim for contemporary teacher education. I then examine how access structures (i.e., admissions) and educational processes (i.e., program structures, curriculum, and pedagogy) promote inclusivity within and through teacher education programs.

Context

Teacher education programs are the primary sites for the preparation and development of future educators in Canada. Given that these programs range in length from eight months to two years, teacher education faculty members and program planners face competing demands on program content and structure. Howard and Aleman (2008) identified four broad teacher capacities that should be addressed in teacher preparation programs. These capacities include (a) knowledge of teachable subject matter; (b) knowledge of pedagogy; (c) knowledge of learning and culture; and (d) the development of a critical social consciousness. The Association of the Canadian Dean’s of Education further articulates 12 principles for initial teacher education in Canada. These principles align with Howard and Aleman’s teacher capacities and also emphasize the role of teacher education programs “to allow the meaningful interaction of student-teachers with research-oriented faculty and to promote awareness of the interconnected nature of
theory, research, and practice in the profession” (ACDE, n.d., p. 2). In addition, as education is a provincial responsibility in Canada, teacher education programs must also address local educational policies and curricula as well as adhere to provincial accreditation processes (Hansen, 2008). These broad goals are also clarified by the conceptual orientations and views toward teacher education of individual Faculties of Education in their autonomous universities (Tom, 1997; Volante & Earl, 2002).

Based on these identified teacher capacities and program foci, the most commonly described function of teacher education programs is to produce competent professionals with both disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical skill (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008). The second most widely cited mission involves commitment to issues of social justice, diversity, and inclusivity. For example, one Canadian institution identified a program goal to “produce teachers who have the values, knowledge, and skills necessary to facilitate learning and to promote justice and equity in their schools and local and global communities” (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008, p. 26). Darling-Hammond (1999, 2006) has identified inclusivity as a critical topic and a timely value for teacher education programs. More recently, Howard and Aleman (2008) emphasize "teachers’ capacity to teach diverse learners because of the need to prepare teachers for the growing ethnic, racial, linguistic, and social class diversity in the nation’s schools” (p. 158). This rationale is further underscored by the continued disproportion in achievement of students from diverse cultural and low-income backgrounds, being most evident in secondary dropout rates and admissions to university education (Howard & Aleman, 2008).

Integrating inclusivity and promoting values of social justice, diversity, and equity with teacher candidates is a substantial and formidable task within teacher education.
programs, and more so because of their short duration. Solomon (2002) acknowledges, “one of the biggest challenges for teacher education in Western societies is to prepare practitioners for the growing diversity within their schools” (p. 261). Accordingly, the remainder of this review discusses how teacher education programs seek to promote values of inclusivity throughout their programming. Following Richardson and Skinner’s (1991) model of institutional adaptation to student diversity, I examine two aspects of teacher education programs: (a) access, which involves recruitment and admission procedures; and (b) the educational process, which includes program structures, curricula, and pedagogies. Applied to programs with a high commitment to inclusivity, or what Richardson and Skinner call “open-access cultures” (p. 7), this model suggests that inclusive values can be embodied from initial program intake to teacher candidates’ educational experiences during the program. Solomon draws the same conclusion from his review on progressive models of teacher education. He argues that for the promotion of equity and diversity, teacher education programs must have (a) a recruitment policy and admission process that ensures a representative student teacher body which reflects community diversity (i.e., access); and (b) a program structure, curriculum, and pedagogy that interrogates and modifies the assumptions, dispositions, and beliefs systems about difference and diversity that student teachers bring into teacher education programs (i.e., process). Richardson and Skinner’s model is also particularly applicable to my work because they emphasize that institutional mission statements drive program activities and that institutional cultures arise from the congruence between the stated mission and the enacted mission. In the following section I examine issues related to access in teacher

3 Pre-service programs in Ontario are typically eight months in length consisting of 4 months of university-based classes and 4 months of practicum. Other provinces vary in program length up to 2 years of study.
education programs. This is followed by a discussion on processes for promoting inclusivity in teacher education.

Access

Admission policies, requirements, and procedures are primary structures for promoting equitable access to teacher education programs. Zeichner and Conklin (2008) as well as Ackley, Fallon, and Brouwer (2007) acknowledge that there must be a relationship between the stated mission of the Faculty and admission criteria and processes. Faculties committed to inclusivity and diversity must attend to equitable practices in recruiting, judging, and admitting applicants. Allen (2003) states that equity in admissions recognizes that “ascribed status such as gender, racial/ethnic background and/or cultural roots, socio-economic origin, place of birth, and/or community of residence should not affect the provision of opportunities for upward social mobility” (p. 79). In Canada, equitable access is supported through federal and provincial legislations that “allow for the implementation of affirmative action programs to reduce disadvantages for certain groups” (Fleras & Elliot, 1992, p. 256). These legislations have largely focused on four clearly defined groups: women, people with disabilities, Aboriginals, and visible minorities (or racialized persons) (Allen, 2003). Despite efforts and commitments to equitable access, disadvantaged groups continue to face restrictions and difficulties in pursuing university education (Lundy, Sparkes, & Lawrence, 2001). Systemic and internal barriers still impede a university’s willingness and ability to accommodate high levels of access. These barriers include tradition of practice, definition of the university’s role in society, funding, affordability, admission criteria, elitism, and
broader societal inequities that lead to disadvantages in early schooling and provisions for educational supports (Brathwaite, 2003).

Given systematic barriers to fully equitable admissions policies, data on admission into Canadian universities continue to point toward a largely homogeneous student populace. This is particularly true in teacher education programs (Ryan, Pollock, & Antonelli, 2009). Solomon (2002) states that “the research uncovers a glaring disparity between the dominant-culture teaching force and the growing racial and ethnocultural diversity of the students it serves” (p. 262). Based on a 2006 national survey, Blais and Ouedraogo (2008) offered a cross-sectional sketch of the demographics of the teaching workforce. Key results from their study include:

• females occupied 60-81% of the workforce depending on province;
• across 10 provinces, the greatest percent of teachers were between 50 and 59 years of age with the second largest cohort between 40 and 49 years;
• very few teachers identified as a visible minority with 0% in PEI to 12% in BC;
• visible minority status correlated with age – younger teachers belong to minority groups more so than older teachers;
• of those who did identify religious affiliation, the vast majority were Catholic or Protestant; and
• 86-99% of teachers across provinces were born in Canada with English as the mother tongue of teachers in all provinces except Quebec.

In contrast to the demographics of student diversity existent in many schools and classrooms throughout Canada, these statistics are grossly under representative. This is extremely problematic as parallel representation serves to provide positive role models
and symbols of success for minority students and also serves to enrich curriculum and teaching through increased perspective, experience, and resources (Solomon, 2002).

I contend that equity can be promoted through three broad stages of the admissions process: (a) recruitment, (b) admission requirements, and (c) decision-making. Recruitment of applicants from diverse backgrounds is necessary in order to select a diverse cohort of teacher candidates. Recruitment faces significant challenges in this regard given the systemic biases that disadvantage potential applicants and that reduce the applicant pool (Villegas & Davis, 2007). Brathwaite (2003) states, “in Ontario at this time, the changes in the public education system are affecting the attainment of the competitive grades that students need to secure a place in the elite universities” (p. 17). She goes on to suggest several factors that discourage groups of students from entering and graduating university including recent changes in secondary school curricula, early streaming programs, large-scale assessment systems, social services for underprivileged families, technology and educational supports for poor students and school districts, and racial, ethnic, and gender biases.

Paired with alternative entry criteria, recruitment initiatives must attract the attention of students who may be negatively impacted by these disadvantaging factors (Villegas & Davis, 2007). Currently, recruitment mechanisms are passive, relying heavily on program websites, university-based teacher recruitment fairs, and information distributed to secondary school career and guidance services (Villegas & Davis, 2007). However, as teacher education is a post-degree program (with the exception of concurrent program tracks), programs seek applicants who have already been admitted to and successful in university level education. Post-degree entry programs are limited in
their ability to attract a diverse cohort of students because students attending undergraduate programs already represent a fairly homogeneous group, especially in institutions outside multicultural urban centers (Brathwaite, 2003). Richardson and Skinner (1991) argue that recruitment efforts need to be directed toward underrepresented groups in order to increase diversity. In teacher education, this may involve targeting mature students and students of particular socio-economic, gender, and racial/ethnic backgrounds. There are few documented cases of targeted recruitment for teacher education programs, particularly in Ontario. The majority of research on admission structures has focused on admission requirements, applicant indicators, and equity-based decision-making processes. More research and development is necessary on alternative recruitment methods to secure a diversified applicant pool for teacher education programs (Guarino, Santibañez, & Daley, 2006).

Admission requirements for entry to teacher education programs are fairly common across faculties of education in Canada. Undergraduate grade point average (GPA) is by far the most commonly used criteria with specific subject-specific courses required especially for secondary level teaching. In their review of teacher education programs, Crocker and Dibbon (2008) concluded that faculty members preferred GPA as the main criteria for entry into teacher education programs but also supported the use of a variety of indicators in combination with GPA. Casey and Childs (2007) document other types of criteria used for entry into teacher education programs. These indicators of criteria include written statements (usually about relevant experience and interest in teaching), interviews, reference letters, standardised test results, and performance in pre-requisite education courses. Casey and Childs note that these criteria provide different
information about applicants’ content knowledge, readiness to learn, and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward teaching and learning. Admission based on composite scoring of multiple indicators is most common across North American institutions with GPA often the strongest factor in admission selection; however, evaluation criteria and rating procedures remain undisclosed to applicants.

Casey and Childs (2007) caution that rating information from written or oral sources may maintain lower inter-rater reliability compared to GPA or standardised assessment results due to evaluators’ personal biases and subjectivities. Research suggests however that reliability of scoring open-ended indicators can be enhanced through evaluator training and by increasing the number of evaluators per applicant (e.g., Byrnes, Kiger, & Shechtman, 2000; Caskey, Peterson, & Temple, 2001; Smith & Pratt, 1996). Further, in their study on ten selection measures for 141 applicants, Caskey et al. found that the inter-rater reliabilities on essay items were in the low 0.9 range. They also noted that the essay components maintained a high correlation with applicants’ overall file ratings (0.88), reference letters (0.77), and to a lesser extent GPA (0.42). These data suggest that threats to reliability can be reduced for subjective indicators and that these indicators can yield a high degree of concurrent validity.

Very few studies have examined the effects of these admission procedures and indicators on issues of equity and diversity. In 1996, Smith and Pratt examined correlations between social class background, gender, and teacher candidate acceptance within their study on biodata (i.e., personal statements) collected through the Queen’s University admissions process. Admission procedures into the teacher education program at Queen’s University involve equal weighting between GPA and personal statement
scores. Personal statements are evaluated independently by two evaluators—one faculty member and one practitioner (i.e., teacher or school/school board administrator). Personal statements focus on teacher candidates’ motivations for entering the teaching profession and their relevant life experiences (e.g., employment and training, volunteer or community service, work with diverse groups, languages spoken, special skills, leadership roles). Based on data from a sample of two cohorts and 50 evaluators, male evaluators tended to give slightly higher average ratings than female evaluators to both male and female applicants. Further, both male and female evaluators tended to score female applicants higher than male applicants. These selection trends resulted in increased female selection into the program, especially within the elementary panel in which male GPA scores were lower on average than secondary panel male applicants. In contrast to studies of undergraduate admissions, intake decisions for the Queen’s University teacher education program had a low correlation with teacher candidates’ socioeconomic backgrounds, accounting for less than 5% of the variance in admission scores as measured by parental income and employment status. This difference between undergraduate and post-degree admissions may be a result of initial streaming at an undergraduate level of students from lower socioeconomic groups; hence fewer students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds seem to apply to teacher education programs.

In a similar study conducted in another Ontario teacher education program, Lundy, Sparkes, and Lawrence (2001) found that despite commitments to equitable practice, biases in admission procedures were evident. Their findings point toward increased access for female applicants based on GPA admission criteria and increased access for applicants from higher social class backgrounds. These findings represent
long-standing patterns in Ontario schooling and entrance to teacher education programs. Positively, “the GPA differences among dominant culture, Aboriginals, and visible minority applicants show the need for and effect of affirmative action programs” (p. 18). This suggests that equity admissions work when in place; however, they rely on clearly defined criteria and, to date, address only certain underrepresented groups.

Affirmative action programs and provisions for identification of diversity status are now typical components of admission procedures. These provisions generally involve a self-report declaration by the applicant. For example, the Queen’s University teacher education program invites applicants from one of three equity groups to self-identify. These groups include (a) Aboriginal/First Nations Peoples, (b) racial minorities, and (c) differently-abled groups. See Appendix A for the Queen’s University Faculty of Education Equity Admission Form. Procedures for how this information is integrated into admission decisions are not publicly reported. Instead, statements such as, “For a designated number of places in the BEd/DipEd program, preference will be given to members of Aboriginal/First Nations groups, racial minorities, and differently-abled groups currently under-represented in the teaching profession. All applicants must meet the minimum academic requirements and the prerequisites for the program option selected” (Queen’s University, 2008b). This lack of disclosure about decision-making processes is fairly common across faculties of education. While faculties explicitly state admission requirements and cut-scores, they are unlikely to include how scores from various admission indicators are combined. Some institutions publically indicate their composite scoring practices (e.g., 50% weighting for each of GPA and person statement score); however, the criteria for the assessment of personal statements are rarely
provided, information on how applicant demographics factor into final admission decisions are not publicized.

The admissions processes to teacher education programs are highly complex. Systemic barriers as well as a lack of research supporting reliable indicators of student success as future teachers affect admission decisions. Further, selecting teacher candidates for a job in teaching requires consideration of applicant’s dispositional nature, especially when a program wants to graduate teachers who are committed to issues of equity and inclusivity. Efficiently measuring a teacher candidate’s disposition toward inclusivity is a difficult task; moreover this is compounded by the large number of applicants and time/financial constraints. Few studies have examined ways to gauge a teacher candidate’s disposition for teaching. Ackley et al. (2007) suggest that, as part of admission requirements, teacher candidates should be asked to respond to scenario-based items, some of which could explicitly address equity issues. In order to ensure administration reliability and authenticity of responses, the authors suggest on-site standardised procedures. This suggestion is problematic for students who live at far distances; however, technology may present useful solutions. Caskey et al. (2001) also argue for simulation activities. They recommend that applicants complete these activities in small groups so that the members of the admissions committee can observe interactional dispositions. Caskey et al. state

The simulation activity was an important part of admissions decision-making since it added a different kind of information to the admission process. In general, the simulation activity has strong face validity for admission: this collaborative group task is much like the expectations of performance for program coursework
and field placements. It is recommended that this activity be continued and
developed. In particular it will be important to estimate the reliability of judges.
(p. 19)

More research on alternative indicators of teacher candidates’ dispositions is
necessary if admissions are to select teacher candidates whose approach to education
aligns with the program’s mission (Ackley et al., 2007; Caskey et al., 2001; Denner,
Salzman, & Newsome, 2001). In the following section, I consider how teacher education
processes contribute towards the promotion of inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical
principle in education.

Process

The process for educating future teachers in Canada involves a program structure
that combines on-campus coursework with field-based experiences (Crocker & Dibbon,
2008). However, despite this common program structure, teacher education programs
vary widely in their relative focus on each and in their overall duration. For instance, in
Ontario, consecutive programs are typically two semesters but up to four semesters in
other parts of Canada. Further, in addition to consecutive programs, concurrent education
programs offer students the option of taking education-based courses and completing
teaching practica experiences simultaneously while taking a four-year undergraduate
degree. Concurrent education programs are far fewer in number than consecutive
programs throughout Canada (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008).

Both on-campus coursework and practical teaching experiences offer professors
in faculties of education and educators within the schools opportunities to promote
inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle (Solomon, 2002). However, despite
these opportunities, a significant concern remains that issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are neglected within teacher education programs (Gerin-Lajoie, 2008). Philpott and Beynon (2005) state

I am concerned that educators in various stages of their preparation are neither required nor encouraged to take courses in which they explore and articulate the sources of their ideas on social responsibility and the variety of issues of inclusion and exclusion it encompasses: for example, race, language, physical abilities, and sexual orientation. Similarly, why are pre-service and in-service teachers not routinely introduced to formal authoritative discourses such as the United Nations (1991) Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), nor asked to explore the Canadian Multiculturalism Act: Bill C-93 (1993) or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1992). (p. 35)

In Crocker and Dibbon’s (2008) survey of 343 faculty members, 1853 graduates of teacher education programs, and 865 principals across Canada, topics in ‘dealing with diversity among children’ and ‘teaching children with disabilities or other special needs’ were perceived as very important for beginning teachers (principals’ responses of 83% and 81%; faculty’s responses of 82% and 61%, respectively). However in comparison, the perceived readiness of teacher candidates in these areas by principals and faculty members was marginal (principals 7% and 3%; faculty 13% and 16%, respectively). Teacher candidates themselves also acknowledged a lack of emphasis on these issues with only 28% of them indicating ‘a great deal of emphasis’ on dealing with diversity in their teacher education program and 19% on teaching children with special needs. These statistics point toward continued concern over teacher readiness to address diversity and
promote inclusivity within their classrooms. Accordingly, the following three sections examine literature specifically related to how inclusivity is promoted throughout teacher education programs. In particular, I examine three areas of teacher education: (a) coursework, (b) field experience, and (c) pedagogies.

Coursework

Inclusivity as a fundamental principle of education can be promoted in coursework either through an infused approach, a separated approach, or through a combination of both approaches (Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Zeichner & Conklin, 2008; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996). An infusion approach assumes that issues of inclusivity, diversity, and equity are embedded and addressed in all teacher education courses and in practicum experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Irvine, 2003; Nieto, 2000). In advocating for an infused approach, Nieto states that placing equity and social justice front and centre in teacher education programs means

Looking critically at why and how our schools are unjust for some students. It means analysing school policies and practice – the curriculum, textbooks and materials, instructional strategies, tracking, recruitment and hiring of staff, and parent involvement strategies – that devalue the identities of some students while overvaluing others. When social justice is a major lens with which we view the education of all students of all backgrounds, then diversity gains a place of prominence in the teacher education curriculum…All courses need to be infused with content related to diversity, from secondary math methods to reading. (p. 183)
Further, Beck and Kosnik (1998) assert that an infused approach is very effective in providing teacher candidates the opportunity to directly connect curriculum, policy, and pedagogy with social issues related to diversity and inclusion. They also assert that such an approach is viewed more positively by teacher candidates compared to a separated approach in which teacher candidates perceive the treatment of equity issues as tokenism or as a program ‘add-on.’

The separated approach promotes inclusivity through discrete courses that explicitly address issues of equity, diversity, social justice, and inclusion. For instance, it is not uncommon to have specific courses offered on special education, ESL, or multiculturalism in teacher education programs. However, more often than not, these courses are electives, taken only by certain students in addition to a required core program. Nieto (2000) acknowledges that although an infused approach is necessary for teacher candidates to understand the embedded nature of equity issues across educational contexts, specialized courses are also necessary and serve a critical function in the preparation of teachers. Separate courses on issues of equity and inclusivity enable teacher candidates to deeply explore the structures, policies, and pedagogies that promote inclusive learning communities. In their study of teacher candidates’ experiences of teacher education programming, Kosnik and Beck (2009) observed the benefits of these courses on teachers’ practices. One participant in their study indicated that “the most valuable course I had in pre-service…was my multicultural education course…It’s an all-year course, and the value I gained from it was to be able to respond delicately, effectively, and critically when necessary, to issues in multicultural education” (p. 15).

As benefits exist for both infused and separated approaches, some programs elect to
provide teacher candidates with both forms of learning. A combined approach ensures that all teacher candidates receive some teaching on issues of inclusion and enable those interested in pursuing topics further to do so through more specialized study.

The teacher education program at Queen’s University employs a combined approach to the education of equity and inclusion issues. All teacher candidates in the teacher education program are required to take a half course on critical issues in education, which include topics in exceptionalities and educational equity (Queen’s University, 2008d), as well as a module on social justice education, which emphasizes the theoretical underpinnings of equitable pedagogies and social justice education (Queen’s University, 2008f). Teacher candidates must also enroll in foundational, educational studies, or focus elective courses. Of the elective courses offered in the 2008/09 academic school year, 6 out of 40 explicitly addressed the teaching and learning of exceptional or at-risk students, teaching for social justice, or topics in social class, gender, and race. Coursework at Queen’s University is intended to inform and build on teacher candidates’ practical experiences in schools (Russell, 2000; Upitis, 2000). Hence these courses aim to enhance teacher candidates’ awareness and understanding of the diversity encountered during practicum placements. In the following section, I specifically consider how field placements contribute to teacher candidates’ views of inclusivity in education.

Field Experiences

Practica experiences vary widely in duration and location throughout teacher education programs in Canada. Although all programs have a practicum component, some require less than 8 weeks of in-school experience while others require 21 or more weeks (Crocker & Dibbons, 2008). In Ontario, the majority of teacher education
programs (69%) require that teacher candidates complete 8-12 weeks of field-based placements. Most of these practica occur in teachable subject areas and are located in mainstream school settings (i.e., K-12 publicly supported schools). Teacher candidates report the following activities as most often conducted during these field-based placements: teaching within subject specialization (76%), reflecting on teaching (75%), observing teaching practices (74%), and receiving formative feedback (66%) (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008). In contrast, only 26% of teacher candidates reported that classroom work related to university coursework.

In addition to in-school practica, select programs also offer alternative field-based experiences that encourage teacher candidates to practice education in non-traditional settings. The Queen’s University three-week alternative practicum is one example of this type of practicum. The alternative practicum was created to diversify teacher candidates’ experiences of teaching and learning enabling a broader understanding of learning across contexts (Queen’s University, 2008g). Each year, teacher candidates are invited to explore education in diverse settings, such as teaching abroad, working with community out-reach groups, initiating educational artistic projects, or teaching in non-mainstream schools (e.g., correctional facilities, schools for severely disabled students, Waldorf, Montessori, and other private schools).

Several researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Kosnik, & Beck, 2009; Santoro, 2009; Solomon, 2002) have identified alternative placements and those within mainstream settings as fostering teacher candidates’ experiences and understandings of inclusivity in education. Solomon suggests that field-based experiences provide teacher candidates with the opportunity to “move pedagogical theories and concepts about equity,
diversity and social justice from the university classroom to practical application in practicum classrooms, schools and communities” (p. 265). Further, in Santoro’s small-scale qualitative study, teacher candidates’ own construction of their ethnic identities and their understandings of the ‘ethnic other’ expanded through guided activities that occurred during placement periods. In this case, on-site learning about students’ and teachers’ cultural backgrounds was found to promote more culturally inclusive pedagogies and teaching practices. Two other placement programs, the Urban Diversity Program at York University in Toronto and Stanford’s Teacher Education Program (STEP) in the United States, are notable examples of practicum experiences that promote inclusivity as a fundamental principle of education.

The Urban Diversity Teacher Education Program was designed to attract and admit culturally diverse teacher candidates with the aim of creating an enriched cultural environment in which to learn about education (Solomon, 2002). The program, which is composed of approximately half visible minority students and half Caucasian students, seeks to infuse equity and diversity into all aspects of the program’s curriculum and pedagogy as well as teacher candidates’ placement experiences. One of the most salient features of the placement component of this program is its focus on inter-group collaboration and the intentional partnership of cross-race teaching dyads. The aim of these structures is to expand awareness and understanding of cultural similarities and differences within contexts of education. One Asian-Canadian participant in Solomon’s research on the Urban Diversity programs stated that the dyad teaching arrangement worked very well because I’m able to accept someone else’s point of view, not only from a different racial group but also from a different gender. Also, I can see
things in a different light; we use each other’s experiences and ideas and bring them into the classroom. (p. 269)

Another teacher candidate stated, “instead of having naturally occurring cliques, which usually happens, dyads put you in a situation where you have to learn about someone outside your culture…it helped to promote the understanding of antiracist education but in a very subtle way” (p. 269).

In addition to their in-school placements, teacher candidates in the Urban Diversity program are required to participate in a community involvement project. This project enables teacher candidates to interact and collaborate with social service organizations, youth agencies, and after-school programs. The aim of this program component is to help teacher candidates gain sensitivity as well as a cultural understanding of their local teaching communities. Cochran-Smith, Davis, and Fries (2004) support this approach, asserting that “a particularly promising teacher preparation program appears to be community-based experience, which offers teacher candidates new understandings about culture, families, and ways of life that are different from their own” (p. 964). Paired with teacher candidate-driven action research projects and on-site learning about culture theory, these practicum experiences were shown not only to increase teacher candidates’ cultural knowledge and understanding of equitable learning practices but also to promote teacher candidates’ ability to practice inclusive pedagogies (Solomon, 2002).

The Stanford Teacher Education Program also endeavours to expand teacher candidates’ cultural understandings and develop equitable pedagogies through purposeful placements in extremely diverse communities in the San Francisco Bay Area (Darling-
Hammond, 20002). The program is “intended to provide a forum in which new teachers address difficult issues of diversity in schools and society and reveal how they are considering and constructing their role in addressing these issues” (p. 1-2). Features of this program include a cohort-grouping model, novice-expert pairings, and similar to York’s program, a guided internship in a community-based organization. Central to the success of this initiative is peer and mentorship relationships that facilitate critical reflection and address concerns related to diversity. This relational support structure aligns with Nieto’s (2000) call for developing a community of critical friends with which to explore issues in educational equity, inclusivity, and social justice education. Darling-Hammond notes that, “increasingly, the kind of schooling STEP teachers observe is schooling that seeks to confront the long-standing barriers created by tracking, poor teaching, narrow curriculum, and unresponsive systems” (p. 5). She continues in recognition of the cohort-group model stating that “STEP teachers critically examine current school structure, practices, and outcomes as they visit and study schools and evaluate school policies and reform” (p. 5). Evidence from both of these placement programs suggests that when field-experiences are focused on issues of inclusivity and when teacher candidates are provided with the appropriate supports to understand, deconstruct, and interrogate educational structures then teacher candidates’ understandings, practices, and commitments to inclusivity in education expand and deepen. In addition to on-campus coursework and field-based experiences, conceptions of inclusivity can be promoted through teacher education pedagogies.
Pedagogy

This final section examines the role of pedagogy—the instructional strategies used to teach about inclusivity—within teacher education programs. Grossman (2005) in her review of research on pedagogical approaches in teacher education points to a dearth of literature in this area. Research on teacher education has focused more heavily on curriculum and program structures rather than on faculty members’ pedagogies. This is particularly problematic since, in teacher education, how students experience teaching is part and parcel of what is being taught, the medium is often the message (Loughran & Russell, 1997). Unsurprisingly then, few studies empirically examine pedagogical practices used within teacher education programs to promote the concept of inclusivity.

In their paper on cross cultural competency and multicultural teacher education, McAllister and Irvine (2000) offer a useful classification of pedagogical approaches for addressing culturally responsive education. They separate content-based teaching from process-based teaching. Content-based teaching refers to didactic instruction with a focus on the transmission and application of knowledge and skills related to educational inclusivity. In contrast, process-based teaching strategies seek to engage students in active meaning making with an emphasis on experiential learning. I expand on each below.

Content-based Pedagogies

Content-based pedagogies are characterised by didactic teaching of pre-existing knowledge, typically through lecture-based, text-based, or case-based learning. In teacher education, this pedagogical approach is commonly used for learning about educational policies, procedures, and theories. Content-based pedagogy aligns with one of Tom’s
(1997) principles for teacher education program design. He asserted that content should be made explicit and that direct instruction in a given area is important to teacher candidate development as new teachers. Philpott and Beynon (2005) concur and suggest that within the context of equity issues, teacher candidates should be routinely exposed to seminal and legislative documents as a foundation for their learning. Lecture-based and text-based teaching offers an opportunity to provide teacher candidates with an understanding of key concepts and process within educational equity and exceptionalities. For example, a lecture may be an appropriate pedagogical approach when teaching about the stages of the identification, placement, and planning process for students with exceptionalities. In a study of 21 teacher candidates’ learning about racial issues, Garmon (1998) noted that ‘information provided by the instructor’ was one of the most useful components for teacher candidates’ learning in addition to self-reflection and class discussions. These findings point toward the need for a multi-modal approach that integrates both content- and process-based pedagogies in learning about issues of inclusivity and diversity.

Bringing case studies into the learning context is another way to enhance engagement and connect content to teaching practice. Significant research has been conducted in case method instruction within teacher education (Grossman, 2005). Based on her review of ten studies that investigated the role and impact of case-based pedagogy, Grossman concluded, “cases may help improve reasoning skills of pre-service teachers, enabling them to identify issues and analyse an educational problem more effectively” (p. 442). Specifically within the context of learning about equity and cultural issues, Laframboise and Griffith (1997) found that case method instruction had a positive
influence on the learning of inclusive values of the 22 teacher candidates in their study. They suggest that case studies are useful in bridging gaps in teacher candidates’ experiences. They state “novice teachers often lack a shared knowledge of school culture and the experiential base that provides alternative for decision making” (p. 167). They articulate six guidelines for using teaching to instruct on issues of diversity and culture. In particular, they suggest that (a) the selection of quality literature is essential, (b) discussions and other reflective assignment should be used in conjunction with reading of case studies to allow for multiple perspectives, (c) students should be asked to make connections between case studies and their own practice as developing teachers, (d) faculty members should be aware that teacher candidates may have counterproductive ways of making sense of case studies, (e) discussion groups should be structured that provoke critical interrogation of case studies, and (f) teacher candidates should be given opportunities to reflect in different ways over time.

A final aspect of a content-based approach to promoting inclusivity in education is what Banks (2007) identifies as content integration. Content integration involves representing various cultures within teaching and case-study examples. The aim of this pedagogical approach is to infuse the curriculum with representations of student diversity in an effort to both teach about particular cultural structures and groups of people as well as to enable students from diverse backgrounds to identify with the content. This approach has been widely accepted as a means to facilitate teaching and learning about inclusion issues; however, Derman-Sparks (1991) raise concerns that cultural examples may essentialise cultural groups and reinforce stereotypes. As the only acknowledgment of diversity within curriculum, this approach may be insufficient; however, this approach
may be useful when combined with other approaches and in particular, process-based pedagogies, which enable students themselves to articulate their own cultural understandings. Process-based pedagogies call for students to actively engage cultural issues from personal, group, and critical perspectives.

*Process-based Pedagogies*

Process-based pedagogies in teacher education contexts encourage active learning through processes of critical reflection on self, practice, and system, community engagement, and experiential tasks. In relation to issues of inclusivity, much of the literature supporting process-based pedagogies has been tied to social justice education, a recent focus of many teacher education programs (Brandes & Kelly, 2003; Grant & Agosto, 2008). Nieto’s (2000) articulation of teaching as a life-long journey sees principles of social justice as ubiquitous to teacher development over time leading toward a more just system of education where students and teachers engage in critical process of transformation. In particular, she asserts that teachers must engage in the following processes in pursuit of a social justice pedagogy: (a) face and accept their own identities, (b) become learners of their students’ realities, (c) develop strong and meaningful relationships with their students, (d) become multilingual and multicultural, (e) learn to change racism and other biases, and (f) develop a community of critical friends. Pre-service programs can begin teacher candidates on this path toward social justice education by establishing the basis for critical reflection on personal practices and philosophies, developing communities of practice, and learning ways to address and connect with students while on practicum. In alignment with Loughran’s (1997) suggestion, I contend that teacher education programs should also model these processes

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in the relationships between faculty members and teacher candidates and by establishing scholarly cohorts for critical reflection amongst teacher candidates. Further, as institutions committed to social justice, faculties of education should move toward enhanced multiculturalism and ties to diverse cultural groups, which may entail revisions in faculty hiring and student admissions, partnerships with cultural associations and international institutions, and additional on-campus opportunities that support the cultural and linguistic development and expression of teacher candidates (Nieto, 2000).

In order to specifically facilitate these aims, three pedagogies feature prominently in research related to social justice education and process-based learning. These pedagogies are (a) personal narratives and reflection, (b) cognitive dissonance and critical consciousness, and (c) action-based learning (Kelly & Brandes, 2001). McAllister and Irvine (2000) assert that all three of these pedagogies “describe a process (often broken down into stage or strata) that can be used to increase understanding of how people change their behaviour and attitudes about themselves and others as cultural beings” (p. 4). I examine each of these pedagogies further given their suggested potential for promoting inclusivity as a keystone principle of education.

Literature on social justice education recognizes that, in order to promote socially just teaching practices, teachers must begin by examining their own socio-cultural positions and the biases and power that those positions afford. Philpott and Beynon (2005) note that personal reflection is necessary if teachers are to understand their own identities and the related discourses that bias their teaching practice. They further suggest that individuals construct perspectives on race, culture, and ability based on their own life experiences and social-cultural identities. Narrative writing and analysis has been
identified as one way to explore developing teachers’ identities (Alsup, 2006). In particular, interrogating teacher narratives has been shown to help new teachers change their beliefs about the structure, purpose, and form of education, as well as move toward more grounded and connected teaching practices that better align with their teaching philosophies (Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 1991; Tillema, 1998).

Fowler (2006) provides a seven-stage structure for writing and analysing personal teaching narratives. The stages of her framework range from initial ‘naïve’ telling to analysis of psychological, psychotherapeutic, and curricular elements, and finally to poetics of the relational teaching self. In reflecting upon her own narratives on moments of teaching difficulty, Fowler comments that engaging in these seven stages “subsequently ‘troubled’ my practice, my identity, my thinking, and my being. Through the narrative research that attended those stories, I have reconstituted my own teaching, understanding, learning, and professional growth as an educator” (p. 7). Fowler (2006) and Alsup (2006) independently contend that narrative work can result in greater awareness of a teacher’s personal pedagogy (i.e., one’s individual understanding and approach to teaching and learning), while drawing attention to points of dissonance and the need for a critical consciousness in the practice of teaching.

Cognitive dissonance and the need for criticality emerge when narratives of experience and understandings of identities are shared amongst groups of people: students, teachers, and faculty (Greene, 1993). Thus pedagogical practices that provoke cognitive dissonance and the development of a critical consciousness should be integrated within professional learning communities or what Nieto (2000) calls ‘communities of critical friends.’ Within this form of education, critical consciousness
draws on theories of critical pedagogy to suggest an awareness of the role teachers play in structuring, perpetuating, and ameliorating hierarchies and hegemony based on various social constructs that enforce prejudice, disability, and discrimination within classrooms (Howard & Aleman, 2008). The aim of a critical pedagogy is to decentre positions of power through inquiry into how culture, teaching, and learning are related at individual and systematic levels of education. Howard and Aleman state that “critical inquiry entails not only asking questions, but investigating potential solutions, creating new knowledge, seeking an understanding of various phenomenon, discussing discoveries and experiences, and then engaging in reflection and application of new found knowledge” (p. 167). Gay and Kirkland (2003) identify general and specific barriers to developing cultural critical consciousness and self-reflection in their research with teacher candidates in a teacher education program. In particular, they point to a resistance (mainly in Euro-American candidates) toward critique and cultural analysis and a lack of skills needed to engage in self-reflection. In addition, they suggest that guilt and benevolent liberalism present barriers to moving conversations from general understandings to specific personal experiences and practices. In response to these barriers, they suggest that critical consciousness can be developed when learning expectations about criticality are articulated, when faculty members model self-reflection and critical inquiry, when opportunities are routinely provided to practice critical consciousness, and when conceptual understandings are directly related to instructional practices in K-12 education. Gay and Kirkland’s final recommendation is to turn critical thoughts into transformative instructional actions, an approach of “learning by doing within the context
of authentically lived experiences” (p. 186). This approach maps directly onto the final process-based strategy to promote inclusivity in education, that of action-based learning.

Action-based learning invites teacher candidates to engage in social justice education by moving theoretical understanding into teaching practices. Action-based learning asks teacher candidates to be change agents by practicing and advocating for a critical consciousness within classrooms and educational systems. However, as Adams (1997) cautions, experiential and action-based learning is insufficient as a learning strategy onto itself. Drawing on Joplin’s (1995) action-reflection cycle, Adams suggests that action-based learning must be coupled with a preceding focus and followed by a reflective analysis and debrief. Therefore, an action-research framework provides a useful strategy for engaging in this pedagogical approach. Action research involves teacher candidates selecting a focus of study, implementing a theory-based practice within an educational context, and then collecting and analysing data in response to their focus (Bullough, 1997). When centered on issues of inclusivity, diversity, equity, and social justice, such a pedagogical approach not only alters and impacts learning environments but also leads teachers to deepened understandings about theory and practice, dually promoting inclusivity in education.

Summary

In this review of literature on teacher education and inclusivity, I have examined admission policy and programmatic elements (i.e., program structures, coursework, curricula, practica experiences, and pedagogies) that currently operate to promote inclusivity through and within teacher education programs. What appears consistent across the literature is that teacher education programs must explicitly and actively
address issues of inclusivity in various capacities in order to achieve and fulfill their missions related to inclusivity. Recruitment and admission policy are the first steps in redressing under representation of minority teacher candidates in teacher education programs and the teaching workforce. Once in teacher education programs, learning about inclusivity can be leveraged in a blended approach through on-campus coursework and practicum experiences. In particular, explicit teaching and working within richly diverse contexts has been shown to promote inclusive values in teacher candidates. These experiences coupled with pedagogies that encourage critical reflection, case-based learning, and collaborative meaning-making foster inclusivity as a fundamental principle in education.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

In this research, I use a qualitative, multiple perspective case study methodology to construct the validity argument for the Queen’s University teacher education program aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. I selected this methodology because it aims to provide a complex description of the unique interrelationship of persons, texts, systems, and processes embedded within a discrete context (Stake, 1995, 2000). In addition, I use a series of hermeneutic practices with participants from three distinct groups—program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates—to obtain their interpretations towards the program’s aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental principle. My intention in using a hermeneutic approach is to construct a validity argument that recognizes multiple perspectives that are contextually bounded but individually situated (Slattery, Krasny, & O’Malley, 2006). Specifically, the notion of the hermeneutic circle and the recognition that interpretations are variant, value-laden, socio-culturally constructed, and subjective serve to guide this validity methodology. While hermeneutic practices differ in their nature depending upon the domain of study, Smith (1999) offers four general requirements for this form of inquiry that include the following:

1. Paying close attention to how language is used by and across individuals (i.e., subjectivities between individuals and groups);

2. Committing to deepening one’s sense of the basic interpretability of texts, actions, and beliefs;

3. Questioning meaning and its relationship to practice and the larger whole (i.e., hermeneutic circle); and
4. Creating meaning, not simply reporting it.

This study integrates these requirements within its methodology as a means to engage hermeneutics for the purpose of validating one program aim.

Following and expanding upon Moss et al.’s (2006) application of hermeneutics in validity case study research, I collected data through practices that targeted both individual and collective levels of interpretation, thus constructing a hermeneutic circle methodological framework. In particular, the hermeneutic practices used in this study were (a) Commonplace Books, (b) interviews with follow-up reflection on participant-wide summaries, (c) focus groups with both individual and group-based activities, and (d) researcher keyword writing.

The methodology used for this research received clearance from the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board and complies with the Tri-council Standards on research with human subjects (see Appendix B for clearance letter). In addition, prior to data collection, all participants were given a letter of information that detailed their involvement in the study and signed a consent form (see Appendix C).

Participants

Participants from three groups were recruited for this study including 4 senior program administrators (i.e., Dean, Associate Dean, Previous Associate Dean, and Registrar), 9 faculty members, and 25 teacher candidates. Program administrators were purposefully recruited for this study because of their leadership roles and influence on the teacher education program. As the current Associate Dean had only recently been appointed, both the current and previous Associate Dean were asked to participate.
In addition to senior program administrators, faculty members who taught in the teacher education were invited to participate. Criteria for selection of faculty members consisted of them teaching within the teacher education program during the 2008-09 academic year and having participated in reading the 2008 personal statements for applicant admission to the teacher education program. A purposeful sample was obtained for four of the nine faculty member participants to ensure representation of faculty members who taught courses explicitly in the area of inclusivity (see Appendix D for list of courses in this category). Of those four faculty members, one was selected from each of the required courses related to inclusivity and social justice (i.e., PROF 100/101 and PROF 150/51: Social Justice Module). Five faculty members were selected who taught in other aspects of the teacher education program (i.e., courses not explicitly related to inclusivity). These faculty member participants were randomly selected within criteria guidelines.

Two groups of teacher candidates were selected for participation in this study. First, I recruited a group of 15 teacher candidates from the entire teacher candidate population for participation in three focus groups. Recruitment of focus group participants occurred in April 2009 via an email and poster campaign (see Appendix E). Participation within focus groups was open to all teacher candidates (i.e., no eligibility criteria) to a maximum of 20 participants. Based on data obtained from the pre/post-focus group surveys (see Appendix F), Table 1 below provides information on participants’ academic programs and enrollment in elective courses related to inclusivity in education. In total, seven participants were Intermediate/Senior (I/S) teacher candidates and eight were Primary/Junior (P/J) teacher candidates with one in the Outdoor Experiential
Education program and one in the Technology Studies program. Four of the participants had taken an elective course related to inclusivity in education.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Program Track</th>
<th>Elective Courses on Inclusivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I/S</td>
<td>I/S</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P/J</td>
<td>P/J</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 documents non-academic demographic information about teacher candidate participants, including their identification with respect to gender, race, disability, Aboriginal status, religion affiliation, and sexual orientation. These data were collected to provide background on the degree of diversity represented in participants of the focus groups. There were five times more female participants than male participants in the focus groups, which is not surprisingly given the gender ratio within the teacher candidate population. In addition, four participants identified themselves as a racial minority, three of which specified Asian as their racial affiliation. Three participants identified themselves as differently-abled, reporting cognitive (i.e., gifted), physical (i.e., visual impairment), and social-emotional (i.e., bi-polar, anxiety) exceptionalities. Three of the four participants who identified religious affiliation specified Christianity or Catholicism as their denomination; the fourth participant did not disclose their specific religious affiliation. Two P/J teacher candidates identified themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) sexual orientations: one as a gay male and one as a lesbian.
Table 2
Demographic data for teacher candidates who participated in focus groups by program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Racial minority</th>
<th>Disabled</th>
<th>Aboriginal/First Nations</th>
<th>Religious affiliation</th>
<th>LGBT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I/S</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P/J</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second group of teacher candidate participants was recruited in September 2008 from five sections of the Extended Family Groups (EFG) program (two P/J EFG sections and three I/S EFG sections with one of the targeted I/S sections instructed by the researcher). In total, I recruited 10 teacher candidates to keep Commonplace Books throughout their teacher education year. Teacher candidates’ Commonplace Books were collected in April 2009 and returned to them one week later. Three I/S sections were targeted instead of two because of an initial low response rate. Table 3 below provides information on participants’ academic programs and enrollment in elective courses related to inclusivity in education for this group of participants. Seven teacher candidates who kept Commonplace Books were P/J teacher candidates and two of the participants in this group were male. None of the participants in this group had enrolled in an elective course related to inclusivity and only one was enrolled in a special program track. This demographic information was obtained via a form that teacher candidates completed prior to submitting their Commonplace Books (see Appendix G).
Table 3

Program information by gender for teacher candidates who kept Commonplace Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Program Track</th>
<th>Elective Courses on Inclusivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I/S</td>
<td>P/J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

Multiple data collection strategies were used in this research within a hermeneutic circle framework in order to access and analyse participant interpretations and experiences towards the program’s aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. Specifically, these strategies included face-to-face interviews, interview follow-ups based on group-wide summary of responses, focus groups, pre- and post-focus group questionnaires, and Commonplace Books. Table 4 outlines data collection strategies and their use with participant groups. In the following sections, I elaborate on each of these strategies in relation to each participant group: (a) program administrators, (b) faculty members, and (c) teacher candidates.

Table 4

Data collection strategies by participant groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Group</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
<th>Data Collection Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program administrators</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>– Semi-structured individual interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty members</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>– Two-staged data collection with semi-structured individual interviews followed by reflection on group-wide summary of responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher candidates</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>– Three-staged focus group protocol involving pre- and post-focus group questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>– Commonplace books including artifacts, keyword writings, critical reflections, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Administrators

In order to gain the perspectives of program administrators, interviews were conducted with the Dean, two Associate Deans (current and former), and the Faculty of Education Registrar. The aim of these interviews was to better understand the program’s overall orientation, structure, and development as well as to obtain administrators’ interpretations of the program’s aim to promote inclusivity in education. Interviews were used in this research because they allow the researcher to “enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 2002, p. 341) and contribute rich data towards constructing a multiple perspective case study (Stake, 2008). Interviews were semi-structured and approximately one-hour in length (see Appendix H for interview questions). The interviews occurred in each of the participants’ work offices between March 15 and April 10, 2009, and were audio-recorded with participant consent. Given the high-profile nature of these positions and identification of institution, participants were also made aware that their participation in the study could lead to their identification through academic presentations of results (i.e., dissertation, publications, and conference presentations).

Faculty Members

The views of faculty members were important to better understand how inclusivity was promoted within the Queen’s University teacher education program. I conducted one-hour semi-structured interviews with each of the nine faculty member participants (see Appendix I for interview questions). Not only were interviews with these program users helpful in better understanding teacher educators’ conceptions of inclusivity but they also provided an opportunity for faculty members to identify program structures, curricula, and pedagogies that contributed towards promoting inclusivity as a
fundamental pedagogical principle in education. In addition, as these participants were involved with the admission process for the teacher education program, they were able to comment on the selection process and its ability to admit teacher candidates who align with the program’s aim towards inclusivity in education. Interviews occurred between March 15 and April 10, 2009, and were audio-recorded with participant consent.

Based on an analysis of participant responses, I prepared a summary of the various interpretations towards inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle as expressed by faculty members. I distributed this summary by email to faculty member participants. Participants were asked to comment on the document, indicating areas of agreement or disagreement, offering examples, or providing further insights towards the notion of inclusivity in education. A total of six of the nine faculty member participants completed this second stage of data collection within two weeks of initial summary distribution. The summary statement given to faculty members is presented in Appendix J. Through this method, I could reflect participants’ individual interpretations within a larger discourse and provide them with an opportunity to revise or expand upon their interpretations. This hermeneutic practice enables participants to engage in meaning making (Smith, 1999) and contributes toward an expanding hermeneutic circle.

Teacher Candidates

Data were collected from teacher candidates in two ways: first, through three focus groups with 15 teacher candidates; and second, through collection of 10 Commonplace Books. The three focus groups, each approximately one-hour long, were conducted during teacher candidate’s final on-campus week in April 2009. These focus groups involved both individual reflection and whole-group discussion (see Appendix K
for focus group protocol). First, teacher candidates were asked to write a statement describing their interpretation of inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. In addition, teacher candidates were asked to identify social group affiliations (i.e., gender, race, ability, Aboriginal status, religion, and sexual orientation) and comment on whether or not their social affiliation affected their view towards inclusivity. Teacher candidates were also asked to describe personal experiences that have shaped their view of inclusivity. After 15 minutes, the whole group began to discuss definitions and conceptions of inclusivity with a particular emphasis on how inclusivity had been promoted in the teacher education program and on examples of what inclusion looked like in practice. The aim of the focus group sessions was to enable teacher candidates to articulate and situate their position towards inclusivity amongst the conceptions of inclusivity held by other teacher candidates. After the group discussion, teacher candidates were asked to once again individually reflect on their understandings of inclusivity.

I also collected data from teacher candidates through Commonplace Books. The Commonplace Book was part of the extended family group (EFG) program and served as a site for collecting and engaging with ideas, writings, artifacts, images, and narratives. Specifically, a Commonplace Book is intended to provoke critical reflection, deep interpretation, and complex (re)arrangements of knowing (Sumara, 1996b). Sumara states that

The Commonplace Book is unlike a journal, for it is not meant to be merely a collection of narratives of experience and/or reflections on experience. Instead,
the Commonplace Book is a cultural object created by each student that represents fragilements of a variety of experiences in a variety of forms. (p. 45)

In this way, the Commonplace Book is an active site for continual interpretation and identity development that includes social-cultural conditions and dispositions. Through revisiting and drawing on entries in their Commonplace Books throughout the EFG sessions, teacher candidates were able to “begin to notice and locate patterns of repetition and points of resistance–both of which become important sites for personal and collective interpretation” (Sumara, 1996b, p. 45).

Teacher candidates were asked to use their Commonplace Books for EFG-based activities throughout their teacher education year as well as for any other reflective purpose that they saw appropriate. Three EFG activities that were particularly important to the objectives of this research included (a) keyword writing, (b) critical incident analysis, and (c) personal pedagogical statements. These activities served as hermeneutic practices by encouraging teacher candidates to critically interrogate their teaching beliefs in light of their social, cultural, and professional circumstances. Keyword writing was used with teacher candidates to isolate dominant concepts within teaching and learning. Based on Williams’ (1976) use of keywords and following the practices used by Luce-Kapler (Curriculum Collective, 2008), teacher candidates were asked to write keywords at least three times throughout the academic year. Williams stated that keywords are

Not a dictionary or glossary of a particular academic subject… It is, rather, the record of an inquiry into a vocabulary: a shared body of words and meanings in our most general discussions, in English, of the practices and institutions which we group as culture and society. (p. 15)
In addition, throughout their teacher education year, teacher candidates were asked to share their keyword writings with one another so that they could revisit and rewrite their beliefs in light of new experiences and broader understandings of learning and teaching.

Through the critical incident analysis activity, teacher candidates were asked to narrate and analyse a moment of teaching difficulty. Brookhart and Freeman (1992) view personal narrative writing as an appropriate mechanism for accessing and situating teacher beliefs. Further, Fowler (2006) demonstrated that narrating critical life incidences has proven useful in isolating belief shifts or formation and articulating core teaching positions. During a structured in-class session, teacher candidates were asked to share their narratives in small groups and then analyse the ethical, curricular/pedagogical, and personal dimensions of the incident (using Fowler’s analysis structure). In this way, teacher candidates engaged in guided analysis, which may help them to identify and articulate their core teaching beliefs.

Finally, teacher candidates were asked to write and re-write pedagogical statements. Alsup (2006) defines a personal pedagogy as “a choice of classroom methods resulting in the expression of borderland discourse and critical identity work” (p. 206). Alsup argues that articulating one’s personal pedagogy identifies beliefs and interpretations while highlighting practical teaching examples that demonstrate how teaching beliefs translate into classroom actions. During the final EFG session, I invited teacher candidates to draw on entries from their Commonplace Book in order to articulate their personal pedagogy and then share their pedagogical statements with one another.

While the practices in the EFG sessions did not focus solely on issues of inclusivity, teacher candidates could choose to write about issues related to inclusive
practice. Regardless, the Commonplace Books offered a site for understanding teacher candidates’ compelling interests and learning throughout their teacher education year. These data were useful in situating data specifically obtained about inclusivity through focus groups within teacher candidates’ broader learning in the program.

Data Analyses

Data analysis for this dissertation followed my articulated framework for the validation of educational program aims (see Program Validity Framework in Chapter 2). Specifically, I used a two-staged analysis process that reflected the dual argument structure of the validity framework: (a) the interpretive argument, and (b) the validity argument (Kane, 2006). In the interpretive argument, I analysed participants’ multiple conceptions of inclusivity as a fundamental principle of education. A hermeneutic circle framework guided data analysis for the interpretive argument. This analysis involved a dual dialectic model (Gadamer, 1981): first, participants were invited to analyse their interpretations in relation to whole-group interpretations through recursive hermeneutic practices; and second, I analysed participant data in relation to theoretical conceptions of inclusivity. My analysis of theoretical conceptions and participant data occurred simultaneously and followed a convergent discourse analysis strategy (Gee, 2005; Patton, 2002).

Discourse analysis draws on participants’ language, both spoken and written, to examine individual social and cultural perspectives and identities (Gee, 2005). Further, Gee suggests that discourse analysis not only focuses on words and their meanings but also on how words are situated within a pattern of meaning and within a context of use. He refers to this analysis as emphasizing “language-in-use” with consideration of
“language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects that enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity” (p. 8). Discourse analysis is useful in my construction of the interpretive argument because it allows for an analysis of language related to inclusivity as nested within a context of practice. Patton (2002) states, “every program gives rise to a special vocabulary that staff and participants use to differentiate types of activities…and variously valued outcomes.” Convergent discourse analysis considers the language across and within participant groups that points towards similar structures in meaning. In analyzing the hermeneutic practices, convergent discourse analysis enabled an inductive approach to analysis that was congruent with the emic foundations of hermeneutic inquiry. In conjunction with my analysis of the hermeneutic practices, I engaged in reviewing, also through a convergent discourse analysis approach, the theoretical literature related to the construct, inclusivity in education.

In analyzing the theoretical literature and data from the hermeneutic practices, I specifically followed Gee’s (2005) approach to discourse analysis, which focuses on (a) language and word meaning (i.e., conceptions); and (b) the use of language (i.e., context); and (c) the personal roots of discourses (i.e., foundations). I analysed data from participants in each of the three distinct groups for individual conceptions of inclusivity. I then conducted a thematic pattern analysis across and within participant group data and with theoretical literature on inclusivity in education (Patton, 2002). Drawn from Gee’s approach to discourse analysis, I constructed a reporting framework based on context, foundations, and conceptions for representing the interpretive argument for the Queen’s University teacher education program. The context section provides a contextual basis for the construct, inclusivity in education, whereas the foundations sections delineates
common and core elements of the construct. The conceptions section reflects the development of what Patton calls ‘indigenous typologies’ (p. 457). Indigenous typologies represent the framework of meaning in relation to a central construct as based on participant discourse. In this case, four conceptions of inclusivity were articulated based on converging discourse across participant data and theoretical literature.

In addition, the process of generating the interpretive argument was based on an overarching hermeneutic structure that maintains a circularity in data collection and analysis (Patton, 2002) across various participant groups and theoretical literature. This process of data collection and analysis is in contrast to the linearity of dissertation writing. As such, there is some incongruence in the approach used to construct the interpretive argument and its representation through the text in this document. This limitation is further addressed in the final chapter with recommendations for representational formats that might better acknowledge the hermeneutic approach employed in the interpretive argument.

In order to construct the validity argument, I analysed participant data in relation to the various program structures as outlined in Chapter 3 (i.e., program admission policy, structure, curricula, and pedagogies). The aim of this analysis was to establish a descriptive argument for the quality of coherency related to the program’s aim to promote inclusivity in education. Specifically, I examined the prevalence of diverse conceptions of inclusivity (as articulated in the interpretive argument) in each program structure as based on data from focus groups, interviews, interview follow-ups, and Commonplace Books. In addition, I conducted a document analysis of the program’s equity admission policy and two course syllabi for required courses related to inclusivity as participants
identified these documents during interviews as explicit articulations of the program’s commitment to inclusivity. As stipulated in the program validity framework, the purpose of the validity argument is to consider the congruency of program users’ practices and interpretations towards the program aim. Hence in my analysis, I emphasize aspects of congruence and incongruence among participant experiences in the teacher education program.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I conclude my analysis by offering six hermeneutic windows. Arising out of tensions, incongruence, and dilemmas of practice, hermeneutic windows are complex frames of interpretation that suggest ways to more deeply understand and make meaning out of phenomena, experience, and text (Sumara, 1996a). In this context, a hermeneutic window provides an interpretive structure for considering how inclusivity is promoted through and within teacher education programs. Further, hermeneutic windows are suggested as a generative structure for continued thinking about complex educational constructs (Sumara, 1996a). As such, I believe this hermeneutic form heeds Moss’ (1996) assertion that validity must serve a generative function by providing a specific structure for new ways of interpreting critical constructs. Ultimately, the aim of these analyses is to construct a complex validity argument that encourages deep understandings about program coherence and future program developments.

Credibility of Arguments

As the interpretive and validity arguments are derived and supported through a qualitative methodology, judging the credibility of the arguments can be based on credibility criteria for qualitative inquiry. In following with Lincoln and Guba’s (1986)
classic framework for judging qualitative research, aspects of (a) trustworthiness and triangulation, (b) authenticity and reflexivity, and (c) particularity and praxis become important criteria for judging the credibility of validity arguments. Trustworthiness and triangulation involve the design of research (i.e., multiple evidence sources) and the convergence of data to support validation claims. In this study, several hermeneutic practices were used across participant groups to ensure trustworthiness in data collection. Moreover, through the hermeneutic framework, faculty members and teacher candidates were able to rearticulate their interpretations and experiences related to inclusivity in education through recursive practices (i.e., follow-up statement, focus-group and post-focus group questionnaire, and Commonplace Books). Further, data in this study was triangulated through a convergent discourse analysis, which seeks to articulate congruent interpretations and experiences across and within participant groups.

Authenticity and reflexivity involves declaring researcher biases and background experiences that influence data collection and analysis and that contribute to the authenticity of the research. In this study, I have engaged in ongoing keyword writing as a reflexive practice to articulate my positionality in relation to this validation inquiry. The presentation of keywords throughout the dissertation reaffirms my perspectives and acknowledges the background experiences that shape my ability and biases towards data collection and analysis.

Finally, particularity and praxis, considers the degree and quality of the presented evidence in relation to the purpose of the inquiry and the claims derived from the research. Traditional qualitative research as rooted in ethnography and case study methodologies, has established criteria that reflects the need for a high degree of
particularity or what Geertz (1993) terms, a thick description. Alternative approaches to qualitative research (e.g., narratology, hermeneutic) suggest that there needs to be a balance between data representation and the thematic or narrative interpretation of the data (Patton, 2002). I suggest that given the hermeneutic approach to data collection and analysis used within the program validity framework, that the balance in data representation should tip toward the articulation of the argument and the interpretations and experiences of participants within the program context. In an argument framework, the intention is to present an articulation of the coherency of the program aim across various program structures and as based on the interpretative data. As such, the focus is on providing sufficient description and direct quotations to engage readers in understanding the context, foundations, and conceptions but, “descriptions should stop short, however, of becoming trivial and mundane…Focus comes from having determined what’s substantively significant and providing enough detail and evidence to illuminate and make the case” (Patton, 2002, p. 503). Hence in judging the credibility of the validity argument, there is a need to recognize the balance between the sufficiency of data representation and the interpretation of the data in formulating a credible validation argument.
PREFACE TO CHAPTER FIVE

Keyword: Interpretation

The following chapter represents the interpretive argument—the pieces of data that make up participants’ multiple conceptions, narratives, and experiences related to inclusivity in education. In the interpretive argument, the process of interpretation manifests in two notable ways: first, in the way that teacher candidates and teacher educators express their understandings and experiences of inclusivity; and second, in the way that I interpret participant data. Layers of meaning filter and shape the words that get put on these pages—the chapter I choose to write, the quotes I select, and the themes I name are my interpretations biased by my judgment and my way of understanding what others experience. Further, it is the language drawn from the theoretical framework, which I constructed, that connects ideas from participant to participant and from case study to broader inclusivity discourse.

How then, with such a view to interpretation and data analysis, can there be any sense of trustworthiness, accuracy, or validity? It is this vexing question that I believe epitomizes the state of validity theory in contemporary social inquiry. It is the crux of Lather’s (1993) efforts to “rethink validity in light of postfoundational discourse,” and to “reinscribe validity in a way that uses the antifoundational problematic to loosen the master code of positivism that continues to so shape even postpositivism” (p. 118). Postpositivism as a relativistic epistemology makes the validation of interpretive inquiry a contested and challenged practice. And so, we face a dual dilemma as both postpositivism and validity theory operate in relation to traditional conceptions of truth.
Though there are those who jettison the term validity from the qualitative researcher’s lexicon in an effort to evade at least one of these dilemmas, I follow Lather (1993) in keeping the term. She states

I retain the term in order to both circulate and break with the signs that code it.

What I mean by the term, then, is all of the baggage that it carries plus, in a doubled movement, what it means to rupture validity as a regime of truth (p. 118).

Lather suggests that researchers use validity as a theory for what is true in social inquiries but that we reframe truth’s reference point. In this way, we lean on the positivistic ‘baggage’ that validity brings but reach towards a validity of self. Rather than seeking an objective truth that is global, generalisable, and grand, I argue for validity inquiries that authenticate the subjective positions of individual interpretations. I contend that an authentic validity argument is one in which multiple positions, congruent and incongruent, are heard.

Interpretations result from complex webs of relations and experiences that are bounded by context contingencies (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008; Nash, 2004). Interpretations in validity arguments presented as descriptive accounts of multiple perspectives may be useful in this research pursuit. I see the aim of an interpretive argument to be a description of how people arrive at and enact their individual interpretations within a complex web, nested within a specific context of practice. Frameworks have been established for judging the authenticity of descriptive, interpretive accounts. Bruner (1990) points towards the criteria of coherence, livability, and adequacy to determine authenticity. These concepts are useful: Is the narrative about inclusivity in this Faculty of Education plausible in practice? Does the story adequately account for
multiple participant perspectives? Is the story about this teacher education program coherent? The next keyword, which precedes the validity argument, specifically elaborates on this final question by exploring the notion of coherency. For now, my point about interpretation is that what you are about to read is only my version of the data, interpreted through my voice, my perspectives, and my experiences.
CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETIVE ARGUMENT

I present the result from this study in two chapters to reflect the program validity framework: Chapter 5 represents the interpretive argument and Chapter 6 represents the validity argument. The purpose of the interpretive argument is to integrate theoretical and participant conceptions towards the Queen’s University teacher education program aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. Hence in this chapter I begin with a review of four models of inclusivity and then analyse the interpretive data from administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates. While the models of inclusivity and participant data are presented separately, analysis of each occurred simultaneously to reflect a hermeneutic approach to the construction of the interpretive argument. The result of this analysis is a complex articulation of multiple conceptions of inclusivity as represented in theory and as interpreted by participants in this study.

Overview of the Interpretive Argument

There has been a significant focus on promoting inclusivity in various contexts of education in recent years, including teacher education programming. This focus has been in response to political and social trends that have globalized local communities through increased immigration, technological advancements, and changes in human rights policies for diverse social groups (Gerin-Lajoie, 2008; Solomon, 2002). This movement has also resulted in multiple conceptions of inclusivity (Trifonas, 2003), each of which bears particular implications as to how students and teachers interact within a classroom setting. This interpretive argument supports the notion that educators engage in inclusivity in highly diverse ways.
Through my theoretical delineation of inclusivity, I review below four dominant models of inclusion that have guided inclusivity initiatives in Canadian education. Based on my critique of these models, I argue that none of these models fully accommodate all forms of difference in a way that recognizes student and teacher diversity as a complex and evolving construct. Further, these models tend towards a binary hegemonic structure (i.e., dominant and subordinate relationship) that perpetuates asymmetries between individuals and groups of people. In response to these critiques, I present what I believe to be a more comprehensive framework of inclusivity that bridges some of the common features across the various models while simultaneously addressing critiques of these models. I use my comprehensive framework of inclusivity as the basis for the theoretical delineation of the critical construct for this interpretive inquiry.

The framework of inclusivity positions four conceptions of inclusivity along a continuum. These conceptions are (a) normative, (b) integrative, (c) dialogical, and (d) transgressive. The four conceptions represent qualitatively different forms of inclusivity embodying different relationships between individuals of difference within a learning environment. The normative conception works to assimilate diversity to a dominate and standard form; the integrative conception includes diverse learners within academic contexts through physical placement, provision of accommodation, and alternate programming; the dialogical conception welcomes and honours diversity within both academic and social aspects of teaching and learning; and finally, the transgressive conception uses diversity as the basis for teaching and learning within the classroom. Based on previous literature, evidence exists that all four conceptions of inclusivity continue to operate within the educational system to varying degrees and in various ways.
Further, each conception is supported through particular practices, both explicit and implicit.

Participants in all three groups of this research (i.e., administrators, faculty members, and teachers candidates) expressed commitments to three of the four conceptions of inclusivity represented within the framework. The majority of participants articulated either an integrative view of inclusivity or a dialogical view. Participants suggested that the integrative conception pertained more specifically to groups of students who required academic accommodations (e.g., students with exceptionalities) with the dialogical conception pertinent to other instances of difference (e.g., culture, interest-groups, faith-based difference). What was somewhat surprising was the lack of articulation around a transgressive conception of inclusivity: only two faculty members (out of nine) and two administrators (out of four) articulated this conception, and it was incomplete in relation to its theoretical delineation. No participants articulated a normative conception of inclusivity. Hence I concluded that participants interpreted the critical construct and the aim towards inclusivity in multiple ways. In addition, participants offered numerous examples of diverse conceptions of inclusivity thus supporting the claim that inclusivity continues to operate in multiple ways within the teacher education program and within the educational system more broadly.

In addition to articulating various conceptions of inclusivity, participants described five foundational constructs of inclusivity with fairly broad consensus. Participants considered foundational constructs to be necessary underpinning components for the enactment of integrative, dialogical, and transgressive conceptions of inclusivity. Although not all participants specifically addressed each foundational construct, faculty
participants confirmed the constructs in interview follow-ups with general agreement that these constructs were foundational to their understandings of inclusivity in education. In particular, these foundational constructs included the following: (a) inclusivity as a personal and collective disposition; (b) inclusivity as anchored in specific experiences of diversity (e.g., culture, gender, ability); (c) inclusivity as a fundamental aim for all learning contexts; (d) learning about inclusivity as achieved through increased diversity; and (e) physical, cognitive, and emotional safety as necessary components for inclusive learning.

One central feature of the interpretive argument was the finding that the distribution of support for the various conceptions of inclusivity and foundational constructs was not dependent upon any participant group. Participants from each group (administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates) articulated aspects of the five foundational constructs of inclusivity as well as commitments to integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity. This finding challenges the common assumption that faculty members are more advanced in their conceptions of inclusivity compared to teacher candidates. Based on data from this study, teacher candidates’ interpretations of inclusivity were on par with faculty members’ conceptions of inclusivity, perhaps because many teacher candidates come from highly diverse communities and attended school during a period of heightened cultural and diversity awareness. However, a central difference between teacher candidates and faculty members was that teacher candidates were not able to articulate the impact of their conception of inclusivity on their pedagogical practice to the same extent as faculty members.
Based on the theoretical delineation of inclusivity in education and on participant data, it is possible to construct a coherent interpretive argument. This argument presents a framework of inclusivity that represents inclusivity as a complex construct involving multiple conceptions and interpretations. In this framework, inclusivity is understood as a perspective-based term. While participants expressed three of the four dominant conceptions of inclusivity, there was an overarching acknowledgement by participants that conceptions of inclusivity were enacted in different ways based on personal dispositions and unique experiences of difference. In the subsequent sections of this chapter, I provide theoretical and empirical support for the interpretive argument and for my proposed framework of inclusivity.

Theoretical Delineation of the Critical Construct

Validating complex program aims involves delineating the theoretical constructs associated with each program aim. Through a review of literature, I establish a theoretical understanding for the construct of inclusivity in education to contribute towards the interpretive argument for the Queen’s University teacher education program. I begin by examining and critiquing four existing models of inclusive education before presenting a more comprehensive framework of inclusivity.

Models of Inclusivity

Several models exist for understanding inclusivity and diversity within the contexts of schools and society. I review four dominant models of inclusive education in this section. These models are (a) the special education model; (b) multiculturalism and anti-racist education; (c) an integrative framework for inclusive education (Dei, James,
James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000); and (d) a chronology for the treatment and production of diversity in Ontario schools (Harper, 1997). While these four models prominently focus on K-12 educational contexts, they may also be used as educational frameworks for inclusive post-secondary education and are commonly addressed in teacher education programs.

The Special Education Model

The majority of texts related to inclusive education focus specifically on the integration of students with exceptionalities. Hence the special education model of inclusion is central when considering frameworks of inclusivity in education. Inclusive education practices and policies for students with exceptionalities have paralleled legislative developments within Canada and the world with a general shift from segregation to inclusion (Hutchinson, 2010). In 1975, the United Nations established the Declaration of Rights of Disabled Persons, which advocated that disabled persons had the same rights as all other human beings. Amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act followed in 1977 and to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 resulted in Canada being first country to guarantee rights to people with disabilities within its constitution. These civil rights advancements changed schooling options for persons with disabilities and forced a movement from a dual program model, which involved institutional segregation, education within special schools, or full-time remediation, to a more integrated model of education (Thomas, Walker, & Webb, 1998). This movement also marked the difference between a psycho-medical response to educating students with special needs and a sociological response and maintained implications for mainstream education (Clough, 2000).
Early inclusion efforts focused largely on time-placement of students with disabilities in regular school settings. This meant that students with disabilities were physically included in mainstream classrooms for a proportion of the school day. Several placement options existed including placement in full-time mainstream classrooms, partial mainstream placement, and placement within a special education classroom (Bennett, Dworet, & Weber, 2008). In Ontario, students with special needs are now guaranteed access to education with the first choice of placement being the mainstream classroom. Underpinning this policy is the premise that students with disabilities should have access to and be working toward the same educational standards and curriculum as non-disabled students given appropriate supports and accommodations whenever possible.

Thomas et al. (1998) further distinguish responses to inclusion within the special education model by contrasting integration and inclusion. Key features of each response are outlined in Table 5. The integration response focuses on compensating for student deficits in cognitive, physical, or behavioural abilities. Often this integration requires providing additional and specialized accommodations and modifications to teaching, learning, and assessment by expert staff. Despite the fact that students with exceptionalities share the same learning space as mainstream students, educational programming and delivery are different for these students who have limited social interactions and participation in mainstream activities. In contrast, the inclusion model seeks to address the interactional gap and cultivate a culture of social acceptance amongst all students and teachers in the learning environment. Hence the central difference between integration and inclusion is the acceptance of students with exceptionalities
within mainstream classroom activities (Thomas et al., 1998). This shift acknowledges that inclusion benefits all learners and that accommodations enable equitable access to educational opportunities whether they are academic, social, or personal (Clough, 2000).

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs of ‘special’ students</td>
<td>Rights of all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing/remedying the subject</td>
<td>Changing the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits to the student with special needs of being integrated</td>
<td>Benefits to all students of including all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals, specialist expertise and formal support</td>
<td>Informal support and the expertise of mainstream teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical interventions (special teaching, therapy, accommodations)</td>
<td>Good teaching for all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Thomas et al. (1998)

Much of the research and developments in the special education model have focused on defining the boundaries of special education and establishing provisions and pedagogies for including students into mainstream settings (Bennett et al, 2008). The research agenda has focused largely on cognitive, physical, and behavioural interventions and the effectiveness of accommodations on student achievement (Hutchinson, 2010). More recently, research has begun to look at the social and emotional effects of an inclusive pedagogy (Bennett et al., 2008). While the special education model effectively presents three forms of inclusion (segregation, integration, and inclusion) and provides a basis for understanding inclusion for this group of students within the Canadian
educational context, it is limited in its address of a socially inclusive theory and practice. Its transferability to other marginalized groups including those related to culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, and interest is tenuous. Accordingly, the following framework begins to address issues related to social and cultural inclusion through a model of multiculturalism.

**Multiculturalism and Anti-racist Education**

In addition to addressing the needs of students with exceptionalities, education in Ontario and Canada has been increasingly responsive to diverse cultural groups from indigenous cultures such as Aboriginals, First Nations, and Francophone communities to immigrant populations. At 18%, Canada is only second to Australia in its percentage of foreign-born population (Statistics Canada, 2003) and maintains the highest per capita immigration rate in the world (Becklumb, 2008). In response to the sharp rise in Canada’s cultural diversity during the 1970s and 1980s, the Canadian government reaffirmed its commitment to equality and respect for diverse cultural groups within Canadian society through the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988 (Gerin-Lajoie, 2008). In the spirit of this legislation, both the provincial and local governments and education systems developed multicultural policies and programs to address the growing ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity present within their communities. Multiculturalism emerged as a “philosophical position and movement that assumes that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions” (Banks & McGee Banks, 2007, p. 474).

Like the integration of special education students, early multicultural programs had an objective of inviting and welcoming students from diverse cultures into schools
and classrooms. Such an approach often involved a highly visible campaign that encouraged participants from the broader community to publically participate in mainstream educational activities. At its most basic level, multicultural education attempted to represent student diversity in the school curriculum—in its readings, writings, mathematics, sciences, and arts. There was an attempt to showcase and name specific diversities so that students from minority cultures could begin to “identify and connect with the school’s social environment, culture, and organizational life” (Dei et al., 2000, p. 13). The poster in Figure 1 provides an example of a culturally inclusive campaign typically found in schools. Acknowledging the presence of diversity in the classroom through these displays reminds educators and students that difference exists within their school and community at large.

**Diversity is our Strength**

*Figure 1: Cultural diversity poster campaign (City of Toronto, 1998)*
Initiatives that welcomed diversity deliberately celebrate and address diversity through multicultural festivals, heritage programs, studies of marginalized groups, and assemblies that promote awareness of anti-discriminatory behaviours. Such events serve to make diversity explicit. Further, when these activities address multicultural stereotypes they provide critical educational opportunities that shift prejudicial beliefs and assumptions (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997). Multicultural programs became commonplace in Ontario schools in the mid-70s and continue in present-day education.

Many schools incorporate cultural celebrations beyond those of the majority group and have reformed school curriculum to educate “all students with their own and other cultures through the exchange of literature, art, dance, food, clothing, folk rhymes, religion, ethics and subjective aspects of culture such as pause length, eye contact, social distance, greeting, etc.” (Kehoe & Mansfield, 1993, p. 3). Underpinning these initiatives is the belief that students’ backgrounds and cultures are closely linked to student learning and to the overarching aim of promoting democracy and respect through public education (Fleras & Elliot, 1992).

While discrete multicultural events and campaigns may be useful to introduce diversity within school contexts, more contemporary practices of multicultural education seek a more fully integrated cultural approach across various aspects of school life. Derman-Sparks (1991, p. 58) asserts that we need to strategize beyond a “tourist curricula” and move towards an expanded understanding and philosophy of diversity education. Banks (2007) delineate five dimensions of contemporary multicultural education. The five dimensions aim toward an integrated transformation and
reconstruction of the learning culture where power relationships and institutional norms are challenged and reframed. Their five dimensions are the following:

1. *Content integration* which considers the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures in their teaching;

2. *The knowledge construction process* in which teachers help students understand, investigate, and determine how they impact cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline can influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed;

3. *Prejudice reduction* which focuses on the characteristics of students’ racial attitudes and how they can be modified by teaching methods and materials;

4. *An equity pedagogy* which exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievements of students from diverse racial cultural, gender, and social-class groups; and

5. *An empowering school culture and social structure* which involves examining grouping and labeling practices, sports participation, disproportionality in achievement, and the interaction of the staff and the students across ethnic and racial lines to create a school culture that empowers students from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender groups. (Banks, 2007)

A fundamental commitment to an anti-racist pedagogy underlies contemporary multicultural education. A central feature of anti-racist pedagogy is the use of critical theories to deconstruct systemic racial barriers. In defining multicultural education, Nieto (1996) states that “it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change” (p. 307). With
the aim of creating more equal social relations along ethnic, racial, and gender lines, an anti-racist pedagogy examines the hegemonic structures that privilege certain racial groups, images, and identities while oppressing others (Nieto, 2007). This perspective also involves a critical interrogation of school, teacher, and student expectations, language norms and preferences, sorting, selection, and grouping procedures as well as classroom organization, pedagogy, and curriculum. While multicultural education has moved to a more critical position through an anti-racist orientation, its emphasis still remains heavily focused on issues of race, ethnicity, and language. Therefore, this orientation is problematic as other groups may not identify with an anti-racist inclusivity framework. The following integrative framework by Dei et al. (2000) broadens its scope to consider other historically marginalized groups.

*Integrative Framework of Inclusive Education*

I present Dei et al.’s (2000) integrative framework next because it is rooted in the multicultural framework of inclusivity. By arguing that every social group (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability) represents a culture, Dei et al. reframe multiculturalism to include all marginalized groups, not just those related to race, ethnicity, and language. They advocate for a more integrated understanding of inclusivity that recognizes inclusion as the production, validation, and dissemination of multiple knowledge forms by every social group. This framework represents a critical shift that moves the discourse of inclusivity away from advocacy for individual groups toward a discourse of plurality and multiplicity. Hence Dei et al. suggest a multicentric understanding of inclusion rather than the historical unicentric (i.e., dualistic) conception of inclusion.
Multicentric education accepts indigenous (i.e., cultural) knowledges as equally valid within teaching and learning contexts and creates space for the sharing and exchange of different ways of knowing. Dei et al. (2000) underscore that in order for such an education to occur, hegemonic structures must be recognized as conditions that shape the production and expression of cultural forms. Multicentric practices work to recognize individual marginalized cultures within a larger framework of social human rights and within the pursuit of hegemonic deconstruction and meaningful power-sharing. Dei et al. assert that the best way forward in multicentric education is through an anti-racist pedagogy. They state that “the fluidity of an anti-racist, inclusionary approach provides the greatest potential to transform the current school system. It displaces the centre-margin (in group/out group) dichotomy of racism with the possibility of multiple centres for all groups of people” (p. 241).

While anti-racism pedagogy is one potential means for pursuing inclusive education, it is rooted specifically in multiculturalism and the recognition of visible (racial) minorities. This is problematic if individuals of different cultures are to identify with and use this pedagogical and educative model. Further, Dei et al.’s (2000) framework operates at the level of culture rather than at the level of the individual. Though their view of cultural interaction is useful in suggesting how cultural histories create the context for modern schooling, such an approach essentialises cultures and tends toward a more static understanding of what it means to be part of a particular group (Hoffman, 1997). Given that individuals exist within multiple, overlapping cultural groups (Banks, 2007) and that cultures themselves continue to evolve (Hoffmann, 1997), such a view may not capture the complexity of inclusive practices at individual and
personal levels. Hence a model that bridges individual with cultural understandings within a more comprehensive framework of inclusivity appears necessary.

**A Chronology of Responses to Diversity**

Based on a historical review of the production and treatment of difference and diversity in Ontario schools, Harper (1997) presented a framework for classifying responses to difference. She identified five responses that have occurred throughout Ontario education since colonization. These responses include the following: (a) suppressing difference, (b) insisting on difference, (c) denying difference, (d) inviting difference, and (c) critiquing difference. Though each response represents a unique relationship between self and other leading to different practices of inclusion, Harper notes that these responses may operate simultaneously depending on circumstance. A brief description of each response is summarized below. Harper populated these descriptions with historical examples from the Ontario context.

1. **Suppressing difference** involves the active and often aggressive assimilation of minority groups to a dominant cultural standard. Suppression of subordinate cultures has occurred throughout Ontario and Canada under a dominant Anglo-Saxon regime beginning with the Westernization of Aboriginal peoples, followed by the “Canadianization of new immigrants from Europe, Asia, and South America. The suppression of difference is an attempt to eliminate “the ‘inferior’ or undesirable culture – the heathen should become a Christian; the Aboriginal, a European; the non-Anglo-Saxon, British” (p. 194).

2. **Insisting on difference** views difference as natural, predetermined, and unassailable. Program planners create special conditions that enable access to
different forms of education for different groups of people including separate or segregated classes, program streaming, and accommodations. Remediation or separate schools/curricula for students with exceptions present a contemporary example of this response to difference.

3. **Denying difference** promotes mandates of education for all and equitable access to education. Difference is recognized and accepted by the institution with all students having equal access to participate in education and work toward the same educational ends. Hence denying difference distinguishes between equity and equality where equity involves adjusting policies and practices to challenge inequities and discrimination and equality seeks equal treatment regardless of differences (Hutchinson, 2010).

4. **Inviting difference** welcomes and celebrates differences in the classroom. This response brings forward diverse knowledges as rooted in the lived, cultural and personal, experiences of students. Often, inviting difference involves a highly visible and aggressive campaign to encourage many faces and many voices within curriculum content and pedagogy.

5. **Critiquing difference** employs a critical perspective to reframe inclusivity as a matter of social justice. This response to diversity centers on how differences are produced and treated within society and how curriculum works to reinforce or liberate oppression. The emphasis in this conception of inclusivity is on the power relationships that operate and govern social interactions.

I contend that Harper’s (1997) framework offers a comprehensive model that delineates multiple forms of inclusivity not rooted in any one marginalized group. This
framework begins to addresses fundamental issues of inclusivity that are applicable across marginalized groups. While Harper drew solely on historical examples, her work suggests that the most progressive response to diversity is to critique difference. Like Dei et al. (2000), Harper assumed a critical perspective toward inclusivity, arguing that this perspective can be promoted in the classroom through social justice pedagogy. Freire (1970) suggested that to be committed to social justice involves a moral and ethical ethos of equity, equality, and the belief in people’s capacity to change their world and the worlds of others. Kelly and Brandes (2001) operationalized social justice education as one that requires (a) a critical analysis of social and institutional inequities; (b) a commitment to dialogue, action, and advocacy for social injustices, both local and global; and (c) a willingness for students and teachers to question their own understandings of social justice and their own positions of privilege and oppression. Through such an approach, not only are differences recognized but also the relationships between differences are discussed. For students and teachers, learning about and discussing how difference is nested within social structures may represent a more genuine understanding of their lived experiences and bring personal, emotional, historical, and social dimensions of inclusion into education.

Critique of Models

Each of the four models of inclusivity described represent different forms of inclusivity and demonstrate the multiplicity of conceptions related to this construct within educational contexts. In this section, I examine the commonalities and differences amongst these models through three overarching critiques. As a result of this analysis, the need for a more integrative framework of inclusivity is proposed, a framework that
bridges some of the connecting features across the various models while also addressing the three overarching critiques.

The first critique recognizes that each of these models approach inclusivity from different socio-cultural (e.g., race, religion, gender, ability) and/or theoretical (e.g., anti-racist, critical, queer) perspectives that serve the needs of specific marginalized groups. As a result, none of these four models presents a comprehensive framework of inclusivity in education that appeal to all students and teachers from diverse groups within contemporary education (Trifonas, 2003). I consider the absence of a comprehensive framework problematic. A framework of inclusivity would provide a comprehensive structure for bridging multiple positions, conceptions, and practices of difference. Within education, such a framework would provide a spectrum of inclusion approaches and facilitate a greater understanding of the relationships between diverse students and teachers within classroom or school contexts.

The second overarching critique, which applies to the majority of these models, is their relatively simplistic understanding of cultural identification. Dei et al.’s (2000) notion of culture notably acknowledges that any distinguishable group can be deemed as a culture, not solely those related to race, ethnicity, and linguistic diversity. Individuals may identify with cultures related to ability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, interest, etc. However, the majority of these models rely on a singular understanding of culture that portrays an individual’s cultural identity as static, singular, and stable. Hoffman (1997) asserts that, in singular cultural models, cultures have firm boundaries where “individuals are so conditioned by their cultures that they are locked into fixed ways of perceiving and being, and cultural identities become privileged commodities that are
owned like property and invested with notions of individual right and privilege” (p. 380). This narrow view of culture does not reflect the reality that individuals identify themselves as being part of multiple cultures to various degrees and in different ways. Hoffman recognizes that assuming culture as a static entity “does not reflect the blurred boundaries, shifting contours, and continuous creation, recreation, and negotiation of ethnic and cultural identities in real lives” and ignores the learning, interaction, and diffusion that can emerge from education within diverse contexts (p. 380). Further, though cultures can be rooted in long-standing traditions, their identities and norms may continue to change in response to current social movements. Davidson (1994) concurs, suggesting that teaching from such perspectives undermines the complexity of human relations and symbolic meanings, both of which are far more influential on student response to diversity.

As an example, Walcott (1994) discusses the impact of a simplistic view towards cultural identification on antiracist education, one that has historically been linked most prominently to African American cultures. Walcott suggests that there is still a need to acknowledge intragroup and intergroup differences across black people. He states, “antiracism should take the heterogeneity of groups in society (i.e., multi-differences) as the assumed underpinning of its praxis (i.e., practice based in theory). Recognition not only of black differences but also of the complex and shifting differences among visible minority and other marginalized groups is essential to anti-racism pedagogy” (p. 13). Further, he suggests, “teachers must shift from the easy multicultural assumptions of ‘tribal sameness’ to one of ‘difference within and without’” (p. 13). A static and singular view of culture leaves little room for students to identify with and enact a cultural identity.
different from dominant cultural stereotypes. Moreover, it leaves little opportunity for students to change their cultural identity over time.

An effective framework of inclusivity must address the complexities associated with cultural identities and individual cultural associations in order to characterise inclusive learning spaces. A framework of inclusivity should consider the relationship between individuals who are culturally complex. Therefore, if nuances of cultural identification are to be recognized, then I contend that the framework must operate at the level of the individual rather than at the level of culture.

The final critique interrogates the perceived relationship between marginalized and dominant groups presented within the four models. Each model assumes a dominant-subordinate relationship where subordinate groups (also referred to as minority, underrepresented, or oppressed) seek inclusion by those of a dominant culture. Critical theories further emphasize the hegemonic structures that perpetuate oppression and exclusion within these relationships. Hegemony results in the privileging of some and the oppression of others through everyday social norms, physical barriers, discourse, and language. Dei et al. (2000) state that

Inclusivity denotes an educational practice that is premised on the idea that the process of teaching, learning, and sharing of knowledge is fundamentally a power relation. Thus, to deal with inclusiveness is to address the issues and inequities related to the distribution of power in society. (p. 243)

Much of the discourse on power relations has assumed a highly dualistic view of the oppressed pitted against the oppressor. Once again, this dualistic view seems simplistic, especially given the complexity of individual cultural associations. Instead, I want to
reassert Gramsci’s (1971) original notion of hegemony, which described power asymmetries between individuals and groups of people as either explicitly coercive or voluntary (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997). Further, Gramsci suggests that power is a necessary part of natural social orders; it is something that “circulates within a web of relationships in which we all participate, rather than as something imposed from top down” (Adams et al., 1997, p. 11). A framework of inclusivity must make provisions for a more complex understanding of hegemony, one that accepts intermediate and indeterminate relationships of power between cultures and individuals. Given these critiques, there appears a need for a more comprehensive framework of inclusivity in education; one that works to incorporate multiple conceptions of inclusivity and that addresses the treatment of all forms of diversity.

**Framework of Inclusivity**

Based on my review of four models of inclusive education, I offer the following framework of inclusivity. I assert that this framework differs from previous models as it applies to all marginalized and non-marginalized groups and serves to bridge identities related but not limited to gender, social class, race/ethnicity, religion, ability, nationality, sexual orientation, and interest. The framework combines elements from each of the reviewed models to characterise four conceptions of inclusivity: (a) normalizing, (b) integrative, (c) dialogical, and (d) transgressive. Each conception of inclusivity represents a different relationship between groups of difference and individual identification. These conceptions are presented along a continuum from unicentric to multicentric to concentric. As conceptions of inclusivity move from a unicentric position to a concentric position, dominant group effects diminish and more equal interactions between complex
socio-cultural individuals prevail. The concentric position assumes that relationships exist amongst culturally heterogeneous individuals. This continuum begins to address concerns over static representations of cultural groups and singular cultural identifications. This framework of inclusivity also operates on an individual level of cultural identification. I present my model in Figure 2 and then elaborate upon each of the conceptions of inclusivity: normative, integrative, dialogical, and transgressive.

![Diagram of inclusivity framework]

Figure 2: Framework of inclusivity

**Normative Conception**

A normative conception of inclusivity involves the active and often aggressive assimilation of minority groups to a dominant cultural standard. Individuals who identify with a particular non-dominant group are expected to normalize toward the dominant culture. In this conception, non-dominant groups are recognized but not legitimized;
rather, the cultural traditions such as language, dress, religion, and gender roles of these
groups are actively dominated and subsequently altered. This view of inclusivity
represents a unicentric orientation with the dominant culture at the center. Markus,
Steele, and Steele (2000) suggest that this conception of inclusivity offers conditional
inclusion for minority groups (i.e., they may be part of this society so long as they
assimilate into the dominant way of life). Cultures that do not assimilate to the dominant
standard have historically been disadvantaged, marginalized, and socially dismissed
(McPhail & Freeman, 2005).

Ultimately, the normative conception maintains a dualistic model of inclusion
based on dominant and submissive groups. McPhail and Freeman (2005) indicate that
such a model not only magnifies difference by making subordinate groups question their
worth and identity but also commits the mainstream to reshaping and redressing
difference toward a more normal state. Education plays a significant role in such a
conception of inclusivity. Harper (1997) states that it is “an education intended to
eliminate diversity among students, ensuring conformity to a standard identity, narrowly
and rigidly defined” (p. 194). Within such a model of education, Markus, Steele, and
Steele (2000) acknowledge that members of a minority group enter into a power structure
that forces them to assimilate to the culture, standards, and styles of the society as
reflected in classroom social dynamics and curriculum. In this structure, the mainstream
culture is not required to “take and interest in, or value any of the distinguishing
characteristics of, the corresponding features of, minority groups” (p. 234).

Although one would be hard-pressed to find any explicit campaigns of
assimilation in contemporary education, I contend that this conception of inclusivity is
still widely apparent in the social relations that operate within and structure schools today. Take for instance gender identities and their related conventions. Boys have a boy culture and girls have a girl culture. In elementary school, boys play with boys, doing ‘boy’ things—sports, pranks, and action heroes; while girls do ‘girl’ things—dress-up, skipping, and doll play (Eder, Evans, & Parker, 2003; Wood, 2009). These gender identities are part of the dominant heteronormative culture prevalent across many educational contexts. However, consider the following narrative of one boy’s experience.

I remember playing with my friends when I was seven years old, enjoying their company outside on a warm summer day. We played tag, we chased each other, we wrestled, we laughed. I liked them, and they liked me. Nothing about it seemed remarkable. Mom didn’t like it, though. I could see the expression on her face through the window: a scowl that made Hallowe’en ghouls seem friendly by comparison. She had told me before that I should play with other boys, not with girls. I didn’t understand why. I thought I should be able to choose my own friends. Deep down, I knew that it was a sissy thing to do, to play with girls, but they were my friends. Nonetheless, I just wanted to be like the other kids. I didn’t want to be different. (Alderson, 2000, p. 17)

This narrative highlights the implicit suppression of behaviours based on gender difference. In an analysis of such stories, Alderson acknowledges the multiple signals and indicators that block awareness and acceptance of gender difference within society. He attests that some of these signals and indicators are derived from family expectations, peers relations, teacher treatment, and religious beliefs.
hooks (2000) in her essay, *Crossing class boundaries*, describes a similar process of normalization. hooks grew up in a segregated black community with neighbours who were either poor or middle class. Her father worked, supporting her five sisters and one brother through menial jobs, the longest being a janitor at the local post office. When hooks “chose to attend a ‘fancy’ college rather than a state school close to home,” she said that she “was compelled to confront class differences in new and different ways” (p. 143). hooks acknowledged her need to change; she believed that she had to suppress her class background in order to be included by ‘the privileged.’ In speaking about her parents’ reaction, she says, “they were afraid these fancy ideas like the fancy schools I wanted to attend would ruin me from living in the real world. At the time, I did not understand that they were also afraid of me becoming a different person—one who did not speak their language, hold on to their beliefs and their ways” (p. 143). hooks was the only member of her family to attend college and the only one to attain a doctorate degree. She confesses that at college, she “learned different ways to dress, different ways to eat, and new ways to talk and think” (p. 145). Committed to her roots, hooks continued to negotiate between her identity as a black woman from a segregated community and her prestigious position amongst a predominately white cadre. “Even though I was struggling to acquire an education that would enable me to leave the ranks of the poor and working class, I was more at home in that world than I was in the world I lived in,” she says. “My political solidarity and allegiance were with working people. I created a lifestyle for myself that mixed aspects of my working-class background with new ideas and habits picked up in a world far removed for that world” (p. 145). In doing so, she had
maintained her position within the marginalized culture while simultaneously normalizing to the dominant American culture.

hooks' (2000) narrative represents the struggle that can accompany the normalizing conception of inclusivity—the blatant disconnect between cultures and the negotiation required of students attempting to straddle these worlds. However, the following conception marks a change in orientation from the normalizing conception. In contrast to the normative conception, the integrative conception of inclusivity, while still reliant on a dualistic relationship model (i.e., dominant to subordinate), acknowledges diverse groups and makes provisions for accommodating diversity.

**Integrative Conception**

The integrative conception of inclusion accepts difference as being present within society and learning environments. Individuals are recognized for their differences; however, there is still evidence of a dominant cultural standard. Along with the dialogical conception of inclusivity, I consider the integrative view multicentric as it recognizes and acknowledges multiple diverse groups. Program planners create special conditions that enable differential access to education for different groups of people including separate or segregated classes, program streaming, and accommodations. Thus I believe that this integrative conception of inclusivity maps most closely onto Harper’s (1997) ‘insisting on difference’ response. Harper identifies that such a response to diversity gave rise in the 1900s educational structures such as segregated schools for women, black people, and students with disabilities as well as alternative program options for students interested in pursuing trade careers instead of academic studies in postsecondary education. Hence in the integrative conception of inclusivity, there remains a recognized duality between the
dominant (or mainstream) group and the minority group. Also the assumption remains that minority students cannot perform to the same standards as mainstream students and hence require alternative (and often times less rigorous) programming.

Special programming for diverse student populations continues to be a feature in contemporary education. Throughout the history of public education in Ontario, educational programs have differed for students of diverse social and ability groups. Curtis, Livingstone, and Smaller (1992) note that these differences are documented in reviews such as the Hope Commission (1950), the Hall-Dennis Report (1968), the Secondary Education Review Project (1982), the Radwanski Report (1987) and King’s 2002 Double Cohort Study. While Ontario’s education policies no longer favour segregation of students based on their ethnicity or gender (though some cases still exist, for example, private schools based on specific religious groups including Catholic schools and Hebrew schools), several alternative programs based on cognitive and physical abilities as well as career interest are still publically supported in Ontario. There has also been a renewed interest in other forms of segregation. For example, the Toronto District School Board started a school for Canadians of African Descent in 2009 and the new Education Director is exploring the option of boys only schools. Ability grouping remains a common practice across educational systems “founded upon the idea that students have relatively fixed levels of ability and need to be taught accordingly” (Boaler, Wiliam, & Brown, 2000, p. 631). This practice is achieved through a process of streaming in which students are paired based on their level of cognitive or physical ability or on their career focus. While proponents of this approach acknowledge it as a means to address specific learning needs and interests with an overarching goal of making schools
more inclusive (likely because different educational streams can be housed in the same school), others (Curtis, Livingstone, & Smaller, 1992; Ireson & Hallam, 1999; Taylor, 2005) argue that it reinforces social inequities and maintains a bifurcate social class structure. Taylor states, “streaming has long been a feature of the school system despite periodic concerns about its effects on already disadvantaged students” (p. 327).

Currently, streaming in Ontario begins in Grade 9 where students must select differentiated courses based on either an academic or applied focus. In later years, this split translates to workplace, college, university/college, or university destination courses (Taylor, 2005). The initial aim of this program was to increase graduation rates and strengthen transitions from youth to adulthood. Though this program structure was publicized as a more flexible education, the number of compulsory credits in math, language, and science was increased while courses in areas such as technology continued to be optional. Given the adoption of the new Ontario curriculum in 1998, few reports are available that track the social perception of streaming and its effects on creating cultures of inclusivity. King’s (2002) report predicted that as a result of secondary school modifications, which included moving from a five to four-year track and incorporating a revised streaming program, failure and drop-out rates would increase predominately among students in applied courses. In 2005, Ryan and Joong, confirmed this trend toward greater failure and low marks, especially for students in Grades 9 and 10 applied courses. Such a trend marks an increased likelihood of students dropping out and moving onto a path of social exclusion. In a study by Earl, Freeman, Lasky, Sutherland, and Torrance (2002), Ontario teachers commented that “kids are giving up a lot sooner and that those who failed would probably drop out at 16” (p. 21). For those who do remain in school,
there still appear negative social ramifications as a result of applied course selection. Earl et al. identify incongruence between how course options are presented to students and the actual social implications of selecting particular courses. One student in their study stated:

In Grade 8, I remember them sitting me down in this really stuffy room and telling me, “Okay, Grade 9 is going to be different. There’s going to be two strands, academic and applied. Academic is more knowledge, applied is more technical.”

But, when we get here, academic’s for smart people applied’s for dumb people. (p. 17)

Though an integrative conception of inclusivity begins to recognize and address student diversity, it may also serve to reinforce social structures based on ability and class. I contend that this is because it fundamentally relies on a dualistic and static representation of culture and cultural identification.

**Dialogical Conception**

Conceiving inclusivity as a dialogical interaction relates mandates of education for all and equitable access to education. This perspective considers individuals as culturally complex. A dominant group identity is still evident; however, the dominant group is not at the center of interactions. The dialogic conception of inclusivity is representative of a multicentric orientation where differences are recognized and accepted by the institution. Not all individuals are treated the same but all students have equitable access to participate in education and work toward the same educational ends. A dialogical conception towards inclusivity differentiates between equity and equality. Equity involves adjusting policies and practices to challenge inequities and
discrimination; equality means treating everyone the same regardless of differences (Hutchinson, 2010). A dialogical conception favours equity for individuals.

From the dialogical perspective, systemic discrimination is actively targeted and accommodations are made in policies and practice to enable equitable learning. This response parallels legislative advancements in Canada, in particular, Article 15.1 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Government of Canada, 1982), which states: “Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.” The name of seven groups of differences in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms serve as a basis for advocacy and accommodation of various forms to promote equitable access for all. Such an orientation toward education requires identification of difference and an active response to difference to enable widespread access and participation. In alignment with this view, McPhail and Freeman (2005) characterise inclusive classrooms as “those that create access to and full participation in rich learning for all students without prejudice, and that include the tenets expressed by Thomas and Loxley (2001) as “tolerance, pluralism, and equity” (p. 264).

As an example of the dialogical conception of inclusivity I review the dominant process of admission to university for identified groups of difference. Student selection in Canadian universities is becoming increasingly critical as institutional success depends largely on the quality and diversification of graduates (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, AUCC, 2007). On a national scale, the Government of Canada (2002a) identifies higher education as a key commodity in the current knowledge-based
economy. Further, the AUCC recognizes that a diverse student population will be crucial to help “Canada and Canadian universities prepare to meet the future demands for the levels of education that are increasingly vital to the global knowledge-based economy” (p. 7). In particular, the AUCC emphasizes the need for a student populace reflective of the degree of diversity evident in Canadian society and also one that complements global trends toward intercultural and international studies. Access to university is the first challenge in working to achieve diversity within universities in Canada (Weber, 1999), with admission policies acting as a central barrier in a university’s ability to “accommodate a deep level of access and equity in its structure and operation” (Brathwaite, 2003, p. 19).

In response to this challenge, Canadian institutions have begun to shift from a model of admission based solely on qualifications to one that also incorporates addressing systemic discrimination through equity-based admission policies. This movement toward equity-based admission policy is not only evident in Canada but also in other developed countries including Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Through a historical review, Gale (2001) classified paradigms of admissions in Australian undergraduate education, noting two major paradigms throughout the twentieth-century: qualified-entry and diversified-entry (i.e., equity-admission). Currently, higher education directives in Canada strive to increase diversity in universities through equity-based admission policies that function to increase access to university for under-represented groups including students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, students with disabilities, and first generation students (Council of Ministers of Education Canada, 1999; Government of Canada, 2002b). Individual
universities are responsible for the implementation of this directive. Typically, equity admissions take the form of student self-identification of minority status and admission of minority students through quota standards. The aim of such efforts is to enable members of diverse groups to access the same education as members of the dominant culture.

The dialogical conception of inclusivity invites diversity into education, creating modern cosmopolitan classrooms, or what Pinar (2009) acknowledges as worldliness in education. A more nuanced understanding of difference is needed for this conception of inclusivity. Further, a consideration of diversities beyond that which is already present in local schools, communities, and regions is required. Segal and Handler (1995) assert that we need to move toward a more global and comprehensive view of diversity that recognizes “radically foreign ways of being human” (p. 394). Dialogic interaction requires that we go beyond the “American multiculturalist discourse,” a discourse that solely acknowledges the predominant identifiable minority groups in North American society and that is only significant “insofar as it is associated with relatively familiar cultural and ethnic groups” (Hoffman, 1997, p. 379). Such a “domesticated diversity” negates the “too diverse” (p. 379). We are therefore challenged to engage with the unclassified diversities, the culturally complex. Trifonas (2008) states that It would be wrong to ignore the diversity within the composition of what we call knowledges and to cull a universal thinking without a diversity of knowledge and being. The emanation of the cosmopolitical view is a gathering of multiplicity in knowledge communities. (p. 72)

Dialogical interactions bring forward knowledge as rooted in the lived, cultural and personal, experiences of diverse students, whether already present or not.
Transgressive Conception

In a transgressive conception of inclusivity, student diversity is used as a vehicle for the generation of new knowledge. All individuals are regarded as culturally complex beings with the opportunity to contribute towards one another’s learning. I consider this conception of inclusivity to be culturally concentric because there is no dominant social group, only overlays of cultures that create complex contexts of learning. Learning cannot be standardised in this view of inclusivity because individual differences alter what and how learning takes place. In line with the transgressive view of inclusivity, Dei et al. (2000) state that if teaching and learning includes “the bodies, cultures, spaces, objects, positions, beliefs, sights, sounds, and smells within schools then, an inclusive curriculum, which is positioned through the cultures and experiences of all students, is one that has the broadest range of academic possibilities” (p. 175).

This conception of inclusivity hinges on principles of social justice. Kelly and Brandes (2001) indicate that “within this pluralistic conception, the school is an important arena for the expression of diverse values and the teacher must assume the role of a nonpartisan referee, whose dominant interest is to ensure fair competition in the classroom marketplace of ideas” (p. 438). In addition, education in this form of inclusion recognizes and works to modify the hegemonic structures affecting various inequities (e.g., sexism, racism, heterosexism, homophobia, ablism, poverty, etc.) present within learning contexts (Brandes & Kelly, 2003; McDermott, 1987). A social justice pedagogy moves inclusive campaigns from specific identifiable groups of people toward the treatment of alterable ‘isms.’ Acknowledging forms of discrimination instead of the discrimination of specific peoples reframes inclusive discourse as a socially constructed
condition. Reframed in this way, education can begin to engage discussions not only about specific cases of inclusion but also about the “patterns that connect and mutually reinforce different oppressions in a system that is inclusive and pervasive” (Adams, et al., 1997, p. 5).

In this conception of inclusivity, stereotypic labeling of difference is not done; rather the continuum moves towards claiming individual, unique positions of knowing. “Needing to choose a particular label for oneself ultimately falsifies the lived experience of ethnicity and the realities of multiple commitments and affiliations that are the essence of cross-cultural experiences” (Hoffman, 1997, p. 383). This perspective assumes that all individuals are culturally complex and is congruent with contemporary educational theories that posit learning as contextually situated and knowledge as socially constructed (Greene, 1993). In this conception, educators are called to draw on the individuality of students to shape knowledge making. Noddings (1995) suggests that pedagogies need to be replaced with “a multiplicity of models designed to accommodate the multiple capacities and interests of students. We need to recognize multiple identities” (p. 367). Allowing students to interpret and share their uniqueness as individuals leads to a more authentic representation of student diversity and a more genuine context for inclusion. Greene attests that by inviting students to come “together in their pluralities and their differences, they may finally articulate how they are choosing themselves and what the projects are by means of which they can identify themselves. We all need to recognize each other in our striving, our becoming, our inventing of the possible” (p. 219). Thus the transgressive conception of inclusivity empowers difference and leverages it for learning about the self, others, and the world. Such an education opens toward a state of
possibility and a letting go of the predetermined, narrow curriculum. Learning is directed by complicated and personal conversations and is shaped by students’ subjective ways of knowing. Hence Trifonas (2008) suggests that education within this ground of subjectivity involves a “pedagogy-to-come,” which must therefore entail an education yet-known.

Moving towards a Framework of Inclusivity

The purpose of the preceding review was to delineate the theoretical underpinnings of inclusivity as a construct in education and to identify and critically examine shortcomings of pre-existing frameworks. Based on critiques of existing models of inclusion, I developed what I consider to be the basis for a framework that depicts four conceptions of inclusivity positioned along a continuum: (a) normative, (b) integrative, (c) dialogical, and (d) transgressive. The continuum represents a progression from a unicentric view of inclusion to a concentric view and acknowledges the unique cultural complexities of individuals. This framework serves as a working description of the theoretical construct for this interpretive inquiry. In the following section of this chapter, I link participants’ interpretations towards inclusivity to this theoretical delineation to present a complex interpretive argument that describes multiple conceptions of inclusivity in education.

Participants’ Interpretations of Inclusivity in Education

I collected data from three participant groups (program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates) regarding their interpretations towards the program’s aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. In this part of the
interpretive argument, I provide evidence that supports the claim that participants espouse different conceptions of inclusivity ranging from integrative to transgressive. Further, I elaborate on five foundational constructs identified by participants and on their understandings of the context for inclusivity in education to present a more robust delineation of inclusivity as an educational construct. I group these findings into three sections: (a) context for inclusivity in education, (b) conceptions of inclusivity, and (c) foundational constructs of inclusivity.

**Context for Inclusivity in Education**

Documenting participants’ articulated understandings about the context for inclusivity in education provides a basis for the interpretive argument and for the framework of inclusivity. Faculty members and administrators suggested several reasons why inclusivity was fundamental to contemporary teaching and learning. They viewed inclusivity in education as a response to globalization and societal diversity as well as a response to legislation and ethical commitments related to human rights. One faculty member recalled the adage, “if a person sneezes in China a man in America will catch a cold” to articulate his point that students and teachers are increasingly interacting on a global scale. “The world is a small place,” he affirmed, recognizing that the connections between individuals across nations have been made even smaller by liberal immigration laws, intercultural relations, and cyber spaces. He further suggested that these connections have resulted in increased diversity within our classrooms, schools, and communities and have advanced the need for a more globalized orientation towards curriculum, teaching, and learning. In addition, as evidence of teachers’ responsibility to address globalization in their teaching, one faculty member pointed to the Ontario
Teachers’ Federation (OTF) mandate, which states that teachers in Ontario should be able to address and teach from a global perspective. The OTF mandate further identifies several areas in which teachers must incorporate a global perspective into teaching practices (see Appendix L for the OTF mandate).

Beyond recognition of globalization as a factor contributing to the need for inclusivity in education, acknowledgment of diversities has increased ten-fold in recent decades as Canadian society has begun to identify different groups of people through legislation and social policy. As identified by the Dean of Education and three other faculty members, diversity and the condition of inclusivity is fundamentally recognized in Article 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability. (Government of Canada, 1982)

The Dean of Education acknowledged that “at this point in history, we are no longer arguing whether to have a diverse universe or not, we are arguing with how to keep and treat that diversity.” The reality of local and national diversity and the legal obligation for inclusive treatment of diversity were viewed by participants as significantly contributing towards the context for inclusion in schools and classrooms.

Connecting the notions of diversity and inclusivity, the Dean of Education stated, “I see diversity as a human right and I see inclusivity as an articulating principle making possible the enactment of that human right.” The Dean further defined inclusivity as the respect for diversity, enacted through an entire process of inclusion for those who are
different through policy, through the development of an appropriate institutional climate,
and through pedagogy. Applied to education, the Dean recognized that diversity and
inclusivity “have to be articulated in an ethically defensible vision of education in which
diversity and inclusivity appear as a moral imperative.” Faculty members said that
establishing an ethically defensible vision means creating the conditions for inclusive
education through efforts to respect, to listen, to integrate, and to validate specific human
experiences. Hence they described context for inclusive education where difference is not
only present but where there is also a particular treatment of that difference.

Despite an emphasis on inclusivity in education, the degree of diversity within
teacher education programs grossly under represents the level of diversity within K-12
public school contexts. One faculty member participant stated

There is a big effort to make the body of pre-service candidates in the Faculty
more representative of the diversity in the country in general and of people sitting
in schools and classrooms. There are several reasons why minority groups don’t
enter teacher education. In the past some of the reasons have been that they don’t
feel comfortable or even included in classrooms when they were in school as they
don’t see any role models of teachers from their cultural group and so they do not
consider that education would be a receptive profession. This Faculty of
Education and faculties all around the country have tried to respond to that as a
problem in our profession; to recognize for ourselves and for the greater
community that we need to do proactive things as well as be adaptive things once
they are in the program.
The Registrar also acknowledged the need for a diverse group of teacher candidates to “fit with the context of diversity found in our school system.” In addition, several faculty members noted that diversity within the program promotes the learning of inclusive values amongst teacher candidates. Given this link, establishing diversity within teacher education programs is a critical step in promoting inclusivity in education more broadly and responding to contexts of increased diversity.

Conceptions of Inclusivity

Central to the interpretive argument are participants’ interpretations to the critical construct, *inclusivity in education*. When participants were initially asked to define inclusivity, one of the most common responses across participant groups was that it meant a sense of belonging—having students learning together. The Associate Dean stated, “inclusivity means that everyone belongs in an important way so that no matter what would normally make you an outsider to community, you actually have a place in our community.” Belonging was identified within each participant group several times, representing a rudimentary interpretation of inclusivity in education. However, when probed further and when asked to describe what belonging might look like in practice, participants described different pictures of inclusivity representing qualitatively different conceptions of inclusivity. This finding aligns with my theoretical framework that acknowledges multiple conceptions of inclusivity along a continuum. One faculty member described inclusivity as a spectrum.

I don’t think there is an absolute inclusive learning space. I think we can talk about the ideal of what maximum inclusivity is versus maximum exclusivity and I
think we get this continuum between inclusive and exclusive but I’m not sure anyone is at either end.

A central feature of the interpretive argument is the understanding that participants’ descriptions of inclusivity differed depending upon the context of inclusion. Overall, their descriptions mapped onto three conceptions of my framework of inclusivity: (a) integrative, (b) dialogical, and (c) transgressive. The first conception of the framework, normalizing, was not found in interviews, focus group, or Commonplace Book data. The majority of teacher candidates and faculty members expressed either dialogical or integrative conceptions depending upon the context of inclusion they were describing. For example, when describing the inclusion of students with exceptionalities, participants largely articulated an integrative conception of inclusivity; however, when describing the inclusion of diverse perspectives (i.e., cultural, gender, religious), participants generally described a dialogical form of inclusivity. Two faculty members, one whose research focuses specifically on inclusion and another whose research centers on social justice as well as two of the four administrators articulated a transgressive conception of inclusivity. In the following sections, I examine each conception of inclusivity as described by participants.

*Integrative Conception*

The integrative conception of inclusivity was evident across participants in all three groups. Participants described an integrative view as the inclusion of diverse learners into the school setting and core curriculum through accommodation, modification, or alternative programming. The emphasis in this conception was on facilitating the academic needs of students so that they could access and participate in a
common learning space and work towards common curricular expectations. This conception of inclusivity first relies on the explicit labeling of difference followed by a formal institutional response. One faculty member stated, “teacher candidates need to leave here with an understanding of diversity, being able to recognize it, and then accommodate their teaching so that diverse students can learn in their class.”

Embedded within the integrative conception of inclusivity is a discourse that assumes teachers welcome, invite, and accommodate diverse students into the learning environment. When asked to describe an inclusive learning space, one teacher candidate said, “it is a space where students with diverse abilities and backgrounds are included in the learning activities and accommodations are made so that they can learn.” Faculty members, administrators, and teacher candidates described the teacher’s role in an integrative environment as inviting students from diverse backgrounds into the classroom with provisions for accommodations.

A second feature of the integrative view was an acknowledgement that diverse groups of students can work toward the same educational expectations or goals when provided with accommodations. One faculty member noted, “in an inclusive classroom we are all going in the same direction and have the same end goal and we help each other get there.” Teacher candidates articulated similar positions: they wanted all students in their class to be at the same level and work towards the same educational aims; however, they did recognize that in reality, students are at varying levels of learning and require accommodations in order to access the standard grade level curriculum. This view of inclusivity acknowledges the centrality of a common goal or core curriculum, where
teachers accommodate diverse learners so that they can access and participate in that curriculum.

In instances where access and participation in the mainstream curriculum are not possible because of the severity of learning needs, alternative programming options were viewed as an alternative in this conception. For example, teacher candidates identified that for some students with exceptionalities, the mainstream classroom is not the most conducive environment for their learning, suggesting that some students may require alternative provisions resulting in partial inclusion. One teacher candidate stated

I think being in the classes [practicum] has solidified this idea that mandatory inclusion for all children with exceptionalities isn’t always to the benefit of the children themselves. Resources are often better spent in pull-out classes especially in those particular cases where the students’ needs are completely different.

Several faculty members in their interviews also described accommodations and remediation for students with exceptionalities as an integrative form of inclusivity. One faculty member noted that in Ontario, the policy is that, whenever possible, students with exceptionalities should be included in the mainstream class; however, mainstream placement is not always possible or in the best interest of the student. Sometimes students need special programming. In these cases, the student is still part of the school environment but with a tailored program. The Ontario policy for special education required exceptional students to be explicitly identified through an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee process with provisions for accommodation, modification, or alternative programming stipulated in an Individual Education Plan. One
teacher candidate acknowledged the negative impact of alternative programming on students’ social relationships suggesting that students who get withdrawn from class for special education are often times socially marginalized. One faculty member stated that this practice reinforces a power imbalance between mainstream students and students with exceptionalities. Alternative programming represents a persistent dilemma between serving students’ educational needs and serving their social-emotional needs.

Accordingly, responses varied, either against or in support of this practice. In general, participants recognized that meaningfully accommodating students’ learning needs through alternative programming is a difficult and complex practice. One faculty member commented, “it’s very hard to make it work in practice in a way that’s respectful to the institution and its aims as well as to the individual.” Based on participant responses, it appears that teacher candidates and faculty members recognize the value of an integrative approach but also acknowledge potential limitations of accommodating an integrative conception in practice. Participants acknowledged that offering alternative programming for students who are different from the mainstream can be costly and may require faculty members with specialized knowledge and skills. These barriers may limit an integrative response to diversity by institutions and may result in either lower levels of inclusion or the adoption of an alternative conception of inclusivity.

In addition to potential staffing and cost barriers, one faculty member articulated a core critique of the integrative conception of inclusion. She asserted that an integrative view of inclusivity perpetuated a binary context of learning and created inequality amongst students of the mainstream and students of difference. Specifically, she stated
When you ‘include’ someone, you always have an ‘includee’ and an ‘includer,’ so that already people are positioned unequally. If I organize the context into which someone would be included, then there is a power structure, which is the same problem as the word ‘tolerance.’ The problem with tolerance is that the minority never has to tolerate the majority. When we have the notion of tolerance, it’s always the dominant group who takes the social position for being the one to say, “yes, I’ll tolerate you.” The subordinate never has to tolerate the dominant. It’s the same with inclusivity.

This quote represents a foundational limitation of the integrative conception of inclusivity and aligns with critiques from previous researchers (Dei et al., 2000; Harper, 1997; Segal & Handler, 1995). Explained next, the dialogical conception of inclusivity begins to address this limitation by offering a more balanced and equitable treatment of diversity within a learning context.

**Dialogical Conception**

The dialogical view of inclusivity was not only the most commonly articulated conception of inclusivity across administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates but also maintained a high degree of agreement over its definition. In alignment with previous research, these participants responded that, within a dialogical conception of inclusivity, diversity is recognized as a central feature of learning contexts and that all individuals are diverse in some capacity. One teacher candidate stated that, in creating inclusive classrooms “it is important that we all realize from the very beginning that we are all different. If you can acknowledge everyone’s differences, then you can see that everyone has a difference in some way.” According to a faculty member, “it means
honouring and respecting everything that each individual brings into the classroom whether I understand it or not.” Accepting different perspectives into the learning environment was viewed as a keystone feature of this conception of inclusivity.

In the dialogical conception of inclusivity there is also recognition that the teacher contributes to classroom diversity and that the teacher’s diversity matters to teaching and learning. As an example of the impact of a teacher’s diversity on learning, one faculty member told the following story about his first few years as a faculty member.

During my first three years here I tried to play ‘professor’—to go into my classes and be the kind of person professors are suppose to be. And I played it for three years and my teaching evaluations were mediocre. The fourth year I said, ‘this is ridiculous, why am I a playing this role? I’m going to be me, which is sarcastic, out there, and personable.’ My teaching evaluations skyrocketed and students enjoyed my classes much more because I was allowing them to see who I really was.

This quote provides a good delineation of the difference between the integrative view of inclusivity in which the focus is on curricular accommodations and modifications and the dialogic view of inclusivity, which begins to address social-emotional aspects of inclusion and the genuine acceptance of diversity into teaching and learning processes. This view of inclusivity is about relating towards one another, teachers and students, as diverse peoples.

In a dialogical context, learning not only occurs in a joint physical space but, more importantly, engages social, academic, and emotional learning. Both faculty members and teacher candidates cited emotional, academic, and social attachment to
school as a central feature of the dialogical conception. One faculty member noted, “being physically present isn’t enough, what really matters is people’s experience of being there and of feeling that they are genuinely contributing members of the community; that they’re not devalued because they come from diverse groups in the society.” The dialogic conception was also differentiated from integrative descriptions of inclusive learning in the teachers’ role within the classroom. Teacher candidates described the necessity of a student-focused pedagogy in this conception in which teachers do not drive all instruction. Rather, the central role of the teacher is to structure opportunities in which diverse students can learn and share their unique perspectives.

Three articulated characteristics contribute to dialogical environments in the classroom. These characteristics include respecting diversity, listening to students’ diverse perspectives, and caring about students as individuals. Respecting diversity and multiple perspectives was viewed as foundational to dialogical learning contexts: “Inclusivity really equals respect” (teacher candidate). Another teacher candidate suggested specific behaviours that signal respect in a classroom including no rolling eyes, no sneering, no laughing at people in malicious ways, no talking over or at someone, no put downs, no rejections—accepting other people and allowing them to have their say whether you agree or disagree. From respectful learning follows the idea that teachers and students need to listen to one another’s perspectives. Listening in a dialogical conception of inclusivity was characterised as a dual dialectic where “I open to you and you open to me to hear one another” (faculty member). Another faculty member acknowledged that listening involves a back and forth between two equal parties in a conversation where there is both hearing and talking. A dual dialectic suggests a bringing
together of perspectives, a sharing of diverse interpretations of how individuals understand and make meaning. However, it does not suggest consensus or agreement; but rather, it accepts that diverse perspectives can coexist in the learning environment.

Faculty members and teacher candidates both cautioned that engaging in sharing of multiple perspectives through open dialogue could lead to tension, hostility, and potentially unsafe learning environments, especially if perspectives are incommensurable and value-laden. It was recognized that oftentimes, expression of diverse perspective contributes to instance of bullying and abuse. One faculty member asserted the need to foster caring within classrooms as a preventative measure against such adversities. This faculty member also presented caring as a capstone feature of dialogical learning environments because notions of respect and listening are inherently nested within it. Caring was articulated as a response to students as diverse people, drawing on their unique perspectives, and helping to create a culture where students and teachers feel valued.

In an inclusive learning environment, it’s not just what is done but its about how things are done and the *how* really matters and that piece is not legislated. Creating classrooms where students and teachers care about each other I think is fundamental. It’s about creating that inclusive, caring environment where you are not only doing what is consistent with the policies and what people are entitled to, but you are doing it in a particular way that the person recognizes, that they feel, “I do have teachers and people that care about me. But they don’t just care about me because I’m East Asian or in a wheelchair. They care about everyone. And
they care in a way that they do everything they can to make it work. (faculty member)

One teacher candidate noted on their pre-focus group questionnaire, “caring is different than warm and fuzzy. Caring is about taking an interest in a student’s life.” Several faculty members concurred and articulated that caring is sometimes difficult to achieve given certain contexts of learning, for example, large class sizes, significant differences in perspectives and core beliefs between students, and too much curriculum. However, despite these barriers, teacher candidates and several faculty members articulated deep commitment to the notion of caring in classrooms.

When conditions of respect, listening, and caring are achieved in a classroom, dialogical inclusivity promotes both a learning about and a learning with diverse individuals. The following dialogue between teacher candidates in a focus group characterises learning in a dialogical environment.

*Teacher candidate 1:* When you respect and welcome diversity into the class, you begin to see and hear how people from other cultures think about things. Classes now are so multicultural; students need to expect that they will be learning with people from other places.

*Teacher candidate 2:* It is also good [to include different cultures] because you get to learn about those places and those people. So you begin to understand where they come from and why they think differently.

*Teacher candidate 3:* Or why we think the same about things. I think we can’t overlook similarities between people that might look different. We spend so much
This dialogue suggests that in diverse classrooms, learning can occur in multiple ways, including learning about different cultures, diverse perspectives, and the similarities between diverse people. On learning about sameness, one teacher candidate commented, “if we ask in a classroom, how are we similar? Similar in our beliefs, in our interests, in our conditions of respect, so that no one is singled out, then we can come together around our similarities.” Building on similarities amongst students was characterised within the dialogical conception of inclusivity because it was suggested that from a point of similarity, students could begin to accept and understand one another’s differences. It was also viewed as a strategy to promote safety and protect against adversity due to differences amongst students.

Participants who described a dialogical learning environment still anchored their understandings of diversity on rather singular and well-defined groups of difference. For instance, faculty members suggested that it would be important to invite teacher candidates from diverse racial groups to offer a cultural perspective towards classroom learning. Likewise, one teacher candidate stated that during her December practicum, her associate teacher asked students to share and research different holiday traditions to bring forward diverse religious perspectives. However, such an approach to inclusivity not only simplifies students’ cultural backgrounds and diversity but also assumes a fairly static and homogeneous representations of culture. As identified in my framework of inclusivity, this is problematic as in reality students belong to multiple cultural associations that are individually interpreted and shift over time. Hence participants’
conceptions of a dialogical context did not fully acknowledge the cultural complexity of students, which may result in a reinforcement of static and singular cultural understandings.

Transgressive Conception

Only two faculty members and two administrators articulated a transgressive conception of inclusivity for certain contexts of education. None of the teacher candidates articulated a transgressive conception of inclusivity. As such, I offer the following description of transgressive inclusivity to the interpretive argument with the caveat that instances of it were rarely found in my interviews and focus groups.

In line with the literature on transgressive inclusivity, the four participants who articulated this conception recognized that all individuals in a classroom are culturally complex and thus each context of learning is different. Teaching and learning in these contexts were described as shared and emergent as based on the multiple perspectives in the class and the interaction amongst students and teachers. Student diversity was suggested as a vehicle for the generation of new knowledge and the co-construction of curriculum, teaching, and learning. The transgressive conception was demarcated from the dialogical conception of inclusivity in that learning not only happens with and about diverse students but learning also from diverse students. “My learning in the class depends on your learning and your perspective and your contribution and visa versa,” said one faculty member. Hence learning in this conception is highly situated within and dependent upon the diversity within the classroom context.

One faculty member stated, “the phrase that I use to describe it [transgressive learning] is, ‘the difference that makes a difference.’ What does it mean to work within a
framework where we accept that difference actually makes a difference? Where difference means a different worldview.” Difference that makes a difference suggests a context of learning from, where students and teachers are asked to share their worldviews, which in turn, challenges them to question and interrogate their own assumptions about the world, their standards, and understandings. This alters the way in which students and teachers perceive the world so that there is a reconfiguration not only about what is learned but also, and arguably more importantly, about how individuals relate and interact with one another.

One faculty member spent a significant amount of time in her interview describing a transgressive learning context and suggesting the importance of a social justice pedagogy for this conception. She framed transgressive education as an education predicated on principles of equity, justice, and democracy and delineated the underlying social structure needed and for this type of teaching and learning. On the structure of transgressive learning contexts, this faculty member asserted, “structurally and conceptually, a social justice framework creates a set of conditions where we are committed to shared access to resources and shared conditions of life.” In this conception, individuals are conceptualized as potentially equal and there is a democracy in which individuals can contribute and participate in the construction of environment and place. She suggested that democracy must be an underlying condition for social justice education but that democracy must move beyond current models of majority versus minority ruling. She stated, “democratic practice is not the rule of the many over the few but the responsibility of the many for the rights and well being of all including the few.” She believed that such a structure would give rise to ownership, commitment,
and an intrinsic sense of belonging, where a balance exists between individual needs and group conditions. In a transgressive learning environment, the structure and organization of interaction are changed from a binary relationship of power to one that creates rights and responsibilities that are equal but not necessarily the same. In a classroom context this means that all individuals contribute to what is learned and how learning occurs.

All four participants who described this conception recognized the difficulty of its implementation. They suggested that transgressive learning was more likely to occur in a higher education context than in primary and secondary school contexts. In addition, they suggested that there might be instances of transgressive learning throughout a course of study as conditions of social justice evolve and develop. However, participants generally viewed this conception as an “ideal structure for education” (faculty member) and one that “we might want to aim towards” (administrator). Participants recognized that larger social frameworks condition classroom practices and the way students and teachers relate to one another. Fully achieving a transgressive conception of inclusivity in education would require a systemic redress towards a social justice orientation. Nonetheless, the transgressive conception was acknowledged by some participants as one interpretation towards the program’s aim of promoting inclusivity in education and thus is an element of the interpretive argument.

*Foundational Constructs of Inclusivity*

My earlier theoretical delineation of the critical construct, *inclusivity in education*, centered on describing four conceptions of inclusivity: (a) normative, (b) integrative, (c) dialogical, and (d) transgressive. Missing from that was an articulation of foundational constructs that support the various conceptions of inclusivity. Through my explorations
of inclusivity with administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates, I identified several constructs that support the integrative, dialogical, and transgressive conceptions. These constructs were initially identified during interviews and focus groups and later confirmed through follow-ups to faculty member interviews. Specifically, the foundational constructs are (a) inclusivity as disposition, (b) anchors of inclusivity, (c) inclusivity across contexts, (d) learning through diversity, and (e) safety. These foundations were thought to apply equally to the promotion of inclusivity in teacher education as well as in schools and classrooms more broadly.

Inclusivity as Disposition

In describing inclusivity, a common theme across all participant groups was the notion that inclusivity was a disposition that is situated at both personal and institutional levels. Inclusivity as a disposition implies an ontological commitment to inclusion that is embedded within the collection of beliefs that governs an individual’s or group’s interpretations and actions. Not only were dispositions of inclusivity thought to be graded (i.e., a matter of degree rather than all-or-none) but they were also understood to be qualitatively different for different people and organizations depending on their conception of inclusion. For example, participants who expressed a dialogical conception of inclusivity described dispositions that were welcoming, humble to new perspectives, and respectful.

When participants spoke of inclusivity as a disposition, they identified that personal approaches and institutional approaches were not always congruent. One faculty member contended that inclusivity operates at both a human level and at an institutional level and that “at the institutional level there are always lots of things we need to do
better but on the human level so many people do reach out and are inclusive.” The Associate Dean also commented that at times, he felt constrained by institutional structures that prevented a more “transparent” disposition to inclusion within the Faculty. He also contended that while there is an explicit commitment to inclusivity through the mission statement, not all institutional practices enable a deep level of inclusivity for privacy and other reasons. Faculty members concurred: “Inclusivity at a human level is really important but it is in part facilitated by things at the policy or institutional level” (faculty member). When institutional policies do not fully support inclusive practices then one’s ability to promote inclusivity through personal disposition can also be limited.

One of the most common understandings about inclusivity was that it is best promoted through personal dispositions reflected in individual ways of responding to diversity. Inclusivity as a personal disposition was understood as an individual’s attitude towards another individual or group of individuals. One teacher candidate commented that inclusivity “is about how you treat other people and how you make them feel.” The Associate Dean further suggested that inclusivity was the “work we do personally and individually, the way we behave ourselves as administrators, teachers, and human beings.” Several participants also acknowledged that there are always limitations to personal dispositions of inclusivity based on past experiences and prejudices. One faculty member noted, “there is an automatic response to be more inclusive to those that are most like ourselves and it is harder to be inclusive to those who are least like ourselves.” Hence inclusivity is promoted and enacted differently by different people because of their personal positions of difference and their views of different people.
Anchors of Inclusivity

A central aspect of the interpretive argument was that inclusivity is a perspective-based term rooted in individual experiences of difference and diversity. When participants described inclusivity, they often spoke discretely about specific groups to which efforts of inclusivity have been or should be focused. Though some were blanket statements, such that inclusivity applies to all forms of difference, the examples used by participants to illustrate cases of inclusion centered predominately on differences of culture, gender, ability, social-political class, and sexual orientation. Hence these five positions of difference represent what I term anchors in participants’ thinking about inclusivity and are ordered in the relation to the relative prominence of each. I use the term anchors because these various positions were firmly articulated by participants and very much rooted in personal histories, many of which go back to one’s childhood. These early-established positions continue to guide educators thinking on issues of inclusivity.

It is worthwhile to recognize that additional anchors (e.g., physical image, interest groups, religion) may exist that contribute towards participants’ conceptions of inclusivity. The anchors presented below were the most commonly discussed in this study; however, they align fairly closely with common examples found in the literature on inclusivity in education. To describe each of the five most common anchors, I present participants’ narratives below. I selected one narrative to describe each anchor; however, more than one participant may have identified with each anchor. Further, anchors may manifest in different ways for participants. For example, one participant may have recalled a story about culture in relation to his/her black heritage while another participant who identified culture as an anchor may have narrated his/her experience as
an Aboriginal person. The narratives presented below are written in the first person to honour the individual stories of participants.

_Culture._ I am female, Korean, a Christian immigrant and now, a teacher candidate at Queen’s University. I have always been concerned with issues of inclusivity; living difference on a daily basis seems to magnify for me the importance of inclusion within schools and society. In particular, I am interested in how immigrants are accepted as part of the Canadian community, how we immigrants accept and embrace the Canadian identity, and how there is a constant lived tension between acceptance and tolerance. When I was in school, other kids in my class wouldn’t invite me to birthday parties or to play with them on the schoolyard because I was visibly different from them and because I had an accent. They would mimic me and laugh sometimes at how I pronounced words and misunderstood expressions. They would also assume things about me because I was Asian; some of the stereotypes were right, but some were not. Even now, when I tell people that I am Christian, they jump to certain stereotypes and prejudge my beliefs and views. Although it does mean something to be a Christian, I believe that people practice their faith differently and not all Christians believe the same thing or enact their beliefs in the same ways. The transition between elementary and secondary school was hard for me. I didn’t receive the same level of support in secondary school. By that point, I suppose they thought my English had improved well enough to cope with mainstream curriculum. Most difficult though, was seeing no reflections of myself in my schools—there were no Asian teachers and few other Asian students. This was also a concern for me in coming to Queen’s University for my B.Ed. I wasn’t sure how accepting the program would be given all the talk about the “culture of whiteness.” What has surprised
me has been the level of inclusion and the willingness to embrace cultural and other 
forms of diversity here.

Gender. I have been a faculty member here for 22 years. Since then, I have seen a 
huge change in our faculty complement and specifically in the number of female faculty 
members. When I was hired, there were only two other women who had a PhD here and 
they were in special positions. It was a different environment; women were the absolute 
minority. I remember one instance that involved a teacher candidate at that time, the 
president of the education student society in 1987 and a woman. She also happened to be 
in my pre-service course on learning and development in adolescence. She came to me at 
the end of class one day looking very serious and she said, “I really need to talk to you.” 
My initial reaction as a fairly new faculty member was to think that I was doing 
something wrong. Later that day, she came into my office and she said, “I need to close 
the door.” And I thought to myself, “oh, this is really serious.” She closed the door, sat 
down, and then she broke into tears. I waited. Then she said, “I have to talk to you 
because you are the only female professor I have.” She was in the Intermediate/Senior 
stream with Math and Science as her two teachables. She continued, “the whole Fall I 
didn’t have one female professor and now you are the only one I have. I have to tell you 
that I am about at the point of leaving education. There is no place for me as a woman in 
secondary education. I have no female professors and no role models. I go into my 
practicum schools and they don’t have female teachers in the Math or Science 
departments. I have no one to talk to about how to do this. I get comments from the male 
students that I don’t know how to deal with and I get comments from the male teachers 
that I don’t know how to deal with. I can’t handle it. I feel out of my element. I am
woman who has studied math and science and I have no idea what I’m going to do now because the one place I thought that I could fit in as a woman interested in math and science was in education.” I tell that story to people now and they think of how much things have changed, that was a female feeling not included in secondary education in 1987, but there are still ways in which females and of course many many others feel like they don’t belong. And so, we need to be deeply concerned about inclusivity and a lot of us have been since we walked in the door.

**Ability.** I think my first opening into the concept of inclusivity was that my mother was a kindergarten teacher. She had a private kindergarten school above our garage because we lived in a small town and at that time there were no kindergarten programs in the public schools. Once kindergarten started to be offered in the local elementary school, my mother began offering a nursery program, which ran weekday mornings. About when I was 11 years old the then called, Retarded Children’s Association, asked my mother if she would do a class in the afternoons for preschool children with cognitive disabilities. She agreed. My job was to clean up after lunchtime and prepare the classroom for the afternoon children. But I would often stay late, helping and getting to know the students who had exceptionalities. To me they were very similar to the morning group and my mother would treat them nearly the same. My mother’s approach toward teaching students with special needs translated into our family life as well. My brother has multiple disabilities, though mainly slight. My mother would treat us in the same way and include us equally in activities whether it was baking pies, gardening, or chores. And so, I’ve always been quite comfortable with children with retardation, Down’s Syndrome, and learning disabilities. I’ve always seen that they can
do things and participate and be included. I think that those two experiences have always provided a little opening for me into how to teach students with exceptionalities in my classroom and in turn, how to talk about inclusion with teacher candidates.

Social-political Class. I grew up in a very different environment than most in this building. We lived in a European culture and country that was communist; though, I quickly came to understand that it wasn’t communist in its ideological sense but rather state capitalist. Although the country did have components of socialism, there were obvious benefits to the state and a significant amount of state control. This immediately following the Second World War and amid economic hard times, led to a revolution, civil war, and unsettlement within the country. My father decided that we should leave our home and emigrate. Wanting an ocean’s distance from Europe, my father selected from Australia, the United States, or Canada. We finally arrived in Canada and lived in Toronto. As newcomers to the country both my parents worked, worked, worked, because that is what immigrants do. But I remember Sunday mornings. That was our time, laidback and fabulous. By Sunday afternoon it was back to homework and chores but on Sunday mornings, over long breakfasts, we would talk and read and question. I remember listening to my parents and sometimes their friends and other family members, as they would analyse and debate social issues, inequities – the hard times. I too would offer my thoughts on occasion, “well you know…” It was an environment where questions could be asked with effect, that they meant something. During those breakfasts, we were trying to sort things out and we tried to recognize that there were different ways of speaking about the world and different ways of imagining the world. My view of inclusivity now is much more about social justice because that is what my parents
believed. They had a strong, strong, sense of fairness. They were virulently anti-
hierarchy. They firmly believed that whatever was available to one should be available to
all so that life wasn’t about working really hard to move up but about working really hard
to create a world where everyone had that option. Fairness for them was a right.

*Sexual Orientation.* I think being gay forces you to look at the world a different
way. You go through a lot of crap being gay and figuring out being gay and thinking,
“Can I be gay? Am I allowed to be gay?” I grew up in a rural community and we moved
a lot because my father was in the armed forces. It was hard back then to come out, both
to yourself and publicly. I remember thinking about how I fit within the social
stereotypes of the community. I thought about whom I was going to marry and how I
could be a father as a gay man in rural Canada. For me, that didn’t seem like much of an
option at that time; I’m still not sure that it is. Being gay is a constant struggle. It is a
thing you think about every time you are in a new encounter. There is a whole
assumption that unless you are wearing pink and a feather boa, that you are straight. I
think there is a need for different kinds of gay role models within our schools and
universities. But it is hard. The first time I came out to my class was difficult for me. I
had taught the same lecture on anti-homophobia many times before deciding to say, “I
am gay.” There are barriers to disclosing your sexual orientation, most of which are self-
imposed but they can have real consequences. In my lecture on anti-homophobia, I show
the students two video clips. One is from the movie In & Out, where everyone accepts the
main character, Howard Brackett, as gay. The other clip is from Boys Don’t Cry, where
Brandon Teena gets abused and finally killed for being transgendered. After showing the
clips, I tell the students that is how it is for every single gay person every time they come
out. They don’t know whether they are going to get the Howard Brackett reaction or the Barndon Teena reaction. And so, you weigh the benefits and at times, you take your chances. I am fairly out about my sexual orientation because I realize that, when we talk about inclusivity, you can’t be accepting of others unless you allow them to be accepting of you. You can’t expect to be included as a gay teacher, student, friend, colleague, parent, sibling, or community member, if you don’t give them the opportunity to include you. Sometimes this puts you in a very vulnerable place.

*Limitations of Anchors.* The five anchors of inclusivity not only highlight specific commitments to including certain groups of people but they also reinforce the earlier finding that suggests that there are personal limitations to inclusion. Faculty members and teacher candidates identified three factors that contributed to limitations in their ability to accommodate a deep level of inclusion for certain individuals. First, teacher candidates and faculty members identified that they do not make explicit efforts to include some people because of a lack of knowledge about particular diversities. For example, one faculty member acknowledged, “it’s the cultural things I feel I’m not very good at. I have a sense of Aboriginal people. I don’t really have a sense of the worlds of our black candidates or the world of our South East Asian candidates.” A second factor that limited inclusive efforts related to personal stereotypes and prejudices towards certain people. Prejudices were suggested to be rooted in personal histories and conditioned by sociocultural beliefs. The following dialogue between teacher candidates connected the notion of personal limitations with stereotypes.

*Teacher candidate 1:* I think you have to understand or recognize your limitations. I think it sounds great to say everybody should be welcoming and
everyone should be inclusive and inclusive practice is the ideal and that’s great. But the reality is that there are fundamental and systemic racism and sexism and homophobia. Sometimes it’s out of our control and it’s not a conscious decision that you’re making but you still have those thoughts because that’s the way our society operates.

*Teacher candidate 2*: So even just recognizing those thoughts and questioning them or trying to find the root of them. You know if I’m walking down the streets of Toronto at one in the morning and some big black guy walks towards me, I hesitate. Why? Why do I hesitate? Why is that my immediate reaction?

*Teacher candidate 3*: Our culture just has so much that’s put on us about stereotypes and how we feel about different groups of people. I think that if you come across it in your classroom, you have to make a teachable moment and sort of break it down.

Finally, personal perception of who requires inclusion and who does not also limits one’s efforts of inclusivity. One faculty member stated, “I find sexual orientation is one that is not an issue. I don’t think it’s an issue in this building and I never see that as an issue out in schools either.” However, in contrast to this view, two teacher candidates who identified as LGBT in focus groups asserted that they felt discriminated against because of their sexual orientation. This incongruence suggests that personal perceptions may be inaccurate, especially in instances of non-visible diversity. Addressing visible diversity and issues that arise as a result of visible differences is certainly necessary; however, acknowledging students from non-visibility diverse groups or those that are not perceived to need specific efforts is also important when working towards certain conceptions of
inclusivity. In particular, in dialogical and transgressive conceptions, honouring diversity, regardless of whether or not it presents as ‘an issue’ is encouraged. Thus moving beyond limitations of perception regarding who requires inclusive efforts and who does not may be necessary in promoting these conceptions of inclusivity in education.

These limitations to inclusivity suggest a critical addition to the interpretive argument—there are personal limits based on individual experiences, personal differences, perspectives, and knowledge, to the inclusion of certain individuals or groups of people. In efforts to promote inclusion, addressing these limitations through exposure to difference and education about inclusion appears a necessary step.

_Inclusivity across Contexts_

The Queen’s University teacher education program aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle does not explicitly indicate whether it applies discretely to the teacher education program or if it applies to broader educational contexts (i.e. K-12 system of education). Interestingly, participants’ descriptions of inclusive learning spaces were similar regardless of level of education with recognition that the specific language and pedagogical approaches used to promote inclusivity differ across elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Hence central to the interpretive argument was the finding that all participants in this study interpreted aims towards inclusive learning as consistent and necessary across all contexts of education. Participants often explicitly acknowledged that their conception and understanding of inclusivity was equally applicable to the teacher education program as it was to other educational contexts including the K-12 school system.
Learning through Diversity

One of the most common beliefs across participant groups was that increased diversity within an educational context promoted the learning of inclusive values, especially within dialogical and transgressive conceptions of inclusivity. “We need to see diversity, in order to learn to accept diversity,” one faculty member stated. Specifically in relation to teacher education, several participants commented on the lack of cultural diversity and its impact on teacher candidate learning. One teacher candidate stated, “Queen’s University is seen as a very white place. There aren’t many visible minority instructors or students here. So in our classes we don’t get the chance to hear from people from many different backgrounds.” Several faculty members echoed this notion, and while there was general agreement that the level of diversity has increased in the Faculty of Education there was also acknowledgment that increasing diversity remains a continued challenge. This challenge was recognized for both cultural forms of difference as well as other diversities.

Faculty members articulated that learning through diversity serves to promote inclusive values in education. In addition, one faculty member described the benefits to students and their families by learning through a context of diversity. She described the two Ontario Institute for Studies of Education (OISE) K-12 public schools in Toronto. One of the schools is a general education facility that is closely affiliated with the university and the second school is a fully integrated environment with students who have special needs including mild to severe physical and cognitive disabilities. For most parents, the latter is a far second choice; they would much rather send their child downtown to the ‘regular’ school. Through conversations with the director of the
integrated school, she noted that almost without exception, by the end of a year or two, the parents whose children attend the integrated program were thrilled with the experience. The director indicated that the students had taught their parents so much about inclusion because after a year or two, inclusion was just part of how the children viewed the world; the school didn’t identify students by their difference or make any deal of it. The children’s response to diversity and willingness to accept difference helped the parents go beyond their unfamiliarity about people with disabilities and begin to see the value in learning through diversity.

While increasing diversity within an educational context was generally viewed as a means to promoting inclusive values, the Dean of Education cautioned that just existing within a highly diverse environment does not necessarily mean that those individuals are inclusive. Based on her experience growing up in a highly diverse city in Argentina, she stated that by virtue of the “fact that you are exposed to multiculturalism or difference does not imply that the particular environment is not prejudiced against differences.” She asserted the role of education as a necessary intervening agent to work toward a diverse environment that was socially just. The fundamental function of education in such contexts was recognized by some faculty member participants as “to encourage the connections that we all have and to understand people and cultures and places and how we are similar and how we are different and to foster respect for all people.” There was general consensus across faculty members and administrators that with education that promotes inclusivity and social responsibility, contexts of increased diversity can better facilitate the learning of inclusive values. Hence this construct provides a basis for
examining initiatives that increase diversity within educational contexts, including initiatives within the teacher education program.

Safety

Safety was the most commonly articulated foundation construct with relevance to all conceptions of inclusivity. As an example of the importance of safety in education and of promoting safe learning in teacher education, one faculty member who taught Math Curriculum described an experience with a teacher candidate whom she had taught in a previous year.

I have people terrified to walk through the door. The first thing they’ll tell me is, is this going to be hard? Do I have to know math to be in here? And I’ve had tears and kids throw up and kids leave the class within the first ten minutes. A large percent of candidates are female and a large percent of females drop math as soon as they can. It is very obvious that they don’t want to be here. I recall one woman who stood at the door, she was green and trembling, and she said, “I’m not coming in.” I asked, “Are you here for math?” She said, “yes, but I’m not coming in.” So I said, “okay, would you like a chair out there in the hall because we are going to start anyways?” She said, “okay.” So she stood outside and then she sat for a bit and did the first class outside the door. The next couple of classes, she came but she still wasn’t steady on her feet. I finally got her to sit in the chair at the very first table. She never chose a different table but came in that far. I got an email from her a year ago and she wrote, “You are not going to believe this, I’m so and so from such and such a section, you can remember me as the person who was too afraid to go through the doorway. I just wanted you to know that I just
accepted the math consultancy position in my board.” So when you get those nice little stories, you know that the safe environment back here was the starting point where she could work through all those things that had built up over the years. Now she is able to include more teachers and get them calmed down about mathematics.

In general, participants described three forms of safety required to create inclusive learning spaces. These forms included physical safety, cognitive safety, and emotional safety. All three were perceived as linked in learning environments, whether considering schoolyard activities, classroom learning, or emerging virtual spaces. Further, it was suggested that different students experience these various forms of safety at different times; one student may feel entirely safe in his or her classroom whereas another may not. This reflects the understanding that safety is a matter of degree and highly based on situation and context. Creating physically safe learning environments was seen as an absolutely foundational aspect of inclusive learning. Ensuring physical safety of students remains a real challenge in some school contexts. One faculty member noted that bullying continues to be a fundamental problem in schools and is now taking on virtual and other forms. Articulated by several participants and in each focus group, the primary role of teachers and teacher educators is to create physically safe spaces for learning; no child can learn if he or she feels threatened or scared or full of anxiety.

At the same time, it is necessary to create cognitively safe learning environments. Cognitive safety means, as one teacher candidate noted, “making students feel comfortable so that they can take risks and asks questions.” Similarly, one faculty member suggested that safe learning involves risks in student thinking and developing a
classroom culture in which peoples’ thinking is respected. Taking cognitive risks, asking questions, and sharing viewpoints were commonly viewed as behaviours in a classroom that represent a cognitively safe learning environment. One faculty member acknowledged that achieving cognitively safe contexts can be challenging if students have vastly different perspectives. When diverse perspectives are allowed into the classroom, instances arise where viewpoints may be in opposition to one another, leading to tension and hostility among students and teachers. There is a need and desire to invite multiple perspectives within an inclusive space and yet it can be those very perspectives that give rise to exclusion and unsafe learning environments.

When student diversity is emphasized within the classroom, for example in dialogical and transgressive conceptions of inclusivity, emotional safety becomes fundamental to learning. Creating any form of inclusive space, where differences are recognized, is a vulnerable act for students. Students of difference are well versed in the consequences of sharing their diverse perspectives. One student wrote in her pre-focus group questionnaire, “inclusivity means having a safe place to go where everyone is accepted for who they are, what they look like, and what they like to do. Inclusivity requires having the self-esteem and confidence to allow yourself to fit in.” An emotionally safe space is marked by students who participate in various ways as different people but in a common classroom. As a concluding comment on safety, I include a poem submitted as a response by one faculty member as a description of what safety in learning means to her. The poem is by Mary MacCracken (1986).
A Safe Place

In a safe place people are kind. Sarcasm, fighting, backbiting and name-calling are exceptions rather than the rule. Kindness and consideration and forgiveness are the usual way of life.

In a safe place there is laughter. Not just the canned laughter of radio and television, but real laughter that comes from sharing meaningful work and play.

In a safe place there are rules. The rules are few and fair and are made by the people who live and work there, including the children.

In a safe place people listen to each other. They care about each other and show that they do, with words and also with body language.

In a safe place the adults are the models for the others.

The Interpretive Argument

This chapter represents the interpretive argument—a coherent articulation of both theoretical conceptions as well as participants’ interpretations towards the critical construct, inclusivity in education. Through my review of four dominant models of inclusivity and through my analysis of participant data, I argue that inclusivity can be represented through a framework that recognizes four conceptions of inclusion supported by five foundational constructs. Specifically, the four conceptions of inclusivity are (a) normative, (b) integrative, (c) dialogical, and (d) transgressive. Each conception represents a qualitatively different model for inclusion. While all conceptions are likely present in the current educational system, data from this study support only three conceptions—integrative, dialogical, and transgressive. As the normative conception
asserts assimilation of diversity to a dominant form, it is not surprising to find that program administrators, teacher educators, and teacher candidates largely did not explicitly articulate this conception. Rather, the majority of participants articulated an integrative and/or dialogical conception of inclusivity, largely depending upon their previous experiences and the manner in which these experiences enabled them to consider issues of equity. These conceptions are also represented in broader educational policies such as those guiding special education initiatives and multicultural education.

The integrative view assumes that students from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities can access and participate in a common educational experience (i.e., common curriculum and mainstream placement) with provisions for accommodation. This model currently operates as a foundation for special education programming in Ontario and hence was represented in participants’ responses. However, the integrative conception may be applicable to other student groups (e.g., streaming patterns in high school). In this model, students who cannot achieve or participate in the common curriculum are typically provided with an alternative program. The central challenge for this conception is the social stigma associated with the labeling of difference and with provisions for accommodation. While this approach to inclusivity seeks to address the academic needs of students, it may serve to perpetuate divisions amongst students based on their differences. As represented in both participants’ data and existing literature, such an approach may not only marginalize students but may also reinforce status differentials between students (e.g., special education students versus mainstream students). Furthermore, in order for this model to be effective, it requires the labeling of diversity and therefore only addresses individuals who can be identified within pre-established
categories of difference. Thus this model only works with highly static conceptions of difference and often only those that are visible and/or measurable.

The dialogic conception of inclusivity begins to address some of the limitations presented by the integrative model. Underpinning the dialogic conception of inclusivity is a social-constructivist assumption of learning in which students construct meaning from classroom experiences. Student diversity, previous experiences, and cultural backgrounds are acknowledged as shaping this learning process. As such, diversity is welcomed into the classroom. Participants often described an inclusive learning environment as one that welcomed students’ diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. In particular, participants characterised the dialogical conception of inclusivity as a caring environment in which students and teachers listened to and honoured diverse perspectives, even if they did not agree with them. One incongruity between participants’ dialogical interpretations and the theoretical delineation of this conception was that participants continued to operate on fairly simplistic notions of diversity. When describing a dialogical learning environment, participants often referred to student diversity in a singular form (e.g., the female perspective, the visible minority perspective, the religious viewpoint) rather than articulating a complex understanding of each individual’s multiple cultural associations. While participants certainly asserted the importance of engaging multiple perspectives within the classroom, they were limited in their articulation of the complexity of those perspectives. Assuming a simplistic understanding of culture within a dialogical context raises concerns that perspectives may become representative of general and static positions of difference and thus not reflective of the complex reality of cultural identities. This incongruence points to a nuance within the dialogical conception and suggests that
there are multiple subtle ways in which the dialogical conception could be enacted, again asserting that conceptions of inclusivity exist on a continuum.

The final conception of inclusivity is represented by a transgressive form of teaching and learning. This conception acknowledges and uses student diversity to drive curriculum and pedagogy. Furthermore, this conception is predicated upon principles of social justice with recognition that all students and teachers contribute towards the learning environment in some way. While this conception is represented in literature related to inclusivity in education, it was only expressed by four participants representing only the administrators and faculty member, and even then, they presented it as an ideal state for education that was difficult to operationalize in practice. The central barrier for this form of inclusivity is addressing the systemic and historical hegemony that direct interactions within classrooms. Students and teachers bring with them prejudgments about diversity, which condition the treatment of diversity and that limit one’s ability to accommodate a deep level of inclusivity. As such, this form of education presents a structure that educators “might want to aim towards” (administrator) and one that is always in the making: teachers and students can work towards an education predicated on principles of social justice but will never fully achieve the conditions of absolute justice. As expressed by one participant, inclusivity in this view is best characterised as, “always striving, never there.”

Participants identified five foundational constructs that underpin these various conceptions of inclusivity, which were not represented in my theoretical delineation. The foundational constructs further situate inclusivity as a perspective-based term where personal dispositions and personal positions of difference contribute to individual
interpretations and enactment of inclusivity. In addition, participants recognized, with a high degree of consensus, that inclusivity was a fundamental aim for all educational contexts from K-12 education to teacher preparation. Hence it was unsurprising to find that participants interpreted the Queen’s University teacher education aim towards promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle as applicable to both public education contexts and to the teacher education program.

Safety—physical, cognitive, and emotional—was also identified as consistent and rudimentary construct for inclusive contexts of learning whether integrative, dialogical, or transgressive. However at times, safety is difficult to achieve given the current climate of bullying in schools. Several participants acknowledged that safety in learning could be jeopardized if students uphold vehemently different, incommensurable, or offensive views towards one another. Hence this presents a potential dilemma for dialogical contexts of inclusivity. While the aim in these contexts is to give space for diverse perspectives, it may be those very perspectives that sacrifice safety if not expressed in respectful ways.

The final foundational construct of inclusivity in education recognizes the importance of increased diversity for learning about inclusivity. There was general agreement across faculty members and administrators that when there is education in place that addresses the treatment of diversity within a learning context, then increased diversity amongst students and teachers furthers learning about inclusive values. This claim challenges contexts with low levels of diversity to find ways to enhance and integrate diverse perspectives into teaching and learning. Such is the case for many teacher education programs in centers throughout Canada. This is particularly
problematic because low levels of diversity within teacher education programs translates into a largely homogeneous teacher workforce. This trend is supported by current demographics of teacher diversity across Canada (Gerin-Lajoie, 2008). Thus this finding calls for investigation into diversity initiatives within teacher education programs.

While this interpretive argument provides a conceptual basis for the critical construct *inclusivity in education* as based on theory and participant data, it does not provide a description of how conceptions are enacted within specific contexts of education. Using this interpretive argument as a foundation, in the following chapter, I construct a validity argument for the Queen’s University teacher education program. In particular, I examine specific structures aimed at promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle through and within the program to articulate a complex description of the extent of program coherence.
Keyword: Coherence

The second structure in a validity argument is all about coherence. In this keyword, I explore what the concept of coherence means to me as someone who is currently engaged in tying together the interpretive data collected in this research. This activity is not simple. Nuances in text and experience from both my perspective as researcher and the individual perspectives of participants bias how I choose to pair and place ideas within the validity argument and make sense of the confluence of thoughts, expressions, and actions that promote inclusivity within this teacher education program. Coherence from its Latin root, cohaerentem, splits into *co*—meaning ‘together’ and *haerentem*—meaning ‘to stick’. Coherence then is about how one might ‘stick together’ the pieces of data found in the interpretive argument. When I think of the metaphors and structures that might guide this act of bringing together, three potential directions come to mind.

The first considers coherence as classifications based on sameness—to bundle data that look and sound the same together, to create categories that describe archetypal ways of thinking about inclusivity and to identify the characteristics of similar inclusive practices. However, I am concerned that what will arise from such a process is an expanded, perhaps more structured, version of the interpretive argument. Further, such a deductive mode of sense making would reduce the intricacies of the data to broader thematic categories—qualitative details lost in a translation toward a more general description.
The second way to think about coherence is to seek alignment amongst the data. I believe that this is how Kane (2006, 2009) might regard coherence. In this sense, coherence means to structure the interpretive argument as a sequenced, ordered logic line, challenging outlying, non-conforming pieces and offering a rationale for their omission or an explanation for their inclusion. Thus the aim within this view of coherence is to thread together the pieces of the interpretive argument in a highly linear way.

My preference is for the third view of coherence. This view considers coherence as a web of relations. Here the pieces hang together, not in categorical or linear ways, but rather, through a story. Coherence in this view relates one form of inclusivity to another, joining together both congruent and incongruent data, to paint a textured picture of how inclusivity is interpreted in theory and practice by participants in this study. In this way, I present what I think is a more genuine description of how inclusivity is taught and learned within a program of multiple users. Within a complex system of learning, tensions coexist between competing and congruent understandings of inclusivity creating active sites of learning where ways of thinking are challenged and changed. This tension is a form of coherence, a messy relationship of ideas, people, and actions. The purpose of the validity argument is to capture this coherence, to describe how things work within a complex learning system.
CHAPTER SIX: THE VALIDITY ARGUMENT

“What does this institution do to enable, to give space for, difference?”

(faculty member)

In this chapter, I present the validity argument for the Queen’s University teacher education program and its aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. The purpose of the validity argument is to provide a complex articulation of the quality of program coherence related to this program aim. Specifically in this validity argument, I stitch together data from administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates with results from the interpretive argument to examine coherency within specific program structures. Ultimately, this validity argument responds to my second research question: How congruent are interpretations towards inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle within and between various participant groups?

Overview of the Validity Argument

The Queen’s University teacher education program has an explicit commitment to “promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle” (Queen’s University, 2008a). Even across the 38 participants in this study, interpretations and enactment of this aim varied. This finding is not surprising given the program’s large size (i.e., approximately 700 teacher candidates and over 700 associate teachers from across Southern and Eastern Ontario plus nearly 75 faculty members) and complexity (i.e., two teaching divisions and four specialized program tracks). Such variation in interpretation and enactment of the program’s aim results in the promotion of multiple conceptions of inclusivity that align with various aspects of the framework of inclusivity. Specifically, I
found evidence that both integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity were promoted through program policies, structures, curricula, and pedagogy. As the majority of participants articulated interpretations that align with these two conceptions of inclusivity, the participants were somewhat coherent about their understanding of the term and their experiences in teaching and learning within the teacher education program. However, there were also areas of misalignment and partial articulations of conceptions of inclusivity across participant groups. For example, teacher candidates did not communicate a transgressive conception of inclusivity and their ability to link theoretical conceptions to pedagogical practices beyond their immediate experience was limited. The overall findings suggest that while there is a basis of coherence in the Faculty of Education towards the education of inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle, there is also room for continued development.

Recognizing that increased diversity is a foundational construct for learning about inclusivity, the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University endeavours to recruit and admit a diverse teacher candidate cohort. The Registrar acknowledged that efforts had been made to communicate the Faculty’s commitment towards inclusivity to potential applicants during student recruitment fairs and in published materials. In addition to recruitment initiatives, the teacher education program uses an equity admission form to explicitly select teacher candidates from three specific groups of difference to increase diversity within teacher candidate cohorts. These three groups are (a) Aboriginal or First-nations, (b) racial minorities, and (c) differently-abled persons. In the first-round of admission, all other applicants are selected through a standard admission procedure based on a combination of grade-point average and personal statement of experience. In the
second and subsequent rounds of admission, the Registrar considers admission of under-represented groups in an ad-hoc manner. Despite these efforts, and mainly because of a low number of self-identifying applicants, visible diversity as well as other forms of difference remains noticeably low across the teacher candidate population at Queen’s University. The Registrar further identified several reasons for these low levels of diversity including both systemic and program-based factors.

Once teacher candidates are admitted into the teacher education program, inclusivity is promoted in multiple ways and to varying degrees through the program’s overarching structure, practicum placements, coursework, and faculty pedagogies. Both faculty members and teacher candidates identified that the current program structure presented a challenge to achieving inclusivity within the teacher education program. In particular, the split on-campus-practicum structure was cited as preventing teacher candidates from having a deep sense of attachment to the teacher education program. In addition, as teacher candidates are separated into program tracks and classified by teachable subject areas, the teacher candidate cohort is further divisive. However, teacher candidates did note that within their specific program tracks or teachable subject areas, they were able to develop meaningful connections with their peers and faculty members. Two additional structures were suggested as supporting the Faculty’s aim to promote inclusivity through the program’s structure. These mechanisms included (a) extracurricular activities (i.e., the musical), and (b) formal university-wide supports and resources (i.e., accommodation services, counseling services, diversity-based student groups). These program structures demonstrated teacher candidates’ and faculty
members’ commitments towards integrative, dialogical, and transgressive forms of inclusivity.

Practicum placements provided a practice-based learning experience that teacher candidates asserted was useful to their understanding of how inclusivity was enacted in classroom settings. In addition, the alternative practicum offered a rich and unique opportunity to experience education in potentially diverse contexts, which further promoted the learning of inclusive values. On these alternative practicum placements, it was recognized that teacher candidates might be exposed to any or all conceptions of inclusivity given the diverse range of educational contexts and associate teachers’ pedagogical approaches. In contrast to their placement experiences, the majority of teacher candidates in this study perceived their on-campus coursework as highly theoretical. My analysis of course outlines revealed that courses that directly focused on inclusivity and social justice provided exposure to theoretical concepts related to integrative, dialogical, and transgressive conceptions of inclusivity. However, more than course content, modeling and dialogical pedagogies appeared to promote or hinder inclusivity within the teacher education program. Teacher candidates identified instances of both learning through positive and negative examples and suggested ways in which the program could enhance its teaching of inclusivity. Some of these suggestions included increased teacher candidate diversity within classes, greater diversity representation and acknowledgement, aesthetic enhancements to the physical learning environment, stronger links between course content and teaching practice, and greater congruence between faculty members’ teaching and their practice.
Perhaps most important to observe from this overview of the validity argument is that there are multiple conceptions of inclusivity within the Faculty of Education that translate into diverse practices for promoting inclusivity in the teacher education program. Despite this diversity, there appears a high degree of commitment amongst faculty members and administrators, at least in what they say, to create an inclusive culture and encourage the development of inclusive values in teacher candidates. When explicitly asked, teacher candidates also expressed strong commitments to inclusivity in education.

In the following sections of this chapter, I offer evidence in support of my validity argument for the Queen’s University teacher education program aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. The validity argument, which presents a complex description of the quality of coherence between participants’ interpretations and practices related to this aim, is presented at the end of this chapter.

Inclusivity as an Articulated Principle

The explicit commitments of the Faculty of Education towards inclusivity as an educational principle serve as the basis for the validity argument. Specifically, the mission statement indicates, “the program promotes caring as a central value in the profession of teaching, and inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle” (Queen’s University, 2008a). Further, in describing program graduates, the mission statement states, “we see the beginning teacher as an active agent in the development of a socially inclusive pedagogy aimed at social justice.” Hence inclusivity is an explicitly articulated principle in the Queen’s University teacher education program mission statement.
Faculty members and administrators in my study suggested three reasons for an explicit articulation of inclusivity within the mission statement. The first reason involved a genuine commitment to inclusivity within the Faculty of Education by those who work in the teacher education program. “Are there a lot of people here who are absolutely committed to the mission statement of inclusivity and think it’s very important to have it in what we put out to the world? I believe so. I have worked with a lot of people who share that view” (faculty member). A second suggested reason for including inclusivity in the mission statement was to assert a response to the current state of Canadian education and our society’s multicultural demography. One faculty member acknowledged that, “in 2009, it would be odd indeed if a teacher education program did not have a focus or a vision of inclusivity.” The Dean asserted that inclusivity not only responds to the demographic climate in Canada but also legislative commitments to human rights and equitable treatment of difference. Specifically, she stated, “inclusivity is conceived as a principle because diversity and inclusivity are part of human rights. They have to be articulated in an ethically defensible vision of education in which diversity and inclusivity appear as a moral imperative.” Therefore, articulating inclusivity in the program’s mission statement was thought to represent an explicit institutional address and ethical commitment to diversity and, not least, a particular treatment of diversity within and by the organization. However, as observed in the interpretive argument, interpretations of the treatment of diversity largely oscillated between integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity. This finding suggests that while there is an explicit program commitment to inclusion, the enactment of that commitment may be different based on one’s interpretation of inclusivity in education. Finally, faculty members
suggested that the term inclusivity was used in the mission statement because it is an
easily accepted term, reflective of contemporary jargon in the field of education. One
faculty member stated, “I think it is a big buzz word. That said, I think we should have it.
But, inclusivity is not a debated word; it has a sort of benign meaning, like nobody can be
against inclusivity.” This rationale is somewhat problematic as it suggests that inclusivity
is a generic term and thus assumes a common interpretation. However, this contrasts
what was observed in the interpretive argument in which four possible conceptions of
inclusivity were described. Hence this rationale potentially points to the need for
increased clarity around the intended interpretation of the term inclusivity within the
mission statement.

While faculty members and administrators identified several reasons for
articulating inclusivity in the mission statement, it is likely that the use of the term is a
result of more than one of these rationales or as one faculty member acknowledged,
“none of these are mutually exclusive.” Examining the process through which the
mission statement was developed may also shed light on why inclusivity was selected as
a fundamental aim for the teacher education program. Only two of the interviewed
faculty members were involved with the development of the current mission statement.
Many stated that they didn’t know how or who created the mission statement. In my
interview with the Dean, she succinctly described the process through which the mission
statement was developed. She stated

    Early in my tenure, I created a task force to look at the pre-service program.

    Then I created out of that a sub-committee for the mission statement and I took
myself to write it and then I submitted it to the committee. The committee was
okay with it; most people didn’t give a great deal of time to this. Then we held a retreat to consider a number of minor adjustments to the program. At the retreat I read the mission statement. It was there that some comments were made, in particular from the school board representative. He wanted to ensure assessment and evaluation was there. It wasn’t as explicit as he wanted. Afterwards, I modified the statement and then it went to Faculty Board and was approved. Then intellectually it was the property of the Faculty. But the original draft, which I wrote, remained fairly consistent.

In addition, the Dean also provided background on the experiences that led her to include the term inclusivity in the mission statement. Specifically, the Dean spoke of her experience as an administrator at a previous university. In that role, she was responsible for encouraging departments from across the university to make their curriculum more inclusive. This mandate involved promoting inclusive pedagogies, equitable hiring (particularly of women and visible minorities), and encouraging a diversified curriculum. The Dean acknowledged that at that time, anti-oppressive education, feminist pedagogy, and Deweyan progressivism were central frameworks that guided her thinking on issues of inclusivity. She further asserted a rationale for inclusivity as a fundamental human right and ethical imperative, which she believes should underpin all acts of education, especially those related to teacher preparation.

Given the prominent role of the Dean in the development of the mission statement, it appears that inclusivity was intended to signal a progressive treatment of diversity that represented an ethical and moral commitment to human rights supported by anti-oppressive and social justice frameworks. This intention aligns most closely with the
dialogical and transgressive models presented in my framework of inclusivity. The majority of administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates in my study articulated commitments to the dialogical conception of inclusivity. As such, there is a potential point of coherence between the intention of the program’s aim and the interpretation of the aim by participants in this study.

Explicit Use of the Mission Statement

Administrators and faculty members identified that the mission statement is intended for both “public consumption” (Registrar) and “internal use” (Associate Dean). In this section, I separately examine the external and internal explicit uses of the mission statement text and consider the congruence of its use across participant groups.

*External Use*

The Registrar and Associate Dean articulated three general ways that they believed the mission statement was used external to the Faculty. They acknowledged that the statement was used for (a) a public statement of intent, (b) program review and accreditation, and (c) teacher candidate recruitment. The first use makes public the aims and intentions of the Faculty through print and online materials. “The mission statement is out there so that people know what we are all about” (Associate Dean). The mission statement signals to the general public, educational stakeholders, and prospective teacher candidates that the Faculty of Education has an explicit commitment to inclusivity and promoting it as a core value in teaching and learning. This use aligns well with the second rationale for including inclusivity within the mission statement as described above.
Administrators and faculty members also recognized that the mission statement was used in the Faculty’s review and accreditation process. One faculty member described that program reviewers, who are external to the Faculty, take the mission statement seriously when judging whether or not the Faculty is achieving its aims and is operating in compliance with external criteria for accreditation. In further elaboration, the Associate Dean discussed that, in addition to a series of external standards, the mission statement becomes one benchmarking standard for program review. He asserted that the mission statement serves as a point of accountability for the teacher education program; but he also recognized that several other factors influenced the Faculty’s review and that the use of the mission statement was largely dependent upon the reviewers’ interest in it.

Finally, the mission statement was explicitly used in teacher candidate recruitment—written in program materials and pamphlets and posted on the Faculty’s website and in admission packages. The Registrar described how the statement was used for teacher candidate recruitment.

Even before people apply to the program, marketing and recruitment are very important. The mission statement is what we use to attract people. If we want more diverse students, then the statement about inclusivity is very important to emphasize in both the statement itself but in how we interact with potential students. When we are at the recruiting fairs, one of the things we want to do is give solid advice about the program, our vision, and the type of student we want in our program, but we also we need people there that have an inclusive attitude and that don’t look like one type of person. We are not going to get a diverse program cohort unless we’ve done the input.
Again, using the mission statement for teacher candidate recruitment and encouraging a diverse teacher candidate cohort appears consistent with its intended aim and with the promotion of a dialogical conception of inclusivity.

Overall, the external uses of the mission statement were viewed as important to positioning the Faculty as a progressive site for higher education within the context of Canadian teacher education. The Dean articulated it as: “Our mission is critical because it describes progressive features of the Queen’s University program to teacher candidates and professional organizations.” Thus it appears that the statement’s external purposes including program accreditation, teacher candidate recruitment, and as a public statement of intent, align with its initial intention and serve to promote and maintain diversity within the teacher education program.

Internal Use

In my interviews with administrators and faculty members, I observed misalignment between the groups’ use of the mission statement. Administrators suggested that the mission statement guides faculty and staff members’ general approach to working in the Faculty. Specifically, the Associate Dean stated that the mission statement is intended to “give them [faculty members, teacher candidates, and staff members] an awareness of the issues we think are important to their practice.” He also suggested that the mission statement was used as a starting place for discussions with faculty members about their course content. In a higher education context, faculty members have significant academic freedom and sometimes, “this can mean very different things than what we subscribe to as an institution.” He contends that the mission
statement helps to facilitate changes in content because faculty members are expected to have read and comply with the mission statement.

In contrast, faculty members expressed little use of mission statement text. One faculty member noted, “I don’t think that the mission statement has an impact on the culture of the building.” This statement fell alongside several other statements from faculty members who declared, “I haven’t read the mission statement in a long time,” “I can’t say what is in the mission statement for sure,” and “I don’t refer to the statement when I plan my courses.” Although there was generally a lack of explicit internal use by faculty members, these faculty members appeared to still highly value the content of the mission statement and endeavoured to promote inclusivity in their teaching at the Faculty. One faculty member stated, “I have been here 20 years and the mission statement has evolved during that time. But at the same time, I like to think that my courses and teaching would include some of the principles expressed in the mission statement.” In most instances, the mission statement appears to serve as a reflection of what faculty members intuitively believe and practice rather than as a prescriptive tool for guiding their practice. Thus the use of the mission statement by faculty members is better characterized as an implicit commitment to the principles described in the statement. Given the misalignment that emerged in administrator and faculty members’ explicit uses of the mission statement, in the following section of the validity argument, I explore the implicit commitments of faculty members towards promoting inclusivity in the teacher education program to determine the quality of coherence amongst participants’ commitments to this aim.
Commitments to Inclusivity

Despite little explicit internal use of the mission statement by faculty members and no explicit mention of the mission statement during teacher candidate focus groups, these participants still expressed strong commitments to inclusivity in their teaching and learning when deliberately asked. As all faculty members and teacher candidates in this study articulated commitments towards promoting one, and often times more than one, conception of inclusivity, I explore their commitments to inclusivity in this section. Administrator commitments towards inclusivity were described above in relation to the intention and use of the mission statement text; hence, I do not further elaborate on their commitments here.

Faculty Members

Despite their varied conceptions of inclusivity, faculty members held general support for promoting inclusivity through their teaching. Across interviews and interview follow-ups, faculty members acknowledged and agreed with their responsibility to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. One faculty member noted

Inclusivity is the responsibility of classroom teachers, therefore, as teacher educators our responsibility is to make teacher candidates aware of that and to look at all aspects of what inclusivity means in order to embrace all cultures and all forms of people in what we do here at the Faculty.

Although faculty members agreed in their explicit commitments to promoting inclusivity throughout their teaching, two faculty members problematised the term *inclusivity*. The first acknowledged that the term inclusivity was ambiguous and held multiple meaning and it is therefore difficult to achieve faculty-wide consensus about its
use. He asked, “What do we really mean when we talk about inclusivity in schools or in this Faculty of Education even?” He went on to assert that inclusivity, as an articulated goal, is no different than any other broad aim written in mission statements; there is little agreement on what it means, how it is achieved, and how we can measure it. Given this degree of ambiguity, he questioned its utility within mission statements. These challenges align with critiques from the field and calls for theoretical and practical delineations of inclusivity in education. This dissertation, in part, begins to respond to these critiques and serves to provide a basis for what inclusivity means in theory and practice at least within one teacher education context.

In contrast to this view, a second faculty member problematised the notion of inclusivity based on its rigid definition. She stated that inclusivity is a problematic term because

   It is always one way. It assumes a power difference between the includer and includee. As long as the construct through which we’re thinking about this reveals that the process only goes one way, an inequity is still in place, even though you use words like inclusivity, which implies equity. But structurally and conceptually, it doesn’t.

Alternatively, she prefers the notion of social justice as an articulated principle for the teacher education program because

   Social justice is a state of being of the entire context. It requires something of everyone. It doesn’t give anyone the notion that I am so position that I can exercise inclusion, or acceptance, or tolerate. Social justice takes us through a different way of conceptualizing relationships between people whereas
inclusivity leaves the power structures in place. The only concept in which individuals are conceptualized as potentially equal are within the framework of social justice.

Interestingly, within the Queen’s University teacher education program mission statement, both inclusivity and social justice are represented as embedded themes in the program. Depending upon the conception of inclusivity to which faculty members subscribe (i.e., integrative, dialogical, or transgressive), the inclusion of both terms may present differing perspective towards education because each conception represents qualitatively different positions towards inclusivity. On one end of the spectrum, transgressive inclusivity works toward a curriculum of social justice whereas on the other end, normative and integrative conceptions maintain a dichotomous power relationship and a binary understanding of diversity within educational contexts. Hence this critique of inclusivity represents a potential contradiction within the mission statement depending upon interpretations towards the two terms. This is problematic as it may send mixed-messages about how diversity and inclusivity are treated and promoted within the Faculty of Education.

Teacher Candidates

In the validity argument, it is also useful to examine teacher candidates’ commitments to this fundamental aim of education. While interviews with faculty members focused directly on conceptions and practices of inclusivity, data that I collected from teacher candidates enabled me to place their commitments towards inclusivity within their broader thinking on issues of teaching and learning. Data collected from teacher candidates in focus groups and questionnaires directly addressed
their conceptions and experiences with inclusivity while data collected through Commonplace Books focused more generally on their philosophies, approaches, and experiences with teaching over their teacher education year. In collecting both forms of data, I was able to gain a sense of how prominent concepts and learning about inclusivity were for teacher candidates in their development as teachers.

Data from Commonplace Books offered general understandings about teacher candidates’ compelling interests in teaching, descriptions of teaching scenarios, dilemmas, and experiences, and articulation of personal pedagogical positions. Based on Commonplace Book entries related to personal philosophies of education (i.e., ‘what does it mean to education?’ and ‘what is the role of the teacher?’) with most teacher candidates at both the beginning and end of their teacher education year articulating commitments to inspiring and motivating students to learn, developing students’ foundational knowledge and skills (e.g., reading, writing, mathematics), and being positive role models in the lives of students. For example, one PJ teacher candidate identified the following aims for her teaching, “I want to assist children in shaping their minds, developing their educational foundation, and exciting them about learning. I want to provide children with a safe space to explore new topics. I want them to take risks and ask questions.” Likewise, an IS teacher candidate articulated these points about the role of a teacher: (a) to help their students grow, (b) to make students want to come to school, (c) to encourage, inspire, enlighten, and motivate, (d) to create learning opportunities, and (e) to create a safe and fun learning environment. These responses by teacher candidates largely pointed toward a conception of teaching characterized by a singular relationship between teacher and student with little recognition of the importance of peer interaction in
classroom learning, which is a critical component of inclusive education. Further, these types of responses suggested that for these teacher candidates, teachers bear the responsibility for student learning with a focus on teachers creating the conditions, opportunities, and directions for learning. Again, there was little consideration of the community of learners in a classroom and the dynamic interaction between agents in the learning system. Therefore unsurprisingly, when not directly asked about inclusivity, most teacher candidates did not readily identify inclusivity as a fundamental principle of education. However, I did find explicit evidence that teacher candidates endeavoured to create physically and cognitively safe learning environments, one of the foundational constructs for inclusivity.

There were a few exceptions to this general trend in lack of focus on inclusivity. Johnas, a PJ teacher candidate, articulated the need for developing relationships in classrooms that lead to a sense of belonging and that provided a foundation for learning; “relationships are key to learning,” he wrote in his Commonplace Book. He further suggested, “building a learning community that engages in relevant inquiry guided by the curriculum” is part of his approach to teaching. In response to the prompt, “What do I believe matters about my teaching?” he stated

I care about learning from students. I care about inclusive classrooms and educating about issues of social justice. I care about mutual respect for teachers and students and creating a sense of community based on companionship within the classroom. I care about caring.

Similarly, Sebastian, an IS teacher candidate, also wrote about his commitment to caring and fostering connections and relationships within his classroom. He wrote
The most important quality of teaching is caring. Caring is the underlying goal of education. Without caring by the educator both to their student and to their knowledge, nothing is possible. Passion for knowledge, respect for others, growth intellectually, socially, and culturally cannot occur without first caring about who you are and what you do.

Unsurprisingly, in a list of Sebatian’s 20 key characteristics of teaching, caring (i.e., inclusion and respect) and connection (i.e., interest in students and belonging) he identified as his first two characteristics. Data from these two Commonplace Books suggest that at least some teacher candidates articulate commitments to a dialogical conception of inclusivity with caring and relationship building featured as central aspects of their intended learning environment.

When asked more directly about the role and function of inclusivity in education during focus groups and on questionnaires, teacher candidates did articulate an explicit commitment to this notion. One teacher candidate wrote, “inclusivity is the first ‘subject’ addressed in any classroom. When a student leaves at the end of their year, their memories will be the positive or negative feelings they had, not what curriculum they learned.” Another teacher candidate acknowledged that inclusivity was a fundamental feature of good teaching and learning and necessary for successful classrooms. Nearly all teacher candidates expressed similar broad statements of commitment. In fact, one teacher candidate commented that the focus group discussion confirmed her feelings about inclusivity in the classroom and that she appreciated that other people were equally passionate about creating inclusive classrooms.
Teacher candidates supported their expression of commitment towards inclusivity with a variety of rationales. Many teacher candidates described the importance of feeling included when they were in school and the lasting impact of such feelings on them now. One teacher candidate said:

I just remember how influential feeling included was for me growing up, being teased and left out of things, not picked for teams in gym class for example. The absolute importance of it is sometimes put by the wayside because we are all so focused on the curriculum or report cards or easy classroom management techniques. You don’t remember anything about what you learned in elementary school when you grow up but you do remember the fundamental feeling you had in that classroom. How I make kids feel today is so important to how they remember their schooling experience and how I treat them, positive or negative, will have a long lasting effect on them. It is the most important thing.

Teacher candidates also recognized that inclusivity was about creating relationships within the classroom and further linked the importance of relationships to learning. “There can be no learning without relationships. Inclusivity is rudimentary for establishing safety and willingness to make new relationships and create communities of learning” (teacher candidate). This view was consistent with contemporary notions of situated and social cognition and the importance of learning with and from other students. Safety was also presented as a rationale for commitments to inclusivity. Several teacher candidates connected the notions of safety, inclusion, and learning in describing why inclusivity was critical to their personal pedagogy. Again, this finding is congruent with faculty members’ conceptions of safety as a foundational construct to inclusivity. In
addition, one teacher candidate asserted that an inclusive approach serves a protective factor for students who might typically be at-risk of social or academic exclusion. She stated that an inclusive learning environment reduces adversities in schools and begins to address issues related to anxiety, bullying, social exclusion, and self-concept for at-risk children and youth. She said, “bullying and self-esteem issues really struck me in this discussion and inclusivity could be a preventative measure used everywhere!” These various articulated rationales suggest that teacher candidates perceive the value of inclusivity within the teaching and learning process and that they connect the importance of creating inclusive learning spaces with student achievement and enjoyment in school when explicitly asked about inclusive education. These rationales and commitments also reinforced certain aspects of the framework of inclusivity with support for integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity (e.g., learning communities) and safety as a foundational construct. This finding suggests that teacher candidates and faculty members share some common conceptions of inclusivity; however, teacher candidates largely do not articulate the importance of building on student diversity to promote learning. These multiple conceptions towards the enactment of inclusivity in education were promoted through various structures within the teacher education program.

Promoting Inclusivity in the Teacher Education Program

Central to a validity argument is an examination of how program practices and policies promote interpretations towards specific aims. Accordingly, in this section, I present validity evidence on admission policy, program structure, practicum placement experiences, coursework options, and faculty pedagogies that support the Queen’s University aim towards inclusivity in education.
Admission Policy

As identified by one faculty member, “the Registrar’s office really matters and how they do admission really matters to equity and inclusivity in this building.” The admission policy is critical to promoting inclusivity in the teacher education program because it serves as the initial gatekeeping mechanisms for the entrance of diverse teacher candidates into the program. This recognition aligns with previous research that suggests inclusivity is primarily addressed through entry or admission to educational contexts (Brathwaite, 2003; Solomon, 2002). In addition, the context at Queen’s University resembles the broader challenge facing teacher education programs of increasing diversity through their admission policy (Solomon, 2002). The Registrar of the Faculty of Education noted that applicants are from a fairly homogeneous pool each year. He further identified several potential reasons for the lack of diversity within the teacher education program including the admission process, a lack of diverse teacher role models within the school system, cultural and gender-based perceptions of the teaching profession, and financial requirements for attending a post-degree program. In addition, one faculty member observed that the level of cultural diversity at Queen’s University and in the Kingston area is minimal, which undoubtedly contributes to potential teacher candidates from minority groups selecting other institutions. In particular, the faculty member stated that a central concern is “attracting diverse students to our program especially because I don’t think we have a critical mass of students or faculty from any diverse backgrounds. It’s a challenge for us. We are not in a community that is culturally vigorous.” In contrast, she offered the following perspective based on a conversation with a graduate student who was from a visible minority. The graduate student noted that “I’ve
never been as challenged, or supported, or felt this sense of connection before coming to Queen’s University. I almost didn’t come here because of the lack of diversity. I can’t imagine not coming here now.” While this reflection centers on cultural differences, it points to the importance of teacher candidate recruitment and suggests that efforts need to highlight faculty members’ dispositions towards diverse groups of teacher candidates despite a lack of visibly diversity. The Registrar concurred, stating “in recruiting students, when talking to parents and students interested in our program, we need to show them that we are open to diverse perspectives and backgrounds. We are not going to get a diverse program cohort unless we’ve done the input.”

In addition to recruitment initiatives that highlight faculty members’ inclusive dispositions, the Registrar also recognized that some of the challenges are due to systemic factors (e.g., a lack of male applicants in the primary panel), and he asserted that there needs to be a system-wide address in order to curtail applicant trends. This suggestion is in alignment with the broader address of equity admission evident throughout faculties of education in Canada. Specifically, in response to the systemic challenges and in an effort to increase diversity within the program, the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University maintains an explicit equity admission policy. This policy complies with the university’s mandate.

Queen’s University attempts each year to admit a student body reflective of the general population of Canada, whose members bring to their pre-service professional preparation, understanding and personal experience of working towards environments free from prejudice and discrimination and characterized by inclusivity. The Queen’s University Faculty of Education has developed an
admission policy regarding equitable representation of groups under represented in the teaching profession, and has reserved a number of equity admission places in the Teacher Education Program. (Queen’s University, 2008e)

In practice, this policy translates into a self-identification equity admissions form for specific minority groups (i.e., Aboriginal/First Nations status, racial minorities, or differently-abled persons) and into provisions for a personal statement of life experiences where applicants can describe their diverse backgrounds (Queen’s University, 2008b). The self-identification equity admission form is available to all applicants of the teacher education program (see Appendix A).

The Registrar described how the equity policy is considered in the admission process of the teacher education program. He says that because applicants from one of the three identified groups must meet the same admission criteria, applications for teacher candidates who self-identify are processed and ranked in the same way as other applications. When making offers of admission, the Registrar considers the equity status of the applicant and offers admission to the highest ranked applicants within the designated number of places. He further described efforts to admit teacher candidates who are from under represented groups but who are not classified under the equity admission policy; for example, male elementary teacher candidates or female teacher candidates in the Technology Studies program. Applicants in these categories again get ranked using the typical procedures and are often times not offered admission during the first round because their overall score is lower than the initial in-take average. However, in the second round of admissions, the Registrar factors in gender as a selection criterion. He noted that this procedure helped to maintain a relatively consistent admission ratio of
females to males within the Technology Studies program for the current year. While this practice was effective for the Technology Studies program, other program areas have a severe imbalance, notably a low number of males in the P/J cohort. Hence, this ad hoc equity selection process does not address all gaps across the program and points toward the need for a systematic process to address admission for teacher candidates of under-represented groups who are not currently listed on the equity form.

In addition to equity admissions for diverse teacher candidates, selection is based on a composite score derived from applicants’ undergraduate grades and their personal statements of experience (PSE) score, with each weighted equally. While the grade calculation is non-discriminatory in relation to diversity, the PSE provides an opportunity for applicants to communicate their diversity and dispositions towards inclusivity to the selection committee. Specifically, the personal statement asked applicants to list up to five activities or jobs that they have held and then, in a subsequent statement, to explain the learning related to teaching that has occurred through participation in those activities or jobs. Applicants had a total of 500 words in which to write this statement. The use of PSEs as an indicator of teaching ability and disposition towards inclusivity was a contentious issue amongst participants in this study. Some faculty members believed strongly that PSEs were not useful indicators of an applicant’s ability to teach and be inclusive while others noted that these statements provided critical information for admission decision-making.

In favour of the use of PSEs, faculty members argued that they provide one of the only opportunities for pre-selection of educators who have inclusive approaches to teaching and learning. One faculty member stated that the PSE is
One part of the program that I’m proud of. They’re a lot of work, but they allow us to select candidates who might be inclusive teachers. The PSE tells us when someone has had a diverse experience working with diverse communities and that way we can bring a variety of experiences and perspectives into our faculty.

Both faculty members and administrators expressed a need to have some form of admission component that characterized teacher candidates’ abilities to teach. In general, they believed that using a numerical score of their grades as the sole criteria for entry into a professional program was problematic. Specifically, one faculty member stated

I think that if our applicants feel safe enough to actually tell us about their life experiences, whether the student is someone with a disability (i.e., physical, mental, etc.) for example, then we get a very different group of people in the program than if we didn’t have the PSE. I know that from the core of my being. I think the PSE needs to be tweaked but I think we get different people and better candidates than if we were just relying on marks. The people who get A’s don’t always know about inclusivity. I knew a boy in first year that was brilliant and I taught him in one of my curriculum classes, he was the gold medal winner in one of his teachable areas, but he was going to teach in a certain way because that is what worked for him. That would be my concern if we just accept people on the basis of marks.

Despite wanting an alternative indicator than grades for admissions, several faculty members highlighted negative aspects of using PSEs in admission decisions. Four general critiques were raised in relation to the use of PSEs for teacher candidate selection. These critiques include: (a) falsification of information, dispositions,
experiences, and perspectives; (b) the generic nature of statements; (c) a lack of scoring criteria; and (d) inherent selection biases. One of the primary objections to using the PSE is their credibility and reliability as a testament of applicants’ experiences and perspectives. One faculty member noted, “we have no way of knowing who wrote the personal statement and therefore we have no way of knowing for sure who we are picking until we see the whites of their eyes and then, sometimes you think, how did you get here?” In addition to questioning who wrote the personal statement, there was expressed concern over the accuracy of what is written in the personal statements. One faculty member noted, “No one ever says, ‘I am a racist homophobic pig’ on their PSE. And yet they come here and they are. There is no way to do this because there is no good test for judging inclusivity and they are going to falsify their results. Everyone knows the right answer.” One mechanism by which the Education Registrar’s Office addresses this concern is to randomly phone applicants’ referees to verify the accuracy of applicant claims in their PSEs. However, this is not a consistent practice used with all applicants and therefore the concern for PSE authenticity still remains.

Given the prompt for the PSE, the statements vary widely in their focus and detail. Moreover, several faculty members also commented that the statements tend to use highly politically correct language related to issues of inclusion and social justice and that applicants use educational buzz words rather than articulating a personally situated understanding of inclusivity. As such, the majority of faculty members believe PSEs to be fairly generic and provided little guidance towards applicants’ personal positions and approaches to teaching and learning. Specifically, faculty members described the
majority of PSEs as “bland,” “unspecific,” “generic,” or “too theoretical.” One faculty member said

Hopefully we’ll rethink the prompt and get more of candidates’ stories back in the personal statements. We were trying but we didn’t ask the right questions this year and so, they spouted theory instead of experiences. And that was our fault. Beyond the quality of prompt, another faculty member acknowledged that the PSE is used to measure several different criteria including applicants’ abilities to communicate and write, their level of critical reflection, their breadth of experience, their disposition towards inclusivity, and their passion for teaching. He further suggested

When we asked them to do so much in one page, they end up doing none of it well. The statements become very generic, especially around issues of social justice and inclusivity. Only about 10-15% communicate a deeper understanding of these issues, so you could pick those out but the rest I couldn’t separate.

Accordingly, the PSEs’ usefulness as a discriminating indicator for teacher candidate selection was questioned by faculty members.

A third dilemma with the use of PSEs in admission decisions centers on the scoring protocol and criteria. PSEs are typically read by two volunteers, one faculty member and one practitioner, and are each ranked independently on a 10-point scale. While groups of raters discuss the “look fors” and rate some statements together as a group, there are no set criteria for point allocation. As described in more detail below, raters look for vastly different things when assigning scores. Further, one faculty member noted, “the problem with the system is that we have no way of ranking all the life experiences within the group because each PSE is only read by two people.” This
suggests while the end-goal is to norm-reference all applicants by ranking them based on their PSE score, currently there is no consistent rating process that allows simultaneous comparison of all statements. Ratings are subjectively applied to PSEs based on fairly individualized criteria yet ranked on standard scale.

Perhaps most widely discussed was the biased nature of scoring PSEs. One faculty member noted that “with any judgment system there's always bias…and it is impossible to remove ourselves completely from that. What we need to do is keep checking ourselves to see if the rules we put in place or the way we individually rate PSEs are putting barriers and boundaries in places that we not ought to put them.” This statement suggests that inherent biases exist in both the PSE process and the adjudication of PSEs. In an effort to ‘blind’ raters from applicants’ differences, the Registrar removed the names and identifying information on raters’ copies of the PSEs. One faculty member commented

I've tried to be as blind as I possibly can and not give undue extra weight to a particular situation. The only place where my own experience would come into play would be to not discriminate against somebody whose means of communication might be less crisp or refined than someone else. You can sometimes sense a person’s cultural background or gender based on how they write their statement. So I try very hard not to do that. I look at what it is that they have done and what they are saying as distinct from any nuances of expression.

A blind review approach suggests that applicant differences should not factor into PSE ratings. One faculty member acknowledged that this approach might in fact yield an opposite result to the program’s intention to diversify the teacher candidate cohort. If
raters are unaware of the diverse background of teacher candidates (i.e., their gender, race, culture, etc.), then how can they actively select a diverse cohort into the teacher education program? In an effort to reduce rater bias, there are potentially negative effects on a rater’s ability to select diverse teacher candidates and rate statements in a way that recognizes and awards points for diversity.

Regardless of blind review protocols, raters acknowledged that biases cannot be fully removed. In particular, raters acknowledged specific PSE features to which they awarded higher scores. When asked, “What features in a PSE generate a higher rating from you?” and “What do you look for in rating PSEs?” faculty members’ responses included

• People who are parents I want them to be in here. People who speak more than one language, I want them to be in here. People who have worked in other countries and jobs are the people who I want in here. The people I don’t warm to are the people who have wanted to be teachers from their childhood. They are the suspect ones.

• Stories where they show me when they’ve been inclusive. Whether that is working at home with their own siblings, if they can’t afford to be camp counselors. Any indication where they’ve demonstrated the ability to see the world through someone else’s perspective.

• When I read a statement I want to hear their voice. Its not just words, it’s what they know about themselves.

• I like it when they talk about what happened to them in school. For example, you were the kid who was really quiet so wanted a teacher who would work and connect with you, especially kids with unidentified learning disabilities.
• I want to hear that they actually went out and did something about issues of inclusivity. They perhaps tutored a person with a disability or an immigrant or whatever; they’re doing something to reach out to some group that’s not their own group. Or it’s the applicant who says well my brother or my sister or whatever is Down’s syndrome, so I understand that very well. And some will say, ‘I am a person that is different and I want to be included and my difference helps me to understand other people.’ Those people are the ones I give higher scores to.

• When they ask questions. I love it when they ask questions. When they tell me things that they’ve learning and they admit what they use to think before. When they can say that I never realized before that blah, blah, blah.

• I read it and ask ‘would I like to have you teaching beside me? Are you passionate about teaching and children? Or, do you give me all the buzz words?’ For example, some might stay, I would be very conscious of social justice but they don’t say how. I want to know, what does that looks like? How do you relate that to your experiences?

These responses suggest biases towards particular ways of writing, experiences, and applicant dispositions. Further, these biases function in relation to assumptions that link particular experiences to applicants’ teaching readiness and disposition towards inclusivity. One faculty member cautioned against operating on this assumption by stating, “some of the people you would think by their life experiences should be the most inclusive because of their negative life experience and demographic group may not be inclusive of other groups.” However, perhaps even more problematic is the lack of consensus across responses. Raters appear to be looking for vastly different criteria in personal statements. This finding reinforces the concern over a lack of assessment criteria
and the subjectivity of the rating process. Interestingly, this current structure for evaluating PSEs and the degree of diversity in rater “look fors” may in fact result in increased diversity but a lack of equity in teacher candidate selection.

Several faculty members outwardly acknowledged that the admissions process for the teacher education program is flawed and, in their opinion, no reliable indicator exists for admission decisions. The majority also identified the caveat that teacher candidate selection is a complex process that is conditioned by situational, systemic, and measurement issues. However, based on the current equity admission policy at the Faculty of Education—the use of self-identification forms and PSEs—admission processes appear to be working toward enhanced teacher candidate diversity and thus promotes at minimum an integrative context for learning. This suggests coherence between administrator and faculty member conceptions of integrative inclusivity and the program’s current admission policy.

Program Structure

The overarching structure of the teacher education program also influences experiences of inclusivity amongst teacher candidates, faculty members, and administrators. In describing the role of program structure on inclusion, there was general recognition amongst participants that the program structure could only go so far in enabling a deep sense of inclusion; most participants expressed that inclusion occurred in individual classes and interactions between teacher candidates and faculty members. In addition, participants generally expressed that the current structure was somewhat limiting in promoting feelings of inclusivity within the program. The teacher education program is structured as an eight-month program with split on-campus coursework and
in-school placements. Both faculty members and teacher candidates acknowledged that this program structure made it difficult to promote inclusivity within the teacher education year. As one teacher candidate reflected, “our program makes it difficult for us to really feel like we belong at McArthur [the faculty] because we are always in and out.” Several faculty members also supported this notion, with one commenting “it can be hard in classes and even in planning workshops for teacher candidates because most go home on weekends and by April they are already done and gone, so they don’t necessarily come together as a group much.”

In addition to the split campus-practicum structure, faculty members and teacher candidates acknowledge that there appears to be “silos of students” based on teachable division (i.e., PJ and IS) and program foci (ATEP, OEE, ACE, and Tech Studies) with few opportunities for cross-group connections. These silos did allow teacher candidates to experience inclusivity within their program focus cohort but less so within the broader program. Perhaps the most obvious case of this was the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP). ATEP is a program track intended for teacher candidates who want to specialize in Aboriginal education and is particularly suited to Aboriginal teacher candidates (Queen’s University, 2008h). ATEP is a community-based and on-campus program with specialized courses in Aboriginal community education. Teacher candidates in this program have a modified admission process and alternative program requirements to address their specific educational backgrounds and learning needs. In commenting on the Faculty’s programmatic response to Aboriginal teacher candidates, one faculty member noted that
In this Faculty, in this part of the country, there is recognition of the 4% of the population who declare themselves to be Aboriginal. We have a pretty good sense that those that are sensitive to Aboriginal culture do a better job of making Aboriginal students feel comfortable and at home in school. They also do a better job of adapting schools so that they are not foreign places for Aboriginals. I think in this Faculty for a long time, and I’ve been here 22 years, there has been a real sense of the importance given the Aboriginal communities around us. I think that we are doing a more conscious and conscientious job of attending to Aboriginal notions in schools.

This programming structure suggests an overall integrative view towards including Aboriginal teacher candidates within the teacher education program at Queen’s University. However, it was noted that within the program track, teacher candidates experience a dialogical sense of inclusivity. This finding reinforces the multiple ways in which the program supports differing notions of inclusivity. It also points towards the overall effect of program tracks on creating schisms across diverse teacher candidates and the need to find ways to bridge connections between these diverse groups.

The participants identified three current structures intended to help teacher candidates feel included throughout their program. Teacher candidates suggested that the cohort group model (i.e., PROF 190/91 and Extended Family Groups) and the consistent timetabling (i.e., common lunch time) were effective in helping to create a sense of belonging. One teacher candidate stated

We have the same group of people in our classes and in our practicum. We are included in that group. So I like that it’s not like the rest of university, with
random classes and random people. We have the same schedules, breaks, and lunches. We have the opportunity to connect.

Other teacher candidates also supported the idea of maintaining common free time for working together and relationship building amongst teacher candidates. In addition, the cohort groups were viewed as creating a professional learning community with structured and unstructured learning opportunities. One faculty member commented, “this year, we have tried to tie together the program for teacher candidates with the Extended Family Group time, which gives them an opportunity to chat and bring their thinking together. I think it has worked well so far.”

One faculty member identified the annual BEd Musical as a second opportunity for teacher candidates to connect with one another and feel as though they belong within a group. She stated

The first instance where I really saw people being brought together was the musical. That play was the best thing to happen to this place in a long time. It brought all different people together. The people I didn’t think would volunteer or step into the limelight like that are the ones who did. And, they’re the ones who would say, I’m a little behind in my work, but I wouldn’t trade it for anything. And that is exactly what I want people to say when they leave here. That play was the best ever because it’s about more than academics; it’s about life and making people happy. I’ve never seen people happier. There was a mood in the building we haven’t had in a long time. It’s momentum, and that’s the kind of inclusivity that keeps people motivated and on track. It’s about enjoying all
aspects of learning and feeling like you are part of something special. And they don’t feel that everywhere.

The BEd Musical was an entirely voluntary extra curriculum activity directed by three doctoral candidates, including myself. Casting began during the November on-campus block and followed the policy that any teacher candidate who expressed interested in performing would have a part in the show. With nearly 40 teacher candidates involved, rehearsals ran for five weeks in January and February before four performances on candidates’ final two on-campus days before their third practicum. Research on the Musical (Ogden, DeLuca, & Searle, in press) corroborated data from this study to suggest the musical as a program structure that promoted inclusivity. In particular, musical participants expressed a sense of belonging that was shaped by a number of factors including regular full-cast rehearsals that enabled relationship building, working towards a common and authentic goal, having an ongoing commitment that bridged professional and personal interests, and an opportunity for safe risk-taking behaviour. This sense of belonging went well beyond the cast itself and “extended into other aspects of the pre-service program” (Ogden et al., in press).

The third program structure that was mentioned by the former Associate Dean was the explicit supports offered by the university to help accommodate teacher candidates with exceptionalities or teacher candidates with particular cultural interests. He stated, “there are several resources for incoming students like disability services, counseling and health services, and other spots on campus like the Ban Righ center and the Four Directions Aboriginal Center that help students connect.” These and other equity
and accessibility services fall with the purview of the Queen’s University Student Affairs Office and Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility Office, which maintains a vision of:

An inclusive Queen’s University, one whose community members have created positive environments that reflect the diversity of who we are, including: feminists, people of colour, gay men, lesbians and transgender people, persons with different abilities, and persons of many religions, ancestries and cultural backgrounds. (Queen’s University, 2009c)

All students, including teacher candidates, maintain full access to these services.

While these three structures were identified as programmatic aspects that contributed to a sense of belonging within the teacher education program, in general participants expressed the idea that the current program structure limited their experiences of feeling included within the teacher education program. As such, it may be useful to more closely examine and integrate alternative program structures (e.g., York’s Urban Diversity Program and Stanford’s Teacher Education Program) that enable more consistent interaction between cohorts of teacher candidates. Despite the program’s structure, participants pointed towards other aspects of their teaching and learning that promoted inclusivity in education. In the following section, I explore the value of the practicum experience in achieving this aim.

Practicum

All participant groups acknowledged the importance of field-based placements for promoting inclusivity in education, and activity that is supported by previous research (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2002; Kosnik, & Beck, 2009; Santoro, 2009; Solomon, 2002). Across interviews and focus groups, participants addressed three aspects of the practicum
that contributed to learning about inclusivity. The first was best described by the former Associate Dean, who noted

We give them [teacher candidates] opportunities to explore education in different ways. With their alternate practicum, for example, they are encouraged to go out of the normal school system and see how education operates in different environments so we have students going into prisons, going into low income communities where people are struggling with having basic needs met, going into reading camps, working with students with disabilities at the H’Art Studio, doing all kinds of other things that draws on their notion of what education is and what education can be about. The goal of that is partially even if they end up in normal schools they can bring some of that understanding back into the school.

Field-based placements and especially the alternative practicum were viewed by participants as discrete opportunities to engage in diverse forms of education. Having teacher candidates complete four practicum blocks, oftentimes in different school settings, enables them to see what works within different educational contexts and to gain a better understand that schools and classrooms differ throughout Ontario, Canada, and the world. One faculty member noted that it also gives teacher candidates a “reality check. It shows them that the classroom they might be teaching in is not the same classroom that they went to school in. They come back to our Faculty with their eyes wide open.” One faculty member pointed towards the unique opportunity at Queen’s University for teacher candidates to go abroad during their alternative practicum. He suggested that such an experience directly promoted the concept of globalization in
education and allowed teacher candidates to experience education from an entirely different perspective. He stated

We have lots of students who go abroad for their alternative practicum. These students are able to see how teaching and learning happens in other parts of the world. And they come back with wonderful stories that enter our discussions here at the Faculty.

These findings suggest the field-based component of the teacher education program at Queen’s University provides teacher candidates with a potential opportunity to understand the context for inclusivity in education. Through these experiences, teacher candidates gain exposure to the concepts of globalization and education, diversity in schools and society, and the broader movement towards inclusivity within the educational system.

The second aspect of the practicum experience that contributed to teacher candidates’ understandings about inclusivity in education was their observations of inclusive teaching methods within diverse classroom contexts. Through their practica, teacher candidates typically see how their associate teachers interact and accommodate students with diverse needs.

You see their understandings about accommodations and differentiated instruction change. At first, they are looking for the magic template for teaching students with exceptionalities, by the end, some of them understand that it is not a cookie-cutter thing, that each student is different, what works for one might not work for the next. (faculty member)
This quote suggests that through their practicum, some teacher candidates learn that pedagogy is dependent upon classroom context and student diversity and that an inclusive pedagogy involves responsive teaching. One teacher candidate noted, “My associate teacher was so good at it. She made all the students feel comfortable regardless of their ability. She had a way of teaching to all students.” Evidence from Commonplace Book entries suggested that teacher candidates were recognizing and recording accommodation strategies. Several teacher candidates had lists of possible accommodations for students with specific exceptionalities. One teacher candidate even had a list of “accommodations observed on practicum.” As such, these teacher candidates gained exposure to an integrative conception of inclusive education through their practicum experiences.

The final aspect of the practicum that appears to contribute towards teacher candidates’ understandings of inclusivity was the link between coursework learning and practical learning. As one teacher candidate noted in his Commonplace Book, “I found the classes on-campus were a lot of times too theoretical and not hands on enough. The practicum allowed me to see it happening in practice.” Previous research on teacher education similarly identifies a persistent challenge in bridging the gap between teacher candidates’ on-campus theoretical learning and their in-school teaching practice. Critical to this linkage between theory and practice is the support from associate teachers and faculty members. “Candidates sometimes need help in making the link between what we talk about here and what they do out there. Some of them never make the link, others do,” said one faculty member. She further elaborated, suggesting that conversations before and after practicum, debriefing and reflecting, are important ways to support the bridge between theory and practice. Strengthening the links between theory and practice appears
a necessary aspect for promoting a deep level of learning about inclusivity in education in the teacher education program at Queen’s University.

Administrators and some faculty members also viewed the practicum as a potential barrier to accepting teacher candidates with diverse learning needs into the teacher education program, thus limiting the diversity of the teacher candidate cohort. One faculty member described an initiative that took place a few years ago to admit teacher candidates who were deaf and blind into the program under a human rights mandate. He described the experiences of these teacher candidates as “challenging; they constantly confronted barriers, institutionally and personally.” Specifically, he described the situation as

We made a conscious effort to admit deaf and blind students and we sent them out to their practicum. Some of the associate teachers were just horrified. These people won’t be able to teach! You can’t take this kind of people! And we said, well we don’t know that, we haven’t tried yet. So some teachers did have them and we had someone from student counseling come to help us and counsel us on the law and we talked about how a person with a disability has to be accommodated but they also have to be able to do the core functions of the job. So if you’re blind, yes we can send someone to class with you to take notes for you, will we send someone with you to your practicum and our conclusion was no, because if you got a job, the school board wouldn’t provide that kind of assistance. If you’re blind, can you tell if someone is misbehaving? Therefore, can you maintain discipline and safety in the class? We had one blind student who coped enough to get his degree but didn’t go on into teaching. We’ve had several
deaf people and they’ve managed. People in wheelchairs have also managed. And many of the associate teachers have changed their views.

Part of the dilemma in admitting teacher candidates with severe exceptionalities is the focus and emphasis on ‘mainstream’ teaching in the teacher education program. While a teaching degree can lead to a career in the public school system, it may also lead to teaching in alternative settings and schools for differently-abled individuals. Limiting access and programming for teacher candidates with disabilities who might be well matched to these alternative education settings or who simply want to learn more about teaching and learning is discriminatory. “We have such narrow views of what constitutes teaching. We’re not for example saying to students, why don’t you go off and become a consultant to parents who are home schooling their children” (faculty member). Further, one faculty member asserted that because, “we’re so narrow in what we teach people to do and therefore we’re not able to include some people who might be includable if we were saying you can be an educator in another way.” Hence the current model for field-based placements is limited in its ability to accommodate diverse teacher candidates. Further, I contend that this limitation presents a barrier to promoting dialogical or transgressive conceptions of inclusivity within the teacher education program. Alternative practica requirements may help to facilitate greater capacity to accept teacher candidates with exceptionalities while simultaneously broadening the program’s conception of what teaching is and where it can occur.

In general, participants in all groups viewed field-based placements as critical experiences to promote inclusivity in teacher candidates. However, these placements also present barriers to the level of diversity accommodated for by the program and therefore
limit experiences of inclusivity within the teacher education program. The Queen’s University teacher education program appears to have pushed the boundaries in this regard, with both successes and challenges. Bridging practicum experiences with course-based learning also remains a critical link to enhancing awareness and understandings of inclusivity.

Coursework

In addition to field-based placements, participants from all groups suggested that coursework, both mandatory and elective, was a dominant program structure that contributed to teaching and learning about inclusivity. Two courses, directly related to inclusivity in education, were required components of the 2008-09 teacher education program: (a) Critical Issues in Education (PROF 100/101), and (b) the Social Justice Module (PROF 150/155). The Critical Issues in Education course focused specifically on issues of equity and exceptionalities in the classroom. The course had a total of 21 instructional hours, 7 of which were lecture-based instruction delivered by a faculty member and the remainder involved breakout seminars led by graduate teaching assistants. Lecture and seminar topics differed each week and ranged from specific exceptionalities (e.g., ADHD, MID) to equity issues of culture/race, gender, religion, etc. Teacher candidates were expected to prepare weekly readings for each lecture and seminar in addition to completing two assignments. The first assignment required teacher candidates to explore an equity issue or an exceptionality either in short essay format or through a poster. The second assignment asked teacher candidates to either accommodate a lesson plan for a student with an exceptionality or design a lesson to teach students about a critical issue in education. The content of PROF 100/101 promotes aspects of
both an integrative view of inclusivity (via an emphasis of accommodation on students with exceptionalities) and a dialogical view of inclusivity through topics of equity in the classroom. The course outline is provided in Appendix M for a more detailed description of topics and assignments.

The PROF 100/101 course was viewed as a critical component of the teacher education program’s commitment to promoting inclusive values in education. The Associate Dean stated, “The most obvious way we promote inclusivity in the program is through the equity and exceptionalities course.” Teacher candidates concurred and identified the course in each focus group as a positive learning experience about inclusion, accommodations, and equity issues. One teacher candidate noted, “I really do think that PROF 101/100 was important. I just can’t imagine this program without it. The seminars allowed us to express our own experiences and opinions and more importantly, hear the views of others.” She proceeded to share how shocked she was at some of her classmates’ opinions about equity issues and how the seminars were “eye openers” to some of the beliefs that exist within the teaching profession. As an example, she told of her experience coming-out as a lesbian in her seminar and the response of one peer who said, “I don’t understand why there would be any reason you would need to share that with the teachers on your staff.” The seminars created an opportunity to not only hear and express teacher candidates’ views about equity issues but also provided a language and framework for critical dialogue on these issues. This structure enables teacher candidates to begin to develop a dialogical conception of inclusivity. As one faculty member noted, it gave teacher candidates the opportunity to “empathize and experience, but also to ask critical questions about experience. For example, what does this classmate ask me to
notice, and care about? How do they invite me to view my fellow human beings?”

Comments during focus groups reflected teacher candidates’ views that the seminars were useful in mediating contrasting views, providing a safe space for discussion and critique as well as an opportunity for critical personal reflection.

The Social Justice Module was another opportunity for teacher candidates to engage in topics related to inclusivity in education. This required module consisted of seven instructional hours and used a lecture format. The module’s aim was to “draw attention to the theoretical underpinnings of social justice (as distinct from the more commonly understood notions of charity) and help us to better understand how issues of equity and possibility might be achieved in schooling contexts” (Queen’s University, 2008f). Topics covered in lectures and readings included the theoretical foundations of social justice pedagogy; concepts of oppression, injustice and social change; poverty; and language. Hence the module focused heavily on issues surrounding social justice education and at least through its content suggested the promotion of a transgressive conception towards inclusivity. In order to pass the module, teacher candidates were required to complete two assignments, including (a) a critical reflection on a social justice issue observed in an educational context, and (b) a digital story that linked personal experience with new knowledge and insights on social justice education through multimedia, image, and voice over methodology. A more detailed description of the Module (i.e., course outline) is available in Appendix N.

Teacher candidates’ description of the Social Justice Module focused on its strong theoretical emphasis. “It was good to get all of the theory on social justice education” (teacher candidate). However, a common critique of the module was that given its short
duration, teacher candidates were not able to see a social justice pedagogy in action; the link to their practicum and to practical teaching examples was tenuous. “It would have been useful to see what a curriculum of social justice looks like in practice, I didn’t get how to tackle it in the classroom. I still don’t know if I know how to do social justice” (teacher candidate). This finding aligns with the commonly identified gap of translating theory to practice within short teacher education program. While teacher candidates gained an introductory exposure to principles of social justice, both faculty members and teacher candidates expressed concerns that learning from the module would quickly be lost amongst more practically based teacher education experiences. Teacher candidates also expressed concerns over the large amount of self-reflection required in module assignments. Overall, these teacher candidates did not fully value the depth of personal reflection or readily make the link between individual teacher diversity and creating contexts of classroom inclusion. This personal link is a key feature of dialogic and transgressive conceptions of inclusivity and teacher candidates may not yet be fully prepared to engage these conceptions.

In addition to the two required courses on critical issues in education and social justice, teacher candidates in the teacher education program also had the option to enroll in an elective course related to inclusivity in education. For the 2008-09 academic year, these courses included: Exceptional Children and Adolescents (EDST 476); Seminar in Social Class, Gender and Race (FOUN 490); Teaching At-risk Adolescence and Young Adults (FOCI 290/295); Teaching for Social Justice (FOCI 296); and Teaching the Gifted (FOCI 299). All of these courses involved small group learning (i.e., maximum 40 teacher candidates per section) and weekly readings. In interviews with two instructors of
these courses, it was evident that the content of these courses focused heavily on practices and theories related to inclusive values in education as connected to their specific focus of study (e.g., exceptionalities, gender, social justice). The instructor of Teaching for Social Justice noticed that by the end of her course, “these worlds—beliefs, histories, personal commitments—opened up, and teacher candidates had learned something about teaching as an act of justice.” However, she also identified a concern that the teacher education program was too short to create a significant lasting impact on teacher candidates and she feared that teacher candidates would get jobs in schools with such an institutional force that their own views, beliefs, and commitments to social justice would fold and their learning in the course would dwindle. She then articulated the need to draw on personal pedagogies as a way to increase impact of teaching and suggested that one of the key roles of faculty members in areas of inclusivity was to empower teacher candidates to continually advocate for and act in ways that promote a socially just education. Instructors of these courses indicated that they used a variety of pedagogical approaches to promote deep understanding of content and to empower and encourage teacher candidates. I elaborate on some of these pedagogies in the following section.

It was evident through speaking with faculty members who taught courses not directly related to inclusivity or social justice that they too promoted inclusivity as a fundamental value in their teaching. The majority of these faculty members indicated that they integrated concepts of inclusivity into their curriculum, educational studies, professional studies, and foci courses. In some instances, faculty members directly addressed issues of inclusivity. For example, one faculty member described that she
spends at least one class a year on accommodating curriculum/lesson plans for ESL and exceptional learners. Another faculty member identified that the link between his curriculum content area, geography, provides a natural connection to talk about issues of multiculturalism and globalization, suggesting that class conversations often times involve consideration of cultural issues in the classroom and the integration of diverse learners. One faculty member said that she does subtle but intentional things to open discussions related to culture, gender, or other forms of difference.

I specifically choose activities that bring issues like homophobia into the classroom and I do it through activity. And am I going to ask the boy to be a princess? Am I going to change the language in the story so that the hero is a heroine? That is how I deal with those issues, through songs, story, and then talk. I do things in the context of the materials I use and the activities and then I say what are some of the problems or changes or things we need to think about as educators?

Other faculty members indicated that they address issues of inclusivity in an ad hoc manner. One faculty member noted that inevitably, conversations about inclusivity come up after teacher candidates are out on practicum. “You just can’t ignore it. When they come back, they have so many stories, most dealing with diversity and the reality of classrooms. We spend a lot of time talking and critically reflecting on their experiences.”

As evident from these examples, faculty members of non-inclusivity based courses believed they promoted both integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity depending upon the context of education.
Finally, formal learning about inclusivity and social justice in education occurred in workshops offered throughout the academic year. Teacher candidates’ Commonplace Books suggested that they engaged in several different workshops including the Social Justice Workshop Series, Tribes, Universal Design, Differentiated Instruction, and Classroom Management. Based on entries, these workshops appeared to focus mainly on practical links to the classroom as evidenced by lists of accommodations and classroom management strategies, activities focused on promoting equity and social justice in the classroom, resource lists for specific social justice topics, and steps for universal design planning. The Social Justice Workshop Series included sessions by several guest speakers from the following organizations: (a) Queen’s University Women’s Studies Program, (b) John Howard Society, (c) H'Art Studios Kingston, and (d) Kingston Community Living. These workshops not only offered exposure to these organizations but also increased awareness of issues related to gender, queer, Aboriginal, criminal, and disabilities in classrooms and communities. The Tribes workshop was offered as an extracurricular weekend session to teacher candidates for a fee of $200. The Tribes session emphasized caring and inclusion as key aspects in creating a positive school and classroom environment. One teacher candidate articulated that Tribes focused on student achievement through (a) having student feel included and appreciated by peers and teachers; (b) respecting for diversity and differences (i.e., cultural, gender, interests); (c) active learning; and (d) positive and appropriate expectations of student success. One teacher candidate had pasted in her Commonplace Book the Tribes Trail (see Figure 3), which emphasizes a path of sequential stages for group development that involves inclusion, influence, and community.
The Universal Design workshop and the differentiated instruction workshop further emphasized choice as a pedagogical and curricular strategy to increase inclusion within classes. These workshops have the potential to promote all three conceptions of inclusivity—integrative, dialogical, and transgressive—as well as foundational constructs to inclusivity (e.g., safety in classrooms). However, as half-day or weekend events, the lasting impact of these workshops on teacher practice is questionable. Previous research has demonstrated that effective professional development requires continuous learning that connects theory, philosophy, and practice with direct opportunity for implementation (Whitcomb, Borko, & Liston, 2009). These workshops appeared to focus primarily on classroom practices, requiring teacher candidates to bridge previous theoretical learning with workshop learning. The extent to which teacher candidates were able to do this remains unknown. In addition, these workshops were often times facilitated by external agencies or organizations thus offering an alternative perspective and approach to
inclusion, which appear characteristic of dialogical and transgressive forms of inclusivity. However, it is unclear how congruent practices within these workshops were with learning that occurred in on-campus courses and practicum experiences. This format of one-off workshops presents a potential challenge for teacher candidates’ learning, especially if messages are incongruent and if structures are not available to help teacher candidates connect their learning from across these various educational experiences.

**Pedagogies**

Faculty members and teacher candidates identified several teaching strategies that they felt engaged candidates in learning about inclusivity. These strategies were deduced from focus groups with teacher candidates and from interviews with all faculty members regardless of whether or not they taught courses directly focused on inclusivity. While these pedagogies do not represent an exhaustive list of teaching strategies used in the teacher education program, they were highlighted as key mechanisms for promoting various conceptions of inclusivity in the teacher education program at Queen’s University. The specific pedagogies that I elaborate on below are (a) learning through modeling and personal interaction, (b) learning through environment, (c) learning through diversity, (d) learning through critical self-reflection, (e) learning through dialogue, and (f) learning through the arts.

**Learning through Modeling and Personal Interaction**

Faculty members and teacher candidates in this study strongly asserted the importance of “practicing what you preach” through the modeling of inclusive attitudes and dispositions. Modeling was viewed as the primary method for promoting conceptions
of inclusivity in the teacher education program. In addition, participants acknowledged that modeling inclusive attitudes and dispositions in an age-appropriate way needs to occur in both personal interactions between faculty members and teacher candidates and in formal teaching contexts. As recognized by one faculty member, “I think we can offer models for how we are inclusive to help them [teacher candidates] be more inclusive. It is not what we teach per se, it is what we model. I can teach the ten steps to be inclusive, but if you come into my office and I treat you like dirt, then the message is lost.” This notion was repeated in nearly each interview with faculty members and was also addressed by teacher candidates in each of the three focus groups. One faculty member also noted the importance of making modeling explicit to teacher candidates asserting that teacher candidates need to know that they should be practicing what is modeled in the Faculty in their teaching in schools. While modeling was pervasively expressed, it was articulated in a rather simplistic way. Faculty members and teacher candidates who addressed modeling as a pedagogy that promoted inclusivity failed to recognize that inclusive practices and the language used with diverse individuals differs depending upon educational context. Hence what appears important to model is a commitment to inclusivity and to suggest ways that teacher candidates might negotiate their experiences of inclusivity in the Faculty of Education with their own teaching contexts and personal pedagogical approaches.

In commenting on their experiences of inclusivity within the Faculty of Education, teacher candidates asserted that when faculty members modeled an inclusive disposition, it was the little things that matter most. For example, they noted that faculty members who remembered their names and who encouraged them in areas outside their
immediate classes were effective role models. One teacher candidate acknowledged that one of her instructors was, “Great! She knew us all by name and was always on about the musical and wanted to talk. And yet she had so many students but she would take the time to listen to what you were saying.” Faculty members also acknowledged the need to listen and care about the small things in the lives of teacher candidates. One faculty member suggested that she doesn’t start her class until she has gone around to each teacher candidate in the class and ask them how they are doing. While this practice may be considered time-consuming and superfluous to course learning, this faculty member was firm in her belief that this practice served to welcome teacher candidates to her class and build strong connections amongst teacher candidates. Teacher candidates cautioned that efforts at inclusivity need to be authentic and sincere. In each focus group, teacher candidates pointed to instances in which they perceived a lack of sincerity on the part of a faculty member and an incongruence between the instructor’s message to be inclusive and their approach to teaching. Teacher candidates viewed these instances as “learning through negative examples” (teacher candidate).

Faculty members articulated the importance of inclusivity being modeled by the administration: “It is one thing for us to do it in classes, but it helps when there is a welcoming message right from the first day. I believe anyone in a leadership position has to model inclusivity or it won’t happen” (faculty member). Administrative support for faculty members’ efforts towards inclusivity is a necessary component of promoting inclusivity and helps contribute to the overall culture of inclusivity within the program. Faculty members also asserted that it is easier to be an inclusive educator when working in an inclusive environment: “There needs to be, and I think there is most times, an
obvious and genuine attempt at inclusivity in this building.” Similar to teacher candidates, these faculty members sought to work within an inclusive atmosphere at the Faculty. This further reinforces the fundamental characteristic of inclusivity as a personal and collective disposition and suggests that experiences of inclusivity are enhanced there are both personal and institutions commitments to inclusion. Based on data from administrators and faculty members in this study, a general commitment to model inclusivity throughout the program was found.

*Learning through Environment*

The physical environment of learning spaces was identified as a critical consideration to promoting inclusive values. The majority of faculty members who spoke of physical space linked it to accessibility for teacher candidates and students with exceptionalities. “It is important that the space is accessible for all students who need to learn within it. That means, making sure that there are clear pathways, doors that open automatically, and accessible washrooms” (faculty member). In a classroom context, faculty members recognized the need to be mindful of desk arrangements and rearrangements when they teach teacher candidates with exceptionalities. However, faculty members did note that their need to be physically inclusive was minimal because there were not many teacher candidates with special needs in the teacher education program.

Teacher candidates acknowledged that promoting inclusivity through environment goes well beyond ensuring an accessible learning space. When teacher candidates were asked to describe what an ideal inclusive learning space looked like, one of the central features across descriptions was the need to represent student diversity (i.e.,
diversity representation) in the physical elements of the classroom. In their responses, they asserted the importance of showcasing student diversity on bulletin boards, in the selection of books available for students to read, and in artifacts and toys used in the classroom. They suggested that diversity representation makes students feel like they belong to a community that recognized and acknowledges their uniqueness and that promoted learning about diversity. Several teacher candidates provided examples of diversity representation from their practicum experiences. In contrast, there was very little mention of diversity representation in the Faculty of Education. In fact, one teacher candidate identified that “some professors show us the type of strategies, resources, and books we should have in our classes but we don’t actually practice that here.” Integrating such pedagogical approaches within the teacher education program would signal the importance of diversity representation to teacher candidates and also demonstrate its impact on learning. Hence the absence of diversity representation in the program may be a pedagogical area for future development.

Teacher candidates also asserted the importance of making physical environments inviting and welcoming through comfortable and aesthetically pleasing fixtures and furniture.

Having couches, carpets, and things that make it feel comfy deinstitutionalizes it. In my Grade 6 placement, there were four really comfortable beautiful chairs and carpets everywhere and you just felt comfortable when you walked in. You felt like it was a place you could go and be accepted. Like diversity representation, creating a comfortable learning environment was an identified area for development within the teacher education program. While teacher
candidates did recognize “Student Street” as a center point for interaction, they commented that the classrooms, for the most part, were highly institutional—windowless, poorly painted, and uncomfortable. Though there have been some changes in recent years to enhance the physical learning environment at the Faculty, it was suggested that further aesthetic enhancements might lead to a greater sense of inclusivity and community within the teacher education program.

*Learning through Diversity*

Participants acknowledged the importance of increased diversity within learning contexts to learning about inclusivity, keeping in line with one of the foundational constructs of the framework of inclusivity. In the admission section of the validity argument, I addressed the equity initiative strategy in depth, as the admission policy appears to be the main mechanism for changing the demographic representation within teacher candidate cohorts. However, one faculty member described another means for enhancing diversity within her teacher education classes that presents a novel solution to the dilemma of low diversity within the teacher education program.

“At first, I didn’t intend to do it” she said referring to the two Down’s syndrome students from the H’Art Studio who participate in her music curriculum class. “They asked and I said yes. And, I’m so glad that I did because you don’t have to say a word, that is inclusivity in action and everyone in the class is aware that these two students are here.” In describing her learning context, she said that the content area enabled the two students to nearly fully participate in all activities. She also acknowledged that it gave teacher candidates an opportunity to directly interact with people with Down syndrome and model inclusive teaching. This method of increasing and addressing diversity within
teacher education classes created an authentic learning experience for teacher candidates and enabled them to learn inclusive teaching strategies as well as participate in a richly diverse learning experience.

Given the barriers of equitable admission and a fairly homogeneous applicant pool to the teacher education program, it is useful to find other means to enhance diversity within the program context. Including students with exceptionalities or individuals from different backgrounds may be one option. Additionally, guest lectures or continued hiring of diverse faculty members might be another. It is useful for the Faculty to continue to explore non-traditional options for increasing diversity as it was suggested by nearly all participants as a central means for authentically learning about inclusivity.

Learning through Critical Self-reflection

Next to modeling, learning through critical self-reflection was one of the most cited pedagogies for promoting inclusive values in the teacher education program. This pedagogical approach aligns with previous research that promotes critical self-reflection as an effective means to enhance teachers’ awareness of their teaching practice. Specifically, such self-reflection has the potential to promote dialogical and transgressive conceptions of inclusivity (Garmon, 1998). Often times, the faculty members I interviewed noted that they asked teacher candidates to reflect on a teaching moment or dilemma experienced during their practicum and then analyse the moment from multiple perspectives to construct alternative teacher responses. For example, the first assignment of the Social Justice Module required teacher candidates to critically reflect on a social justice issue they observed on their practicum. In this assignment, reflections may involve an examination of the power relationships and the role of different cultural statuses on
classroom dynamics, the impact of administrative and institutional structures on teaching and learning, and the social, political, and economic complexities that influence schools and classroom operations. The aim of engaging in a critical self-reflective pedagogy is to “push candidates to think about the multiple ways their actions as teachers impact the lived experiences of students in schools” (faculty member). It is hoped that through this process, teacher candidates become more aware of their assumptions and limitations as educators and begin to construct a more sensitive approach to teaching and learning.

More often than not, faculty members stated that they used critical reflections as an initial strategy to begin group or class discussions about issues related to inclusion and social justice. Hence this pedagogical approach is closely linked to the following pedagogy, learning through dialogue.

*Learning through Dialogue*

Both teacher candidates and faculty members identified dialogue as a central pedagogy to promote learning about inclusivity within the teacher education program. In particular, participants identified the importance of focused, structured discussions that addressed teacher candidates’ compelling interests and experiences. “When they come back from practicum we spend time talking about their experience. I want to know what happened out there, what challenges they faced, and what they learned about teaching and students” (faculty member). She further articulated that her job at that point was just to listen and allow teacher candidates to share their diverse experiences and let them learn from one another. One teacher candidate described the benefits of this approach, indicating, “I had a tutorial section where you could talk with your classmates and all sorts of ideas would come up and people would say things that would enlighten you.”
That teacher candidate continued to suggest that he felt the program would have benefitted from more talking and sharing of experience. Other teacher candidates in the focus group agreed.

Learning through dialogue offers a pedagogy that promotes inclusivity in two ways. First, dialogues may center directly on issues of inclusivity and when paired with critical reflection, offer a powerful means to deepen understandings and beliefs about teaching practice. Second, learning through dialogue, when approached with an inclusive disposition, may model a dialogical conception of inclusivity by inviting diverse perspectives and experiences to shape learning. This pedagogical approach suggests coherence between practice and a dialogical conception of inclusivity.

As a caution, if dialogues are left unstructured or if they do not engage a critical approach, learning through dialogue may lead to perpetuating ignorant or exclusionary beliefs and practices. One faculty member acknowledged the importance of structuring conversations so that they moved from the sharing of experiences (either through personal experience or through teaching case studies) to a critical analysis of teaching. The aim of critical dialogue is to deepen teacher candidates’ understandings of teaching in relation to broader philosophies and purposes of education. In alignment with previous research (Grossman, 2005), the use of case studies is one common pedagogy to begin teacher candidates’ discussion of issues of inclusivity in the classroom. For example in the PROF 100/101 seminars, teacher candidates were given case studies of students with socio-emotional exceptionalities to analyse using a “think bowl” strategy. This analysis strategy asked teacher candidates to consider the case from multiple perspectives (e.g., individual, curricular, pedagogical, class dynamic) and then to construct a plan for
addressing student need within the class including an articulation of the additional learning needed to effectively include the student in the learning context. This structure provided teacher candidates with a critical analytic framework to move talk towards productive understandings of the complexities of inclusive teaching and learning.

Learning through the Arts

Among faculty participants, three were declared artists: a musician and two painters. Therefore, it was not surprising to find art as an articulated pedagogy for learning about inclusivity. “It is a total link” one faculty member said, “everyone interprets and creates art differently and it reflects such individual expression that it is a natural fit to enhance our mission of inclusivity.” Further, they gave several specific reasons for art as a conduit for learning about inclusive values. First, “art is not useful” (faculty member) because it takes people right out of the drive to be productive and places them in an imaginative and creative space. This space offers a different kind of learning, one that seeks community and expression of the inner self. Art making is deeply personal and therefore serves to communicate, in non-traditional ways, what makes teacher candidates unique within the learning community. Second, art becomes the basis for meaningful discussions. Art inherently invites multiple interpretations (i.e., there is no right answer) and provides opportunity for teacher candidates to communicate personal connections and understandings. One faculty member suggested that when you show a piece of artwork in class and ask, “how does this relate to teaching students?” the responses are so different and yet still connected. He suggests that such an activity provides fertile ground for discussion about teaching and teacher education. Third, unlike language that imposes a necessary skill level, art is accessible to all: there are no cultural,
ethnic, or gender barriers to creating or interpreting art. “Art immediately levels the playing field. Joy is experienced and expressed through music across the board. The display of stories of everyone’s background and culture comes through in murals, paintings, and puppet shows” (faculty member). All three faculty-artists said that this quality of art works to quickly create a sense of inclusivity within the class and provides an engaging method for learning about each other as educators and people. Finally, art and artists by their nature push social boundaries and experiment with alternative constructions of societal structures. Learning through art asks teacher candidates to engage different perspectives towards students, teachers, and education. It also brings to bear social diversities and realities outside those observed in the mainstream classrooms. Showing pictures or watching a film on poverty, or war, or homophobia opens candidates’ eyes to issues facing educational systems and asks teacher candidates to consider their responsibility as future educators to diverse social realities. One faculty member suggested that from art, teacher candidates can engage in making sense of their social responsibility and can construct a plan for how they intend to advocate and work towards an education of social justice.

While not all faculty members or teacher candidates articulated the use of art-based pedagogies, art still appeared to be an active means for teaching about inclusivity within the Faculty of Education amongst both artists and non-artist faculty members. The P/J music curriculum faculty member indicated that she tried to engage in music making each class. Another faculty member stated that she had her teacher candidates create collages and pictures to communicate their values and philosophies of education. Other faculty members draw on artistic works to initiate discussions while some faculty
members use storytelling and multimedia to highlight certain aspects of their content. One faculty member commented, “these formats not only provide a hook for students but also break away from the regular lecture or reading and writing approach.” Hence art-based pedagogies are used to varying degrees and in varying formats throughout some courses in the Faculty. Engaging in artistic learning was suggested to maintain teacher candidate engagement in course content and was considered to inherently promote values of inclusivity in teacher education. In addition, what I find most useful about this pedagogical approach is that it can be easily combined with nearly all of the other pedagogies described in this section of the validity argument to present a personal reflective and dialogical approach to learning about inclusivity. As such, this pedagogy works to promote a dialogical, if not transgressive, conception of inclusivity within the teacher education program and presents significant coherence with participants’ commitments to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. Therefore, the Faculty may consider additional ways (e.g., the musical) to enhance learning through the arts as a means to promote learning about inclusivity. In addition, other subject areas may present similar opportunities to promote inclusivity in a useful way. Hence further research into the use of subject disciplines as pedagogical structures for enhanced learning about inclusivity in education is suggested.

The Validity Argument

The initial purpose of this validity inquiry was to articulate the quality of coherence across participants’ interpretations and practices related to the Queen’s University teacher education program aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. Through my analysis of the validity evidence, I argue that
inclusivity was not promoted in a singular way through the teacher education program but rather was promoted in multiple ways that align with some aspects of the framework of inclusivity. Hence some coherence between participants’ practices and experiences in the teacher education program and participants’ conceptions and the theoretical delineation of inclusivity in education was found. Specially, participants in each group expressed practices, policies, and program structures that promoted integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity, and to a much lesser extent, a transgressive conception of inclusivity. However, as the framework was only partially promoted through teaching and learning opportunities in the teacher education program, teacher candidates were unable to articulate the spectrum of conceptions of inclusivity evident across educational contexts. Further, in some instances, teacher candidates were limited in their ability to link theoretical conceptions to pedagogical practices. This suggests that the program aim towards promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle was only partially achieved and that there is opportunity for continued program developments in this area.

Promoting inclusivity as a fundamental aim is explicitly articulated in the Faculty of Education’s mission statement for the teacher education program. Administrators acknowledged that this statement serves both external and internal functions including as a public statement of intent, a benchmark in program review procedures, a mechanism for teacher candidate recruitment, and as a common basis for working within the Faculty. Interestingly, faculty members agreed with administrators that the mission statement was important for external functions but largely differed with them, believing it did not serve to enhance the internal operations of the Faculty. This may be in part due to the few
participants who participated in the development of the mission statement or to a lack of explicit expectations for mission statement use. However, regardless of the degree of internal use of the actual mission statement text, faculty members did agree that the aim towards inclusivity was important to include in the Faculty’s mission statement.

The overall aim to promote inclusivity through teaching at the Faculty was met with general agreement and support by faculty participants in this study, with the exception of two faculty members who objected to the term’s use in the mission statement. One criticism emphasized that the term was problematic because it reinforced a binary understanding of relationality (i.e., dominant-submissive, majority-minority, includer-includee) while the other critique asserted that the term was too vague and ambiguous to have an impact. Other faculty members also recognized the generality of the term when describing the rationale for its inclusion in the mission statement. Thus, although inclusivity as an aim was widely accepted by faculty members and administrators, it was viewed as a general term that encompasses multiple interpretations resulting in practices, policies, and program structures that promote qualitatively different conceptions of inclusivity. Through this validity inquiry, I present greater clarity over these various conceptions, with dialogical and transgressive conceptions addressing critiques over binary understandings of relationality.

Evidence from this study suggests that policies, practices, and program structures in the teacher education program mainly support integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity. In particular, an integrative view to inclusivity was evident in the admission policy, overall program structure, practica experiences, and in content of specific courses. The admission policy maintains provisions for special entry for select groups of
difference with an additional ad hoc procedure for second-round admission of under represented groups. While these processes endeavour to accommodate diverse applicants, they do not target all forms of diversity nor do they provide a systematic method for entry of non-classified (i.e., not on the equity form) but under-represented groups. Lack of provisions for diversity entry is problematic as it limits the opportunity for teacher candidates to learn from diverse perspectives once enrolled in the program and minimizes the Faculty’s contribution of diverse beginning teachers to the teaching workforce.

The integrative view to inclusivity was also supported in the overall program structure. The specialized program tracks maintain specific admission and program requirements resulting in what one teacher candidate called “silos of students.” One effect of these perceived silos was that teacher candidates might be limited in their learning from one another’s diverse perspectives. However, although the overall program structure may create divisions among diverse groups of teacher candidates within the various program tracks, teacher candidates expressed a strong sense of connection and often times a dialogical experience of inclusivity.

Finally, the promotion of an integrative view was evident in select course content, primarily the PROF 100/101 course, and in teacher candidates’ practicum experiences. In both contexts, teacher candidates learned about accommodations and modifications for students with exceptionalities and gained exposure to concepts associated with the Special Education Model of inclusion, namely segregation, integration, and inclusion. While understanding the Special Education Model is necessary for teachers entering the Ontario school system, what remains unclear is whether or not teacher candidates were able to discern the various forms of inclusivity for students with exceptionalities. As
teacher candidates identified that the link between their practicum learning and their course-based learning was tenuous, a concern remains that teacher candidates may not be able to translate dialogical or transgressive conceptions of inclusivity into their teaching of students of special populations. Strengthening the link between theoretical learning and practical experiences appears to be a persistent challenge in presenting a cohesive message about inclusivity to teacher candidates.

Several initiatives and structures in the teacher education program appear to support a dialogical conception of inclusivity. Firstly, the Dean’s initial intent of including inclusivity within the mission statement appears to adhere with, at minimum, a dialogical view of inclusivity. This intention has since been promoted in program structures that bridge connections between teacher candidates from various specialized grouping (e.g., common timetabling, mixed elective classes, and the musical), in coursework and practica experiences, and through various pedagogies. Faculty members in this study suggested that they endeavoured to integrate topics related to inclusivity in both formal and informal ways. Specialized courses on inclusive and social justice education appeared to present explicit content that promoted a dialogical form of inclusivity whereas non-specific courses appeared to address the topic in an ad hoc or implicit way. Teacher candidates’ field-based placements may also present opportunities to engage in dialogical and possibly even transgressive forms of inclusivity. However, although this method of professional learning is relevant and practical, the quality of learning is ultimately dependent on the knowledge and skills of associate teachers and is highly variable across teacher candidates’ experiences. Hence some teacher candidates may gain exposure to a dialogical context of learning while others may not, again
supporting the notion that inclusivity is promoted in various ways throughout teacher education experiences. Further, as teacher candidates found their on-campus work to be highly theoretical, those teacher candidates whose placements did not promote a dialogical view of inclusivity may be limited in their capacity to translate theory into teaching practice. In addition to field-based placements, optional workshops were offered to teacher candidates that focused primarily on practices related to inclusivity. The central challenges with these workshops were that they were disconnected from other learning in the program, they did not lead to immediate opportunity for practice, and they did not appear to connect educational practice with broader theories and philosophies in education.

Missing from the course and workshop content reviewed in this study was a framework for thinking about inclusivity in which teacher candidates could anchor their learning from across various program structures. While some teacher candidates may have been able to negotiate and consolidate their learning independently, there is evidence from this study that others may not. The absence of a comprehensive framework may contribute to fragmented, partial, or rudimentary understandings of inclusivity that are not deeply integrated into teacher candidates’ personal teaching practices and philosophies. Evidence from this study supported the notion that teacher candidates were able to express integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity and provide examples from their own personal experiences; however, teacher candidates were limited in their articulation of the spectrum of inclusion and the implementation of theoretical conceptions in their teaching practice.
Perhaps one of the best ways that a dialogical conception of inclusivity was promoted in the teacher education program was through faculty members’ pedagogical approaches and their interactions with teacher candidates. Both teacher candidates and faculty members described instances in which teacher candidates were asked to reflect on their own experience and then share their diverse perspectives within various classes. As identified by one faculty member, engaging in learning through dialogue needs to occur within a critical analysis structure so that sharing of experiences translates into positive learning. Further, modeling of inclusive values was recognized as a principle means for promoting a dialogical conception of inclusivity; however, it is necessary to acknowledge that modeling inclusivity within a teacher education context will look different than engaging inclusivity in other contexts of education. Hence while it is important to make modeling explicit to teacher candidates, it is perhaps more important to articulate commitments to inclusivity and provide opportunities for teacher candidates to reflect on how they might integrate their experience of inclusivity in the teacher education program with their own personal pedagogies. Several other identified pedagogies have the potential to contribute towards dialogical learning environments. For example, learning through the arts maintains inherent qualities that encourage the development and sharing of multiple perspectives and interpretations.

In contrast to the integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity, few structures explicitly promoted a transgressive conception of inclusivity within the teacher education program. Of those that did, coursework that specifically focused on social justice education provided evidence of the dissemination of transgressive content. In addition, several of the identified pedagogies have the potential to create contexts for
transgressive inclusivity. In particular, critical personal reflection that identifies personal diversity and position within hegemonic structures forms the basis for a social justice pedagogy. However, as observed in teacher candidate focus groups, these teacher candidates may not have fully valued the reflective approach nor did they readily make the connection between teacher diversity and creating inclusive classroom cultures. Hence it appears that this conception was not supported enough throughout the teacher education program to integrate into teacher candidates’ teaching approaches or that teacher candidates did not see the value in engaging a transgressive conception to inclusivity. This finding is not surprising as only two faculty members and two administrators asserted a transgressive conception of inclusivity and even they commented that it was an ideal form of education and not currently the common framework in contemporary public schools.

The teacher education program appears to promote multiple conceptions of inclusivity as encompassed by the framework of inclusivity, with integrative and dialogical conceptions being most prominently supported. Administrators and faculty members expressed and provided examples of practices and policies that contribute to integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity. At the end of their teacher education program, teacher candidates were able to match articulations of integrative and dialogical conceptions by drawing on experiences from their field-based placements and on-campus coursework. This matching suggests that teacher candidates are beginning to understand various conceptions of inclusivity; however, unlike faculty members and administrators, they were not yet able to articulate the spectrum of inclusivity found within educational contexts. Further, it was unclear whether or not teacher candidates were able to discern
various forms of inclusivity and understand their limitations and benefits in practice. This was in part due to variable field-based placements, tenuous links between on-campus learning and practicum experiences, and the lack of a comprehensive structure in which to negotiate and consolidate their learning about inclusivity. Institutionally, there may be ways that the teacher education program can begin to address these gaps in teacher candidates’ learning and enhance experiences of inclusivity within the teacher education program. As with any program, there are always areas for further development and continued growth.
CHAPTER SEVEN: TOWARDS A VALIDITY FRAMEWORK

I began this dissertation wanting to explore the validity of the Queen’s University teacher education program mission statement. I believed that this task would involve measuring teacher candidates’ learning outcomes as related to specific program aims. However, as these aims were complex—contextually situated, socially-dependent, and widely interpretable, I quickly recognized that my initial approach would be insufficient in capturing the diverse ways that these aims could be taught, learned, and experienced within the teacher education program. Furthermore, there appeared to be no theoretical framework to guide the validation of complex educational aims. As such, I reframed the purpose of my dissertation towards constructing a validity framework for complex program aims. Drawing on contemporary validity theory and on a hermeneutic methodology, I applied my framework to one aim of the teacher education program at Queen’s University: to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. The overall purpose of the framework was to engage multiple sources of evidence to generate situated judgments about the congruence of interpretations and enactment towards the program’s aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. What has emerged from this dissertation is a validity framework that enables a complex articulation and analysis of the interplay between interpretations of program aims and the educational experiences of program users.

I based the overarching structure of the validation framework on Kane’s (2006, 2009) validity-as-argument model. Kane’s model maintains two distinct arguments. The first argument, the interpretive argument, collects and analyses interpretations towards complex aims from various participant perspectives. In this study, data for the
interpretive argument were collected and analysed through a series of practices that engaged hermeneutic inquiry (e.g., Commonplace Books, interviews with follow-up reflections on participant-wide summaries, focus groups with individuals and group-based activities, ongoing keyword writing) through recursive interpretations at individual and group levels. While Moss et al. (2006) suggested the application of hermeneutics to validation processes in classroom and large-scale assessment contexts, their discussion has been largely theoretical with few articulations of specific methods and processes for engaging hermeneutics in program validation. Hence the use of hermeneutics in collecting evidence for the interpretive argument in this dissertation provides a notable contribution to the field of validity and heeds Kane’s (2006) call for pragmatic “guidance on how to validate specific interpretations” (p. 18). The complexity of the interpretive and validity arguments presented in my work provides evidence that hermeneutic practices contribute meaningful validity evidence for the generation of multi-perspective arguments when program aims represent complex educational constructs.

The second argument, the validity argument, builds on the interpretive argument by considering the quality of congruence between interpretations and enactment of program aims through various program structures. Ultimately, the validity argument articulates a coherent yet complex argument on the multiple ways an aim is interpreted and experienced by participants within a specific temporal and programmatic context. In this research, the validity argument articulated the diverse ways that inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle was interpreted and enacted by users and administrators of the Queen’s University teacher education program. The argument qualifies the coherency among participants’ perspectives by presenting both congruent
and incongruent evidence within a narrative structure. Coherency in this validation framework is understood as a complex articulation of the relationship between individual practical and theoretical interpretations towards a critical construct (i.e., aim). Further, I support Taylor’s (1979) notion that coherency involves depicting evidences and interpretations, which may not present as rational, linear arguments but instead may be full of contradiction and confusion. This view of coherency is notably different than in other validation structures, including Kane’s (2006, 2009) validation model. Despite integrating value-evidence and social consequences, contemporary validity-as-argument frameworks largely aim to reduce complexity to linear logical arguments by eliminating improbable or incongruent evidence (Crooks et al., 1996; Kane, 2006). While I used Kane’s dual-argument model as an overarching structure for my validation framework, I differed significantly in my method for collecting, analysing, and representing validity evidence. Rather than relying on a reductionist and linear approach, I demonstrate that it is possible to construct a coherent multi-perspective argument that addresses the complexity of teaching and learning program aims that are socially-dependent and highly interpretable. Most importantly, my argument framework does not reduce validity evidence to logical explanation (Zumbo, 2009) but instead aims to engage existing tensions, dilemmas of practice, and incongruencies in interpretation alongside points of congruency in an argument of complex coherency.

The validity argument constructed in this dissertation characterizes inclusivity as a complex construct that involves qualitatively different conceptions of inclusion (i.e., normative, integrative, dialogical, and transgressive). Even among the 38 participants of this study, evidence indicated that these multiple conceptions led to diverse experiences
in teaching and learning about inclusivity within the teacher education program at Queen’s University. Moreover, specific conceptions of inclusivity were not linked to specific participant groups (i.e., program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates). Rather, commitments and experiences of diverse conceptions were associated with participants from each group as dependent upon individual experiences of diversity and personal interactions amongst program users. Participants in each group expressed practices, policies, and program structures that promoted integrative and dialogical conceptions of inclusivity, and to a much lesser extent, a transgressive conception of inclusivity. This complex articulation of how participants work towards inclusivity within the Queen’s University teacher education program is not only useful in describing current interpretations and practices of inclusivity by program users but may also be used to provoke continued inquiry into program aims to establish greater program coherence. This suggestion follows assertions within contemporary validity theory that validation processes have the potential to serve a generative function by provoking continued inquiry related to program aims (Lather, 1993; Messick, 1998; Moss, 1996, 1998).

However, despite previous assertions that validity is a generative activity, there have been very few articulations on the validation structures that enable this activity to occur. Drawn from the validity argument, I have constructed six hermeneutic windows to demonstrate how validation can yield structures for continued inquiry into complex program aims. In other areas of educational research, hermeneutic windows have been useful in providing a structure for ongoing interpretation into complex curricular constructs. For example, Sumara (1996a) has used hermeneutic windows to explore
significant curricular constructs to the learning of a literature group. Out of that experience, Sumara writes that locating these hermeneutic windows “amid the planned structures of our lives can help us—as curriculum inquirers, teachers, learners—to initiate the necessary interpretations that help us to more deeply understand the complexities of curricular forms” (p. 178). As such, I draw on hermeneutic windows as a form to articulate vexing issues as located in the lived experiences of participants in this study and in the program structures that serve to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle within the Queen’s University teacher education program. I differ from Sumara in my use of hermeneutic windows in that I base the windows strictly on the validation process used with all participants of this research and not on one group’s interpretive work over a period of time. In addition, I position the windows with a deliberate focus on future program development and on areas for continued program inquiry. My use of hermeneutic windows in this final chapter has two purposes: first, to demonstrate the utility of validity arguments to provoke ongoing inquiry into complex program aims; and second, to articulate how this research can be used to inform developments specifically in the Queen’s University teacher education program.

Hermeneutic Windows

The following hermeneutic windows address vexing issues for promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. It is important to recognize that these windows do not capture all aspects of inclusivity in teacher education; rather they characterize complex tensions, dilemmas of practice, and frames for interpretation as expressed in relation to the teacher education program at Queen’s University and represent only the views of those who participated in this study. In addition, they are
intended to provide a lens for the continued interpretation of practices within the teacher education program that work towards enhanced inclusivity and greater program coherence. Specifically, the six hermeneutic windows are: (a) what we see matters, (b) finding balance, (c) out of political bounds, (d) the incommensurability dilemma, (e) always striving, never there, and (f) the preacher’s practice.

What We See Matters

“We tend to address visible differences more than non-visible differences: what we see matters.” (faculty member)

Visible differences tend to demand explicit treatment of inclusion compared to non-visible differences. People who are racial or gender minorities or who have physical disabilities have historically encountered high levels of explicit segregation, marginalization, and bullying because of their visibility. Still today, students and teachers in these groups continue to attract subtle and not so subtle attention because of their diversity. In response, policies have been developed to address and provide equitable treatment for these groups. For example, of the three identified groups on the Queen’s University equity admission form (i.e., Aboriginal/First Nations peoples, racial minorities, and people who are differently-abled), all have the ability to address the treatment of visible minority applicants and work towards the inclusion of these potential teacher candidates within the teacher education context. What remains largely absent from equity forms is the identification of non-visible groups of difference (e.g., individuals who are queer, hearing impaired, religious). Perhaps these groups have been comparatively neglected in public addresses of equity because they are perceived as unverifiable or potentially unstable. As some of these groups remain largely
underrepresented in the teaching workforce and in teacher education programs, the absence of these groups within equity initiatives perpetuates systemic discrimination of people who are non-visible minorities.

Further, there is evidence from this study that the diversity of those who are non-visible minorities is not fully recognized within the learning context compared with those who are visibly different. One faculty member stated that she does not believe that individuals of diverse sexual orientations face challenges with inclusion in the teacher education program. In contrast, two teacher candidates who identified as LGBT, one male and one female, told of instances in which they felt discriminated against as a result of their sexual orientation. They also acknowledged that the use of heteronormative language and assumptions were palpable in the Faculty. A lack of treatment towards groups who are non-visible minorities is likely not due to faculty members and teacher candidates not wanting to fully include these individuals. On the contrary, most participants expressed widespread desire to include all individuals regardless of their form of difference. Thus a lack of treatment may be a result of not knowing that such diversity is present in the teacher education program or perceptions that these groups do not face adversity because of their form of difference. As such, this hermeneutic window suggests that one of the central challenges for the teacher education program is to find ways to address and acknowledge non-visible differences and to promote diversity representation as well as acceptance within classes and the program more broadly.
Finding Balance

“I’ve always thought that inclusivity meant celebrating our differences but I now recognize that it also means the exact opposite, finding ways in which we are similar.”

(teacher candidate)

Faculty members and teacher candidates identified two approaches to promoting inclusivity in their classes. One approach involved targeting similarities among students as a basis for developing respect and connectedness while the other approach involved welcoming diversity and fostering awareness that we are all diverse individuals who have unique learning and cultural experiences. Each of these approaches emphasizes a different conception of inclusivity, and in my view, neither fully address the complexity of inclusion within a culturally diverse classroom. Most classes are comprised of multiple groups of difference with various perspectives towards diversity. Not only are students both similar and different from one another but they also carry with them prejudices that condition the way in which they interact and respond to difference. Inclusivity within these contexts is highly complex—solely focusing on similarities or differences may neglect the complex underpinning of inclusivity within schools and classrooms. In reality, most educators cannot evade this complexity because identified differences lead to social cliques, discrimination, name-calling, and bullying while an emphasis on similarities may leave students feeling underappreciated and generic. Educators are required to find a balance in their approach to inclusivity, drawing on student similarities as well as on their differences.

Finding the balancing point between diversity and similarity in classroom contexts may be linked to one’s overarching conception of inclusivity as integrative,
dialogical, or transgressive. An integrative approach to inclusivity would identify student
difference but work to normalize the learning environment via accommodations and
modifications. Through these practices, student similarities in learning a common
curriculum would be emphasized. In contrast, a dialogical conception of inclusivity
would rely on acknowledging differences, drawing on students’ diverse perspectives
within teaching and learning. The transgressive conception may present the most
balanced approach, as individuals are not only regarded as culturally complex in this
conception but there is also consideration for students’ common school and class
experiences. The transgressive conception acknowledges the complex cultural diversity
of students while paying attention to the context of schooling as a commonplace for
students. This hermeneutic window points towards the pragmatics of promoting
inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. Within a teacher education context,
the use of various pedagogies that promote similarities and differences may present
teacher candidates with mixed messages about classroom practices. This hermeneutic
window encourages teacher educators to link pedagogies of inclusivity to theoretical
conceptions in order to promote intentional teaching about inclusivity so that teacher
candidates can establish a rationale for their own balance in their teaching practice.

Out of Political Bounds

“These students are really very good at being political. They’re not going to say anything
that isn’t politically correct.” (faculty member)

There is a reason for politically correct language in modern society and modern
schooling. Politically correct language and beliefs are largely a product of years of human
rights advocacy, of recognizing marginalized voices, and of a systemic correction for
historical injustices. However, politically correct language and beliefs can also stand in the way of confronting stereotypes and prejudices. Faculty members and teacher candidates acknowledged the difficulty in engaging in personal conversations that challenged politically incorrect viewpoints. It was recognized that such viewpoints were largely considered taboo topics and that those who voiced politically incorrect positions were quickly ostracized—called racist, sexist, homophobic, etc. Few people would outwardly admit their prejudices, and yet as one faculty member articulated, “to varying degrees, we all make judgments about others based on skin colour, the way someone dresses, religion, accents, etc.” Confronting internal beliefs requires people to step out of the political arena and step into a more human discourse of how people actually relate to one another with consideration for the beliefs that condition those relationships. As one faculty member acknowledged, doing this is not easy. The first challenge is getting people to identify and take ownership over their prejudices. The second challenge is redressing those prejudices in ways that are compassionate and that do not threaten already vulnerable students.

Several curriculum structures have been suggested to engage these challenges and move beyond education within a politically correct framework. Pinar (2004) calls for the use of “complicated conversations” (p. 62) in teaching and learning. He asserts that these conversations are curriculum moments that push self-reflexivity into erudition and that challenge the assumptions governing our ideologies and subjectivities. Pinar further suggests that complicated conversations can operate within the context of university curriculum as a means to rupture the political sterility and create a curriculum that responds to a more genuine, truthful account of the lived experiences of students and
teachers. Complicated conversations may take on multiple pedagogical forms from critical dialogues that interrogate individual and cultural beliefs to hermeneutic practices that position one frame of understanding in relation to another. However, enabling these conversations requires a foundation of inclusivity and trust, which takes time to develop and build. Given the current teacher education program structure—short on-campus periods, multiple course timetabling, and competing curricular demands—teacher educators are pressed against time to create contexts of inclusivity that lend themselves to fruitful and supported critical dialogues. While there is evidence that faculty members within the teacher education program endeavour to engage these conversations, it may be useful to ask how the program can further facilitate and create time and space for complicated conversations among teacher candidates. It may be also useful to continue to investigate the pedagogical structures that can support these critical conversations within the current framework for educating teachers.

*The Incommensurability Dilemma*

“Incommensurability is a permanent template in the back of my head. It presents a persistent dilemma for a pluralistic society.” (faculty member)

The overarching aim within inclusivity and social justice discourse is to bring people together into contexts of multiplicity—multiple cultures, languages, religions, genders, abilities, etc. Inclusivity and social justice movements in education are intended not only as a response to the increased recognition of diversity within society and schools but also as a means to enhance learning through the inclusion of diverse perspectives. However, within any context of multiplicity there is the potential for incommensurability—instances in which perspectives operate on such foundationally
different beliefs and understandings that they cannot interact. The Dean pointed to an example in which a teacher assumes a Western perspective towards gender relations and the role and ability of female students in a class with a female student whose cultural tradition does not permit her to participate in certain practices. As the Dean asserted, this situation presents, “a fundamental conflict between the individual’s rights and the liberal tradition of community rights.” Vehemently different perspectives that operate from different frameworks of individuality and relationality are difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile without collapsing one perspective into another. As articulated in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Criminal Code, citizens of Canada have fundamental freedoms of thought, belief, opinion, and expression (Government of Canada, 1982), so long as those freedoms do not incite “hatred against any identifiable group where such incitement is likely to lead to a breach of the peace” (Government of Canada, 1985). As long as individual perspectives and beliefs do not translate into a communication of hatred (i.e., assault, abuse, or bullying) towards a particular individual or group, then students are free to assume incommensurable perspectives. Hence incommensurability poses one of the greatest challenges for inclusivity in schools as it impacts the way in which students and teachers interact and their ability to meaningfully relate to one another. Engaging the dilemma of incommensurability was identified by one faculty member as a “persistent challenge for the teaching profession” given the increasing context of multiplicity in schools today. Further, she questioned how well the teacher education program was preparing its graduates to confront and address students’ multiple perspectives in their future classrooms. This hermeneutic window represents not only a perennial dilemma for inclusive education but also a persistent question for teacher
education: In what ways does the teacher education program prepare teacher candidates to address the complexities of teaching in diverse classrooms and the potential for incommensurability amongst students?

Always Striving, Never There

“With inclusivity, I believe we are always striving but never there.” (faculty member)

Each educational context is different—the people, the space, the institutional commitments and constraints. Through this hermeneutic window I recognize that, in each new context, inclusivity is always in the making. From day 1 until the final class, students and teachers are always striving towards creating contexts in which there is a sense of inclusion. Inclusivity is equally important on the first day of class, when 25 nervous, anxious, and excited students sit around new desks with new backpacks and new pens, as it is on the final day of term, when students present their culminating group tasks. While experiences of inclusion change over this time, creating learning spaces where individuals feel safe, respected, and acknowledged remains a daily goal. In my opinion, one of the strongest findings of this research was the commitment by administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates to strive towards inclusivity in their teaching and learning.

Each class works to this goal differently; no universal template exists for creating an inclusive learning space. Inclusivity depends on the complex interaction of people and activities within a particular time frame and as conditioned by a particular context. As noted throughout this research, faculty members engaged diverse and multiple practices to create contexts of inclusion. These practices change depending on the class—what works for one group may or may not work for another. In addition, most significant to
fostering a sense of inclusion was personal interaction with attention to individual
students. This suggests that inclusion is largely a responsive practice requiring continuous
and deliberate efforts. Classroom practices of inclusivity and personal responses are also
dependent upon institutional climate and the promotion of inclusivity throughout program
structures. Therefore, a vexing question for the teacher education program at Queen’s
University is: How can the institution further facilitate a sense of inclusivity through its
program structures and institutional culture? Across my participants, there was
acknowledgment that inclusivity in the teacher education program was limited by the
current program model and that more could be done to enhance inclusivity within the
program. Always striving, never there. This hermeneutic window appears equally
applicable to personal, classroom, or program levels, as educators within these structures
strive to promote inclusivity as a fundamental educational principle.

*The Preacher’s Practice*

“There have definitely been some contradictions in some classes, some teachers do not
practice what they preach.” (teacher candidate)

This hermeneutic window asserts the importance of ensuring a consistent message
in what teacher educators say and do when teaching about inclusivity. As Russell (1997)
suggested, in teacher education, the way you teach is the message. As noted in data from
this study, modeling was perceived as an important means to promoting inclusivity in
teacher education. However, it was also recognized that modeling inclusive practices
needs to be appropriate for a teacher education context and the teaching of adult learners
rather than modeling practices appropriate for diverse educational levels and settings.
Further, teaching about inclusivity in the Faculty of Education may be constrained by
educational context (e.g., large lecture hall), which limits teacher candidates’ experiences of inclusion despite messages to be inclusive educators. Regardless of these caveats, there were observed instances of incongruence between teachings about inclusivity and experiences of inclusion.

Incongruent beliefs, teachings, and practices frustrated teacher candidates and sent contradictory messages about inclusive education. Two examples were mentioned in focus groups. First, one student enrolled in the Outdoor Experiential Education (OEE) program track noted that from the first week she arrived on-campus, beliefs were already circulating about the nature of OEE students. She stated that students in OEE were stereotyped as “being lazy, and loud, and just hippies that sit in the back of the class, not doing anything. And all of us experienced it in the first week, profs saying to us, ‘oh you are the loud ones’.” She further asserted that such labeling made her feel unappreciated and misunderstood. She also believed these stereotypes negatively impacted her relationships not only with faculty members but also with other teacher candidates. A second example of incongruence, which was mentioned in all focus groups, involved one faculty member stating during lecture, “I know some of you need computers for a modification; however, you need to turn them off now” (teacher candidate paraphrasing). Teacher candidates described that instance as a “huge contradiction” that excluded teacher candidates from engaging in learning and as negative teaching about inclusivity. Computer policies do not exist in other university programs; however, they may be necessary in the teacher education program given teacher candidates’ potential disengagement and inclination to Facebook, MSN, email, and web surf. Nonetheless, the implementation and expression of this policy may need to be framed in a way that offers
teacher candidates a rationale for its existence as well as provisions for students who legitimately require computers for learning. Hence this may be an instance in which a policy intended to promote engagement and participation was negatively construed because of the way in which it was communicated to teacher candidates and implemented within the class.

Given that one of the most dominant findings of this research was that inclusivity was best promoted through modeling, experiences of congruence between teaching practices and inclusive educational theory is important to teacher candidates’ learning. This hermeneutic window suggests that faculty members in the teacher education program need to continue to focus on creating inclusive learning environments that present congruent conceptions and practices of inclusivity. On an institutional level, this hermeneutic window encourages the alignment of policies with intended conceptions of inclusivity.

Utility of Hermeneutic Windows

The six hermeneutic windows presented above articulate complex tensions and dilemmas of practice that face the Queen’s University teacher education program in its aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. This hermeneutic structure is notably different than typical evaluative or validation reports that offer definitive recommendations to address areas of weakness and to further develop program practices. Instead, these hermeneutic windows provide a discussion on central issues in promoting inclusivity within the Queen’s University program, which have emerged through the complex interaction of experiences and interpretations of participants in this study. In this way, I address Sumara’s (1996a) assertion that “hermeneutic inquiry must
never devolve into reports of what was done, discovered, or concluded but must instead, show the ongoing and coevolving relationship among what is known and coming to be known” (p. 128). As such, these windows suggest areas for continued inquiry that may work to enhance coherence within the Queen’s University context. These hermeneutic windows have the potential to promote validation as a generative activity by engaging participants, program users, and administrators in continued interpretive work about complex dilemmas related to program aims. Indeed, it is my hope that these windows serve as the basis for subsequent discussions and program developments that reach beyond the experiences of study participants. While the validity argument presented in Chapter 6 is anchored in the Queen’s University teacher education program, the six hermeneutic windows extend dilemmas of practice to more general contexts by integrating theory and policies related to teacher education and inclusivity more broadly. These hermeneutic windows may help guide validation inquiries related to inclusivity within other teacher education programs by identifying potential areas of inquiry, analysis, and sources for hermeneutic practice.

Validation of Complex Program Aims: An Evolving Framework

This research is an initial attempt at constructing a framework for the validation of complex program aims. It is also one of the only studies that I have encountered that integrates hermeneutics as a methodological approach for validation. Thus while the framework maintains several notable distinguishing features, it also maintains limitations and areas for future development.

The first distinguishing feature of this validation framework is that it operates within a bounded case study structure that relies on a qualitative methodology. The use of
a case study methodology has been suggested by Moss (1996, 2007) for assessment validation; however, I extend it here to the validation of complex educational program aims. Based on the complexity and depth of the interpretive and validity arguments presented in this dissertation, I assert that the case study structure provided a descriptive account (Geertz, 1973) of the validation context, taking into account the various perspectives shaping interpretations towards program aims and the consequences on teaching and learning that follow. Through this qualitative methodology, the framework supports contemporary notions of a “context-bound view of validity” (Zumbo, 2009, p. 75). However, my approach to validation differs significantly from the majority of validity researchers who engage contextual explanations largely through psychometric and quantitative evidences (Mislevy, 2009; Zumbo, 2009). Even in commonly proposed argument-models, there is an accounting and causal analysis of plausible and implausible evidences to support linear validity judgments as based on singular interpretations to context-dependent constructs (Kane 2006, 2009).

While there have been few documented cases of validity arguments and few discussions on the pragmatic approaches for collecting validity evidence (Kane, 2006), this common argument structure suggests a positivistic positioning for validation inquires. In contrast and in the context of validating socially-dependent program aims, I assert the importance of engaging a methodology that relies on a postpositivistic epistemology. Postpositivist inquiry recognizes validity as socially constructed and situational (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Lather, 1986, 1993, 2001). Inherent to postpositivist inquiry is the assumption that all validity evidence is subjective and relational. The aim of this inquiry approach is to describe and analyse the multiple
perspectives within a given context. Emphasis is placed on understanding the interrelatedness of individuals, texts, systems, and culture, rather than on explaining the causal links between these variables. Case study methodology is an appropriate structure for engaging postpositivistic inquiry as this methodology uses various sources of evidence to present multiple-perspective case descriptions (Yin, 2006). Hence in drawing on a case study methodology for validation, I aim to engage a postpositivistic approach to understanding coherency of program aims within a specific context. More generally, this work serves to reframe educational validity as an interpretive mode of inquiry that acknowledges the complexities and subjectivities embedded within educational contexts.

A case study approach promotes two fundamental aspects within contemporary validity theory. First, it is a methodological structure that has the potential to evoke all four components of Messick’s Progressive Validity Matrix⁴ (Messick, 1989, 1998) by collecting validity evidence related to the value-laden, socio-cultural interpretations of various program participants. Despite the acknowledgement that values and social consequences fall within the purview of validity research (Markus, 1998; Messick, 1989; Moss, 1998; Moss et al., 2006), much of the literature on validation practices to date has focused on methods for generating the evidential basis for construct relevance and construct utility rather than on consequential components, which include value implications and social consequences. The case study approach and the hermeneutic practices used in this research provide evidence that this validation framework has the potential to consider value-implications and social consequences within a specific program context. Moreover, such an approach provides a structure that maintains

⁴ Messick (1989) presented a 2x2 matrix which he termed the Facets of Validity Matrix. The Matrix classified various aspects of validity including evidential and consequential bases of test interpretation and test use.
incongruent values and consequences within its representation of validity, presenting a more genuine articulation of how program aims are interpreted and enacted within a complex program of multiple users. Hence my validation framework reflects a response to the call for a methodology that engages consequential and value-based evidences within validity inquiries (Markus, 1998).

In addition to evoking all four aspects of Messick’s matrix, the case study structure promotes ecologically valid arguments. Ecological validity, as distinguished from population or general validity, emphasizes the interplay between context and validity evidence, suggesting that there is uniqueness in participant responses due to context (Patton, 2002; Shulman, 1970). Describing validity within case contexts as ecological is useful as it not only asserts that validity arguments are situated within a specific time and place but that they also represent complex descriptions of the interconnected interpretations of program aims. Yin (2006) comments that “compared to other methods, the strength of the case study method is its ability to examine, in-depth, a ‘case’ within its ‘real-life’ context” (p. 111). Thus case study methodology enables inquiry into the lived ecology of a program, favouring context-specific arguments over generalisable claims. To this end, the validity argument presented an argument of complex coherence related to the ecology of a specific program and the enactment of its aims.

Given this ecological view to validity, the validity argument presented in this research is understood as an argument of program coherence specific to the Queen’s University teacher education program. Interpretations and enactment towards the aim of promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle were anchored in the
Queen’s University context of practice, shaped by specific program structures and administrator influences. In addition, the theoretical delineation of the construct, took into account that the Queen’s University context was impacted by broader policies, theories, and practices related to teacher education and the teaching profession in Ontario and Canada. In this way, this validation framework presented an argument specific to one ecological site as positioned within a broader theoretical and practical context.

As with any validity inquiry, arguments and their resulting claims are always contingent upon the available evidence (Kane, 2009). In this study, validity evidence was collected from 38 participants stratified across three participant groups (i.e., program administrators, faculty members, and teacher candidates). This participant sample was a fraction of the total number of program users associated with the Queen’s University teacher education program. While criteria were established to ensure a representative sample, the validity argument was only representative of the experiences and perspectives of study participants. Given the sampling limitation associated with a multi-perspective case study approach, there is an increased need to continue to engage new program users in contributing additional validity evidence for complex program aims. As such, the results from such validity inquiries need to serve a generative function by providing a basis for ongoing validation work. As a relatively small sample was used in this research, further studies may consider the integration of larger-data sets as an evidential component of interpretive and validity arguments. Hence future validity research should consider the utility of a mixed-methods design for data collection in case studies operating at various scales within program contexts (i.e., organization, group, individual; Currall & Towler, 2003).
While the specific findings in this research are not generalisable, this case study may be useful in guiding future validation inquiries within other teacher education program, providing a methodological framework for such inquiry and identifying potential areas related to inclusivity for consideration and analysis. Moreover, Eisenhardt (2002) contends that case studies can contribute towards the generation of theory through the development of a population of cases. As cases within a given domain accumulate, cross-case analysis can draw out generalisable trends to inform practices beyond local case contexts. Additional empirical support should be collected for the validation framework through a repeated case-study methodology (Stake, 1995, 2000). Specifically, a need exists to examine the viability of the framework within various educational contexts and to refine the framework for general use through a cross-case analysis.

Another area for further development of the framework involves the application of hermeneutics as both a process for collecting and analysing validity evidence and as a structure for validity arguments that invite continued inquiry. I used hermeneutics as an approach for engaging participants in recursive interpretations about a complex program aim. These interpretations were then integrated into the interpretive and validity arguments for the Queen’s University teacher education program. In using this approach, I worked towards Jardine’s (1992) recognition that hermeneutics is about bringing forward individual and group presuppositions and interpretations within a particular context. However, while I used a series of interpretive practices in this research, each practice occurred within and not between participant groups. Further, only the Commonplace Book and researcher keyword writing were sustained interpretive practices. In future applications of this framework, I would like to extend the use of
hermeneutics to engage participants within and between groups in sustained interpretive work. In this way, I hope to situate participants as “interpreters in the middle” of validity inquiries with greater ownership over hermeneutic practices (Sumara, 1996a, p. 127). Through such an approach, I believe that program users may become more meaningfully connected to the validation process leading to increased use of validity arguments and continued inquiry into complex program aims.

One challenge I faced in writing the validity argument was finding a representational form that sufficiently articulated the complex coherency found in the Queen’s University teacher education program. As expressed in my final keyword on coherence, I endeavoured to write the validity argument through a narrative of participant interpretations in relation to program structures. Based on my research, I believe that narrative representation appears to be one of the most promising avenues for validity articulation because these narratives aim to interweave multiple perspectives into a coherent form (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). While narrative as a representational form has yet to be suggested within validity research, it has been used extensively in previous research on curriculum and pedagogy, classroom and school cultures, and educational organizations (see Clandinin, 2007). Further, Czarniawska (2007) has effectively documented the benefits associated with narratives of educational organizations, acknowledging that narratives provide an effective way to articulate the dynamic interactions within educational programs and to represent the complex culture characteristic of education institutions. She also suggests that narratives offer an accessible format that invite continued inquiry into program operations, structures, and developments. Hence validity arguments articulated through a narrative form have the
potential to not only present an argument of coherence but to also situate that argument within a description of the program’s culture. In this way, the validity argument becomes a useful cultural artifact for continued inquiry into the coherency of program aims, their multiple interpretations and enactment. Certainly, an opportunity exists for subsequent research to examine the links between narrative inquiry and validation practice with a particular focus on how narratives can be used as a source for ongoing hermeneutic work.

My central purpose in conducting this research was to construct a framework for the validation of complex program aims that addressed the multiplicity of interpretations and enactment towards educational aims within a program context. The result is a framework that combines an overarching argument structure with a hermeneutic methodology and a narrative representational form. While this combination proved useful in articulating a complex argument of coherency for the Queen’s University teacher education program, this work represents a preliminary framework that requires continued development and refinement. Specifically, my future research will (a) engage new programmatic sites to consider the viability of the framework across educational contexts, (b) continue to explore the application of hermeneutics as sustained interpretive practice for validity evidence collection and analysis that integrates multiple program users, and (c) further develop grounds for a narrative argument structure as a cultural artifact and its utility in promoting validity as a generative activity. Overall, this program of research will aim towards reframing validation as a process that engages the complex coherence characteristic of educational programs.
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Equity Admission: For a designated number of places in the BEd/DipEd program, preference will be given to members of Aboriginal/First Nations groups, racial minorities, and differently-abled groups currently under-represented in the teaching profession. All applicants must meet the minimum academic requirements and the prerequisites for the program option selected. Those who apply for equity admission will be considered both under the general admission procedure AND under the equity admission policy.

Equity Admission Form: If you are a member of one of the groups indicated below and wish to apply for an equity admission place in the Education program please submit this form by 28 November 2008. The Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, attempts each year to admit a student body reflective of the general population of Canada, whose members bring to their pre-service professional preparation, understanding and personal experience of working toward environments free from prejudice and discrimination and characterised by inclusivity. The Faculty has developed an admission policy regarding equitable representation of groups underrepresented in the teaching profession, and has reserved a number of equity admission places in the Education program. Those who complete this form will be considered both under the general admission procedure AND under the equity admission policy. Please note that in order to be considered for admission, all teacher candidates must meet the minimum academic requirements and the prerequisites for the program option to which they apply.
OUAC Reference Number: 2009-\_

Last Name: First Name:

*Please check the box or boxes that apply to you:*

- [ ] Aboriginal/First Nations Peoples
  For the purposes of Canadian legislation, an Aboriginal person is a person of Indian, Metis or Inuit ancestry. Persons of Indian ancestry include all such persons whether they are deemed to be status or non-status Indians under the terms of the federal Indian act.

- [ ] Racial Minorities
  For the purposes of Canadian legislation, members of visible minorities are generally defined as persons, other than Aboriginal persons, who because of race or colour are in a visible minority in Canada.

- [ ] Differently-abled groups
  For the purposes of Canadian legislation, a person with a disability is defined as someone who experiences specific and serious barriers to educational opportunities, who requires accommodation, or who believes that a potential educational institution would likely consider them to be disadvantaged by reason of a persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, learning or sensory impairment.
APPENDIX B: GENERAL RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD CLEARANCE

July 16, 2009

Chris DeLuca
PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education
Duncan McArthur Hall
Queen’s University

GREB ref. # GEDUC-409-08
Title: “Validating Program Mission Statements: A Case Study of a Pre-service Teacher Education Program”

Dear Mr. DeLuca:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB) has reviewed and approved your request for renewal of ethics clearance for the above-named study. This renewal is valid for one year from September 4, 2009. Prior to the next renewal date you will be sent a reminder memo and form to reapply.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB if applicable, of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (details available at webpage www.queensu.ca/vpr/greb/addforms.htm#Adverse ). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that any adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes in study procedures or implementations of new aspects into the study procedures on the Ethics Change Form that can be found at http://www.queensu.ca/vpr/greb/addforms.htm#Change . These changes must be sent to Linda Frid at the Office of Research Services or FRIDL@queensu.ca prior to implementation. Ms. Frid will forward your request for protocol changes to the appropriate GREB reviewers and / or the GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Stevenson, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
General Research Ethics Board

c.c.: Dr. Don Klinger, Supervisor
Dr. Don Klinger, Dr. Ruth Rees, Dr. Rebecca Luce-Kapler, Co-Investigators
Dr. Don Klinger, Chair, E-REB
Graduate Studies and Bureau of Research, Attn: Celina Freitas
Letter of Information for the Dean of the Faculty of Education

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. The purpose of this study is to validate the aim of the Queen’s University program to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. As such, understanding your perspective as Dean towards this program mission is important to this research. This research project is led by Christopher DeLuca, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, under the supervision of Dr. Don A. Klinger, Associate Professor at Queen’s University.

Your participation in this research will involve an interview approximately 1 hour in duration. Interview questions will focus on your interpretation of the program’s mission, your views on how inclusivity is embedded within the pre-service program, and your views on how the BEd admission’s process contributes to the selection of candidates prepared to enact inclusive values in education. The interview will be conducted at a time and location convenient to you. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. Data gathered from you will only be used by the researcher and will be kept securely in a locked office and on a password protected computer. This research may result in publications of various types, including journal articles, professional publications, newsletters, books, and instructional materials. Your identity will not be disclosed in any of these result presentations. Given the high-profile nature of your position as Dean, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. By choosing to participate in the study, you are consenting to potential identification through presentation of results. However, you will have the option of having your name associated with any direct quotes included in publications.

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from this study without reason at any time and without consequence. To withdraw from this study, you may contact the lead researcher of this study (i.e., Christopher DeLuca, 2cd16@queensu.ca). If you withdraw from the study, your data will be removed from the study and destroyed immediately. There is no remuneration for participation in this study.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). Questions, concerns, or complaints about research ethics can also be addressed to Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Sincerely,
Christopher DeLuca, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education, Queen’s University
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR THE ASSOCIATE DEAN (CURRENT AND FORMER) OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. The purpose of this study is to validate the aim of the Queen’s University program to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. As such, understanding your perspective as Associate Dean towards this program mission is important to this research. This research project is led by Christopher DeLuca, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, under the supervision of Dr. Don A. Klinger, Associate Professor at Queen’s University.

Your participation in this research will involve an interview approximately 1 hour in duration. Interview questions will focus on your interpretation of the program’s mission, your views on how inclusivity is embedded within the pre-service program, and your views on how the BEd admission’s process contributes to the selection of candidates prepared to enact inclusive values in education. The interview will be conducted at a time and location convenient to you. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. Data gathered from you will only be used by the researcher and will be kept securely in a locked office and on a password protected computer.

This research may result in publications of various types, including journal articles, professional publications, newsletters, books, and instructional materials. Your identity will not be disclosed in any of these result presentations. Given the high-profile nature of the Associate Dean position, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. By choosing to participate in the study, you are consenting to potential identification through presentation of results. However, you will have the option of having your name associated with any direct quotes included in publications. There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from this study without reason at any time and without consequence. To withdraw from this study, you may contact the lead researcher of this study (i.e., Christopher DeLuca, 2cd16@queensu.ca). If you withdraw from the study, your data will be removed from the study and destroyed immediately. There is no remuneration for participation in this study.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). Questions, concerns, or complaints about research ethics can also be addressed to Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Sincerely,
Christopher DeLuca, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education, Queen’s University
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR THE REGISTRAR OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. The purpose of this study is to validate the aim of the Queen’s University program to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. As such, understanding your perspective as Registrar towards this program mission is important to this research. This research project is led by Christopher DeLuca, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, under the supervision of Dr. Don A. Klinger, Associate Professor at Queen’s University.

Your participation in this research will involve an interview approximately 1 hour in duration. Interview questions will focus on your interpretation of the program’s mission, your views on how inclusivity is embedded within the pre-service program, and your views on how the BEd admission’s process contributes to the selection of candidates prepared to enact inclusive values in education. The interview will be conducted at a time and location convenient to you. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. Data gathered from you will only be used by the researcher and will be kept securely in a locked office and on a password protected computer.

This research may result in publications of various types, including journal articles, professional publications, newsletters, books, and instructional materials. Your identity will not be disclosed in any of these result presentations. Given the high-profile nature of your position as Registrar, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. By choosing to participate in the study, you are consenting to potential identification through presentation of results. However, you will have the option of having your name associated with any direct quotes included in publications. There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from this study without reason at any time and without consequence. To withdraw from this study, you may contact the lead researcher of this study (i.e., Christopher DeLuca, 2cd16@queensu.ca). If you withdraw from the study, your data will be removed from the study and destroyed immediately. There is no remuneration for participation in this study.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). Questions, concerns, or complaints about research ethics can also be addressed to Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Sincerely,
Christopher DeLuca, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education, Queen’s University
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHING FACULTY

Research Project Title: Validating Complex Program Aims

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. The purpose of this study is to validate the aim of the Queen’s University program to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. As such, understanding your perspective as a pre-service faculty member toward this program aim is important to this research. This research project is led by Christopher DeLuca, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, under the supervision of Dr. Don A. Klinger, Associate Professor at Queen’s University.

Your participation in this research will involve an interview approximately 1 hour in duration. Interview questions will focus on your interpretation of the pre-service program’s mission, your experiences with issues of inclusion, and your views on how the pre-service admission’s process contributes to the selection of candidates prepared to enact inclusive values in education. The interview will be conducted at a time and location convenient to you. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. Based on interview data from 10 pre-service faculty members, a summary of faculty perspectives towards the concept of inclusivity in education will be prepared. This summary will then be forwarded to you via email and you will be asked to comment in writing on the various perspectives (i.e., elaborate on points, clarify concepts, or identify areas of agreement or disagreement). This process should take no longer than 1 hour and can be completed at time convenient to you. This research may result in publications of various types, including journal articles, professional publications, newsletters, books, and instructional materials. Direct quotes from your interview may be used in presentation or publication of results; however, your name will not be associated with these quotes. Your identity will not be disclosed in any presentation of results however depending on your position and the information you provide your identity may be deduced by others. Your confidentiality and anonymity will be protected to the best of the researcher’s ability. Data gathered from you will only be used by the researcher and will be kept securely in a locked office and on a password protected computer. There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from this study without reason at any time and without consequence. To withdraw from this study, you may contact the lead researcher of this study (i.e., Christopher DeLuca, 2cd16@queensu.ca). If you withdraw from the study, your data will be removed from the study and destroyed immediately. There is no remuneration for participation in this study.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). Questions, concerns, or complaints about research ethics can also be addressed to Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Sincerely,
Christopher DeLuca, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education, Queen’s University
I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the Queen’s University preservice teacher education program. The specific aim of this study is to validate the program’s core aim to promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle in education. As such, understanding teacher candidates’ perspectives and beliefs are important to this research. This research project is led by Christopher DeLuca, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, under the supervision of Dr. Don A. Klinger, Associate Professor at Queen’s University.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Participating in this study will involve attending a one-hour focus group session. These focus groups will involve both individual reflection and whole-group discussion. First, you will be asked to write a statement describing your interpretation towards the notion of inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. The whole group will then discuss definitions and conceptions of inclusivity with a particular emphasis on how inclusivity has been promoted in the BEd program. The aim of the focus group session is to enable teacher candidates to articulate their understandings and experiences related inclusivity. The focus group will be audio recorded and you will be asked to keep any information shared confidential. There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. However, participants will be asked to describe a time when they have felt excluded within an educational context. This question may cause some participants to feel emotionally upset. If you experience feelings of upset and would like to discuss these with a professional you may contact Queen’s University Health and Counseling Services at 613-533-6000 Ext. 78264. You may choose to withdraw from this study without reason at any time and without consequence. Choosing not to participate or electing to withdraw will have no impact on your academic standing in the BEd program. To withdraw from this study, you may contact the lead researcher of this study (i.e., Christopher DeLuca, 2cd16@queensu.ca) or simply leave the focus group session. If you withdraw from the study, your data will be removed from the study and destroyed immediately. There is no remuneration for participation in this study; however, you may directly benefit from articulating your teaching beliefs and critically reflecting on your teaching practice. This research may result in publications of various types, including journal articles, professional publications, newsletters, books, and instructional materials. Your identity will not be disclosed in any of these result presentations. Your confidentiality will be protected to the best of the researcher’s ability. Data gathered from you will only be used by the researcher and will be kept securely in a locked office and on a password protected computer.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). Questions, concerns, or complaints about research ethics can also be addressed to Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofrè, Dean of the Faculty of Education (brunojor@educ.queensu.ca; 613-533-6210) or to Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Sincerely,
Christopher DeLuca, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education, Queen’s University
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES  
(COMMONPLACE BOOK)  

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. The specific aim of this study is to validate the program’s core aim to promote caring as a central value in the profession of teaching and inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. As such, understanding teacher candidates’ perspectives and beliefs are important to this research. This research project is led by Christopher DeLuca, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, under the supervision of Dr. Don A. Klinger, Associate Professor at Queen’s University.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and will not involve any additional commitment other than completion of regularly planned Extended Family Group (EFG) activities. Four EFG sessions are schedule throughout your B.Ed year (1.5 hours each). These sessions consist of structured activities involving analysis of personal pedagogies, teaching metaphors, and critical incidents. Commonplace books will be used throughout the sessions as sites for critical reflection. If you choose to participate in the study, your Commonplace Books will be collected in April 2009 (upon completion of EFG) and returned to you one week later in your PROF 190/191 class.

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from this study without reason at any time and without consequence. Choosing not to participate or electing to withdraw will have no impact on your academic standing in the BEd program or your learning experiences in the EFG sessions. To withdraw from this study, you may contact your EFG facilitator or the lead researcher of this study (i.e., Christopher DeLuca, 2cd16@queensu.ca). If you withdraw from the study, your data will be removed from the study and destroyed immediately. There is no remuneration for participation in this study; however, you may directly benefit from articulating your teaching beliefs and critically reflecting on your teaching practice.

This research may result in publications of various types, including journal articles, professional publications, newsletters, books, and instructional materials. Your identity will not be disclosed in any of these result presentations. Your confidentiality will be protected to the best of the researcher’s ability. Data gathered from you will only be used by the researcher and will be kept securely in a locked office and on a password protected computer.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). Questions, concerns, or complaints about research ethics can also be addressed to Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Dean of the Faculty of Education (brunojor@educ.queensu.ca; 613-533-6210) or to Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Sincerely,  
Christopher DeLuca, PhD Candidate  
Faculty of Education, Queen’s University
CONSENT FORM
FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS
(Dean, Associate Dean, & Registrar)

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I have read and retained a copy of the Letter of Information concerning the above named study and all questions have been sufficiently answered. I am aware that the purpose of this study is to validate the mission statement of the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. I am aware of the nature of my participation in this study and I have been informed that the interview (approximately 1 hour in duration) will be audio-recorded. I understand that direct quotes from my interview may be used in presentation or publication of results.

I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study and I may request the removal of all or part of my data without any consequences to myself. I have also been told the steps that will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all information.

I am aware that if I have any questions about this project, I can contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). I am also aware that for questions, concerns or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I can contact Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Dean of the Faculty of Education (brunojor@educ.queensu.ca; 613-533-6210) or Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Please sign one copy of this Consent Form and return to Christopher DeLuca. Retain the second copy for your records.

I consent to my name being associated with direct quotes taken from my interview:

☐ Yes ☐ No

Participant’s Name: ________________________________________________

Signature: _______________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________________
CONSENT FORM  
FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS  
(TEACHING FACULTY)  

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I have read and retained a copy of the Letter of Information concerning the above named study and all questions have been sufficiently answered. I am aware that the purpose of this study is to validate the mission statement of the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. I am aware of the nature of my participation in this study and I have been informed that the interview (approximately 1 hour in duration) will be audio-recorded. I understand that direct quotes from my interview may be used in presentation or publication of results; however my name will not be associated with these quotes.

I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study and I may request the removal of all or part of my data without any consequences to myself. I have also been told the steps that will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all information.

I am aware that if I have any questions about this project, I can contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). I am also aware that for questions, concerns or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I can contact Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Dean of the Faculty of Education (brunojr@educ.queensu.ca; 613-533-6210) or Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Please sign one copy of this Consent Form and return to Christopher DeLuca. Retain the second copy for your records.

Participant’s Name: ________________________________________________

Signature: _________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________________
CONSENT FORM
FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES
(FOCUS GROUP)

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I have read and retained a copy of the Letter of Information concerning the above named study and all questions have been sufficiently answered. I am aware that the purpose of this study is to validate the mission statement of the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. I am aware of the nature of my participation in this study, which includes participation in a one-hour focus group session.

I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study and I may request the removal of all or part of my data without any consequences to myself. I have also been told the steps that will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all information.

I am aware that if I have any questions about this project, I can contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). I am also aware that for questions, concerns or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I can contact Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Dean of the Faculty of Education (brunojr@educ.queensu.ca; 613-533-6210) or Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Please sign one copy of this Consent Form and return to Christopher DeLuca. Retain the second copy for your records.

Participant’s Name: _______________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________________________
CONSENT FORM
FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES
(COMMONPLACE BOOK)

Research Project Title: Validating Program Mission Statements

I have read and retained a copy of the Letter of Information concerning the above named study and all questions have been sufficiently answered. I am aware that the purpose of this study is to validate the mission statement of the Queen’s University pre-service teacher education program. I am aware of the nature of my participation in this study and I have been informed that my Commonplace Book will be collected in the final Extended Family Group (EFG) session and returned to me one week later.

I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study and I may request the removal of all or part of my data without any consequences to myself. I have also been told the steps that will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all information.

I am aware that if I have any questions about this project, I can contact the lead research of this study, Christopher DeLuca (2cd16@queensu.ca; 613-331-6613) or Dr. Don A. Klinger (don.klinger@queensu.ca; 613-533-6220). I am also aware that for questions, concerns or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I can contact Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Dean of the Faculty of Education (brunojor@educ.queensu.ca; 613-533-6210) or Dr. Joan Stevenson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (greb.chair@queensu.ca; 613-533-6081).

Please sign one copy of this Consent Form and return to Christopher DeLuca or your EFG facilitator. Retain the second copy for your records.

Participant’s Name: ________________________________________________

Signature: _______________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________
### Table 6
*Teacher education courses related to inclusivity (required and elective)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Required/Elective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROF 100/101</td>
<td>Critical Issues and Policies</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 150/55</td>
<td>Concepts in Teaching and Learning: Social Contexts of Education Module</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDST 476</td>
<td>Exceptional Children and Adolescents</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOUN 490</td>
<td>Seminar in Social Class, Gender and Race</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCI 290</td>
<td>Teaching At-risk Adolescence and Young Adults (I/S)</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCI 295A</td>
<td>Teaching At-risk Adolescence and Young Adults (PJIS)</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCI 295A</td>
<td>Teaching At-risk Adolescence and Young Adults (PJIS)</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCI 296</td>
<td>Teaching for Social Justice</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCI 299</td>
<td>Teaching the Gifted</td>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E: TEACHER CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT FOR FOCUS GROUP

Recruitment Email and Poster

Dear Teacher Candidate:

I am writing to invite you to participate in educational research about inclusive education and teacher preparation. As a teacher candidate, your perspective and opinions are important to this work! We will be holding three focus groups (i.e., group discussions with 6-8 teacher candidates each) to understand your views toward inclusivity in education and how we can better prepare teachers for diversity in the classroom.

If you are interested in participating, please reply to Chris DeLuca at 2cd16@queensu.ca and indicate which of the following sessions you would be available to attend:

— Thursday April 16: 5:30-6:30
— Tuesday April 21: 5:30-6:30
— Wednesday April 22: 5:30-6:30
— Monday April 27: 3:00-4:00

Dinner will be provided at each session! Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. Thanks in advance!

Sincerely,

Chris
Participate in Educational Research

Join a Focus Group and Share Views on

Inclusive Education & Teacher Education

Your Opinion Matters!

Email: Chris DeLuca
2cd16@queensu.ca

Select a Focus Group Session
Thursday April 16: 5:30-6:30
Tuesday April 21: 5:30-6:30
Wednesday April 22: 5:30-6:30
Monday April 27: 3:00-4:00

Dinner Provided @ Focus Groups!
APPENDIX F: PRE/POST FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

Teacher Candidate Pre-Focus Group Survey

- To Be Completed Before Focus Group -

Focus Group ID ____________

Program Information

Program:  I/S ☐  P/J ☐  ACE ☐  ATEP ☐  OEE ☐  Tech Studies ☐

Were you enrolled in any of the following courses?

☐ EDST 476: Exceptional Children and Adolescents
☐ FOCI 295: Teaching At-risk Adolescence and Young Adults
☐ FOC 296: Teaching for Social Justice

Questions

1. What does “inclusivity” mean to you?
2. Which of the following groups do you identify with?

- Female
- Male
- Racial minority: Specify (optional): ____________________________
  Persons other than Aboriginals who because of race or colour are in a visible minority in Canada
- Differently-abled: Specify (optional): ____________________________
  A person with a disability is defined as someone who experiences specific and serious barriers to educational opportunities, who requires accommodation, or who believes that a potential educational institution would likely consider them to be disadvantaged by reason of a persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, learning or sensory impairment
- Aboriginal/First Nations Specify (optional): ____________________________
  An Aboriginal person is a person of Indian, Metis or Inuit ancestry
- Religious group Specify (optional): ____________________________
  A religious group refers to any organized congregation related to spiritual practice or tradition
- LGBT Specify (optional): ____________________________
  Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, or transgender sexual orientations

3. Has being part of any of these groups affected your view toward inclusivity? If so, how?

4. What personal experiences have shaped your view toward inclusivity? (feel free to write on the back)
Teacher Candidate Post-Focus Group survey

- To be Completed after Focus Group-

1. What have you learned about inclusivity from this discussion?

2. Please share any other thoughts about inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle?

3. Please share any other thoughts about how the pre-service program promotes inclusivity in education?
Thank you for agreeing to submit your Commonplace Book! Please complete the following information and place it inside your Commonplace Book so that your book can be returned to you. Commonplace Books will be returned to you during your PROF 190/91 Exit Conference unless you consent to having it mailed to you at a later date (within one month).

1. Your Name: ____________________________________________

   Email Contact: ____________________________________________

   Program: I/S ☐ P/J ☐ ACE ☐ ATEP ☐ OEE ☐ Tech Studies ☐

   Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

   Were you enrolled in any of the following courses?
   ☐ EDST 476: Exceptional Children and Adolescents
   ☐ FOCI 295: Teaching At-risk Adolescence and Young Adults
   ☐ FOC 296: Teaching for Social Justice

2. PROF 190/91 Exit Conference Details

   Date: ___________________________     Time: ___________________________

   Room: __________________________     Instructor: _______________________

3. Mailing Address

   Street/Number: ________________________________________________

   City/Province: ________________________________________________

   Postal Code: _________________________________________________

4. Return Option: Yes, you can mail me my Commonplace Book ☐
APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS—PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

1. Please describe how the current mission statement for the pre-service teacher education program was developed.

OR

Are you aware of the current mission statement for the pre-service teacher education program? If so, what aspects of it inform your position?

2. One of the core tenets of the pre-service program is to promote “inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle”. Why do you think this statement was selected as a core characteristic of the BEd program?

3. What does “inclusivity” mean to you?

4. What personal and professional experiences have shaped your view towards inclusivity? Describe an experience when you felt excluded.

5. What do you think inclusivity look like in practice?

6. What theoretical perspectives contribute to your view of inclusivity?

7. How does the pre-service program support the development of candidates committed to inclusivity in education?

8. How does the pre-service program select candidates that are prepared to become inclusive teachers?

9. What indicators do you look for in candidate statements that suggest a disposition toward inclusivity?
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS—FACULTY MEMBERS

1. One of the core tenets of the pre-service program is to promote “inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle”. Why do you think this statement was selected as a core characteristic of the BEd program?

2. What does “inclusivity” mean to you?

3. What personal and professional experiences have shaped your view towards inclusivity?

4. What do you think inclusivity look like in practice?

5. What theoretical perspectives contribute to your view of inclusivity?

6. As a pre-service faculty member, how do you support the development of candidates committed to inclusivity in education?

7. Having participated in the admissions process, how does the pre-service program select candidates that are prepared to become inclusive teachers?

8. What indicators do you look for in candidate statements that suggest a disposition toward inclusivity?
APPENDIX J: FACULTY MEMBER SUMMARY STATEMENT

Faculty Member Interview Follow-up

Thank you for your participation in my dissertation research. Your interview was very helpful in better understanding how the Queen’s University pre-service aim towards inclusivity is interpreted and enacted by faculty members. As a follow-up to the interviews, I have compiled a brief summary of key points (3 pages, see below) in response to the question: “What does inclusivity mean to you?” The summary reflects multiple conceptions of how inclusivity is interpreted by various faculty members. If willing, please provide any further reflections, insights, or comments regarding the expressed conceptions of inclusivity. Specifically, I invite you to:

a. Elaborate on specific points,
b. Clarify concepts,
c. Provide examples,
d. Raise questions, or
e. Identify areas of agreement or disagreement.

You may write your reflection in a response format or you may use ‘track changes’ to embed your comments throughout the document. This process should take no longer than 1 hour and can be completed at a time convenient for you. However, if possible, I would appreciate your feedback by November 30th. You may email your response back to me at christopher.deluca@queensu.ca. Once again, your participation is entirely voluntary. While I very much appreciate your feedback and response, you may choose to not participate in this portion of the study. Many thanks for your time and for your insights into the Queen’s University pre-service program!
This summary includes interpretive data collected from pre-service teaching faculty in the 2008-09 academic year. The summary presents key points that describe program users’ multiple interpretations of the Queen’s University pre-service program aim of promoting inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle in education. As noted by one professor, “in institutions like this one, people who work here have different agendas, an incredible range of responsibilities, and significantly diverse ways of interpreting those responsibilities”. This summary aims to characterise (in brief) these diverse conceptions of inclusivity within the Faculty of Education. This summary has two main sections: (a) foundational tenets of inclusivity, and (b) conceptions of inclusivity.

Foundational Tenets of Inclusivity

Several common themes emerged that were identified as foundational to understanding the concept of inclusivity in education. These foundations represent both practical and conceptual tenets of inclusivity as a pedagogical principle. Further they apply equally to the ways in which inclusivity is promoted in teacher education and in schools and classrooms more generally. Specifically, the foundational tenets are:

a. **Inclusivity is expressed as a personal and collective disposition:** A central theme in describing inclusivity across all participant groups was the notion that inclusivity is a disposition that is situated at both personal and institutional levels. In addition, dispositions toward inclusivity are not only thought to be graded (i.e., a matter of degree rather than all-or-none) but are also qualitatively different for different people and organizations.
b. **Inclusivity is anchored in difference and specifically, in groups of difference:** When participants described inclusivity, they often spoke discretely about specific groups to which efforts of inclusivity have been or should be focused. Though there were some blanket statements, such that inclusivity applies to all forms of difference, the examples used by participants to illustrate cases of inclusion centered predominately on differences of (a) culture, (b) gender, (c) ability, (d) social-political class, and (e) sexual orientation. Hence, these five positions of difference represent anchors in participants’ thinking about inclusivity and are ordered in the relation to the relative prominence of each. There may be additional anchors (e.g., physical image, interest groups, religion) that contribute towards participants’ conceptions of inclusivity. Anchors of inclusivity were also very much rooted in personal histories, many of which go back to one’s childhood and include parental and family relations.

c. **Inclusivity is fundamentally the same across educational contexts:** The Queen’s University teacher education mission statement towards inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle in education is vague in identifying if it applies to the teacher education program (and those that teach and learn within it) or if it applies to broader educational contexts (i.e. K-12 system of education. However, Faculty descriptions of inclusive learning spaces were similar regardless of the level of education. Though there was recognition that the language and pedagogical approaches used to promote inclusivity would differ across elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels, the aim and commitment towards creating inclusive learning spaces remained the same. Hence it appears that the articulated aim of promoting inclusivity as a pedagogical principle
can apply across contexts of education, including within the teacher education program.

d. **Diversity and learning about inclusivity are linked:** There was a general belief that more diversity within an educational context promoted the learning of inclusive values. Further, the learning of inclusive values from diverse contexts has the potential to impact not only students’ learning in that environment but also the students’ parents, siblings, and neighbours. In reflecting on the level of diversity at Queen’s University, there was general agreement that diversity has increased in the Faculty of Education across both faculty and teacher candidates; however, it remains a continued challenge and area of focus.

e. **Safety is a basic requirement for creating inclusive learning spaces:** Faculty described three forms of safety required to create inclusive learning spaces. These forms are (a) physical safety, (b) cognitive safety, and (c) emotional safety. All three were perceived as linked in learning environments, whether considering schoolyard activities, classroom learning, or virtual spaces. Further, it was suggested that different students feel these various forms of safety at different times. This reflects the understanding that safety is a matter of degree and highly based on situation and context.

**Conceptions of Inclusivity**

When asked what inclusivity means, one of the most common responses was that it means a sense of belonging—having students learning together. “Inclusivity means that everyone belongs in an important way so that no matter what would normally make you an outsider to community, you actually have a place in our community”. When probed
further and when asked to describe what ‘belonging’ might look like in practice, faculty described different conceptions of inclusivity. These multiple conceptions of inclusivity were characterised by one faculty member as existing on a “spectrum of inclusion”. He states, “I don’t think there is an absolute inclusive learning space. I think we can talk about the ideal of what maximum inclusivity is versus maximum exclusivity and I think we get this continuum between inclusive and exclusive but I’m not sure anyone is at either end.”

Across members of the Faculty of Education, three broad conceptions of inclusivity were identified:

a. **An integrative conception:** This conception was typically expressed in relation to the integration of students with exceptionalities and alternative programming options for culturally diverse students. Integrative inclusivity was characterised as including diverse learners into the school setting and core curriculum through accommodations, modifications, or alternative programming. This conception of inclusivity first relies on the explicit labeling of difference followed by a formal institutional response, which often focuses on addressing the academic learning needs of diverse students. Embedded within the integrative conception of inclusivity, is a discourse that assumes that a teacher ‘welcomes’, ‘invites’, or ‘accommodates’ diverse students into the learning environment. Faculty members described the teacher’s role in an integrative environment as inviting students from diverse backgrounds into the classroom and accommodating their learning needs so that students could access the core curriculum.
b. A dialogical conception: This conception of inclusivity accepts that all individuals are diverse within the learning context. One faculty member articulated a dialogical view as: “It means honouring and respecting everything that each individual brings into the classroom whether I understand it or not”. There is also recognition in the dialogic conception that the teacher is an active member of the classroom who also contributes to its diversity. Similar to the integrative conception, this conception recognizes a dominant group within the learning context, often represented by the teacher; however, there was an articulation that the dominant group may not be driving of all learning interactions in the class and that the dominant group is a diverse group of individuals onto itself. In contrast to the integrative view of inclusivity, which focuses on curricular accommodations and modifications, the dialogic view of inclusivity begins to address social-emotional aspects of inclusion. This view is about relating towards one-another, teachers and students, as diverse people. Respect/caring and listening to students were articulated as foundational characteristics to this form of inclusivity. Respect involves caring for diverse perspectives, even if different from the dominant group’s perspective. Listening in a dialogical context was characterised as a dual dialectic where “I open to you and you open to me to hear one another”. When conditions of respect, listening, and caring are achieved in a classroom, dialogical inclusivity promotes both a “learning about” and a “learning with” diverse individuals. In a dialogical context, learning not only occurs in a joint physical space but more importantly, engages social, academic, and emotional learning. Hence inclusion is presented as a feeling—an emotional and academic attachment to school and the learning environment.
c. *A transgressive conception:* The transgressive conception of inclusivity recognizes that all individuals in a classroom (i.e., students and teachers) are culturally complex. There is little evidence of a dominant social group in this conception, only overlays of cultures that create complex contexts for learning. Teaching and learning in these contexts is shared and based on the multiple perspectives. The transgressive conception of inclusivity is demarcated from the dialogical conception in the way in which learning happens in the classroom. In the dialogical view, learning occurs “with” and “about” diverse students. In the transgressive conception, learning occurs “from” diverse students. “My learning in the class depends on your learning and your perspective and your contribution and visa versa” (Faculty member). Hence transgressive learning is emergent and based on the complex interaction amongst students and teachers. Student diversity is used as a vehicle for the generation of new knowledge and the co-construction of curriculum and teaching. Guiding this conception is the notion: “Diversity makes a difference”.
APPENDIX K: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS

A. Introduction to research and topic “inclusivity in education” (5 minutes)

B. Individual Writing (15 minutes)
   Pre-focus group survey

C. Group Discussion (30 minutes)
   1. What does “inclusivity” mean?
   2. What does inclusivity look like in practice (in schools)?
   3. How did the pre-service program support the notion of inclusivity in its programming and curriculum?
   4. How do instructors of the pre-service program support the notion of inclusivity in their pedagogy?
   5. What program experiences this year have contributed to your understanding of inclusivity?

D. Individual Reflection (10 minutes)
   Post-focus group survey
It is the policy of the Ontario Teachers’ Federation:

1. That teachers promote Education for a Global Perspective in teaching/learning processes.

2. That curriculum and related activities incorporate, where appropriate, the critical examination of the following major global concepts, issues and trends:
   a. Concepts of interaction, interdependence and change to enable students to develop a holistic view of life.
   b. Trends towards environmental awareness, ecological balance, energy conservation and sustainability of life.
   c. Issues of human rights, social justice, social responsibility and equity.
   d. Respect for the existence of diversity within the human community
   e. Issues surrounding the impact of: the roots of poverty, malnutrition, disease, inadequate shelter and clothing, illiteracy and violence on all peoples and nations.
   f. The issue of the impact of militarism and war on children, human relations, natural environments and the ultimate fate of the planet.
   g. Strategies for the promotion and maintenance of peace

3. That, where appropriate, Education for a Global Perspective be incorporated within pre-service and in-service programs.

4. It be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to establish Education for a Global Perspective as a priority for Ontario education.
APPENDIX M: CRITICAL ISSUES IN EDUCATION (PROF 100/101) OUTLINE

PROF 100/101: Critical Issues and Policies
Course Outline

Website
http://educ.queensu.ca/prof/100-101/

Contact – Information Removed

Course Description
This course is an introduction to issues and policies that are critical for beginning and experienced teachers. It invites candidates to build on their experiences in classrooms and associate schools, to begin to learn about their legal rights and responsibilities as teachers, to begin to learn about adapting instruction for exceptional learners and about equity issues they will face in schools (2008-2009 Faculty of Education Calendar). It is delivered in a lecture and seminar format, with seven of each throughout the term (three weeks in September, one week in October, and three weeks in November).

In this course, you will be introduced to some strategies that will help you teach all the students in your class, whatever their individual needs arising from exceptionality, gender, culture, race, sexual orientation, or environmental conditions. You should also become familiar with the policies that address students’ rights and your responsibilities as teachers. These policies and regulations will guide your work in adapting teaching related to equity and exceptionality issues. You should take a critical and reflective stance in this course and in your work as a beginning teacher, asking questions about your own teaching, education, and society.

Insofar as we are asking you to take a critical and reflective stance, and expect you to make changes to your teaching to meet students’ individual needs, we expect the same of ourselves. To do so, we would appreciate your feedback. Please keep us informed throughout the term of how we can make this course valuable for your professional growth.

This course has been designed in accordance with the Ontario College of Teachers’ Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession
# Course Organization

## Lecture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Special Education</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Learning Disabilities, Part 1</td>
<td>* Implementation of Response to Intervention at Middle School</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Chapter 9A and 9B</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>* A Whole-School Approach to Bullying</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* A Safe School Action Plan, pp. 10-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>* Glossary of terms</td>
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<td>* Unsettling the Academy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* I am white, and that means I am also privileged</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Giftedness</td>
<td>* Differentiation: Gifted children in the Canadian classroom</td>
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## Seminar

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Special Education</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Learning Disabilities, Part 2 and ADHD Assignment 1 due</td>
<td>Chapters 4 and 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* ADHD: Building Academic Success</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Multiculturalism and Aboriginal Issues</td>
<td>Chapters 2 and 3</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* Community as a Participatory Foundation in Culturally Conscientious Classrooms or Bridges to Cultural Understanding (choose one)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Behavioural Issues Poster Presentations (optional)</td>
<td>Chapter 7 (P/J), Chapter 8 (I/S)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* Examining the Influence of Teacher Behavior and Classroom Context on the Behavioural and Academic Outcomes for Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>* What About “What about the Boys”?</td>
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<td>* Gender Inequalities in Education</td>
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<td>* Gender Bias in the Classroom (P/J)</td>
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<td>* Girls Are... Boys Are...: Myths, Stereotypes &amp; Gender Differences (I/S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social and Emotional Issues Assignment 2 due</td>
<td>* Exploratory study of teacher’s knowledge about the symptoms of depression in young people with and without intellectual disabilities</td>
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<td>* School phobia: understanding a complex behavioural response</td>
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<td>* Teaching Students with Mental Health Disorders, pp. 9-35</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mild Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
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<td>* Fitting In: Tips for Promoting Acceptance and Friendships for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders</td>
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<td>* Friendships for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Curriculum Augmentation and Adaptation Strategies to Promote the general Curriculum for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities</td>
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Readings
Reading for this class are drawn from two sources, the custom text and the course website. All assigned readings should be completed prior to the lecture or seminar for which they are listed. The custom text used in this class is required and can be purchased at the Campus Bookstore ($27.95 plus GST). There are a limited number of copies on reserve at the Education Library.

Expectations
Professionalism is expected in PROF 100/101 classes. Professionalism includes:
• treating each other with respect.
• attending all seminars and lectures. If you must miss a class due to extenuating circumstances, you are expected to notify your instructor prior to the start of class.
• arriving punctually to classes.
• participating in discussions and activities.
• working in a collegial manner in groups.
• completing assigned readings prior to class.
• maintaining e-mail contact.
• handing in assignments on time, unless prior arrangements have been made.

Grading
This is an “Honours-Pass-Fail” course. Satisfactory completion of all expectations and assignments is required for a passing grade. To obtain a grade of Honours in the class, you must receive Honours on both assignments. Late assignments will not be eligible for Honours.

It is at the discretion of Dr. Freeman whether circumstances warrant the waiving of any specific requirements described above.

Course Assignments

Assignment One: Investigating Theory
Due: Friday, September 26, no later than 4:00 p.m., A311
Length: 3-4 pages (for paper option; paper copy only)

Although a number of topics will be covered broadly in this course, you will choose an equity or exceptionality issue to examine in greater depth. You can work individually or in pairs. Your examination of this issue can be presented in the form of a paper or poster.
• Consider detailing why you are interested in this issue, drawing on personal experience.
• Identify the issue by providing a description, characteristics and/or testimonial.
• You must cite a minimum of two sources, per person. One of these must be a reliable webpage or book; the other must be an article from a scholarly journal (may be obtained electronically).
• Describe the issue with particular emphasis on teaching implications.
• Summarize how the information you have found could affect your future teaching practice.
• Identify two questions that people should be able to answer by examining your work. Posters should be collected before you leave for your first practicum in October.

Assignment Two: Translating Theory into Practice

Due: Friday, November 14, no later than 4:00 p.m., A311
Length: 3-4 pages (paper copy only)

Choose one of the following options. It may be advantageous, although not required, to use the same equity or exceptionality issue that you selected for the first assignment. In either case, the first part of the assignment should describe the teaching context, including grade level, subject, composition of class, and where the lesson would fit in the unit. The second part of the assignment should be a critical reflection on the lesson. This critical reflection could be an examination of how you might do the lesson differently if you have had a chance to teach it. See the rubric for requirement details.

(a) Modify a lesson plan to address an exceptionality or equity issue that might arise within a classroom. Use either a lesson plan you have previously developed or create a new lesson plan. Clearly indicate throughout the lesson plan how you would incorporate exceptionality/equity changes. Include how you would assess the lesson’s effectiveness and what modifications might be needed to provide a fair assessment.

OR

(b) Create a lesson plan to specifically teach K-12 students an exceptionality or equity issue. The lesson should promote students’ awareness of the issue and help them develop strategies around the issue. As much as possible, the lesson should incorporate hands-on learning. Include plans for student assessment.
INTRODUCTION: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This module is intended to draw attention to the theoretical underpinning of social justice (as distinct from the more commonly understood notions of charity) and help us to better understand how issues of equity and possibility might be achieved in schooling contexts.

Schools are more than places for the transfer of technical knowledges. They are deeply social/cultural places. Inequalities inherent in racism, ethnocentrism, ableism, sexism, class bias, ageism, heterosexism and other social markers are often present, represented, reproduced, made concrete, contested and resisted in the school/social setting. Understanding the interplay and intersection between and among socially constructed identities, and the motivating ideologies of dominant orthodoxies, is one of the most difficult problems in the social sciences.

Students are helped to better understand how social positions, articulated through differentiations of social class, race, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental abilities, sexualities, and so on are not reductive categories ("naturalized" and "neutralized"), but rather exist within a social context and are a result of cultural forms and social practices and ideologies that both define and limit what/who we are and what/who we might become. Schools are one of the major sites of these social/cultural struggles.

In thinking about teaching, it is important to reflect on how the school curriculum and schooling practices can work to address these socially imposed limitations in the interest of equality and possibility. Through this understanding students will be encouraged to reflect upon their own schooling experiences as a way to reflect on who they imagine they might be as teachers and community workers. The examination of our own social environment is the route through which we can understand how social relations are continually in the process of being formed, negotiated and reformed in dynamic ways. It is also the way in which pedagogical practices, aimed at social reform and transformation through schooling, can be produced.

Making sense of the Theory/Practice dyad: Everything we do is a result of what we believe about the world. Sometimes these beliefs seem to be natural and unproblematic because we
take our everyday practices for granted and have not reflected sufficiently on the source of our ideas, their history, and the social/political context in which they have arisen. Failure to reflect on our beliefs often makes them seem “objective”—but in fact they are often highly subjective and serve the interests of particular groups or individuals—often those of which we are a part to the exclusion of those we choose to “other”. When we reflect on our meaning making practices, and what we allow ourselves to DO as a result of what we believe, we are in a better position to uncover the theoretical constructs out of which our practices arise. Here the term "subjective" is understood to mean not blind self interest but the outcome of rigorous self reflection about our meaning making practices, and the conceptual frameworks by which we articulate them. It is through this process that we might uncover the theoretical constructs out of which our practices arise.

PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED (1972), the now classic work of Paulo Freire, can help us develop an understanding of the practice/theory dynamic. Any attempt to "front end" either practice-devoid-of-theory or theory-that-is-not-related-to-questions-of-practice will fall short of our intentions for social justice. For this reason it will be the intention of this module to better understand the tension between practice and theory where practice and theory are seen not as activities distinct one from the other but rather as deeply integrated in mutual relation.

Power in this context references those practices and social relations, by which some individuals, or groups of individuals, are able to organize social life to their own advantage by virtue of their social/historical location, while simultaneously withholding such privileges from others, located differently, through the processes of hegemony—hegemony construction of consent to ones own marginality.

RESPECT: Students are reminded that the course readings and resources are intended to stimulate discussion not to close it down. Interactions in the class-room are a social justice issue. As in all learning situations, it will be our collective responsibility to make sure that everyone’s conceptual positions are heard and engaged to the extent that it is possible within the limitations of our particular context.

Taking Responsibility for Your Learning: Take every opportunity to learn more. You have a right and an obligation as a student of the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University to engage in leaning to be a teacher using all of the intellectual resources that are available to you in a University programme and its intellectual context with concrete links to intellectual opportunities such as conferences, workshops and professional organizations. Do not allow yourself to become so caught up in the "busy-ness" of everyday life that you forget the intellectual reflection component of your programme. Do not allow yourself to become so caught up in the "busy-ness" of everyday life that you fail to take advantage of other learning opportunities as these become available. As seductive as "busy-ness" may be, this is not all there is to know about teaching and community work. In the long run, you will not do yourself or your students a favour by learning the "tricks of the trade" at the expense of taking the time to think about the larger questions of pedagogy—the theory and practice of teaching for social change. Inform your practice with theory; make theory useful with your practice.
COURSE EXPECTATIONS

As a required course, participation in all aspects of the course is required to contribute to and gain the most out of this learning experience. In your capacity as a student and as a professional, the following components of learning are required for successful completion of the course:

Class Attendance: Required
Class Preparation: Required
Submission of assignments on time: Required
Passing grade on assignments: Required

COURSE ORGANIZATION: TIME, PLACE, DATES

Class Meeting Place: Auditorium (A101), Duncan McArthur Hall
Class Meeting Time: 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Class Meeting Dates:
Tuesday January 5; Thursday January 7; Friday January 8; Thursday January 14;
Thursday January 21; Friday January 22; Tuesday January 26; Thursday January 28

Important information:

ACCOMMODATION

Queen’s University is committed to facilitating the full participation of all students with learning and physical exceptionalities in all aspects of the programme. While all students are expected to satisfy the essential requirements for courses and programs, the administration, faculty, staff and students of Queen’s University are expected to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodation may require members of the University community to exercise creativity and flexibility in responding to the needs of students with disabilities while maintaining academic standards. This policy acknowledges that fundamental to the academic and personal success of students is their responsibility to demonstrate self-reliance and to identify needs requiring accommodation. [See: www.educ.queensu.ca/bachelor/index.shtml]. Students requiring accommodation can contact the Queen’s University Health, Counselling and Disability Services at:
http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/

The Coordinator of Disability Services will meet with, assess, and coordinate, with the student and the course instructors, services to promote equitable educational opportunities.

*FIRST ASSIGNMENT Due electronically at 11:00 a.m. Friday, January 8. Submitted online only. Late submission accepted only with permission of Instructor.
*SECOND ASSIGNMENT Due electronically at Midnight, Thursday, February 11. Late submission accepted only with permission of Instructor.

Students are reminded to always keep a copy of all of their submissions in their own files until after convocation.

Computers will not be required in the auditorium lecture portion of this module. Students are asked to keep their computers closed for the 50 minute duration of the presentation. Exceptions only by request through the Queen’s University Health, Counselling and Disability Services Office.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURE/DISCUSSION TOPICS and READINGS**

1. Positioning Ourselves as Students and Teachers of Students Within Social Justice Education and Teaching

   Reading:

2. Conceptual Framing of the Meaning and Practice of Injustice

   Reading:

3. Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice Education

   Reading:

   **First Assignment Due as described in course outline -- to be submitted on-line only**

4. Teachers Teaching for Social Change

   Reading:
5. How We Think About the World Makes a Difference in What We Do in the World: Case in Point—Aboriginal World View

Reading:


Reading:


Readings:


8. So You Want to be an Educational Leader—The Role of Leadership in Social Justice Education

Reading:

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

There are two (2) assignments in this course. These are described below.
All students must 1) complete, 2) submit no later than the posted due date, and 3) earn a passing grade for each assignment in order to pass the Module.

Students must keep a copy of all submissions

**Late submissions will be accepted only with permission of Instructor**
FIRST ASSIGNMENT: REFLECTING ON PRACTICE—SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES
Meaningful engagement in social justice thinking and practice requires students to participate in the exercise of critical reflection. Engagement requires students to (1) participate to the extent possible in the construction of the course, and (2) become aware of prior experience and knowledge which is an important point of departure for new learning. One way to invite students’ meaningful contributions is offered in the first assignment.

All submissions will be reviewed and organized by theme for the purpose of helping to shape the subsequent course content.

Please be advised: Commonly identified issues will be discussed in class, using selected quotes drawn from among the students' submissions as examples of teaching points. Do not use real names or say anything you would not be prepared to share. Authors of representative quotes will not be named or otherwise identified in lectures or class discussions.

Details of Assignment One:
• Think back to a time in educational contexts when you encountered or were a participant in a scene, event, or exchange in which injustice was a key factor,
• Write a short, 1/2 page (single spaced) reflection about what happened.
• Describe the injustice and the role played by those involved or those who should have been involved.
• In writing this short piece you can elaborate the issue but DO NOT include particulars such as names of people or places or any other specifically identifying information as these are not relevant to your thinking theoretically and conceptually about the social justice issue upon which you decide to focus.
• Include a) your FIRST AND LAST NAME, b) your STUDENT NUMBER AND c) the NAME OF YOUR TA at THE TOP OF YOUR SUBMISSION.
• Submit the assignment electronically to your TA. Please take great care to REMEMBER WHO YOUR TA IS and contact her or him specifically. Assignments submitted to the wrong TA could result in Failure to Receive your assignment.

SECOND ASSIGNMENT: DIGITAL STORY

“[The] primary concern is encouraging thoughtful and emotionally direct writing”

An elaborated description of “Digital Story can be found at: http://www.storycenter.org/ Accessed on December 10, 2008)

The Digital Story links your own lived experience, with new knowledge and insight using images and voice-over methodologies. In a required course of this size and with this focus, the Digital Story provides a special opportunity to individualize and maximize learning.
WHY DIGITAL STORY?

Digital Story is a form of learning that is composed of commentary superimposed over still images in order to tell a story. In this assignment you are using audiovisual communication with emphasis on personal voice to address a topic of interest in social justice and education and the issues that social justice concepts raise within the Curriculum of your Teachable. You can be as creative as you like. Think of innovative and engaging ways to communicate your ideas. Metaphor, representation, irony are just a few of the ways that pictures and text can be used together to communicate your thoughts.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO DO?

- Students will have been formed into groups of three according to their “Teachable”
- Each group will prepare a digital story, ten minutes in length, of their choice; addressing one Social Justice issue related to the curriculum of their “Teachable”, grade level of their choosing, as it exists within one specific context decided upon by the group.
- Within your story, you must demonstrate the ability to describe, synthesize, analyse, and critique your chosen topic.
- The digital story must be connected to the course through the concepts developed in the readings, discussions, presentations, and the Social Justice Approach of this Module.
- Prepare the Digital Story with the possibility of using it as Curricular support in your own teaching or that of other teachers in the subject area
- A Queen’s University Wiki site hosted by Dr. Adam Davidson-Harden is an interactive resource that you can both take from as well as add to. It hosts different links to resources in teaching for social justice across a variety of disciplines and themes: https://wiki.queensu.ca/display/~davidsoa/Teaching+for+Social+Justice+resource+bookshelf. Use your Queen’s University netid and password to log on.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DIGITAL STORIES?

Web sites to explore before starting:
http://www.ualberta.ca/~cf6/DS/index.html
http://www.storycenter.org/
http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/hyper/ht99/hypertext.html

WHO IS AVAILABLE TO HELP IF NEEDED?

With regard to the technical aspects of the assignment, you have already, in the fall term, received instruction in the technology you are required to use in producing your Digital Story. Students who still require assistance will be helped by the technical support available at the Faculty of Education, E-Learning Hub.
With regard to the content and presentation of the story component of the assignment, your Teaching Assistant will provide you with guidance and assistance as needed.

WHAT DETAILS MUST BE INCLUDED?

Refer to the “Marking Sheet For Digital-Story Assignment January 2010 Prof 155 Social Justice Module”, available on the PROF 155—Social Justice Module of the Faculty of Education Web Page. Use the “Checklist” to ensure that you have included all of the required components of this assignment.

If you have drawn upon the expertise of other people in producing your Digital-Story, provide proper credits at the end of the story.

For this assignment you cannot:
• interview anyone
• use photographs you have taken of children’s faces
• include identifying names such as schools, cities, organizations etc.
• present work you did not produce

Within the conditions above, you can, with appropriate citation:
• include parts of bodies, inanimate objects, and places
• use your own original work (photos, and other artifacts collected over time)
• use FREE share-ware photos and drawings (only 1/4 of images can come from this source)
• use publicly available materials such as magazine and newspaper articles/headings and teaching federation publications

HOW WILL MY DIGITAL STORY BE ASSESSED?

This digital story assignment has the status of a final term assignment. Assessment will be based on:
• Content. The quality of the story itself (the script) is the central element in building a Digital Story. This story is the ESSAY COMPONENT of this assignment. As such it must be original work using supporting materials. As in a term essay, the content of the Digital Story must be based on your own thinking, informed by the readings and lectures, and linked to how you have come to think about teaching the Curriculum in your “Teachable”. This Digital Story assignment 1) tells a story and 2) makes links to the Curriculum requirements in your “teachable”.
• Evaluation for this aspect of the assignment will focus on content analysis including the ability of the students to describe, synthesize, analyse, and critique their chosen topic making clear how they have built on prior knowledge by using the concepts, ideas, questions, and principles of social justice as made available in the presentations, performances, discussions and readings. Relevance. The
submitted assignment must be relevant to the production team’s “Teachable” and contribute to the delivery of the Curriculum in this area.

- **Use of Technology to Enhance Learning.** Beyond the content of the assignment, evaluation of this assignment will also focus on students’ demonstrated ability to use voice-over script, written by the collaborating team, and related images, both of which are required elements of the Digital Story. Music and other possible components can contribute to the overall quality (effect) but are not required. Nor is musical verse composed by other than the collaborative team acceptable as the “voice-over” component.

**HOW WILL I SUBMIT MY DIGITAL STORY?**

In the Fall Term you were given instruction on submitting Digital Story material. These instructions are also posted on the site for the course, PROF155 Social Justice Module, under the heading **INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING THE DIGITAL STORY.**

**SHARING YOUR WORK**

Those students who wish to participate are asked to sign a waiver allowing us to show their Digital Story. It is our intent to put together a composite of the submissions for public viewing by members of the academic community when you return to the Faculty of Education in April. Please consider signing the Waivers with which you have been provided.

**Please Note: KEEP COPY OF ALL SUBMISSIONS UNTIL AFTER CONVOCATION**

If your submission does not transfer in the electronic process you will be required to produce the copy of your submission for grading.

**A Final Note Regarding Academic Honesty**

Submitting material you did not create constitutes plagiarism and is governed by the Queen’s University policy on Academic Honesty:

http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/AIprocedures.pdf

Accessed December 10, 2008

Please note: plagiarism and cheating are academic crimes. No one will be allowed to paraphrase or copy the words, images, or other creative materials of other authors without providing appropriate citation. Queen’s University policies on academic honesty are available on the web and you must be familiar with them before completing assignments. Infractions of University policies related to academic honesty will be dealt with in strict adherence to the procedures established by the university.