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FACULTY PERSPECTIVES AND PARTICIPATION IN IMPLEMENTING AN  
EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Education  
in the Department of Child, Family and Community Sciences  
in the College of Education and Human Performance  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

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## ABSTRACT

Early alert systems have been recognized as a high impact practice designed to improve student engagement and student success. Early alert is designed to identify students with at-risk behaviors early in the semester before they decide to drop-out, withdraw, or fail their classes, using resources such as a predictive analysis tool or advising. For an early alert to be successful and efficient, faculty should be included in the process of early alert. This qualitative study examined faculty's perspective and experiences when implementing early alert strategies and intervention in a two-year institution. Using Cranton's seven facets of transformative learning as a conceptual framework, this study examined the changes, perception, and experiences of faculty as a result of implementation. The literature reviews best practices that can be considered when faculty designs their early alert strategies and intervention. Participants shared their During and After Implementation Journal experience by completing reflection journals. After careful analysis of their journals and initial interview, the following major themes emerged: a) at-risk behaviors, b) high-impact practices, c) intentionality, d) personal connection, e) perspective transformation, and f) value. As a result of these themes, recommendations were provided to assist faculty development and change agents in two-year institutions in improving early alert methods to increase student success.

*Keywords:* early alert, intervention, at-risk behaviors, transformative learning, two-year institutions, community colleges, support

*I dedicate this dissertation to my family. My husband, Kevin, who has been my support and comforter. My dearest children, Syllina, Alaina, Jordan, and Ava who motivated and pushed me to cross that finish line. I also dedicate this to my Valencia College family and the running club, Lake Nona, for helping me to build endurance. Last but not least, I dedicate this work to my friend Lucillia who helped me to be a prayer warrior.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Overview.....	1
Conceptual Framework.....	11
General Background .....	17
Statement of Problem.....	18
Research Questions.....	20
Significance of the Study .....	21
Definitions of Terms .....	21
Summary.....	24
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	25
Introduction.....	25
Access .....	26
Role of Community College and Faculty .....	27
Community Colleges .....	27
Role of Faculty.....	28
Student Academic Support and Early Alert Programs .....	29
Valencia College’s Early Alert System .....	33
Adult Learning Theories on Practice .....	35
Faculty Development .....	37
History of Faculty Development.....	38
Planning for an Effective Early Alert System.....	39
Empathy .....	41
21st Century Learning.....	42
Formative Assessment Techniques.....	45
Reflection.....	46
Contemplative Inquiry and Reflection-on-Action .....	47
Transformative Learning .....	48
Summary.....	50



CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	51
Introduction.....	51
Research Questions.....	52
Rationale for Qualitative Method .....	53
Data Collection .....	53
Implementation .....	55
Researcher’s Role .....	56
Population and Setting .....	57
Sampling .....	57
Data Analysis .....	58
Trustworthiness.....	66
Limitations/ Delimitations .....	72
Summary.....	73
CHAPTER FOUR: PORTRAITS OF THE PARTICIPANTS.....	74
Participant Profiles.....	76
Martin.....	79
Claire.....	80
Dorothy .....	81
Cole.....	82
Ashley .....	83
Summary.....	84
CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS .....	85
Voices of Participants .....	85
Research Question 1 .....	86
Creating an Activating Event.....	86
Openness to Alternatives .....	88
Summary.....	91
Research Question 2 .....	92
Critical Self-Reflection .....	93
Open to Alternative Viewpoints .....	97
Constructing Knowledge: Discourse, Evidence and Exploration.....	97
Summary.....	103

Research Question 3 .....	103
Revising Assumptions and Perspectives.....	103
Transformation: Acting on Revisions, Behaving, Talking, and Thinking.....	105
Summary .....	115
Themes .....	116
Student Success.....	116
At-Risk Behaviors.....	117
Personal Connection .....	118
Instructional Strategies.....	119
Intentionality .....	121
Perspective Transformation .....	122
High-impact Practices .....	124
Value .....	126
Summary .....	134
<b>CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS .</b>	<b>135</b>
Overview.....	135
Faculty Designed Early Alert Strategy and Intervention.....	137
Cranton’s Seven Facets of Transformative Learning .....	138
Creating an Activating Event.....	138
Articulating Assumptions .....	141
Critical Reflection.....	142
Openness to Alternatives .....	142
Engaging in Discourse .....	143
Revisiting Assumptions and Acting on Revisions.....	143
Limitations/ Delimitations .....	145
Implications and Recommendations.....	146
Recommendations.....	146
Implications for Future Research.....	152
Researcher’s Reflection .....	154
<b>APPENDIX A: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: INTERVIEW ...</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: EMAIL</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>162</b>

APPENDIX C: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: FORMAL	
LETTER I .....	164
APPENDIX D: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: FORMAL	
LETTER II .....	166
APPENDIX E: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: FORMAL	
LETTER III.....	168
APPENDIX F: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: REFLECTION	
JOURNAL- DURING IMPLEMENTATION.....	170
APPENDIX G: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: REFLECTION –	
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION .....	172
APPENDIX H: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: PERMISSION	
FROM INFOGRAPHIC .....	174
APPENDIX I: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION: PERMISSION	
FROM INFOGRAPHIC .....	176
APPENDIX J: UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA APPROVAL OF EXEMPT OF	
HUMAN RESEARCH.....	179
APPENDIX K: VALENCIA COLLEGE IRB APPROVAL .....	181
APPENDIX L: INITIAL CODING NOTES OF THE STUDY’S THEME	
DEVELOPMENT .....	183
APPENDIX M: CODING NOTES OF THE STUDY’S THEME DEVELOPMENT...187	
REFERENCES .....	213

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Mezirow’s Components of the Psycho-critical Approach.....	14
Figure 2. Cranton’s (2002) Revised Model of Mezirow’s Components of Psycho-critical .....	15
Figure 3. Adult Theories and Best Practices at Work.....	37
Figure 4. P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning.....	43
Figure 5. Five Phases of Analysis Interviews and Implementation Reflection Journals Figure developed by author. ....	63
Figure 6. Three C’s of Data Analysis: Codes, Categories, and Concepts. ....	65

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Overview of Research Process, Questions and Data Collection .....	59
Table 2: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 1 .....	60
Table 3: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 2 .....	61
Table 4: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 3 .....	62
Table 5: Example of identifying significant phrases or keywords from participants .....	68
Table 6: Example taken from Appendix L .....	69
Table 7: Emergent Themes to Major Themes .....	71
Table 8: Participant's Profiles .....	78
Table 9: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 1 .....	90
Table 10: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 2 .....	102
Table 11: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 3 .....	114
Table 12: Analysis Using Conceptual Framework: Research Question 1 .....	128
Table 13: Analysis Using Conceptual Framework: Research Question 2 .....	130
Table 14: Analysis Using Conceptual Framework: Research Question 3 .....	132

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

*Involving adult educators in understanding why and how learning activities are chosen and used brings learners into the circle of responsibility. Providing an environment that supports questioning and reflective practice, also leaves open options for educators to move into transformation at their own pace. Some educators may not take an outward step at that time, but instead, continue thoughtful consideration of their choices and perspectives. In addition, at a time when learner-centered classrooms and active learning techniques are more widely accepted in adult and higher education, professors and developers have a receptive climate and an opportunity to integrate transformative learning into the mainstream of practice and purpose. (King, 2004, p.172).*

### Overview

My role as a Faculty Fellow allowed me to capture different perspectives from faculty and how they assisted students with at-risk tendencies. Some faculty members had expressed their concerns and desires to help their students. Nevertheless, when they received suggestions, they had often expressed how these strategies may not work, or how they did not have sufficient time to implement engaging strategies, such as active learning activities and formative assessments or instructional tools in their classroom. Other faculty members had voiced their skepticism regarding the efficacy of these strategies to remedy at-risk tendencies. I had heard a few professors express that these students were merely lazy or that nothing would aid these struggling students in progressing each semester. I was often concerned when I heard these comments from my fellow colleagues because I was once “that student” who struggled in class.

Albeit, my institution provided professional development courses to help all faculty in becoming exemplary educators in their discipline. The issue some of these courses address is that faculty members may be fulfilling their responsibilities without genuinely understanding the adversities such struggling students encounter through their

college endeavors. Because my experience as an undergraduate student provided me with a firsthand discernment of the necessity of offering support and resources to struggling students, it had allowed me to be fully committed to helping my students succeed.

When I first began my undergraduate studies at the College of New Rochelle in New Rochelle, New York, I had never understood what was expected of me as a college student. Furthermore, I lacked entry-level grades from high school. In other words, I would be classified as a non-traditional student due to my financial constraints and first-generation status. After having a child in my second year of college, it heightened my level of under-preparedness and unfortunately, I had limited support from my non-English speaking Haitian parents, as well as limited educational resources for second language learners (Prince & Jenkins, 2005).

As an undergraduate student who was under-prepared, I struggled in my classes because I had lacked college success skills, such as being able to use deductive reasoning or being deficient in writing as a second language learner. Due to my educational background from the private high school I attended, I was more accustomed to skill-and-drill rather than having in-depth critical thinking-based activities. Unfortunately, my elementary and secondary education instructors never employed these strategies for second language learners.

During my sophomore year in college, I gave birth to my daughter, which amplified my struggle as a student. Because I severely struggled with my academics, I was placed on academic probation. However, while on academic probation, I was fortunate to have a professor, Dr. Margaret Finn, who reached out to me early enough

before I dropped out of my classes, and provided me with academic and non-academic support to successfully complete her class, and my other classes as well. Although I had another instructor who was my advisor and did very little to assist me at the time, Dr. Finn wholeheartedly supported me. She aided me in attaining my first teaching position because she instilled the necessary tools to help me with interviews, such as improving my resume and cover letter. Eventually, during my junior year, she transitioned into becoming my advisor. This professor genuinely devoted her time and energy to guide me along the way through my undergraduate years, and through her guidance, I developed a new understanding and perspective about my teaching profession. Therefore, I paid it forward as a professor by providing not only academic support, but also nonacademic support (Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004). I empathize with the struggles my students endure, and I embed best practices, such as active learning strategies, formative and summative assessments, as well as faculty-student interaction and nonacademic support outside of my curriculum to help my students in becoming successful in my class.

Every time I shared my story with my colleagues regarding my interaction with my professor as an undergraduate student who displayed at-risk tendencies, and how she provided me with academic and non-academic support which enabled me to change my mindset and to be successful as a college student, I would reflect on why it is crucial for me to not revert to my old teaching habits of going through the motions when dealing with students who display at-risk behaviors. Furthermore, not only did this experience transform my habits when I attended college as an undergraduate student, it changed my perspective to evaluate my instruction when using activities, assessments, and in my



interaction with my students. As a professor and a Faculty Fellow in faculty development, I had impacted the lives of my students and assisted faculty to do the same for their struggling students who were on the verge of withdrawing from a class.

As a result of my personal and professional experience and my work as a facilitator who teaches a faculty development course on designing an early alert system, I had found myself wanting to perform a study that delves into evaluating faculty perspectives and participation in early alert strategies and intervention. While participating in this course, as noted by Cranton (2006) and King (2004), faculty learned adult learning principles, such as the process of reflective practice, and learning activities that would guide faculty into transformation within their practice. I hoped that faculty could infuse these principles into their classroom instruction to help guide their students into transformative learning that might alter students' at-risk behaviors. In addition, in order to successfully facilitate a faculty development course, Bergquist (2010), and Michael Reder explained that within the first five years of a program, it was not only essential to keep records and assess the program activities, it is also important to harness the stories and experiences from faculty members who had implemented the faculty development activities, and the impact it made to their practice as teachers.

John Dewey, (as cited by Connelly and Clandinin, 2000), believed that one's experience can be both personal and social, and will allow people to comprehend an individual's learning experience. Therefore, it became my desire to explore faculty's personal, professional, or social experiences and motivations when implementing some form of early alert tool for their course. Additionally, not only did I wish to know if their students were successful, but also, I wanted to discern from faculty how their early

detection of students and intervention improved their interaction with students and teaching practice. The literature confirmed that sharing of faculty's experiences, reflections, and actions could be very illuminating when designing a faculty development course that teaches faculty how to design their early alert system (Bergquist, 2010; Lyons, 2010). Cranton (2006) and King (2004) specifically referred to the transformative learning potential of faculty development, stating that if faculty desire to see a transformative change from their students, especially when engaged in faculty development, they must understand the process for themselves.

According to King (2004), faculty development efforts must involve adult educators in perceiving the impact of specific adult learning activities and principles, such as critical reflection and questioning. When faculty developers provide educators with opportunities to question and reflect on their practice, and they begin to embed adult learning principles in their course, they have a more significant opportunity to promote transformative learning in their teaching. To this point, King stated, "at a time when learner-centered classrooms and active learning techniques are more widely accepted in adult and higher education, professors, and developers have a receptive climate and an opportunity to integrate transformative learning into the mainstream of practice and purpose" (p.172).

It is necessary for integration of transformative learning to take place in the classroom for student learning, purpose, and motivation to occur, so that learners can develop new ways of understanding and new information (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). Students desire to seek an education for a better future (Martin, Galentino, & Townsend, 2014), but sometimes life or situational barriers such as bills, family, medical

emergencies, and financial restraints get in the way (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance [ACSFA], 2005; Lotkowski et al., 2004). The ACSFA (2005) delineated nontraditional students as individuals who are single parents, who lack a high school diploma or possess other strenuous demands, such as financial barriers. These students are not always in need of academic support, but at times they are in need of nonacademic support. Additionally, by the time others realize that a student is on the cusp of failing or is failing a course due to these types of barriers, the student has many times already concluded that he or she is going to drop out of class (ACSFA, 2005). If the institutions do not provide nonacademic support in addition to academic support in a timely manner and provide faculty with the tools and resources to engage students in overcoming their barriers, then students will continue to struggle and perhaps withdraw from their courses (Lotkowski et al., 2004).

The scope and breadth of the problem regarding retention in higher education are the impact retention can have on the global economy. “Globalization, with its accompanying socioeconomic, demographic, and technological changes, is having a significant impact on America’s workforce and its postsecondary institutions” (Lotkowski et al., 2004, p. vi). For society to remain competitive and for people to live a better quality of life, it is prudent that citizens possess a postsecondary education. In other words, because some form of postsecondary education and training is required for most of the jobs in America’s workforce, people who are less educated are less likely to be considered for higher pay, health and retirement benefits, and long-term positions (Lotkowski et al., 2004).

However, our post-secondary institutions must improve retention rates, especially in two-year colleges. For example, minority students, such as African Americans and Hispanics, have not been as inclined to attend or complete college compared to Caucasian students. Nonetheless, two-year programs are fulfilling a significant need for the first-time college (FTIC) students as the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center indicated that 38.1 percent of FTICs earn a degree from a two-year program (Shapiro et al., 2015).

To better understand the concerns within higher education, it was necessary to be apprised of the post-secondary demographics and dropout and retention rates. In reference to low retention, the dropout rates decreased from 12.1% to 6.5% in 1990. However, when identifying the differences with Hispanics to Whites (5.2%) and Blacks (7.4%), the dropout rate in 2014 for Hispanics (10.6%) remained higher (Snyder, de Brey, & Dillow, 2016). The dropout rates for male students between 1990 and 2014 declined from 12.3% to 7.1%. However, the dropout rate was higher compared to female students. The female dropout rate in declined from 11.8 % in 1990 to 9.9% in 2000. It continued to decline to 5.9% in 2014 (Snyder et al., 2016).

Moreover, low and middle-class families differed from one another regarding persistence in college. Low-income families had a higher dropout rate than middle-class families. Between 2000 and 2014, dropout rates for low-income families declined from 24.3% to 11.6% respectively, and middle-low class families dropped from 15.1% to 7.6% respectively, and middle-high class families from 8.7% to 4.7% respectively. There was, however, no drastic decline in the highest income families from 1990 (2.9%) and 2014 (2.8%) (Snyder et al., 2016). In community colleges, according to the Lumina

Foundation (n.d.), the demographics comprised of higher percentages of female, first-generation, low-income and minority students. Although the percentages differed across institutions, there was an overall 52% enrollment of African-Americans and 57% enrollment of Hispanics (Snyder et al., 2016).

The tuition costs of community colleges are lower than four-year institutions (Lumina Foundation, n.d.). However, although they are low, students continue to struggle financially. Community college students tend to struggle financially because their income tends to pay only enough to sustain a family, and they often resort to working full-time. Therefore, if community college students are working full-time, it makes it even more difficult for them to succeed. For college students, their problem worsens if they lack college readiness. According to the Lumina Foundation (n.d), a decline in completion rates occurs when students encounter barriers such as being financially strained, academically underprepared, and overly committed to personal and family responsibilities.

The ACSFA (2005), cited Cross's taxonomy of barriers to access and persistence and explained that for students to succeed in community colleges, they need to receive support to overcome these barriers that may impede students from persisting. The three types of barriers include situational, institutional, and dispositional. Situational barriers are conditions, such as commitments to family and work or college affordability, which impact students from successfully engaging in post-secondary activities. Institutional barriers encompass the problems that institutions possess as a result of their practices and procedures. Dispositional barriers involve an adult learner's capacity to complete college work, and self-perception as a learner, which can hinder students from

completing their coursework successfully. Furthermore, institutions need to have accessible, structured programs along with academic support and guidance so that students can successfully culminate.

Because graduation and retention rates are low, community colleges have invested in guided pathways and reforms to aid students in achieving their goals and overcome any barriers (Lumina Foundation, n.d.). In 2009, the Obama administration set a national agenda for college completion. Various organizations have launched many initiatives, such as the College Board and The Lumina Foundation. For example, the College Board's goal is to increase college attainment for adult learners from 39% to 55% by 2025. The Lumina Foundation's goal is to increase the amount of high-quality degrees and credentials held by Americans from 39% to 60% by 2025 (Shapiro et al., 2015).

In addition to establishing educational reforms to help overcome barriers students face, two-year institutions are focusing on programs such as state institution-based programs and other strategies to aid students in transferring from two- to four-year programs (Center for Community College Student Engagement [CCCSE], 2014). One barrier that research has demonstrated hinders completion rates is developmental education (CCCSE, 2014). According to a report from the CCCSE (2014), developmental education has impacted and lowered college completion rates. As a result, community colleges have implemented innovative reforms to aid students in becoming college ready. Some of these innovations necessitate that students receive academic support while taking college credit-bearing courses, assessment tools to identify a student's abilities, and finally, accelerated or modular courses for students

who are in need of a refresher. An example of an innovative reform consists of the accelerated courses designed for developmental students. In Florida, students are allowed to bypass developmental education courses, if they meet specific requirements, such as graduating from high school after 2007 or taking accelerated or modular courses (CCCSE, 2014).

Since there has been an ongoing effort to enhance student success at two- to four-year institutions, colleges have implemented numerous initiatives and strategies, such as counseling, mentoring, and support services, to promote student success. Some researchers have noted early alert warnings as a beneficial strategy to promote student success in higher education (Braxton, 2000; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2011; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Different variations of early warning programs incorporate different processes to help improve student retention. Some programs encompass faculty reporting students' at-risk behaviors to a specific individual or team in order to provide the appropriate resources for struggling students, whereas other programs embody technology support and assessment measures to monitor or identify struggling students in addition to address students' needs (Fletcher, 2013).

For the current study, I incorporated an alternative early warning system that involved a faculty-student centered approach and the essential components in professional development courses one should consider when assisting faculty in developing a student early alert system and intervention for their courses. Finally, because I evaluated faculty's experiences of implementing their early alert system and intervention, this study revealed suggestions, tools, resources, and best practices to

encourage and facilitate transformative learning and critical reflection so that students can become successful in their courses.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that directed my study encompassed Cranton's revised stages of Mezirow's psycho-critical approach to transformative learning theory. Taylor, (in Taylor & Cranton, 2012), explained that transformative learning had become the new form of andragogy because it can improve one's teaching practice, and it provides a roadmap when conducting research.

Mezirow defined transformative learning as a theory that comprised of constructivist assumptions generated from past experiences, and this theory provides individuals an opportunity to evaluate their experiences by using a process that encompasses "examining, questioning, and revising [their] perceptions" (Taylor and Cranton, 2012, p. 6). Transformative learning correlates with constructivist assumptions because meaning is developed as a result of reflecting on the experiences and perceptions an individual possesses. Furthermore, transformative learning is illustrated as "cognitive and rational, as imaginative and intuitive, as spiritual, as related to individuation, as relational to social change..." (Taylor & Cranton, 2012, p.8).

Taylor and Cranton (2012) explained that scholars had had concerns regarding the use and understanding of transformative learning. For example, Brookfield argued that transformative learning only occur if it involves a fundamental change (in Taylor and Cranton, 2012). Another scholar, Newman, indicated that when people are receptive to ideas or beliefs and change their thinking or habits, it is transformation through education as "good teaching" (as cited in Taylor & Cranton, 2012, p. 11). However,



scholars Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner (2012) explained that transformative learning might occur when an individual is provided with support and direction. Furthermore, Cranton (2002) discussed that even though transformative learning cannot be taught, an educator can teach as though it is possible, that is to say, with intention. For faculty to receive support and direction to facilitate transformative learning in their instruction, faculty development must be an integral part of modeling this practice. I hoped that through faculty development and by instilling this optimism in faculty, they could be encouraged to promote change or growth within their students. Therefore, transformative learning became the focus for framing of my research.

For the sake of this research, I applied Cranton's (2002) revised list of Mezirow's steps of transformative learning. To create a conducive "learning environment to promote transformation" (Cranton, 2002, p. 3), faculty employed their early alert system and intervention and considered the following seven components. Cranton (2002) explains these seven facets of transformative learning may help generate transformation within an adult learner.

To illustrate the theoretical perspective of this research, I identified Mezirow's Components of the Psycho-critical Approach (Luna, n.d.) (see Figure 1). However, I applied the framework of the concept map and surrounding text to Cranton's (2002) seven *Facets of Transformative Learning* (p. 2) instead of the ten stages used in Mezirow's original model (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 reveals a stronger framework for this study because Cranton (2002) explicitly explained the transformative learning experience in formal adult learning contexts, such as faculty development and college classrooms. Cranton presented these

seven facets as possible teaching strategies that might help lead to transformative learning.

The theory of transformative learning and Cranton's (2002) seven strategies guided my research closely. The following list demonstrates how the structure of the intervention and research were aligned with Cranton's model.

- First, to promote transformative learning within a learning environment, such as faculty development, it was important to challenge one's viewpoint or unusual perspective by creating an activating event. Magolda (1992) explains that in order for adult learners to gain meaning from their education, they must have discourse with their peers and their instructor.

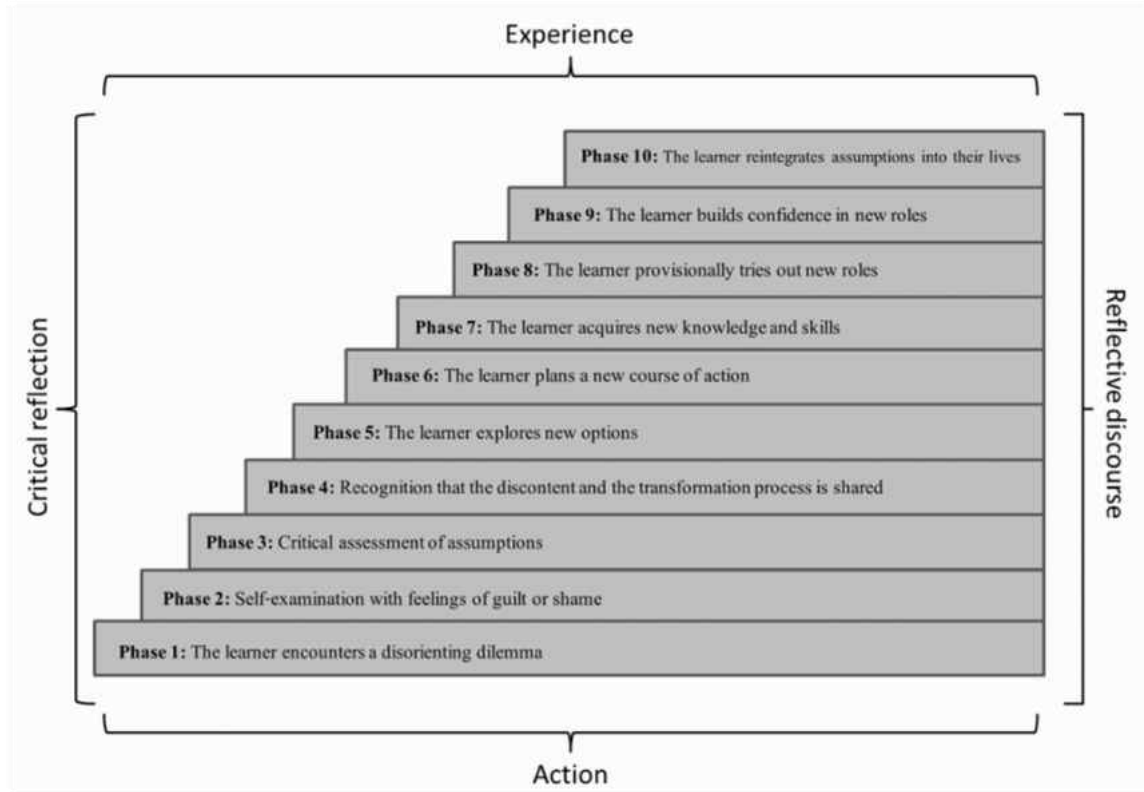


Figure 1: Mezirow's Components of the Psycho-critical Approach

Note. Reproduced with permission Components of the Psycho-critical Approach from Ernesto J. Luna (n.d.) <http://transformationalearning.weebly.com/psycho-critical-approach.html>

- Next was articulating assumptions. According to Cranton (2002), drawing from one's autobiography or experience can extract the hidden assumptions or beliefs. Knowles (1962) also explained that learning activities, such as questioning activities, enable adult learners to draw upon their experiences. It was essential to craft questions that would encourage faculty to express their beliefs or ideas. In this case, when developing an understanding why one should use an early alert strategy, one can ask faculty to describe their experience as an undergraduate learner in college.

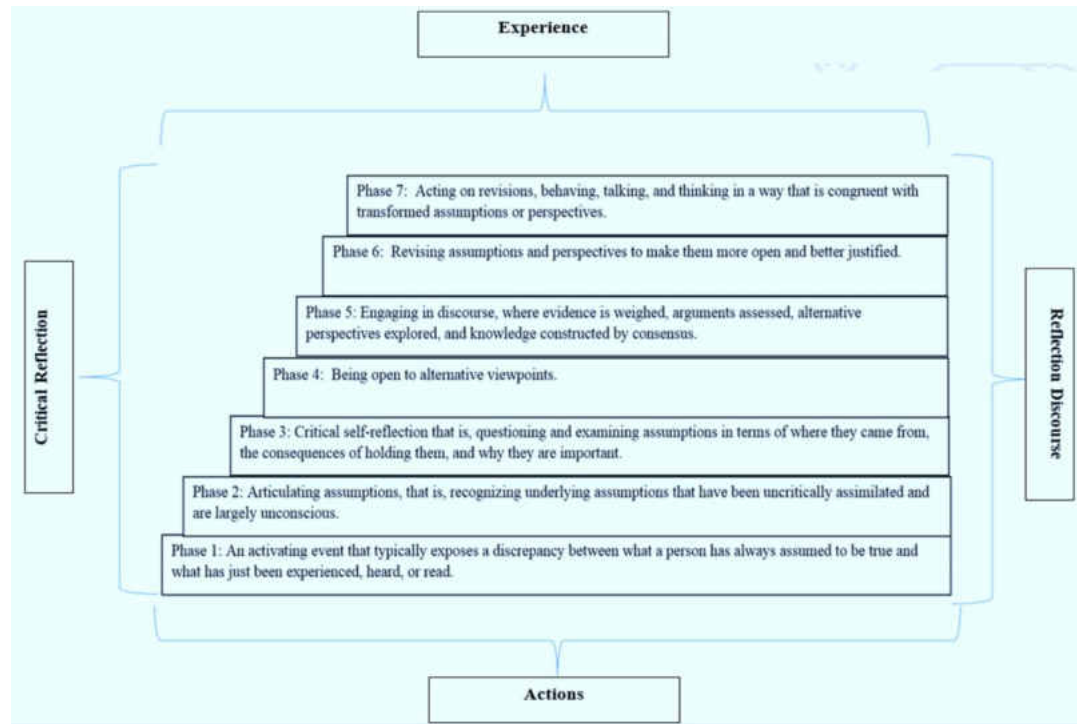


Figure 2: Cranton's (2002) Revised Model of Mezirow's Components of Psycho-critical Approach. Adapted from Ernesto J. Luna.

- Critical self- reflection enabled individuals, such as faculty, an opportunity to thoroughly examine what they think, and to question their assumptions and beliefs. A review of the literature addressed contemplative inquiry and reflection-on-action as a form of critical self-reflection and to generate transformative learning. For my research, I provided faculty with an opportunity to critically reflect by conducting an interview and through the use of reflection journals.
- Next, openness to alternatives allowed faculty to be exposed to the various perspectives of early alert systems and interventions that have been utilized in colleges and institutions.

- “Engaging in discourse, where evidence is weighed, arguments assessed, alternative perspectives explored, and knowledge constructed by consensus” (Cranton, 2002 p. 66) can be applied to active learning activities facilitated within the faculty development course for developing a student early alert system. To identify a learner’s attitude, values, awareness, and reaction, faculty development can apply formative feedback activities as a tool.
- When a student, or in this case faculty members changes his or her belief, it indicates that the faculty member revisited their assumptions and perspective. It is vital to create an opportunity for the transformation to occur when developing and implementing an early alert system and intervention.
- Acting on revisions embodies structuring the opportunity for faculty to demonstrate and share their transformed beliefs. Reflection-on-action is a best practice that consists of teachers reflecting on their instruction once it has been implemented (Schön, 1983). For faculty to be exposed to various introspections, they implemented their lessons and recorded their experiences in their reflective journals. This strategy provided faculty with a chance to synthesize the process and changes that occurred within their instruction and their understanding.

The analysis of the collected data included identifying whether the participants had indeed experienced Cranton’s stages of transformative learning in this study. In this case, using transformative learning as the framing theory for the study illustrated the

educational philosophy and expectations of the research and researcher. Participants answered other research questions in light of this conceptual framework, but specifically addressed the issues related to early alert system best practices and intervention for development and implementation of an early alert system.

### General Background

Student engagement has always been a pertinent element in higher education. Before the twentieth century, American college life consisted of traditional influences, a literary society, athletics, and other student engagements, whether they were positive or negative (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). Students who are engaged in activities such as co-curricular activities tend to not struggle with psychological issues such as depression. According to researchers, these students are less likely to withdraw from a class, which is a predictor of persistence. According to Rovai (2003), persistence is explained as students who can progress and be resilient no matter the obstacles they may encounter. Additionally, the higher number of co-curricular activities a student participates in, the more significant amount of engagement (Bergen-Cico, & Viscomi, 2012).

Student persistence is a crucial factor in determining student success. Institutions must have students persist, which means students complete each requirement until they obtain the degree (Astin, 1975; Bean & Metzner, 1985; Cabrera, 1993). One of the factors contributing to persistence is the educational activities that increase student engagement. Chickering and Gamson (1987) provide modes of engagement that enable students to have more involvement during their college experience. Presently, not only are students lacking engagement in the face-to-face classroom, but they are also disengaged in their online classes (Twigg, 2009). Disengagement consists of students

who are not only exhibiting a lack of participation, but also, are not completing assignments, or not completing them promptly, and they are not attending their classes (Kuh, 2001). As a result of students who are displaying at-risk characteristics, institutions, such as community colleges, have begun to utilize learning analytics that encompasses predictive models to aid in determining student success rates or outcomes. According to Smith, Lange, and Huston (2012) such strategies or “learning analytics’ have been made possible by capturing and utilizing the massive amounts of information collected within campus enterprise systems, most notably the learning management system, to aid in teaching and learning initiatives” (p. 51). This analytics enable institutions to be proactive by reaching out to students who may be in jeopardy of not completing their courses and graduating from their institution (Smith et al., 2012).

### Statement of Problem

The overall problem is that students are becoming less involved in face-to-face classes, and to a much higher degree, in online courses as well (Fletcher, 2013; Hudson, 2005; Tampke, 2012; Twigg, 2009). It is necessary to identify signs of students, primarily non-traditional, who are straying away from their coursework and how faculty must use responsive engagement activities such as surveys and active learning strategies to help with student progression in their courses.

The problem in higher education consists of persistence, retention, and attainment, which in turn become very costly for the institution if students choose not to complete their certifications or degrees (Cabrera, 1993). Therefore, some institutions have utilized early alert systems through a predictive model to help detect if students are becoming less and less likely to graduate. A predictive model calculates a student’s

actions by means of evaluating various components: gender, age, online behavior and interactions (Hudson, 2005). Some college learners choose not to see the advisor after being aware of their performance in class, and others were unaware of their status. Therefore, it has been necessary for institutions to develop other strategies to support students' persistence throughout college (Hudson, 2005).

According to the results drawn from the research, an early alert system increases communication between advisors, instructors, and students. Additionally, an early alert system improves collaboration, reduces unwanted behavior, monitors and tracks approaches, and can increase retention activities (Hudson, 2005). Hudson's research consisted of 216 students from Morehead State University (MSU) who acquired excessive absences during the first six weeks of classes. Faculty and advisors reported the excessive absences using absenteeism notification forms. Hudson (2005) successfully contacted a total of 108 students via email, letter, and telephone by their advisors; there were 91 students who responded to the attempts and remained in their courses. There were 44 students who completed their courses, which was a noticeable increase. Although there were students who failed (33) and dropped out (14) of their courses, Hudson indicated there were fewer drop-outs than in previous semesters. Furthermore, students declared they were surprised that someone cared enough to contact them.

Hudson's (2005) research on early alert system encompasses various implications for student retention. First, early alert systems can prevent inappropriate college behavior and identify potential at-risk students. Second, it can improve retention activities and affect pass/fail rates. Furthermore, early alert systems can be used for



short-term results. If advisors and instructors are notified early enough in the semester, it makes it easier for students to return to class. Advisors and instructors can assist students and provide the necessary support for students to succeed in class. Overall, an early alert program can produce communication college-wide and amongst students, advisors, and instructors.

In addition to advising, faculty would design an early alert model suitable for their course (Valencia College, 2014). The model possesses four ideologies, which entail: 1) faculty members to continuously assess if students are engaged and are learning, 2) ongoing faculty-student interaction to ensure that students complete the course successfully, 3) faculty awareness of the problems and reasons why students do not persist, and 4) effective communication and interactions with student, faculty, and learning support services.

### Research Questions

My research questions were based on faculty sharing their personal or professional experiences (or both) regarding developing and implementing their early alert system and intervention.

**RQ1.** Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences?

**RQ2.** While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred?

**RQ3.** If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results?

### Significance of the Study

The significance of this study entailed examining the experiences of faculty as they developed and implemented an early alert system and intervention for their students who may have been exhibiting at-risk characteristics. This improvement could lead to more significant student support and persistence (Kuh et al., 2011). Kuh Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, and Gonyea, (2008) explained that to ensure that students are successful, faculty and staff must employ best practices to help meet the needs of their students (Allen, 1999; Fleming, 1984). By beginning to work with faculty to address the needs of our students, we are complementing what can also be accomplished in student affairs to support student persistence. It is expected that an entire campus that is focused and coordinated to support students in completing their degrees has great potential to change current at-risk behavioral trends such as disengagement (Chen, 2012). One approach to address disengagement encompasses student affairs department, which includes advisors and counselors as part of their strategies, should encourage students to participate in activities that involve students being closely engaged with their peers (Kuh et al., 2008).

### Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used in this study:

**Classroom Assessment Technique.** This term refers to an approach designed to help teachers assess student learning in the classroom and how well they are learning it (Angelo & Cross, 1993).

**Deeper learning.** This concept enables students to excel in applying college readiness skills such as critical thinking, problem-based thinking, inquiry-based thinking, communication, and self-directed learning (What About Deeper Learning, 2012).

**Early alert systems.** These systems entail a procedure designed to warn of a potential or an impending problem (Lynch-Holmes, Troy & Ramos, 2012).

**Educational attainment.** This term comprises of the number of years completed or degrees earned. A person's educational attainment is based on a person's needs, environment, and background (Pascarella, & Terenzini, 2005).

**Formative assessment.** This kind of assessment is a tool used to evaluate student learning through student feedback. As a result of student feedback, the instruction is periodically modified to ensure that the instructor is meeting the needs of each student (Cauley & McMillan, 2010).

**Interventions.** These are tools or resources to aid in remedying the problematic issues an individual may be experiencing (Lynch-Holmes et al., 2012).

**Non-traditional students.** These students have one or more of the following characteristics: over the age of 24, have dependents, financially constrained, part-time student status (Rovai, 2003).

**Progression.** This measurement (borrowed from Noel-Levitz) is the success rate for students who began with the same cohort and continue to persist at the rate as their peers (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008).

**Retention.** In higher education, retention refers to the success rate of students who remain in college until they have completed their degree or certification (Haynes, Carter, & Wood, 2014).

**Student engagement.** This term encompasses key characteristics to help with student success such as student-faculty interaction, active learning, and a student's desire to be involved with an institution's activities and their studies (Kuh et al., 2011).

**Student motivation.** This concept is based on students' dedication and passion towards accomplishing their own goals, and it tends to tie closely to their own experience (Brophy, 2004).

**Student persistence.** This concept (as cited by Noel-Levitz) is the number of students who began with a specific cohort who persist term-to-term and graduate with the same cohort (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008)

**Student Success.** Student success is defined as students who not only are degree recipients, but have also embraced the college experience by being involved in school activities, increased deeper learning, and can successfully venture out into the workforce (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2007).

**Students with at-risk characteristics (at-risk behaviors).** These characteristics encompass individuals who possess a high probability of not completing their schooling as a result of detrimental circumstances such as disabilities, health and financial issues, and abuse (Hidden Curriculum, 2014).

## Summary

Presently, students desire to receive an education, but they are faced with many obstacles while they are progressing through college. They are not only faced with academic concerns, but they are also faced with non-academic problems. Faculty, who are in close contact with their students, have an opportunity to provide academic and non-academic support as soon as they detect struggling students by designing their early alert tool tailored for their course. If faculty share their personal, professional, or social experiences while developing and implementing their early alert system and intervention, and then reflect on their practice, it might provide direction for faculty development and guidance for other faculty members.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of faculty as they engaged in developing and implementing a course-specific early alert system. According to Lynch-Holmes et al., (n.d.), an early alert system and intervention within higher education can be described as a process. First, the early alert tool is an assessment used to predict future possible characteristics or behaviors which may be problematic to the student. Then, after determining the potential problems, an immediate intervention is put in place to ensure the issues or concerns are no longer a factor (Lynch-Holmes et al., n.d.).

The literature review begins with the history of access in American community colleges and the role of faculty. In it, I present the overall scope of persistence and various early alert models implemented by other institutions, which include vital agents: advisors, faculty, and professional staff. In addition to explaining the significance of advisors, faculty, and professional staff playing a significant role in student persistence, the literature review encompasses the effective pedagogical practices to engage students, such as formative assessments, which have been shown to identify problematic areas that struggling students tend to encounter while taking courses. Faculty can use these strategies and assessments faculty within their early alert plan. Finally, I proceeded to present a process to be demonstrated by faculty when implementing an early student alert system.

## Access

Historically, there have been multiple factors regarding the effect of access to higher education, such as preparation, admissions, finance, and retention (Gelber, 2007). Many schools, including prestigious institutions, have encountered problems using open access policies. Schools have been forced to provide college preparation courses for students who display at-risk behaviors while keeping an academically elite environment (Gelber, 2007). During the nineteenth century, institutions struggled to provide this balance of being elite and providing open access. In addition, with the persistence of the state and the motivation from the job market, institutions were required to provide more access for many underrepresented and underprepared populations (Snyder & Hoffman, 2002). To help remedy the issues for students who exhibit at-risk behaviors as a result of open access, institutions had to develop services to address these issues. Therefore, colleges and universities offer comprehensive support and retention programs to assist students in academic achievement, persistence, and educational attainment, which comprises of “a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent” (Enhancement, Q., 2001, p. 19) for an associates program. Students who persist with the same cohort from the beginning until the end of their college program have demonstrated persistence (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008). These services include instruction and support in such forms as advising, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, math and writing centers, cultural events, and workshops (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

## Role of Community College and Faculty

The Role of Community College Faculty section consists of identifying the importance of Community Colleges and how they have contributed to our economic growth. Additionally, in this section, I continue to explain how faculty in community colleges played a significant role in teaching students and how their role has continued to evolve due to environmental factors.

### **Community Colleges**

Community colleges were once known as “democracy colleges” or “opportunity colleges” because of their contribution to society by developing individuals in preparation for the workforce (Roueche & Baker, 1987). Due to significant historical accounts that occurred within higher education, American community colleges provided open access and opportunities for many people who sought a practical job. However, they required additional skill sets. Two-year institutions enabled working class individuals an opportunity to earn a degree or certificate within a short period of time (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). The role of community colleges was to help democratize opportunities for everyone and to provide social mobility (Dickson, 1999). Following the Serviceman Readjustment Act of 1944, the G.I. Bill was the impetus for having more community college students from various demographic backgrounds to gain access to education so that they were better prepared for the workforce (Altbach, Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011). Due to the open access to community colleges and the fact that some students were academically underprepared, institutions offered support services such as counseling, mentoring, and tutoring, for incoming students to aid them in completing their courses.



Merriam et al. (2012) cited Illeris and Ormond's definition of learning as the most reasonable: "Learning is a process that brings together cognitive, emotional, environmental influences and experiences for acquiring, enhancing, or making changes in one's knowledge, skills, values and worldviews" (Merriam et al., 2012, p. 277). The knowledge and skills that will enhance the experiences and quality of education for an adult consist of twenty-first century best practices, I will discuss later in the literature review. The role of community colleges is to teach students tools that they can use in the workforce (Dickson, 1999) and to develop life-long learners and self-directed learners (Merriam et al., 2012). In addition, community colleges must teach students to develop Bandura's (1989) theory of self-efficacy, which is designed to identify one's capabilities to accomplish a task or achieve a goal.

### **Role of Faculty**

There was a shift in the role of faculty towards the latter era of the nineteenth century (Dickson, 1999). According to Dickson (1999), a report by James Davis explained that the impetus for this change in the role of faculty was that an institution's organizational structure changed by means of the emergence of departments, disciplines, professions, and a method of teaching that no longer encompassed recitation and disputation. Dickson's research indicates that the organization had a technical core of faculty who were the main contributors in fulfilling the primary objective of the organization, which was the production of consumers into the workforce. Faculty contributed to the teaching and learning process of consumers obtaining a profession, thus demonstrating the overall goal of the institution. Dickson (1999) continued to convey that according to scholars, due to the environmental factors and the diverse

population community colleges serve, this change has impacted community college faculty. They are no longer concentrating solely on teaching and learning, but rather the focus has shifted to identifying how students learn. Plater (1995) speculated and argued that the role of faculty in the twenty-first century would change to facilitators and mentors of student learning due to the impact of the significant external forces: constituent-based education, technology-based learning, multidisciplinary and client-based problems, accountability, opportunity costs, and the “new century students.” The “new century students” are individuals who come from all backgrounds using financial dependency, increased enrollment of women, foreign-born, students with disabilities, and those who hold multiple responsibilities. Education for everyone is prudent to improve the economy and society. Therefore, faculty must dedicate additional time and be strategic and innovative when planning their curriculum to meet the needs of their students who possess different learning abilities (Planter, 1995).

Because of the many changes which have occurred in the last several decades related to open access, faculty roles have continued to evolve. Faculty, in addition to academic advisors, utilized strategies and resources to help promote student engagement and the successful completion of the courses to positively affect an institution’s degree completion rate.

#### Student Academic Support and Early Alert Programs

Access without support is not opportunity (Engstrom & Tinto, 2008). Student support services and retention programs significantly and positively impact student persistence (Kuh et al., 2011). According to Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), colleges and universities offer comprehensive support and retention programs, and these services

and programs are designed to assist students who are in need of support services, such as tutoring for academics, career information, counseling, mentoring, laboratories for math and writing, and skill shops.

To aid students in completing college, there are essential elements of support that institutions should consider (Kuh et al., 2011). Two of the most significant issues that produce attrition is the lack of a student-centered environment and a lack of student engagement. Moreover, not only student affairs and other professional staff should be contributors to student success, but faculty involvement is also crucial for student success.

Institutions design multiple initiatives, programs, or efficacious pedagogical approaches to improve student retention and to enhance student academic and non-academic support (Kuh et al., 2011). Lotkowski et al. (2004) conveyed recommendations for institutions to consider improving retention by identifying the characteristics and needs of students, coupled with the academic and non-academic factors that may impede students' progress. Furthermore, Dumbriague, Moxley, and Najor-Durack (2013) provided illustrative examples and strategies to keep students in higher education by issuing support that addresses the needs of students so that they can be successful. They suggested five forms of supportive retention practices that can be considered as pathways for retention.

First, Dumbriague et al. (2013) suggested that institutions provide emotional support and assistance. The authors offered critical programmatic principles institution leaders should keep in mind, such as being cognizant of the stress and anxiety students tend to encounter while attending college. As a result of the adversities students may

face, the program should encompass support and a receptive environment for retention challenges.

The second suggested retention practice embodies informational support, which keeps students abreast of the college's or university's expectations, and ensures students are familiar with the resources, such as peer support, which may be useful for them. Instrumental support is another retention practice provided by offering students the necessary assistance if they are experiencing financial, health and mental health care, transportation, and technical hindrances in addition to educational challenges. Additionally, identity support, as a practice, can aid students in exploring whom they are as individuals by allowing them to express identity through community building, cultural, and social activities. Institutions can provide this identity support by receiving guidance from staff and support groups (Dumbrigue et al., 2013).

In the past, there were many simple forms of early alert warnings in the classroom, such as phone calls, face-to-face conversations, or postcards when students began to show signs of poor performance. Some examples of poor performance include missed assignments, excessive absences, or low-test scores (Lynch-Holmes et al., n.d.). These simple forms can be augmented.

Currently, many early intervention programs have been developed to provide additional academic preparation and support for educational success among high school and even junior high school at-risk youth. The philosophy behind such programs is that the earlier the intervention occurs, the more likely it is that the outcome will be favorable (Fenske, Geranios, Keller, & Moore, 1997). At the college level, Tinto (1993) wrote that

early academic warning systems should alert students to potential problems within the first five to six weeks of the semester (Pfleger, 2002).

One example of an early intervention program is an early alert system and intervention (Lynch-Holmes et al., n.d.). For an early alert system to predict at-risk behaviors, institutions must be able to identify characteristics displayed by at-risk students. According to Chen (2012), one of the characteristics of struggling students who do not persist is that they are individuals who tend to be disengaged. Chen (2012) further reported that this disengagement might occur due to academic and personal reasons. There have been multiple programs/initiatives to aid in remedying students' non-degree completion. Initiatives or programs that have been implemented within institutions include learning communities, service learning, and grant-funded programs (Chen, 2012). An example of a grant-funded program is the Lumina Foundation. This foundation focuses on achieving success in attainment (completion of post-secondary certificates, associate and baccalaureate degrees and credentials) and higher education, by 2025, through an outcomes-based approach (Lumina Foundation, n.d.).

To ensure students do not withdraw from school but persist through college, many institutions have been utilizing an early alert system, which identifies if a student is becoming less engaged in a course. Institutions such as South Texas College (STC) and North Carolina's Pitt Community College (PCC) utilize early alert systems with different approaches to identify students with at-risk behaviors (Chappel, 2010).

Assistant Vice President of Student Services at PCC reported that it was necessary for faculty to be involved with the development of the early alert program. Most recently, Valencia College, a large community college in Orlando, Florida, began piloting an early

alert system that not only focuses on advising and providing resources for students but also uses a faculty-student centered approach to help increase student engagement. Valencia College created an early alert intervention program known as Continuous Assessment and Responsive Engagement (C.A.R.E.) which I will discuss later in the review (Valencia College, 2014).

### **Valencia College's Early Alert System**

Valencia College's (2014) C.A.R.E. program began in 2012 and focused on helping struggling students through their early alert system. This initiative originated from faculty's aspiration to create an early alert system that would aid faculty in identifying at-risk students and using the necessary resources to help students to complete the course successfully. However, for this program to be effective, faculty must design assessments and activities to help at-risk students. Therefore, the college created a faculty development course called C.A.R.E. that encompasses six phases of work: contemplation, planning, development, action, reflection, and sharing. Faculty designs the assessments and activities applicable to their discipline and the needs of their students through the C.A.R.E. development program. The faculty will implement work produced by faculty in this C.A.R.E. course in their courses (Valencia College, 2014).

Step One of C.A.R.E., contemplation, includes helping faculty access background information on the literature pertinent to early alert, student success strategies, and innovation. During this step, faculty begins to reflect on student success and the obstacles their students may encounter within their course, which allows faculty to connect to an at-risk student's experience (Zajonc, 2006). While reflecting, faculty will also contemplate on the at-risk students' behaviors. Furthermore, faculty will think

about their instruction using level of engagement, pace of instruction, and student perception. Faculty will reflect on students' academic and non-academic (e.g., attendance, lack of engagement, classroom management issues) concerns, and the students' environment, such as the facilities (Valencia College, 2014). Other aspects of contemplation would include faculty reflecting upon the uses of the Learning and Study Skills Inventory (LASSI) that is comprised of an assessment on attitudes, time management, test-taking strategies, and information processing. Moreover, stakeholders can assist faculty in demystifying the core and ongoing problems students face (Nist, Mealey, Simpson, & Kroc, 1990).

The second step of C.A.R.E., planning, will help faculty in contacting, gathering, and identifying the Learning Support Services and Student Support available at the school. Faculty can be instrumental in an early support service if they are aware of the necessary tools available to them and their students (Faulconer, Geissler, Majewski, & Trifilo, 2014). For faculty, planning also involves creating goals. Such goals may include 1) teaching the course using the LASSI, 2) helping to reach students with at-risk characteristics, 3) making students more aware of the academic support resources to increase course success rates, and 4) attending faculty professional development courses.

In step three of C.A.R.E., faculty develops a C.A.R.E. strategy. The C.A.R.E. strategies will encompass active learning activities such as Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS). CATS can be either formative (periodic assessments throughout the semester before the final test) or summative (cumulative assessments followed by the formative tests) (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Some of the CATS activities entail students providing feedback on lesson activities, such as the muddiest point and focused listing.

Finally, stages four and five of C.A.R.E., reflection and sharing, consist of faculty's implementation of their C.A.R.E. strategies into their course. They should focus on either changing, adjusting, or revising the strategies as much as possible. Because sharing embodies a sense of scholarship (Fincher et al., 2000), faculty will present their C.A.R.E. implementation at department meetings, conferences, and in other opportunities with fellow scholars. The overall goal of this college initiative is to broaden C.A.R.E. strategies ubiquitously to as many faculty members as possible.

### **Adult Learning Theories on Practice**

Because adults have distinct characteristics as learners, there is a particular methodology that educators should consider. Knowles (1962) suggested that in adult education, there are several premises of adult learning theory compiled as a result of earlier concepts. When instructors are trying to meet the need of adult learners, they need to keep the following principles in mind: The first characteristic is that adults need to know why they are learning and what they are learning. The second is the learner's self-concept, which entails a learner developing into being a doer or producer. Knowles' third component focuses on a learner's quality of experience, which differs from younger learners. Another characteristic is an adult's readiness to learn. Adult learners are ready to learn if they can apply it to a real-life situation. Lastly, the learning situation in a curriculum is the fourth characteristic, and this centers on life-centered or task-centered learning (Knowles, 1962).

Merriam et al. (2012) reflected on and explained their overall understanding about adult learning theory and concluded Knowles' perspective on adult learning was that adults must draw upon their own experiences to draw understanding from learning



activities. Furthermore, Merriam et al. (2012) also noted that Mezirow explained how meaning is manifested through past experiences to aid adults to interpret and comprehend new knowledge fully. Merriam et al. (2012) continued to discuss that at times, adults might encounter problems with learning due to an adverse experience encountered in the past. Therefore, adults may have to unlearn some of their negative tendencies that may prohibit them from learning.

Figure 3 illustrates an introduction to the following concepts in this literature. The visual of the beaker depicts the adult learning theories and best practices working with one another to become a catalyst for faculty motivation to efficiently implement their own constructed early alert system. Faculty development is considered to be the ignition for helping faculty to produce an understanding and the urgency to create an early alert system. The motivation represents the heat produced from the beaker, which is the passion faculty should feel having learned about these concepts in faculty development.

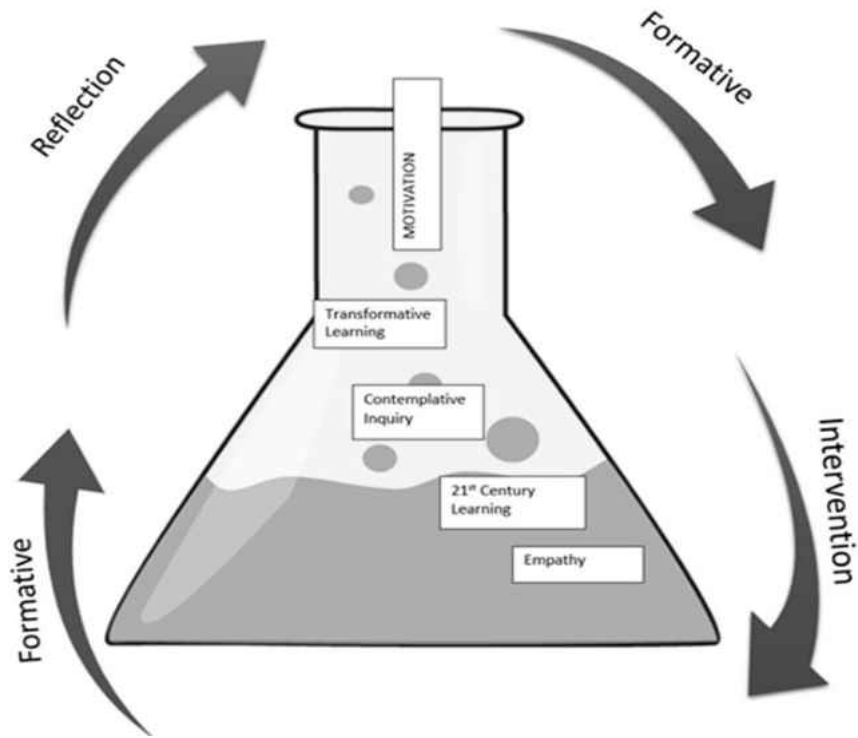


Figure 3: Adult Theories and Best Practices at Work.

The foundation of the process begins with relating to their own experiences (empathy) and then faculty proceeds onto incorporating twenty-first-century skills into their practice. After faculty has been exposed to twenty-first-century skills, they will practice and apply contemplative inquiry and reflection, which may initiate transformative growth in their instruction as they are developing and implementing their early alert system.

### Faculty Development

This section of the literature review addresses the history of faculty development and the way in which adult learning theories can be applied into a faculty development

course. Furthermore, I explored the theoretical basis for planning an early alert system. For instructors to meet the needs of their students by efficiently implementing their early alert plan, faculty development should include the specific aforementioned elements such as transformative learning, contemplative inquiry, twenty-first century learning, and empathy within faculty development courses.

### **History of Faculty Development**

Historically, two- and four-year institutions have invested their time in developing their faculty members by providing faculty development to enhance their practice. Lewis (1996) cited Francis' definition in which faculty development is described as developing the instructional practices and personal skills of faculty members to meet student needs. The overall goal of faculty development is to increase the effectiveness of faculty, and this has been a nationwide effort (Bergquist, 2010). In the past, faculty development was meant to help instructors develop in their discipline or field because in higher education it was expected, and even assumed, that professors knew how to teach their courses.

The oldest form of faculty development first began in 1810 at Harvard University (Bergquist, 2010). Eventually, systematic approaches to faculty development have emerged over time, which included instructional, organizational, and personal development components. The goal of faculty development was to help instructors develop as scholars within their discipline. The changes that have occurred in community colleges regarding the mission has led to institutions developing faculty development programs to enhance the efficiency of faculty teaching.

Currently, many faculty development initiatives assist faculty beyond their scholarship. According to many scholars, faculty development has to acknowledge the following areas: The first is one's personal development, which consists of “self-reflection, vitality, and growth” (Bergquist, 2010, p. 7). Another area is instructional development, and this carefully connects to the institution’s initiatives source. Finally, organizational development is another critical focus to help the effectiveness of an institution’s program and departments (Bergquist, 2010).

### **Planning for an Effective Early Alert System**

Building upon the adult learning theories mentioned previously when faculty development efforts help instructors produce an early alert warning system and intervention; there are several adult learning principles to employ and theories to consider. According to Lawler and King (2000), when executing a faculty development plan, it is essential to incorporate transformative learning and adult learning principles including 1) instilling an environment of respect, 2) creating an actively engaged environment, 3) activating participants’ experience, 4) encouraging collaboration inquiry, 5) utilizing application, and 6) empowering instructors.

Adult learning is about the essential changes and growth within individual learners through their educational experience (Lawler & King, 2000). Therefore, when helping faculty participate in a professional development course, it is necessary to monitor their progress through formative assessments and active learning activities (Lawler, & King, 2000). In addition, transformative learning and reflective assignments should be incorporated to help faculty grow within their practice (King, 2004). Lastly, if faculty desire to instill learner empowerment in their students, then faculty development

should incorporate strategies which have the same goal in their programs. To foster learner empowerment, which is the result of transformative learning, faculty development should consider many elements. An approach to transformative learning opportunities is used to describe designing learning experiences that may lead to transformative learning. Such transformative learning opportunities may include but are not limited to: reflective journals, peer learning, dialogue, critical debate, role-playing, questioning, and readings that can help influence transformative learning opportunities (Cranton, 2002; King, 2004, 2005a/b).

Although instructors or facilitators cannot teach or force transformation, Cranton (1994) conveyed several elements that can help learners to consider or examine their assumptions. Therefore, when faculty development is developing an understanding of transformative learning in instructors, faculty should learn that it is important to encourage critical self-reflection and questioning (Cranton, 1994; King, 2004). Critical reflection can be challenging for learners (in this case faculty in faculty development courses), and they may require support.

When faculty learns about critical reflection and questioning techniques, which they may potentially incorporate into their curriculum, faculty development efforts should model how to reflect on these professional development courses critically. By allowing educators to experience the essential practice involved in transformative learning, the integration of teaching and learning may lead to the development of different perspectives and approaches in their instruction (King, 2004).

## **Empathy**

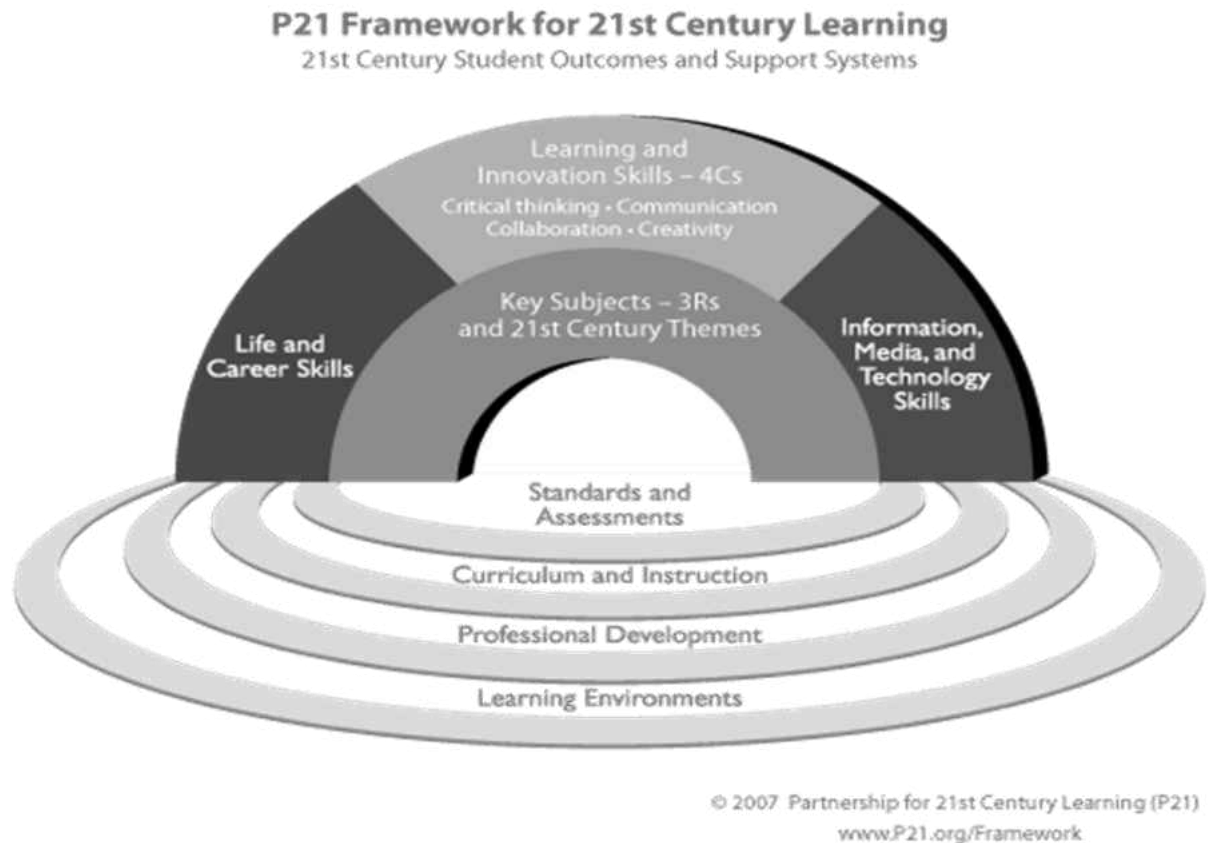
This research is connected to design thinking principles created by IDEO when faculty are developing and implementing an early alert system and intervention plan for their students (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). IDEO is a firm that focuses on using a human-centered approach when designing new ways to support people. When faculty are designing their plan for struggling students, they need to ensure that they are not making assumptions about them. Therefore, it is necessary to collect data from their students to foster empathy so that the implementation of their early alert system and intervention is successful. To provide a specific intervention for struggling students, faculty should collect data regarding each student with at-risk behaviors rather than making assumptions. According to the design thinking principles, when collecting data from students, faculty should consider using empathy when devising a plan for an individual. To empathize, one needs to observe students and their behaviors in class to determine the intervention that can best address students' needs. By observing their actions and interactions in the classroom, this may assist the faculty member in identifying the best solution for their struggling student. The actions faculty members are encouraged to observe encompass what students say, do, think, and feel, and are to aid faculty in ascertaining the problems their students are experiencing or displaying. When faculty engages with their students directly, it may lead to developing insights on how to correctly implement their early alert system and intervention. Engagement will also lead to uncovering the needs of a struggling students and guide faculty with their efforts during implementation (Kelley & Kelley, 2013).

For this reason, if faculty desire to create and employ an early alert system and intervention plan, it is necessary for them to understand and be able to impart empathy within their instruction. In Cranton's (2002) revised model of Mezirow's transformative learning theory, phases 1 to 7, faculty's assumptions regarding a students' experiences and issues may alter as a result of developing empathy for them.

### 21st Century Learning

According to the mission and accreditation principles of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, there are core requirements an institution must exemplify to enhance the quality of education when teaching adult learners. Institutions are expected to provide quality academic programs, support services, and technology to enhance student learning (The College Delegate Assembly, 2012). Due to the expectations from business communities, policymakers, and school commissioners, organization leaders are trying to meet these expectations. One national nonprofit organization that advocates for improving the educational experience is Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning (P21) (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, n.d.). The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning organization's framework can be defined as a set of skills, knowledge, and expertise students must be able to utilize to function in life and work successfully. The P21 Framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning contains learning and innovations skills that consist of entails the 4C's: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (see Figure 4). Another aspect of the framework highlights important subjects and 21<sup>st</sup>-century themes such as Math and English that students must be taught in school to function in the twenty-first century. P21 also identifies information, media, and technology skills as important elements because one must be able to function and to

demonstrate critical thinking skills to be productive citizens and an active workforce member.



*Figure 4:* P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning

*Note.* Reproduced with permission from Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21). (2007)  
<http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework>

Finally, twenty-first century learners should possess life and career skills to ensure they can manage their time, display flexibility, be self-directed learners, and socialize with other people, especially in a culturally diverse atmosphere. Merriam et al. (2012) stated that researchers, when addressing access and opportunity, should delve further into the sociocultural and political context when trying to improve adult learning. Magolda and King's (2004) learning partnerships can aid faculty who teach 21<sup>st</sup>-century



students to develop their teaching and practice so that students learn how to cope effectively with personal, professional, and social challenges.

In addition to faculty applying critical principles associated with the 21<sup>st</sup>-century learners, other pedagogical approaches should be infused in the classroom, such as engagement and reflection (Kuh et al., 2011; Merriam et al., 2012). For students to be engaged and to apply best learning practices within a classroom setting, faculty must explain the learning outcomes of the course and explicitly demonstrate them throughout the course (Walsh & Cuba, 2009). Secondly, including strategies that span multiple learning styles will enable students to feel as though individuals' needs are being addressed. Written communication and posts allow students to have a more personal connection between faculty and student, and diverse views are shared in class or online. Faculty understanding and feedback is another approach that will allow faculty to be cognizant of their students' emotions, and faculty can tailor their instruction to their students' needs. Furthermore, by obtaining student feedback, faculty can anticipate what they should do for future course interactions (Emil & Cress, 2014).

Institutions that embrace involvement, dedication, and 21<sup>st</sup> century best practices, such as teaching from faculty and staff, are known to produce graduates (Burnett, 2006), and there are several principles to ensure higher graduation rates. First, institutions should employ effective critical thinking-based lessons throughout a student's coursework to promote deeper learning (Paul & Elder, 2013). Another principle includes 'pedagogies of engagement' that will enable students to feel vested in the institution. Other principles incorporate real-world reflective activities to aid students in increasing their problem-solving capabilities, as well as and the ongoing exploration of how to

utilize effective assessments to help identify the impact of interventions (Walsh & Cuba, 2009).

This research evaluated the importance of embedding essential components of high impact practices, such as twenty-first century learning practices and activities, as part of a faculty-developed early student alert system to be implemented into their courses.

### Formative Assessment Techniques

To detect if there are gaps in student learning or to determine if students are struggling in class, instructors can employ an evaluative tool known as formative feedback, or assessment (Scriven, 1966). Formative assessment techniques are tools instructors can use to enhance student motivation and student achievement (Cauley & McMillan, 2010). According to Cauley and McMillan (2010), formative assessments can help instructors modify their instruction based on students' feedback. Most people are familiar with summative assessment, in which learning is measured at the end of the process. By contrast, formative assessment is a best practice conducted during the learning process and provides many advantages for both learner and instructor. Not only does formative assessment indicate areas where learning may have been accomplished, but also, where it may not. In these ways, instructors can formatively revise subsequent instructional plans to achieve the learning outcomes.

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS) are viewed as formative feedback activities faculty use to help detect if students are meeting the learning outcomes of a particular discipline (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Additionally, CATS can aid students in the process of learning such as an examination or test evaluations. Some of the CATS

strategies assesses a learner's attitude, values, self-awareness, and reaction to instruction. A student can complete a survey to help self-identify his or her shortcomings in a course. Students who feel that they are on the verge of failing or who feel as though they are not up to par tend to have poor attendance. The exam evaluations also serve as a way for students to give faculty their input about the exam, and as a result, students feel that their feedback matters. Moreover, faculty can create or improvise a CATS activity of their choice based on the deficits or problems that occur in their classroom (Valencia College, 2014). In one research study involving a third-year surgery clerkship, instructors used a mid-semester exam to aid in identifying at-risk students. Instructors administered a mid-clerkship midterm exam (MT) to help identify students who were in danger of failing, and the concluding result was that it helped to categorize the at-risk students. The MT involved an interview with the clerkship director in helping assess the students' completion rate (Corcoran, Halverson, & Schindler, 2014). Thus, based on faculty's experiences of implementing their early alert system and intervention, further exploration examined if student-faculty interaction through formative assessments, when implemented early in the semester, helped to identify struggling students and remedy at-risk behaviors.

### Reflection

In this section, I focus on various reflective practices that can be applied to teaching and learning. First, contemplative inquiry creates an opportunity for individuals, such as instructors and students, to produce deeper learning. Reflection-on-action is another best practice I highlight in this section that can be utilized when faculty are focused on improving their pedagogical approach. Finally, transformative learning is

an adult learning theory that forms the primary focus of this research. If educators self-reflect more on their practice, it may enable them to have a successful intervention and early alert system (Cranton, 2002; King, 2004; Manrique & Abchi, 2015, Schön, 1983).

### **Contemplative Inquiry and Reflection-on-Action**

Researchers suggested contemplative inquiry in education as a practice to enable adult learners and educators to generate transformative learning (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Zajonc, 2006). Zajonc (2006) deduced that there might be a possible relation between knowledge, love, and contemplation. Also, researchers and educators concluded that contemplative practice posits opportunities for students to possess deeper learning, critical thinking, and real-world application that instills an opportunity to enhance diversity in the classroom. Contemplation practice can instill and broaden various practices because students will be able to have introspection, reflection, and contemplation based on personal experiences coupled with activities that are shared with others. Student learning can be transformed because of making a meaningful connection to their peers and to the world.

Another form of reflection that demonstrates best practices of teaching is reflection-on-action (Manrique & Abchi, 2015, Schön, 1983). Reflection-on-action encompasses a reflective activity, such as a discussion group or recording of oneself such as personal narrative after a specific action has been conducted, that creates a distance from the experience. Reflection-on-action allows teachers to ponder the experience to generate awareness of their beliefs, cultures, and values (Schön, 1983). Manrique and Abchi (2015), observed a transformation that occurred with ten preschool teachers as a result of participating in the Teacher Education (TE) course and

implementing teaching practices demonstrated at TE to assist disadvantaged students who attended schools in an impoverished area in Argentina. Each of the ten teachers was equivalent to one another through having completed four years of education, professional development courses, and had at least five years of teaching experience. However, only one out of the ten teachers was selected for a case study because the teacher had the most significant changes. The TE courses enabled teachers to learn best practices about their students' narrative competencies. The process of the reflection-on-action research entailed teachers reflecting on their video-recorded activities coupled with me asking guiding questions on theoretical applications and instruction. After the research, each teacher discussed the activity, analyzed the video transcription, and returned to share their analysis with me. As a result of implementing reflection-on-action, the teachers become more explicit with their instruction by identifying specific learning outcomes they want their students to achieve. Furthermore, there is value when using video analysis because it fosters reflection. The teacher selected for the case study had a significant impact because she implemented the new ideas, and realized how to make it useful (Manrique & Abchi, 2015; Schön, 1983).

### **Transformative Learning**

There is an amalgam of theoretical frameworks that embody elements of student success or strategies to enhance student progress while in college. This research identifies the adult learning theory that is demonstrated by faculty implementing their own designed early alert intervention and responsive engagement plan for their students. Faculty created and implemented these plans to identify struggling students or students who are on the verge of withdrawing from a course. By students completing these plans,

it might enable them to transform their way of thinking and their approach when applying oneself as a student. According to Merriam et al. (2012), when students are provided with support and guidance, they may experience transformative learning. This adult learning theory, which describes such experiences, is known as transformative learning (Merriam et al., 2012).

Transformative learning incorporates students encountering experiences that allow them to change their way of thinking and to make new meaning of their experiences. Some of these types of experiences may include a health-related experience, which alters their way of living or approach. Similarly, an educational experience with an institutional agent, such as faculty, advisors, and counselors, can help students to analyze their experience and change their educational approach critically.

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning is comprised of three perspectives (in Merriam et al., 2012). The first perspective is psychoanalytic, which involves individuals, in this case, students, reflecting on the overall process of how they are developing as lifelong learners. (see Figure 2.) This process can encompass self-responsibility, confidence, and a deeper understanding of self. A next perspective is a psycho-developmental approach in the way an individual learns, and the continuous growth gained by ongoing reflection throughout one's lifetime. Lastly, a social-emancipatory perspective stems from Paulo Freire's philosophy of transformative learning, which couples personal empowerment and social transformation (Merriam et al., 2012).

## Summary

Transformative learning correlates with this faculty-designed early alert system for various reasons. By studying an educator's perspective and the potential change in perspective due to this approach, we learn more about students' learning needs, perspectives, and support needs. In addition, when faculty members embrace critical self-reflection, they often make the necessary changes to improve their instruction and the learning conditions their students' experience in their classes. Because of this process, faculty members adopt the role of a reflective practitioner (Cranton, 2006; King, 2004).

In summary, if faculty desire to assist struggling students in their courses by designing and implementing an early alert system and intervention, then it would be prudent for faculty development to provide them with the necessary tools and resources on best practices. Furthermore, faculty development should use the lens of adult learning to facilitate their work with faculty, and they should design a course that encompasses transformative learning. Moreover, faculty should be engaged in the processes of transformative learning (Cranton, 2006; King, 2004). Because of reflection on their experiences in teaching and learning, educators can be intentional when employing their early alert system and intervention (King, 2004).

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

In Chapter Three, I explain the method used to address the research questions and the research design. Because I evaluated documents such as interviews and reflective journal entries from faculty who have implemented their early alert system and intervention plan, I proceeded with a document analysis as the qualitative research approach. According to Rubin and Rubin (2011), document analysis is another approach to qualitative research that embodies analyzing in-depth interview transcripts or any documents presented in written form. This study encompassed the transcribed, lived experiences of faculty applying their early student alert system and intervention. I combined both views from the participants and me, as well. Faculty shared their motivations to develop an early alert system and strategies for their courses. Furthermore, this research explained my methods to interpret the data collected and the process.

One of the problems in higher education is to improve student retention rates, to provide academic and non-academic support, to increase student engagement and persistence. According to Kuh et al., (2011), more students are in need academic and non-academic support to improve student retention and persistence. The purpose of this study was to identify whether or not a faculty member's intentional methods of their early alert system and intervention encompassed any changes in their profession, classroom or students and if faculty described the nature of those changes. The early alert system and intervention provided a process identifying the possible assessments, resources, and tools that can aid students with persistence.



Many institutions use different forms of early alert systems to help identify struggling students (Fletcher, 2012). Valencia College has faculty working in collaboration with advisors, counselors, and other staff members. Because faculty work very closely with students, they might be the crucial connecting piece for reaching students early enough before they withdraw from the course.

### Research Questions

If faculty desire to see transformative change within their students, it is imperative for faculty development to help guide them through the transformative learning process (King, 2004; Taylor & Cranton, 2012). For faculty to experience transformative change, they should engage in activities that fosters questioning, critical reflection, and discourse (King, 2004). The purpose of this qualitative study was to focus on faculty sharing their experiences and participation in implementing their early alert system and intervention while using transformative learning as the conceptual framework and completing engaging activities such as an interview and reflection journals. Therefore, the following research questions were used to guide the study in my research:

**RQ1.** Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences?

**RQ2.** While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred?

**RQ3.** If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results?

### Rationale for Qualitative Method

Due to the following characteristics and components of this study and the research questions, I implemented a qualitative study. First, this qualitative study involved a framework and an assimilation of interpretation, personal experience, professional knowledge, and individualization towards a specific topic (Stake, 2005). According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), a document analysis approach provides an opportunity to examine participants' responses from their interview and journal entries. The research questions and the purpose of this study encapsulated faculty's overall experience with implementing an early student alert system.

### Data Collection

The approach for this study was a document analysis because I analyzed journals and interview transcripts to determine any themes that the participating faculty presented. Glenn (2009) cited Corbin and Strauss' definition of document analysis as a form of qualitative research that embodies a formulated approach to evaluating and synthesizing documents such as journals, diaries, letters, newspapers, summaries, and other forms of documents that can be subject to a systematic process.

I conducted a document analysis of faculty who shared their experiences while employing their early alert system and intervention; therefore, journals and interviews were the research instrumentation (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). I interviewed Valencia College faculty, who had completed the professional development course, Continuous Assessment Responsive Engagement (C.A.R.E.) with open-ended questions addressing their reason for embarking on the task of developing an early alert strategy and intervention for their struggling students (Glenn, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Faculty completed a reflection journal during and after implementation of their engagement strategies and noted any changes that occurred in their practice (Glenn, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Finally, they developed their meanings from the process of generating their early student alert system, and these were communicated through the artifacts (journals and interview transcripts). The data collection method consisted of the following:

- careful review of the journal documents and interviews (Glenn, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012)
- anonymous identities of all participants,
- journal questions to guide participant journal entries,
- transcription of the participants' responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2012)
- member checking of transcripts as participants reviewed the transcripts for accuracy (Creswell, 2013),
- interviews and journal entries were used as data and was coded (Glenn, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012), and
- Valencia College faculty members who completed the C.A.R.E. course.

Initially, I interviewed the research participants about their experiences with early alert systems or tools within their personal or professional endeavors or situation. Because I used a responsive interview approach, depending on the interviewees' response, new questions may have emerged (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

The reflective journals allowed faculty to share their experiences while employing their early alert system and intervention. I analyzed the participants' stories and identified common themes, conflict, and struggles during their early alert and intervention. The data allowed me to discuss with the participants the content of their responses to avoid inconsistencies (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

### Implementation

Because this was a qualitative study, the research involved an initial interview and two intervals of descriptive open-ended journal-based questionnaires. The first reflective journal consisted of questions that participants completed during their implementation of their early alert plan, and the second reflective journal was completed after implementation. This format contributed to evaluating if there was any change or growth during the participants' experiences (Cranton, 2002; Lyons, 2010). These descriptive open-ended items provided space for faculty to write and share their experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The following procedures depicted how I collected data.

In Step 1, I interviewed Valencia College faculty (part-time and full-time) who completed the professional development course on early alert strategies and intervention describing the essence of their experience while designing their early student alert system (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

In Step 2, I distributed an email (see Appendix B) to all of the faculty members who completed C.A.R.E. professional development and requested volunteers to participate in the study.

In Step 3, I sent the formal invitation letter via email to the instructors who volunteered to participate in the study (see Appendix C). Following the agreement to participate, instructors received a thank you email (see Appendix D).

In Step 4, while the faculty were implementing their plans in their course, I emailed a follow-up letter (see Appendix E) (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Furthermore, I asked faculty participants to reflect on their practice by identifying any changes they had noticed in their students' behavior (see Appendix E) (Schön, 1983).

#### Researcher's Role

My positionality as a researcher in this qualitative study encompassed my perspective and experience as a faculty fellow, faculty member, and former undergraduate student. As a researcher, it was imperative for me to share my personal and professional background, bias, and values. As indicated in Chapter One, I shared my personal and professional experiences in the field of education and as an undergraduate student (Creswell, 2014). The impetus to engage in this type of research started when I was tasked to write my philosophy of education when I was a tenure-track professor. I was prompted to think about my own personal and professional experiences, and this experience led me to ponder both my account as an undergraduate student and the rationale behind my methodology as a professor. When I started to reflect on my experiences, and as I shared this story on numerous occasions during my tenure-track term, I began to realize how these many different pieces fit together in critical ways. I

became very intentional about my approach to students. Therefore, based on my own experiences and teacher knowledge, I used my experiences, along with best practices highlighted in the literature review, to guide my research.

### Population and Setting

In 2011, Valencia College, a community college in Florida, was awarded the inaugural Aspen Prize Winner for Community College Excellence. Valencia College was founded in 1967 and has a total of eight campus locations. As of 2014-2015, Valencia had an annual enrollment of 68,351 students, with an average class size of 23.3. As of July 2015, there were a total of 3,449 employees: 1,965 staff members, 518 full-time faculty, and 966 part-time faculty (Valencia College, 2015).

I conducted this study at the West Campus, which is one of the five campuses at Valencia. The faculty development course, C.A.R.E., is a hybrid course that runs for six weeks. Faculty who completed the course participated in this study.

The participants consisted of both part-time and full-time Valencia College faculty members from various disciplines. Additionally, the longevity of teaching for each faculty member varied, as well as the types of courses they taught, such as face-to-face, online, or hybrid (both face-to-face and online). However, the faculty members shared the common interest of implementing an early alert system and intervention.

### Sampling

I used a non-probability volunteer sampling method for this study. Volunteer sampling encompasses a self-selection of individuals who volunteer themselves to be included in a research study (Jupp, 2006). Based on the nature of the study, volunteer

sampling was the best option to preserve faculty cooperation and is recognized as a valid sampling strategy (Creswell, 2013).

### Data Analysis

Analyzing documents consists of an iterative process of content and thematic analysis. Content analysis involves pertinent information placed into categories which align with the research questions. Thematic analysis involves careful reading and re-reading of the transcripts and identifying a pattern of themes before placing them into categories which emerge from the data (Bowen, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This research involved a thematic analysis in which I coded and categorized the data using a six-step process (Lichtman, 2013). The analysis entailed Yin's Five-Phased Cycle and open coding (Yin, 2015). The initial coding was to "remain simple, preserve actions and compare data with data" (Charmaz, 2014, p.120). As a result of the coding process, I identified categories, themes, and patterns provided from the field text (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

Tables 1 through 4 represent the manner in which I collected the qualitative data and organized it according to the research questions, sources of data, and methods of analysis for each data source.

Table 1: Overview of Research Process, Questions and Data Collection

	Early Alert Instruction	Early Alert During Implementation	Early Alert After Implementation
Research Stage	Research Stage 1	Research Stage 2	Research Stage 3
Data Collection Tools	Interview	Reflection Journal: During Implementation	Reflection Journal: After Implementation
Transformative Learning Phases	<p>Phases 1 – 4</p> <p>Phase 1: An activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has just been experienced, heard, or read.</p> <p>Phase 2: Articulating assumptions, that is, recognizing underlying assumptions that have been uncritically assimilated and are largely unconscious.</p> <p>Phase 3: Critical self-reflection that is, questioning and examining assumptions in terms of where they came from, the consequences of holding them, and why they are important.</p> <p>Phase 4: Being open to alt. viewpoints.</p>	<p>Phases 3-6</p> <p>Phase 3: Critical self-reflection that is, questioning and examining assumptions in terms of where they came from, the consequences of holding them, and why they are important.</p> <p>Phase 4: Being open to alternative viewpoints.</p> <p>Phase 5: Engaging in discourse, where evidence is weighed, arguments assessed, alternative perspectives explored, and knowledge constructed by consensus.</p> <p>Phase 6: Revising assumptions and perspectives to make them more open and better justified.</p>	<p>Phases 6-7</p> <p>Phase 6: Revising assumptions and perspectives to make them more open and better justified.</p> <p>Phase 7: Acting on revisions, behaving, talking, and thinking in a way that is congruent with transformed assumptions or perspectives.</p>



Table 2: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 1

Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 1	
Transformative Learning Phases	Transformative Learning Phases 1-4
Research Questions	<b>RQ1.</b> Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences?
Interview Questions	<p>Q1.1 Describe your experience as an undergraduate learner in college.</p> <p>Q1.2 What strategies or methods do you think are required in order for your students to be successful in your course?</p> <p>Q1.3 Outside of academia, what other early alert systems have you experienced that led you to believe a similar system would be effective in a college classroom?</p> <p>Q1. 4 What led you to realize that you needed to implement an early system in your course?</p> <p>Q1.5. Describe the process that led you to learn more about early alert intervention strategies. Whom did you consult? What resources did you seek out?</p> <p>Q1. 6 At this time, is there anything else you would like to share about early alert systems?</p>
Journal Questions: During Implementation	Not applicable
Journal Questions: After Implementation	Not applicable

Table 3: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 2

Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 2	
Transformative Learning Phases	Transformative Learning Phases 3-6
Research Questions	<b>RQ2.</b> While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred?
Interview Questions	Not applicable
Journal Questions: During Implementation	JQ2.1 When did you implement your initial early alert strategy that you developed during the Valencia College Faculty Development course? JQ2.2 What type of initial early alert strategy did you apply in your course? JQ2.3 What, if any, were the at-risk behaviors your students began to display in class this semester? How soon? JQ2.4 After implementing the early alert strategy, what actions did you use in your curriculum? JQ2. 5 How did you engage with your students after you implemented the strategy or strategies?
Journal Questions: After Implementation	Not applicable

Table 4: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 3

Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, and Data Collection: Research Stage 3	
Transformative Learning Phases	Transformative Learning Phases 6-7
Research Questions	<b>RQ3.</b> If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results?
Interview Questions	Not applicable
Journal Questions: During Implementation	Not applicable
Journal Questions: After Implementation	<p>JQ2. 6 Describe your engagement (e.g., email, phone call, and in-person appointment) with struggling students.</p> <p>JQ3.1 Now that you have implemented the early alert system, describe your interventions for your struggling students.</p> <p>JQ3.2 What positive outcomes led to implementing your early alert strategy and intervention in class?</p> <p>JQ3. 3 What strategies were not effective in the implementation of your early alert strategy and intervention in class?</p> <p>JQ3. 4 What changes in your early alert plan do you intend to make as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?</p> <p>JQ3 .5 What have you learned about your students as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?</p> <p>JQ3. 6 What have you learned about your teaching practice as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?</p> <p>JQ3.7 What have you learned about yourself as a teaching professional?</p>

The process of document analysis contains “skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). During this process, I also considered other responses provided by the participants. In order to ensure a thorough examination of the documents, I applied Yin’s (2015) Five Phased Cycle (see Figure 5). Additionally, to ensure trustworthiness, I used two coders with the assistance of another fellow researcher in addition to Yin’s Five Phased Cycle.

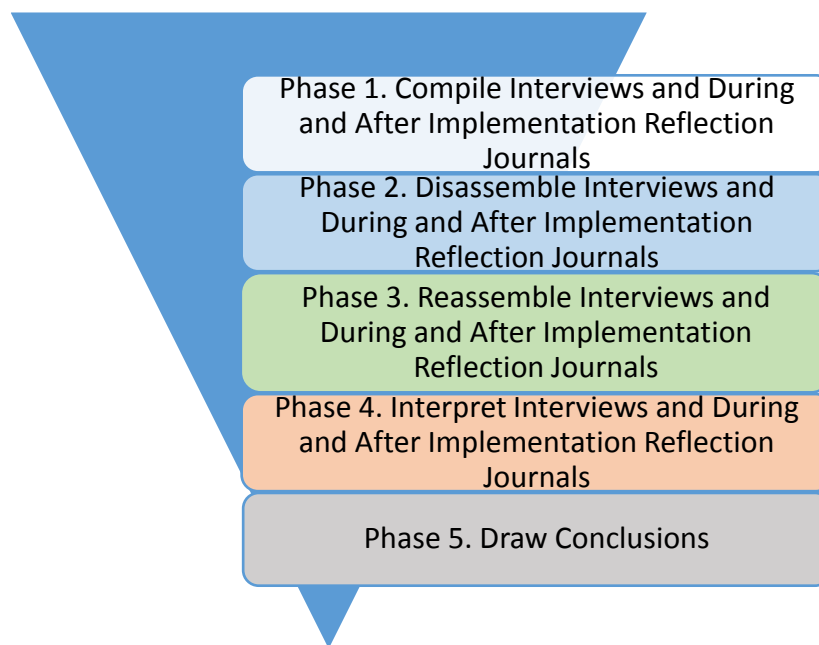


Figure 5: Five Phases of Analysis Interviews and Implementation Reflection Journals  
Figure Developed by Author.

To begin the document analysis, the initial step was to transcribe the recorded interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). A professional transcriptionist prepared the interviews. After receiving the documents, I reviewed each and listened to the audio recording of the participants to verify if their responses were accurately recorded. Then, I sent each interview to the respective participants to confirm if his/her responses were correct.

During the final week of the semester, each participant sent me their During and After Implementation Journals. Next, I began with Yin's (2015) Five Phased Cycle.

The first phase of analysis entailed *compiling* and organizing the interviews and journals, which were comprised of multiple iterations and eventually became the database. I began to compile and organize the documents. *Disassembling* was the second phase, and required breaking down the database and providing codes. It was an iterative process that consisted of notetaking, highlighting key words or phrases, and summarizing participants' responses that became consistent throughout each interview and journals; later, these phrases became concepts and themes. Next, I developed a table to organize and sort out these concepts and themes by placing them under each participant's section. In order to determine the initial codes, I had to examine the themes and concepts to determine if they were relevant to the research questions and the literature on early alert strategies, interventions, and best practices (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

In order to identify the codes, I utilized Lichtman's (2013) six-step process after parsing out the codes (see Figure 6). After the initial coding, I summarized participants' responses from the interviews and reflective journal responses. Then, I revisited the initial coding to collapse and rename the codes, as there might have been a substantive number of codes. I also clustered codes together based on past literature (Creswell, 2014). Next, I placed codes into categories, which became an iterative process because she modified the initial list. After the modification, I revisited the categories and identified the key components, and finally identified the emerging concepts from the categories created (Lichtman, 2013).

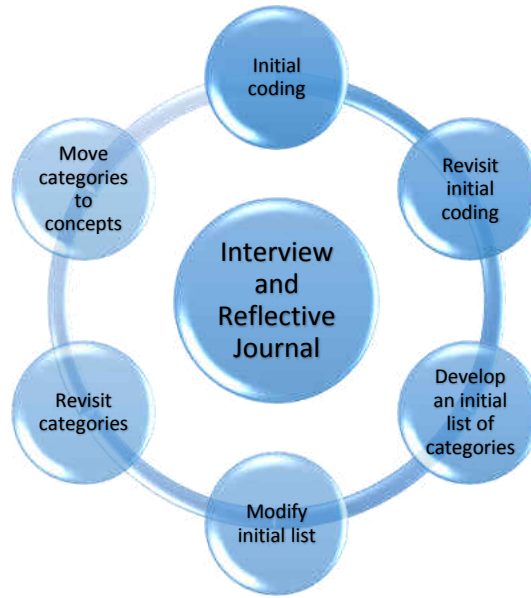


Figure 6: Three C's of Data Analysis: Codes, Categories, and Concepts.

Figure adapted from information by Lichtman (2013).

The third phase consisted of *reassembling* the data by recombining it into tabular forms or graphs. Therefore, I reassembled the data into tabular forms in Google Docs in preparation for the two coder process.

To ensure trustworthiness, another researcher participated in the coding process and cross-checked the lead researcher's results. The assisting researcher and the lead researcher worked electronically and held phone conversations throughout the coding process. The lead researcher provided the assisting researcher a list of defined concepts (see Appendix L), which the lead researcher noted in the literature review, as well as participants' definitions and examples of these concepts to help determine codes in the participants' responses and to cross-check codes to ensure consistency with the definitions. Both the lead and assistant researchers utilized Google Docs to collaborate on the coding process and record additional notes, which include emerging themes (see Appendix L). Both the lead and assistant researchers worked independently on coding for

a week. Because the lead and assistant researchers were unable to meet face to face, they communicated results on the phone while reviewing the documents on their computers. They identified similar themes, and the lead researcher shared additional themes as it pertained to the implementation of early alert strategies and intervention that the lead researcher will later share in Chapter Five.

The next phase encompassed *interpreting* the reassembled data. The lead researcher reassembled data depending on the interpretations. The lead and assistant researchers color-coded themes too so that there was a semblance of the information identified. Finally, the fifth phase was known as *concluding*. The lead researcher drew final conclusions based on her own and the assistant researcher's interpretations, and the outcomes of the fourth phase of analysis (Yin, 2015).

### Trustworthiness

In a qualitative study, a researcher must demonstrate that the findings are credible (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness (Guba, 1981) is the concept that addresses the reliability and validity of data. In qualitative research, trustworthiness is often a word researchers prefer to address validity to distinguish their approach from statistical validity (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). Therefore, to ensure there was trustworthiness in this research, I applied the following validation techniques (Creswell, 2014). Several effective validation strategies, practices, and consistency procedures validated this study's trustworthiness. By using member checking (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), the participants reviewed the transcripts of their interviews and corrected any errors; this practice increased the trustworthiness of the data. In terms of trustworthiness procedures, two coders provided a safeguard for determining the codes

in this qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As described, the second researcher reviewed the data to identify the codes to establish consistency in the emerging themes. The researchers coded the interview transcripts and journals. As the researcher, to provide evidence of my analysis and to identify the common themes, the other coder and I used the following steps.

Prior to meeting and collaborating with the other researcher, it was necessary for me to visualize how I should determine the codes using Yin's Five Phases of Analysis and Lichtman's coding process. Therefore, as shown in Table 5, I annotated and identified phrases to assist me with the coding process.

First, after reading and rereading each participant's transcripts and journals, I identified the keywords or phrases that supported the literature I provided in Chapter Two. In addition, I noticed that a pattern began to surface after reviewing each participant's responses. For example, each participant was asked to explain, in their After Implementation Journal, what they had learned about their early alert system and intervention implementation. I noticed they unanimously altered their original approach to implementing their plan to ensure that they were applying best practices. They stated words like "changed, tweaked, or modified." Some of the other phrases or statements that demonstrated faculty modified their early alert approach entailed the following data.



Table 5: Example of identifying significant phrases or keywords from participants

<p><b>Martin</b></p>
<p>During my <i>initial implementation</i>, my positive outcomes weren't as great ...I was able to <i>make minor tweaks based on the individual student(s) behavior</i> to improve my success rate with student(s) study habits and passing the course. Ultimately, increasing both their creative and critical thinking was my goal (Reflection Journal-After 1, Page 1. Lines 29-34; 39-41).</p>
<p><b>Claire</b></p>
<p>...going to make the <i>individual conferences thirty minutes</i> instead of twenty. For some students, we only needed fifteen minutes, but for the <i>students who needed longer, I want to have the length of time set aside</i> (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1. Lines 18-22; 27-29)</p>
<p><b>Cole</b></p>
<p><i>Adding more informal touchstone points</i> that allow for immediate attention ... I have <i>become more mindful of student behaviors and identifying potential roadblocks</i>" (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 31-32; 49).</p>

After identifying the phrases, I compared them to the literature and the conceptual framework. In turn, this process helped me realize that the participants demonstrated transformative learning as a result of employing their early alert system and intervention plan.

Then, I created a table (Appendix L) with my initial coding notes. It consisted of three columns: topics with subtopics, definitions from the literature, and participant's definition or examples. Such a table is shown is illustrated below in Table 6.

Additionally, to calculate and determine how many topics were noted in my data collection, I used a color scheme for clear visibility. The color scheme also afforded an easy visual reference to the different topics.

Table 6: Example taken from Appendix L

<b><u>Codes: w/Color</u></b> <b>(With Sub Topics)</b>	<b><u>Definition</u></b> <b>(Literature)</b>	<b><u>Participant's</u></b> <b><u>Definition/Examples</u></b>
Empathy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Connection</li> <li>• Partnership</li> </ul>	Use as evidence by communicating with students; getting to know them. Observe students ( say, do, think and feel) behaviors & interactions; Challenging assumptions about students; Human-centered approach	Personal connection; observe; Discuss/ discourse w/students;

After completing my table (Appendix L), I uploaded my notes into Google Docs in order to collaborate with the other coder.

Next, in order to compartmentalize and align each participant's responses with the initial themes, I produced another table (Appendix M). The second coder also used this table to capture her notes and codes in Google Docs.

Once both documents were added to Google Docs, I contacted the second coder. I indicated I provided her access to both documents (Appendix L and M). After explaining the purpose of the documents and how to use each document along with the color scheme I created, I informed her that she needed to include the themes, notes, and any additional

codes she identified in the data. Finally, we determined there should be a goal of a two-week turnaround time to complete both documents. After the two weeks, we discussed the codes and determined the possible themes to help validate the trustworthiness of the study.

Finally, in total, there was a compiled list of 38 emergent themes that included sub-themes. Then, as shown in Table 7, the themes were moved into clusters (or categories) resulting in eight significant themes. In the next step, the themes were aligned with present-day best teaching practices that I later explain in Chapter Six.

Table 7: Emergent Themes to Major Themes

Initial Themes	Major Themes
Student engagement Undergraduate experience Support Purpose Self- motivated 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills	Student Success
At – Risk Behaviors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpreparedness</li> <li>• Arriving late to class</li> <li>• Not seeing an advisor</li> <li>• Students struggling/ Failing</li> </ul>	At – Risk Behaviors
Empathy Partnership Conversations with students Conferences	Personal Connection
Reflection Assessments Observation Learning activities	Instructional Strategies
Taking ownership Mindfulness Plan	Intentionality
Changed Learned Realized Connecting and learning from colleagues	Perspective Transformation
Support Resources Early Alert Strategy Personalized Guidance College Readiness Intervention	High Impact Strategies
Value: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective</li> <li>• Faculty autonomy</li> <li>• Faculty designed</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul>	Value

The coding process entailed a collaborative approach to develop the most complete and consistent analysis of the interview data (Creswell, 2014).

Finally, I used triangulation of data to provide supporting evidence that consisted of the following forms: interviews, document analysis, and journals. Providing multiple sources and perspectives of the participant experience through interviews and journals, provided support and trustworthiness of this study, (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

#### Limitations/ Delimitations

I used Valencia College as part of the study. Valencia College was selected for this study because it represented a sample of participants who were engaged in implementing an early alert strategy and intervention plan. These participants were faculty members who completed the professional development course on early alert strategies and intervention. As of November 2017, a review of the literature of early alert systems and strategies reveals that Valencia College the only institution that was using an early alert approach with a faculty-designed early alert strategy and intervention plan. Due to the nature of this qualitative study on evaluating faculty's experiences and perception on early alert strategies and intervention, the research initially had minimal delimitations. Initially, the only limitations included a specific population of faculty and the semester the research was conducted, in addition to limiting the study to Valencia College. In Chapter Six, I discussed further limitations that developed later in the study.

At the start of the study, the research consisted of the following delimitations. First, I only included the specific population of faculty who completed and implemented their early alert strategy and intervention during the summer of 2017. Faculty from

various disciplines were qualified and considered for this study. I did not study faculty outside of those parameters. Secondly, I used interviews and journals as data collection to capture faculty's perspective and experiences regarding their implementation. Interviews, in particular, provided me with an opportunity to be responsive to participants' comments which means they may be required to ask additional questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The results of this study may be transferable to state colleges similar to Valencia College (Creswell, 2013).

### Summary

In this chapter, I described the research method and how she conducted and interpreted this research through document analysis. This study identified whether Valencia College faculty members who participated in the C.A.R.E. course observed changes in their courses, such as faculty-student engagement or instruction, as a result of developing or implementing their early alert system. My role as a researcher includes not only my functions in conducting this study (capturing faculty's experiences while they are implementing their early alert system) but also the fact that I am invested in the professional development of faculty learning to design early alert strategies. In this analysis stage of the study, I coded, interpreted, and illustrated faculty responses to demonstrate inductive analysis. Based on their responses, the data may reveal strategic approaches for faculty development, or that faculty may apply in the future as best practices for developing and implementing early alert systems through transformative learning opportunities.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PORTRAITS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In Chapter Four, “Portraits of the Participants,” I discussed each participant’s background information and status as a faculty member at Valencia College. The background information described in this chapter includes their race, gender, and the highest level of education. The status of each participant at Valencia College was comprised of whether they were tenured, tenure-track, or adjunct associate faculty, which I defined later in this chapter. In addition to their status, I included further background information as Valencia College faculty. I assigned each faculty member a pseudonym to provide anonymity. In this chapter, I described participants’ life experiences as they pertain to early alert. I incorporated their professional and personal information to help readers have a better understanding of each participant.

The five participants shared their experience of implementing their early alert and intervention plan in their Summer B classes, which occurred during June 20 –August 1, 2017. Furthermore, they described their undergraduate experience of whether or not they were successful students or if they had struggled at any time during their college experience. All of the participants vary regarding experience and position at the college. Participants included adjuncts or tenured faculty, but whether they were adjuncts or tenured, they were fully engaged in taking professional development classes. First, I asked participants to participate in a face-to-face interview. Then, participants completed two journals, During and After Implementation Journal that they submitted to me during the first week of August. I conducted all the interviews in the Center for Teaching and Learning/ Innovation, which is the same location as my faculty fellow office. I interviewed each participant in a private office within the Center. My overall objective of

this chapter is to report information that shows a possible relationship between each faculty member's background, engagement with students, and early alert and intervention plan.

To successfully identify participants who completed the Continuous Assessment Responsive Engagement (C.A.R.E.) course for this study, I was fortunate to receive assistance from Valencia College's faculty development director. The director of faculty development compiled a list of 81 faculty members who completed the professional development course, C.A.R.E. From that list, only 19 faculty members were eligible to be candidates for the study because they were expected to teach during the Summer B six-week session. I emailed the introduction letter to the 19 candidates informing them about the study (see Appendix B), then, emailed a formal letter inviting the candidate to see if they would be willing to volunteer and participate in the study (see Appendix C). Several faculty members informed me that they would not be able to participate in the study because they either did not have any time or they were not able to implement their early alert strategies and intervention plan during their Summer B courses. However, five faculty members from the list of 19 candidates agreed to participate in the study. Those five participants were individuals who I worked with in the past or had established some form of professional relationship. Finally, I sent another email to the five candidates to select the times they were available using a Doodle link. Doodle is an electronic scheduler that allows people to select the dates, places, and times available created by the host. (See Doodle.com)

The interview questions focused on the knowledge and personal and professional experiences of the interviewees (see Appendix A), such as the reason they had an interest



in early alert strategies and intervention, or faculty sharing their overall experience as an undergraduate learner in college. For example, in Question 1.1, participants reflected on their undergraduate experience. Faculty also expressed what was necessary for their students to pass their classes successfully. Doing so allowed me to understand better how they defined student success in their courses. Next, faculty disclosed their personal experiences using an early alert system and what role it had in their classroom. Faculty then had an opportunity to convey their rationale or reason for implementing an early alert and intervention plan in their courses. Finally, towards the latter part of the interview, participants provided their final thoughts on early alert systems.

In reference to the During and After Implementation Journal, faculty responded to the assigned questions and were able to share their experiences while applying their early alert and intervention plan and the outcome of their plan. The During Implementation Journal targeted the process and strategies participants used in their early alert system. As for the After-Implementation Journal, participants provided insight about their intervention, such as the description, the overall outcome, the effectiveness, and the changes and impact of facilitating their intervention.

### Participant Profiles

During the Summer B term at Valencia College, five faculty members had participated in this study about faculty perspectives and engagement in executing their early alert strategy and intervention plan in a two-year institution. This section includes a table of Participant's Profiles (Table 5) that exhibits an overview of all five faculty members, including how many years each participant had been teaching at Valencia College, their discipline, the classroom modality they implemented, the early alert system

and intervention, faculty status, highest level of education and their race (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

For this research, it is important that I explained the status of each faculty member. An Associate Faculty member encompasses part-time faculty and full-time annually appointed faculty who has completed an annual series of professional development courses within the Associate Faculty Certification program. Each year, they are recognized and rewarded (Valencia College, 2017a). Tenured-track faculty are new professors who are in the process of enhancing their professional practice by completing a series of professional development courses and a professional portfolio project within Valencia College's Teaching and Learning Academy. The tenure-track faculty must complete the track and portfolio in 5 years to earn a tenure status (Valencia College, 2017b). In this section, I also describe participants' responses to the face-to-face interview, and their responses to their During and After Implementation Journals. During the interview, I developed a more profound and a better understanding of each participant.

I highlighted each participant by providing a brief account of his or her college undergraduate experience, followed by a brief description of each participant. The descriptions entail their responses regarding their journals. The participants included two men and three women faculty members who are very committed to their practice.

Table 8: Participant's Profiles

<b>Participant Pseudonym</b>	<b>Years of Teaching at Valencia College</b>	<b>*PD Credit Hours On File</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Early Alert/ Intervention Modality</b>	<b>Faculty Status</b>	<b>Highest Level of Education</b>	<b>Race and Gender Self-Reported</b>
<b>Claire</b>	3 years	259	English	Face to Face	Tenure Track	Doctor of Education in Psychology	Caucasian Female
<b>Martin</b>	14 years	341	Engineering	Face to Face	Adjunct Associate Faculty	Master of Science in Industrial Engineering	African American Male
<b>Cole</b>	5 ½ years	233	English	Face to Face Online	Tenure Track	Masters in English	Caucasian Male
<b>Dorothy</b>	17 years	406	Reading	Face to Face	Tenured	Masters in Elementary Education	Caucasian Female
<b>Ashley</b>	4 ½ years	280	Education	Face to Face **Hybrid Online	Adjunct Associate Faculty	Masters of Arts in Applied Learning and Instruction	Mixed Race Female

\*Credit hours are on official professional development transcripts on file at Valencia College

\*\*A course consisting of both face to face and online delivery.

In the interviews, they indicated they had taken professional development courses. Additionally, during the Summer B session, all of the participants were committed to other college-related tasks outside of teaching. Therefore, their participation in professional development was extremely indicative of their commitment to the institution.

## **Martin**

My mother was determined that she wanted her kids to go to college... I always loved Math, always loved Science, so I started out in mechanical engineering. ... it was a little bit of a shock for me, because throughout K-12 I aced everything, you know, I was pretty much a good student, but college basically was kind of a reality check for me, and a reality check in a way that ... the A's that what I used to get, I wasn't getting, and the classes were a lot larger (Transcript 1, Page 5. Lines 4-10).

The first interviewee was Martin. At the time of data collection, he was an Associate Adjunct professor of Engineering, Computer, Programming, and Technology, and taught a college preparatory course, Developmental Math Combined. He taught an array of engineering courses, and he was once a Career Program Advisor for the Engineering department. Martin has been teaching at Valencia College since 2003. I sent the initial invitation to professors on June 19<sup>th</sup>, and Martin, who was the first to respond, contacted me agreeing to volunteer in this study in addition to being committed to other responsibilities.

The first interview question began with Martin sharing his college experience at a traditional four-year institution. He was the second to attend college within his family. His older sister completed her nursing program and served as a mentor to him. Therefore, he was not at all nervous about attending college; he pledged to a fraternity and overall had a great experience. However, he conveyed that as an undergraduate even though he loved math and science and pursued an engineering degree, he was no longer getting A's, which was shocking to him. He was in the habit of getting A's when he attended K-12. His classes ranged from 75 to 200 students, and in the past, he was accustomed to being in a class of 20 to 25 students. I asked him how he was able to complete this program successfully. He explained that he tends to inform his students that networking and working with peers along with studying is necessary to be successful. Finally, Martin

stated that students must communicate with their professors and participate in clubs because it can assist them in completing their desired program.

### **Claire**

I skipped sixth grade and I graduated early from high school, and I started college and then I wasn't interested in any of the majors, so I left school ... It was junior college ... I left school and just worked for a year, and then I realized "Oh, I need a degree to have a job that I actually really like, and makes any kind of money". So I went back to school, and in school ... I was a procrastinator. I procrastinated horribly...I was a procrastinator, I would say. I worked really hard, but I did things at the last minute. That would pretty much describe me as an undergraduate learner... there was one class where I didn't get the paper done in time, and the teacher would not accept it late, and I got a B in that class. And I think that's when I realized "Okay. This is, this is the big leagues now. And I need, I need to meet deadlines" (Transcript 2, Page 2. Lines 6-12; 17-19).

Claire's interview was less formal because of my previous encounters with her.

Aside from teaching English, at the time of data collection, Claire also possessed a Doctorate in Education and taught Education courses that have an emphasis on instructional strategies. In the interview, I learned that Claire had taught for 11 years at a high school in Los Angeles, and for two years in South Korea. Furthermore, during her internship for her Master's degree, she developed an Advanced English program for juniors in South Korea. During the interview, she could not help but communicate her love for Valencia College and her desire to take more of their professional development courses.

Claire's responses to the interview questions were very telling. As noted in Claire's quote, she realized as an undergraduate student that it was prudent for her to meet the deadlines assigned by her professors because college was unlike anything she had experienced in the past. Unsurprisingly, when Claire explained the strategies or methods that her students need to be successful, time management was one of the

essentials. Additionally, she remarked that students should possess clear goals and “know their strengths and weaknesses” in reading and writing so that they can build on their skills. Claire also mentioned that students need to have a “buy-in” and see how what they are learning applies to their own life and profession. This concept resonates with the adult learning literature (Merriam et al., 2012).

### **Dorothy**

I think I was pretty prepared because of my high school experience, . . . , in some areas. . . . , I really struggled when they put me in calculus, . . . , and I wasn't prepared for that at all and ended up not doing well and deciding that math was not going to be in my future. I mean, I struggled a little bit in my freshman year and then kind of got it together for my other three years. . . . I studied sometimes with my peers, but I've always been somebody who studies better by myself. . . . , that I get distracted by other people. So, . . . , I just kinda figured it out myself. . . . But I love learning, so for me, college was just, you know, was just fun. I just found it exciting and I was lucky to be able to take courses that I wanted to take **(Transcript 3, Page 2. Lines 6-15)**.

Dorothy, a tenured Valencia faculty member who specialized in developmental reading and writing at the time of data collection, had employed intervention strategies, for her tenure-track project many years ago, which would enable students to persist throughout their college career. Her project had a semblance of Valencia College’s early alert program. Before teaching developmental integrated reading and writing courses, she taught solely developmental reading classes. Therefore, I was not surprised when she registered and completed the C.A.R.E. course and later became one of the C.A.R.E. facilitators.

Dorothy noted there were strategies or methods that were required for her students to be successful in her course. She said, the quintessential strategy would be time management because some students are not accustomed to having an arduous workload.

Another strategy she highlighted was alleviating hindering habits such as skimming over content instead of reading it more in-depth. Other strategies or characteristics of success she mentioned were listening, paying attention, and avoiding distractions. These strategies were methods she addressed more intentionally with her students during her individualized meetings as part of her early alert strategies and intervention plan.

### **Cole**

First experience was terrible, but I didn't really know why I was here, so... Or why I was in college, so ... A whole lot of fails, withdraws, all that stuff...I went back when I was older, it was much easier because I knew why I was there (**Transcript 4, Page 2. Lines 10, 12, 14 & 15**).

“I knew why I was there.” was a statement in Cole’s interview which resonated with me. Although Cole provided concise responses, they were informative and poignant answers that left an indelible mark. He spoke in a candid, jest manner that he knew why he attended college the second time around. He exclaimed that the recession was the impetus for him returning to college. His success was the result of having some life experiences.

Cole, an English tenure-track professor at the time of data collection and a Veteran, started his teaching career about five years before the current study at Valencia College, which I found quite honestly, astonishing and impressive. I met Cole a couple of years ago when he was an adjunct, and I found him to be engaging, witty, and ambitious, which served him due to his accomplishments. I was surprised when he shared his undergraduate experience and revealed his failures when he attempted college for the first time. For that reason, I was not surprised when he explained the strategies or methods he believed were required for his students to successfully complete his course. Asking questions, “understanding that failure is not a bad thing,” identifying their goals, and

possessing value in what they are learning were Cole's requirements for student success in his course. He continued to elaborate that students need to discover why the content they are learning is valuable.

### **Ashley**

...as an undergraduate I attended UCF. My Gen Ed classes was (sic) a joke. I was not passionate about them, I didn't care, and I didn't do well. Then, when I got into my upper-level courses that were more within my major, I soared. If you look at my GPA for the Gen Eds, really, it's not something I'm very proud of at all... But when you look at the courses where ... that were in my major, they were all like, 3.5 and above (Transcript 5, Page 2. Lines 4-7; 9 &10).

Ashley, who was an Associate Adjunct Education professor at the time of data collection, was the second to respond to the email invitation. When I learned during the selection process that she had completed the early alert strategy and intervention course, C.A.R.E., I was overjoyed. Despite Ashley's struggles in her general education courses as an undergraduate student, she remained resilient because of her sorority. Her sorority sisters supported her, and she was expected to meet the GPA requirement. Eventually, she was able to regain focus as a result of taking her meta-major courses that applied to her degree.

At the time of data collection, Ashley taught Technology for Educators and Introduction to the Teaching Profession, which are prerequisites for the teacher education field. For her students to be successful in her technology class, they need to possess basic computer skills, such as turning on the computer. Other success skills that are required for any of her education class would be life skills and organization. She exposes her students to a substantial amount of content, so her students must have a willingness to learn by embodying motivation.



## Summary

In this section, I focused on the diverse group of participants with different backgrounds, experiences, skills, and approaches when applying early alert strategies and intervention. Transformative learning occurs in various ways. When encouraging transformative learning, Cranton (1994) noted it is common practice to have a diversity of learners who will experience or embrace changes through different modalities or methods. With the portraits of the participants described in Chapter 4, I proceeded to the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Chapter Five contains a structure that initially focuses on the voices of the participants, the analysis as a result of their perspectives, and the themes discovered from participants' journal responses and interviews. Furthermore, in this chapter, I demonstrated the relationship of the conceptual framework, participants' answers to their journal reflections and interviews, and the research questions for this study. To demonstrate the relationship of these findings, I created a visual representation. I inserted participants' quotes to ensure that readers can determine the essence of each response that links to the related research questions. Finally, a summary of the analysis provides the conclusion of this chapter.

### Voices of Participants

In order to capture faculty's experiences of implementing their early alert and intervention, there were three over-arching research questions: 1) Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences? 2) While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred? and 3) If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results? This section consists of several components. I will show the

relationship among the research questions, conceptual framework, and themes, followed by an analysis. The data collected from the interviews and journal reflections will support the analysis. In the analysis, I will display a table to show the relationship between the research questions, conceptual framework, and the themes.

### Research Question 1

Research Question 1 connected to Transformative Learning Phases 1 through 4, and the interview questions. Research Question 1 focused on faculty indicating the moment they realized the need to implement an early alert strategy and intervention because their students were struggling by demonstrating at-risk behaviors in their classes. Participants shared they noticed that their students lacked college readiness skills and required advising. As a result of developing an early alert system and intervention for their courses, faculty expressed that they became more mindful of the students they taught, and transformed their perspectives. For this reason, the following major themes emerged based on faculty participants' responses: at-risk behaviors, high impact practices, student success, intentionality, and perspective transformation.

### **Creating an Activating Event**

**Ashley.** Ashley realized that she needed an early alert system and intervention while attending a summer professional development course. Because Ashley had taken the majority of the summer professional development courses in *Destination*, which is a list of several professional development courses that faculty have the choice of taking during a 5-week period, she had decided to participate in the early alert strategy and intervention course called C.A.R.E. While taking C.A.R.E., Ashley had to think about

how the early alert and intervention applies to her students who are on the verge of transferring out of Valencia. She expressed that she had to intentionally think about what her students might be struggling within her class. During that thought process, she realized that her students did not even have an education advisor.

Okay. Well, I'll share with you. So, when ... Before I took the care destination track, ..., I was running out of care, I was running out of options to take for destinations. And care was the only one that I hadn't taken. So, when I first looked at care. I was like, "What is this? But it sounds interesting." The word care, okay. I still had ... Going two weeks into the course, I still could not figure out what the world discourse was about. So, that will be some feedback I give you later. So, I'm sitting in there and I'm going, "I teach technology." They're asking me to think about, you know, do they have problems with certain skills in Math. And I'm going ... You know, I really don't have those content skills; and so, the more I thought about it, I'm like, "Hey, wait a minute. They ... A lot of students, by the time they make it into my course, they are on their way out of Valencia." And I want to change that. I want them as a Freshman. So, that I can kind of get to know them. Get them on the right path. And then, I started learning, wait a minute, we don't even have an education advisor, and they're going to this advisor and that advisor; or they're not going at all (Transcript 5, Page 6. Lines 23-25; Transcript 5, Page 7. Lines 1, 2 4-8, 9-13).

Because Ashley experienced a moment of engaging in critical reflection by thinking about her students' needs during the professional development course, she shifted her perspective and realized that her students needed to be on the right track with their career. Because they were either seeing just any advisor or not seeing one at all, it was an indicator that her students did not have access to the knowledge and guidance available from an education advisor in the Education Department. Because her students required one-to-one academic assistance from an education advisor, high-impact practices were the theme that related to Ashley's experience.

**Dorothy.** During the interview, Dorothy described her experience with early alert systems that made her believe that she should employ it in her practice. Dorothy remarked that in her personal life she would receive reminders for a doctor, eye, and

massage appointments. Dorothy realized she needed an early alert system in her teaching practice due to her desire for her students to succeed. Her students either had dropped out, withdrawn from class, stopped showing up to class, performed poorly in class, lacked college readiness, or slipped through the cracks if their issues were not identified early on in the semester.

Students not doing well. (laughs) Students like either dropping out, ..., withdrawing from class, or just not showing up anymore. ..., not doing well in class. ..., you know, in developmental education, ..., these are students that are not as well prepared or ready for college as they should be, so, ..., they need to be pretty much on target from the beginning. And, ..., it's very easy for them to kinda slip through the cracks if, ..., I'm not aware of what they're doing from the start (Transcript 3, Page 3. Lines 25--30).

Dorothy's personal and professional experiences with students created the realization that she was in dire need of an early alert system in her courses.

**Cole.** Cole also shared his experience using early alert from a personal standpoint and how it might be beneficial in a classroom. The first reason he shared was "reaching out to people." He explained that reaching out is more than just asking "What's wrong?" It involves providing those struggling individuals with a resource or possible solution.

..., well, a student's not succeeding, students struggling, ..., no consistency between struggling ... Stuff like that, like, very individualized, like, students do better with certain things (Transcript 3, Page 4. Lines 25--30).

### **Openness to Alternatives**

Claire and Dorothy were led to learning more about early alert and intervention strategies as a result of talking to their colleagues and resources which exposed them to various perspectives.

**Claire.** What led Claire to realize that she needed an early alert system in her course was that she wanted to know more about her students' needs. Furthermore, after conversing

with other colleagues and gaining exposure to a similar professional development program called LifeMap that focuses on helping students to be overall life-long learners, she developed an interest to take the C.A.R.E. professional development course.

I took,... Well I came to Valencia and there's the LifeMap, ..., certification. I was doing the Digital Professor Certification, ..., because I wanted to learn more about technology, but as I've stayed here I've seen the importance of LifeMap. And so I took the, the C.A.R.E. strategies class and, ..., and that led me to, to learn more about Early Alert, Early Alert intervention strategies, ...from, from [Dari 00:08:01],...from different people. ..., Lisa Johnson, I believe, and people are doing great work at this school with Early,...Early Intervention strategies. And, and it made me look at my own practice, and what I can do as an English teacher that would, ..., be in my field, for my class, for my students, that would work. And that's how I came up with having the students write me a letter at the beginning of this. And, and ... Which I could talk more about later, if you have a specific question for that (Transcript 2, Page 4. Lines 23-32).

**Dorothy.** Dorothy gravitated to early alert because she sought out and conversed with colleagues and counselors to gather resources that would assist retention and persistence, in addition to conducting research. These experiences led her to early alert and intervention strategies.

..., well, I did some of my tenure work not specifically about early alert strategies but about intervention strategies that would help... help with retention and persistence, you know? 'Cause I want students to go beyond just my course. It's fine if they pass mine, but the goal, of course, is to have them... can- continue on. ..., so when I was doing my tenure work, there were various people that I did consult, various resources (Transcript 3, Page 3. Lines 35-39).

In Table 9, Phases 1 through 4 not only display a continuation of the research process that was represented in Chapter Three, but it also represents the major themes and sub-themes parallel with the research questions that were identified after applying Yin's (2015) Five Phased Cycle.

Table 9: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 1

<b>Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 1</b>		
<b>Data Collection: Interview</b>		
<b>Transformative Learning Phases</b>	<p>Transformative Learning Phases 1-4:</p> <p>Phase 1: An activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has just been experienced, heard, or read.</p> <p>Phase 2: Articulating assumptions, that is, recognizing underlying assumptions that have been uncritically assimilated and are largely unconscious.</p> <p>Phase 3: Critical self-reflection that is, questioning and examining assumptions in terms of where they came from, the consequences of holding them, and why they are important.</p> <p>Phase 4: Being open to alternative viewpoints.</p>	Described in this section's narrative
<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>RQ1.</b> Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences?	<b>Major Themes</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At-risk behaviors.</li> <li>b. Perspective Transformation</li> <li>c. High Impact Practices</li> </ul>
<b>Interview Questions</b>	<p>Q1.1 Describe your experience as an undergraduate learner in college.</p> <p>Q1.2 What strategies or methods do you think are required in order for your students to be successful in your course?</p> <p>Q1.3 Outside of academia, what other early alert systems have you experienced that led you to believe a similar system would be effective in a college classroom?</p>	

<b>Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 1</b>		
<b>Data Collection: Interview</b>		
	Q1. 4 What led you to realize that you needed to implement an early system in your course? Q1.5. Describe the process that led you to learn more about early alert intervention strategies. Whom did you consult? What resources did you seek out? Q1. 6 At this time, is there anything else you would like to share about early alert systems?	

In Table 9, the Transformative Learning Phases 1 to 4 address the initial steps to promote transformative learning, and in this case, when faculty are sharing their encounters when implementing early alert strategies and intervention. The first step entails having an event that begins to alter one’s perspective. Second, through individuals’ personal encounters or experiences and through learning about engagement activities, they will be able to articulate their assumptions. The third step allows room for individuals to critically reflect on their experience, or in this case, when faculty reflect on their implementation through the use of reflection journals. The fourth phase is an openness to perspectives that faculty may be exposed to throughout their early alert and intervention experience. In order to show evidence of the initial phases of this study, I used quotes from the participants to display the alignment.

### Summary

Transformative learning phases 1 to 4 represent an individual’s transformed perspective based on experiences. Although all of the participants did not state specific steps or phases that displayed their thought process, they did reflect on their early alert



and intervention and the purpose behind it as a result of responding to the interview and journal questions (Cranton, 2002; Schön, 1983). Cole applied a humanistic approach to his modified early alert strategies and intervention, indicating that he made his plan more adaptable to students' needs rather than making them rigid. Cole stated, “ [Instead of] the rigid structure of an intervention sheet I originally planned to use, I think it was good for me to develop as a personal framework to understand how to adapt to individual student needs” (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 23-24). Second, faculty had an opportunity to personally connect with students to build empathy and apply a human-centered approach when applying their early alert and intervention plan (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). For instance, Claire shared in her reflection journal,

to have some kind of personal connection with the student makes it all the more effective too. To have that personal connection, because you're teaching the whole student. You're not just teaching math. You're not just teaching English. You're teaching, ..., the whole student, the whole person (Transcript 2, Page 5. Lines 21-24).

Third, participants expressed value as a result of observing positive outcomes. Martin noted in his interview, “ ..., I would say that it's definitely a great program. It's something that I really think every professor should, ..., somehow, ..., see the need, if, even if we could actually make a mini-course of care...” (Transcript 1, Page 4. Lines 20-30).

### Research Question 2

Faculty described noticeable changes in the classroom, such as engagement with students, perceptions of their practice, and modifications made to their early alert strategies and intervention. First, the participants expressed how they adopted or valued

early alert and intervention, which displays an awareness regarding the effectiveness of using early alert (Cranton, 2006). Faculty described the reflective processes of developing an early alert system and intervention. As a result of developing an early alert system and intervention for their courses, faculty expressed that they value and appreciate the resources that were available for students. Second, as a result of their implementation and their responses from the interviews and the During and After Implementation Journal reflections, the major themes identified were at-risk behaviors, instructional strategies, high impact practices, intentionality, value, and personal connections, which are shown in participants' quotes. The quotes below represent the early alert strategy and approach participants used in their classes. The quotes also display support through faculty engaging with their students, which demonstrates personal connection. Finally, faculty conveyed how they value their interaction or approach to using their early alert which made them more mindful of their students' needs as a result of using early alert strategies.

### **Critical Self-Reflection**

**Martin.** The theme that emerged as a result of critical self-reflection was value. During the interview, Martin described that he believed strongly in early alert and intervention and he believed that all professors should be exposed to early alert through the C.A.R.E. professional development course and participate in early alert and intervention.

..., I would say that it's definitely a great program. It's something that I really think every professor should, ..., somehow, ..., see the need, if, even if we could actually make a mini-course of care, and they don't have to go through the entire one, or we make it a requirement as part the, ..., ILA, ..., TLA. ..., and I don't know if it is part of the TLA, but I think it's something that, ..., should be considered, because again, when you sign on and you become tenure, you should have this, ..., you're taking, going for the tenure, basically, you've already

considered that this is your passion, that you want to teach (Transcript 1, Page 4. Lines 20-30).

In the summer of 2016, he initiated his early alert strategy and continued ever since. His initial plan encompassed teaching all of his students, not just the ones who were struggling, how to assess their study habits early and throughout the remaining semester. He noticed that his students modified accordingly to improve their academic performance.

The second part of that passion is, is caring about your students, and that's not just coming to class, teaching, and then going home. It should be that extension of it, which is the care and compassion part of the students (Transcript 1, Page 4. Lines 20-30).

**Claire.** Claire provided her final thoughts on early alert systems; she articulated that these systems were crucial. Students should not be alerted on their progress halfway through the course, but earlier on in the semester, such as the second or third week of class. Moreover, there should be some form of personal connection with the student.

I think they're [early alerts] crucial. I think they're so, so, so important, because you get halfway through a class, it's too late. ..., six weeks in even, it's a little late to be saying to a student "Hey, you, you really, really, really need to do an about-face to make it through this class". Why not the second week? ..., and to have some kind of personal connection with the student makes it all the more effective too. To have that personal connection, because you're teaching the whole student. You're not just teaching math. You're not just teaching English. You're teaching, ..., the whole student, the whole person. ..., and I fully believe that (Transcript 2, Page 5. Lines 21-24).

Like the other participants, Claire implemented her early alert strategy and intervention in her Composition 1 class during the Summer B session. Claire vehemently expressed the importance of personal connection, and her early alert strategy and intervention represented her principle. Therefore, her students were tasked to write her a letter in response to her initial letter, in addition to the regular assessments and goal

setting assignment students completed in previous courses. Then, she met with each student for 20 minutes and discussed their letter with her. Because she taught a face-to-face class, she met with each student in her office and later students were able to call or email Claire. She also stated that after the first and second days, two students were arriving late to class and not completing their online reading logs. She continued to recount that after the two struggling students completed the assigned work including the letter, she brought in specific readings that piqued her students' interest. Additionally, to make their learning more meaningful, she was able to connect with their career goals as well personally.

**Cole.** Cole desired to be involved in early alert and intervention because he wanted to help students succeed. Over the Summer B session, Cole implemented his early alert strategy and intervention plan. He expressed that changes have been made to his original plan which consisted of a questionnaire and checklist.

There's no right way to do it. There's definitely some wrong things to do, but you can learn that from classes, but I also think a lot of that stuff comes with experience and no early alert system works perfectly for every student. . . ., but it's having, just, understanding the idea of what early alert systems are and kinda being proactive about it. You know, it does have to be something specific where you do this and it follows this. It's ... 'Cause it's not ... It's not about the system, it's about the student so whatever you can do to help that student succeed (Transcript 4, Page 6. Lines 19-23; Transcript 4, Page 7. Lines 1-3).

In his interview, he noted that there is no “one size fits all.” An early alert system is not linear, but more individualized. A student who is struggling with time management requires a different plan from a student who lacks support from home and who is trying to survive on a day-to-day basis. Within the first three weeks of the summer semester, Cole observed students' lack of preparedness for reading assignments and a peer review activity. To rectify these issues, Cole's early alert strategy not only encompassed

observing these at-risk behaviors, but it also entailed meeting with his struggling students individually.

### **Cole**

Shortly before the first essay was due. Certain behaviors, such as not having completed readings or not having drafts ready for peer review were indicators. This would be around three weeks into the class.

I addressed students individually, and we collaborated on strategies to help them navigate their individual challenges.

I engaged in whatever manner was most comfortable and effective for each student. I let them set the level of interaction so as not to feel intrusive.

(Reflection Journal-During 4, Page 1.Lines 13-15; 18-19; 26-27).

When he met with his students, they “collaborated on strategies to help them navigate their challenges.” In addition to modifying his plan by making it less rigid and more of a “personal framework,” he changed his early alert plan by meeting with students informally to provide just in time intervention.

### **Ashley.**

First, is that word, early alert systems, I, at first, thought it was just like you're gonna give me some system that I'm going to have to plug and play. But, basically, it's whatever I want that system to be. It's whatever I think that that student needs. So, that I like. I like that you've left it up to us. I think that's really ... I think that was intentional (Transcript 5, Page 11. Lines 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26).

Ashley was able to develop an early alert and intervention plan that focuses on college readiness and transferability, and as a result, her plan will be a component of the Title V grant, which focuses on at Valencia College’s College to Careers program. This program will provide more accessibility and innovative methods for students to receive an education. According to Ashley, “Education is a big chunk of that.” Now, Ashley, along with some of her colleagues, who are faculty mentors for education, and her plan was the impetus for these changes.

Following her implementation of her early alert strategy and intervention plan, she drew many conclusions from her experience. For one, she is constantly updating her intervention information as identifies the gaps her students may have before they graduate.

### **Open to Alternative Viewpoints**

**Claire.** Participants shared that their interactions and discourse with students helped them to recognize that they needed to apply modifications to their practice, which included instructional strategies, personal connection, and high impact practices. For example, after observing her two students' disengaged behavior in class, Claire's statement exemplified her willingness to modify her instruction by making it more meaningful to her students who were disconnected from her initial instructional approach to the reading assignments (Cranton 2006; Merriam et al., 2012).

After implementing the letter, individual conference, and goal setting, I was able to bring in specific readings that the two students who were reticent/struggling were personally interested in. I was also able to personally connect to students' goals and to make the learning more personally meaningful through knowing their career goals and their reasons for wanting to succeed in the class and in college (Reflection Journal-During 2, Page 1. Lines 28-32).

### **Constructing Knowledge: Discourse, Evidence and Exploration**

The following examples display how each participant applied an early alert strategy, which allowed them to construct the right approach for their intervention and construct their knowledge about their students. Both Ashley and Martin used a more linear approach to their early alert and intervention and evaluated their students' performance and responses based on using high-impact practices and instructional strategies. Although Dorothy and Cole used a less rigid approach, they used high-impact

practices and instructional strategies such as observation as their form of identifying at-risk behaviors.

**Ashley.** In Ashley's early alert strategies and intervention plan, she developed a plan that included a procedural method. It consisted of four parts that her students had to follow. Even though high-impact practices connect to instructional strategies, it was essential to explain the specific strategies Ashley included in her implementation. She incorporated different forms of assessments such as surveys and student engagement by conducting group conferences. As for high impact practices and instructional strategies, she provided resources to assist her students as an intervention. As Ashley described in her journal,

The strategy had 4 parts:

- 1] pre-survey that asked students about their knowledge of their education requirements needed for transfer, clubs at Valencia that will help them with their career, and if they knew who their advisor may be.
- 2] an intervention that gives students resources to answer the survey questions
- 3] give survey again after intervention
- 4] discuss survey results via Skype group conferences (Reflection Journal-During 5, Page 1.Lines 10-16).

**Dorothy.** Dorothy included personal connection, high-impact practices, and instructional strategies, such as observation and student engagement when she applied her plan. During the Summer B six-week session, Dorothy implemented her early alert and intervention plan in her integrated reading and writing course that met four days per week. Although she missed the first week of class, she reviewed her students' grades, missing assignments, and observed their performance towards the middle of the second week to identify anyone with at-risk behaviors.

Observation was the early alert strategy she utilized to identify, “any potential problem behaviors performance including grades, preparation with materials, assignment completion, attendance, demeanor in class, participation, and any other signs that might indicate a current or future problem.” Her early alert strategy also encompassed casually meeting with her students in her office to discuss their problem areas in class and confidential matters that might be creating any hindrances, and she conveyed to them that she would provide them with the tools to help them succeed. After meeting with each student and providing them with the resources, tools, or accommodations, she followed up with them to ensure they were successful in rectifying or remedying their at-risk behaviors.

My early alert strategy involves keen observation of any potential problem behaviors or performance including grades, preparation with materials, assignment completion, attendance, demeanor in class, participation, and any other signs that might indicate a current or future problem. After identifying students, I casually meet with them to discuss the problem area and express my willingness to help them get on track and succeed in the course (Reflection Journal-During 3, Page 1.Lines 11-15).

**Cole.** Cole infused a similar approach to his implementation. Like Dorothy, he employed instructional strategies, high impact practices, and personal connection. Cole observed that some of his students were not completing their assignments. Since they were displaying at-risk behaviors, he held one to one sessions with his students at the beginning of the semester. His approach was less formal and made the engagement less informal.

Shortly before the first essay was due. Certain behaviors, such as not having completed readings or not having drafts ready for peer review were indicators. This would be around three weeks into the class. I addressed students individually, and we collaborated on strategies to help them navigate their individual challenges.



I engaged in whatever manner was most comfortable and effective for each student. I let them set the level of interaction so as not to feel intrusive. (Reflection Journal-During 4, Page 1.Lines 13-15; 18-19; 26-27).

**Martin.** In his journal, Martin expressed his engagement with students because he was able to identify their at-risk behaviors. He represented personal connection and at-risk behaviors in his reflection. Although he applied his plan to all of his students, he was still able to distinguish at-risk behaviors his students were displaying, such as failing grades, skipping one or more classes, or lack of motivation. In his During Implementation Reflection Journal, he not only presented additional at-risk behaviors that were displayed during the summer session, but shared several of the actions taken in his curriculum. There actions include meeting and engaging with students via email, phone call, or face to face, and after they completed the self-assessment, Martin arranged designated time for students in the Mathlab, and assigned a mid-semester Self-Reflection to all of his students. Martin infused these steps which are indicative that he had a process in place. Martin described the process that included the following:

Below are some of the actions that I utilized in my curriculum.

- 2nd week of class, identify at-risk students who meet two (2) or more of these criteria:
- Missing quiz assignment in Mathlab;
- Grade scores in Mastery quiz in Mathlab below 70%;
- Not completing homework in Mathlab to support their knowledge when taking the Mastery quiz;
- Missing class/chronically late/inattentive in class.
- Provide the students with the Self-Assessment, ask them to complete their section, and set an appointment for individual meeting with me outside of the classroom.
- Meet with the students at the scheduled appointment and complete the course of action section of the Self-Assessment based on the students' assessment.
- Ensure that the students' course of action is completed by the specified date on the plan.

- Arrange time in the Mathlab or a source so that students can access a computer to calculate their GPA utilizing the GPA tool in ATLAS.
- Assign the mid-semester Self-Reflection to the entire class in Blackboard.
- Identify students with a grade below 70% at the mid-term of the semester and repeat steps 2-4 with these identified students.  
(Reflection Journal-During 1, Page 2.Lines 45-61)

Table 10 is a representation of Transformative Learning Phases 4 – 6 and the findings from this study. These phases embody faculty having an opportunity to engage in discourse, evaluate evidence and research different perspectives to assist with the transformative process. In this section, Research Question 2 connected to both Research Stages 1 and 2. This section provided more insight on faculty's openness to early alert, but it also addresses phases 4 through 6 as it pertains to the during reflection journal. The emerging themes in this section from the participants' responses encompassed at-risk behaviors, high impact practices, instructional strategies, intentionality, and personal connection.

Table 10: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 2

<b>Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 2</b>		
<b>Data Collect: During Implementation Journal</b>		
<b>Transformative Learning Phases</b>	<p>Transformative Learning Phases 4-6</p> <p>Phase 4: Being open to alternative viewpoints.</p> <p>Phase 5: Engaging in discourse, where evidence is weighed, arguments assessed, alternative perspectives explored, and knowledge constructed by consensus.</p> <p>Phase 6: Revising assumptions and perspectives to make them more open and better justified.</p>	Described in this section's narrative
<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>RQ2.</b> While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred?	<p><b>Major Themes</b></p> <p>2. a. At-risk behaviors</p> <p>c. Intentionality</p> <p>d. Personal Connection</p> <p>e. High Impact Practices</p> <p>f. Instructional strategies</p>
<b>Journal Questions: During Implementation</b>	<p>JQ2.1 When did you implement your initial early alert strategy that you developed during the Valencia College Faculty Development course?</p> <p>JQ2.2 What type of initial early alert strategy did you apply in your course?</p> <p>JQ2.3 What, if any, were the at-risk behaviors your students began to display in class this semester? How soon?</p> <p>JQ2.4 After implementing the early alert strategy, what actions did you use in your curriculum?</p> <p>JQ2. 5 How did you engage with your students after you implemented the strategy or strategies?</p>	

### Summary

In summary, after responding to their During Implementation Journal questions, participants demonstrated Transformative Learning Phases 4 to 6 as it applies to their teaching practice and engagement with their students. Each participant revealed that by engaging with students in discourse or other instructional strategies, they were able to identify their needs. These strategies not only demonstrated Phase 5, but it also exemplified Phase 4. Participants were able to assess and intervene in time to address student's at-risk behaviors promptly.

### Research Question 3

In this section, I discussed Research Question 3, addressing faculty demonstrating Transformative Learning Phases 6 through 7, which consisted of revising their assumptions and acting on their revisions. Following their initial interview and their completion of the During Implementation Journal, I asked faculty to describe their engagement with students and their intervention. In addition, participants reflected on the outcomes of their implementation, changes they noticed in their practice, and lessons learned from their implementation. Participants' feedback and experiences revealed the following major themes: intentionality, high-impact practices, value, and perspective transformation.

#### **Revising Assumptions and Perspectives**

Participants revisited their assumptions and perspectives beginning with their initial implementation of their plan and continued to be revisited as noted in their journals. Below, they share their experiences regarding their after implementation plan.

**Claire.** Claire's After Implementation Journal responses revealed that as a result of taking the C.A.R.E. course she decided to produce a letter which would allow her to know more about her students' perspectives to better meet their needs.

The C.A.R.E. Strategies class gave me the idea of doing the letter assignment, and I have been already doing individual conferences for the Diagnostic Essay. I have learned that in a usual class that I do not get to know my students all that well; whereas, with this early alert strategy I was able to really get to know my students very fast in a very genuine way and to open up a two-way line of communication that enabled a deeper level of learning to take place (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1. Lines 34-37).

Because she implemented the early alert strategy and intervention, she realized that she was able to know her students and "open up a two-way line of communication." Claire also learned that there is always room to grow in her teaching practice. She stressed that her teaching practice becomes more effective as a result of learning more about her students.

**Cole.** Cole shared that he would be more mindful and intentional about his students and provide immediate attention, and as noted earlier, he indicated that he wanted to be less formal and rigid with his early alert strategies and intervention.

Adding more informal touchstone points that allow for immediate attention ...  
Prevention is better than treatment approach.  
I have become more mindful of student behaviors and identifying potential roadblocks (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 31-32; 49).

**Dorothy.** Finally, Dorothy expressed that she recognizes the value in personal connection and teaching is more than the delivery of content. Following Dorothy's implementation of her early alert strategies and intervention, she provided me with feedback on changes and overall outcomes of her plan. She witnessed positive outcomes that led to her implementation of her early alert strategy and intervention. A male student

in her course expressed that he did not know what he was doing at Valencia, saying he did not belong. She explained in-depth to him why he was selected for the program called Bridges (a program designed to provide support and assistance persisting through college) and encouraged him to speak to his advisor for further clarity. As a result of making a personal connection with this student and following up with him, he remained in the program. She noted that overall her strategies for her early alert strategy and intervention were effective. Only one student did not pass her course. She reflected on her interactions with this student, and she realized that maybe she could have engaged with him more. As for the changes, she remarked that her initial plan had been very rigid. After multiple implementations, she realized that it was not sustainable which led her to make adjustments.

I have learned that personal connection with students can make a big difference in their success within my classes. I have also learned that in working with students who are taking a developmental reading/writing course, I can influence their work habits, ability to manage their time, and their knowledge of college resources (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 1. Lines 46-52).

### **Transformation: Acting on Revisions, Behaving, Talking, and Thinking**

Each participant revealed in their After Implementation Journal that they intended to make changes to their instructions, experienced a change in their mindset or perspective which is also known as perspective transformation, or realized the value in their early alert strategies and intervention.

**Claire.** Claire's response demonstrated that she was mindful of her approach to scheduling her individualized conferences. Although Claire felt that her strategies were overall effective, she did indicate she would modify the individual conferences. Claire

mentioned that the time she allotted to meet with students was insufficient. Therefore, she decided to increase the individual conferences to 30 minutes rather than 20 minutes.

I do not feel like any part of the strategies were ineffective. The letter set the tone for the class and gave me wonderful information about each student to enable me to be a more effective, caring teacher. Then, the individual conference allowed me to get to know each student one-on-one and for us to set academic goals and practical, realistic steps to achieve those goals.

In the future, I am going to make the individual conferences thirty minutes instead of twenty. For some students, we only needed fifteen minutes, but for the students who needed longer, I want to have the length of time set aside (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1. Lines 18-22; 27-29)

Claire relayed that she experienced changes and learned from the overall experience after implementing her early alert strategy and intervention. Her response demonstrated that she applied high impact practices such as engagement in addition to personal connection.

I have learned that in a usual class that I do not get to know my students all that well; whereas, with this early alert strategy I was able to really get to know my students very fast in a very genuine way and to open up a two-way line of communication that enabled a deeper level of learning to take place (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1. Lines 34-37).

Regarding her teaching practice, Claire relayed that there is always room for growth in one's practice and she can enhance her pedagogy by engaging with her colleagues, scholarship, and students.

Implementing a strategy to get to know my students early on and to assess their needs and concerns shows me that there's always more to learn about teaching. I can always improve. I'm always learning. The good teacher is always learning. And, it's not just about my content knowledge or about pedagogical delivery—it's about the people in the room, and the more I know about the students, the more effective my teaching becomes

What I have learned about myself as a teaching professional is that the more I seek to improve my practice through experts, through theory, through practice, through caring, the more I improve each and every year as a professor, as a human being. And, when I help just one student, I do change the world (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1-2. Lines 42-46; 51-54).

**Martin.** As recounted below, initially, Martin explained that his results were not those for which he had hoped. However, after making a few adjustments, he was able to identify student gains from his course modifications. These adjustments and gains revealed a transformation in his practice.

During my initial implementation, my positive outcomes weren't as great as I would expect because this was my 1st attempt at implementing the C.A.R.E. program. My success rate was slightly under 50%. After, that initial implementation, I was able to make minor tweaks based on the individual student(s) behavior to improve my success rate with student(s) study habits and passing the course. Ultimately, increasing both their creative and critical thinking was my goal.

There wasn't any specific strategy that wasn't effective because each student had/has their own unique situation as it related to learning styles/studying habits and personal issues. As stated, I tweaked the C.A.R.E. plan as necessary to engage the student(s) (Reflection Journal-After 1, Page 1. Lines 29-34; 39-41).

As a result of implementing his plan, Martin noted that he had learned about himself in his profession.

As a learning college facilitator/professor/advisor, it is my goal to succeed, improve and expand the learning outcomes that can be documented from my students (Reflection Journal-After 1, Page 3. Lines 80-83).

**Cole.** Based on entries in Cole's journal, it was evident that while he only assisted students during the summer session on college readiness, he stated that he intended to make changes to his plan. Even though Cole discussed that his plan was successful, he noted that he did make further modifications to his plan. He realized that there was no 'one size fits all' for early alert strategies and intervention and all students have their unique situation. Finally, he recognized that he would increase more personal connection with students when a student requires immediate assistance before it becomes too late.



The rigid structure of an intervention sheet I originally planned to use. I think it was good for me to develop as a personal framework to understand how to adapt to individual student needs.

Adding more informal touchstone points that allow for immediate attention ...

Prevention is better than treatment approach

That there is no "correct" intervention strategy. Each strategy need be as adaptable and unique as my students (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 23-24; 31-32; 41-42).

**Ashley.** Ashley's After Implementation Journal responses displayed a change in her teaching practice and presented significant themes such as high-impact practices, perspective transformation, and value. Ashley, who was an education professor at the time of data collection, explained in her journal entries that she had a different purpose for her students. Ashley had taken the early alert professional development course because she had taken all the other professional development courses and exhausted most of her options. Then, while taking the course, she still could not figure out what the course was really about. Two weeks into the course, the facilitators asked her and the other participants to reflect on their students and the skills they were struggling within their courses. She realized her students were not like first-year students, but then suddenly, it dawned on her they were in need of guidance. In other words, she wanted to ensure they were on the right path regarding their careers before leaving Valencia.

So, I'm finding, just as the more I intentionally thought about it, because before it was like, I really didn't think about, what is it that my students might need to really help them along the way. There were little bits and pieces, but it wasn't an intentional thing; where I could kind of put it in an outline. I hate to say it, but it made it intentional. It made me go, "Okay, ..., this could help." And so, by the end of the course, after I figured everything out, I had a great plan. And to this day, I'm now a year and a half in, and I'm still using it. Yeah, it is. And then, what is coming off that is, you know, Title Five (Transcript 5, Page 16. Lines 6-9; 21-24).

Based on Ashley's response in her After Implementation Journal, she contemplated on how she can be intentional with her early alert strategies and intervention. Additionally, as a result of developing and implementing her early alert and intervention for her courses, it has translated into high-impact practices as well as her experiencing a perspective transformation, because she realized the importance of her plan and that it will assist education students college-wide.

In addition to high-impact practices and perspective transformation, Ashley's responses indicated that she saw value in her early alert strategies and intervention. She stated multiple positive outcomes from her early alert and intervention including the aforementioned advising for education majors. She also stated in her After Reflection Journal and interviewed that her students were grateful that she devoted time to disseminate information to them.

Students were very thankful that I took the time to address these issues. Many students did not consult with an advisor (self-advising) and/or were seeing random advisors who were not familiar with the education nuances. Some students shared with me that their professor at other campuses did not tell them about the prereqs needed, GKT requirement or information about transfer (Reflection Journal-After 5, Page 1. Lines 4-8).

Another example of perspective transformation was Ashley's realization that it was better to collect student feedback rather than making assumptions about her students. She had possessed assumptions about her students and the issues they might be struggling with until she conducted further research and employed high impact practices in terms of student engagement.

We make assumptions, like, we kind of know when a student is struggling and, kind of, maybe, why; but until we really ... really get the research and get the data, it confirmed my hunches.

And there were a couple more. So, so, I made those assumptions; and then, with my care plan, the data that I had to start collecting was ... I did a survey. And so, I

asked them, you know, just very, just the first week of class, I asked them, "What do you know about the GKT?" "I've never heard of that in my life." "Who is your advisor?" (laughs) That was one of them that they didn't know, who their advisor was. And then, they'd say, "I don't know who she is," or "Oh, I haven't taken SLS," or "Oh, I blah, blah, blah. I transferred blah, blah." So, it gave me these ... It confirmed- ... that students just, they don't know. And then, my care plan let them know. That's the second page. So, that was the data. .... That just that ... the surveys, because it's not rocket science (Transcript 5, Page 8. Lines 12-14; Page 9. Lines 1-7; 9-11).

As noted by Kelley and Kelley (2013), teachers need to avoid making assumptions and to possess empathy in order to understand better and assist the individuals we are trying to help. In this case, rather than Ashley making assumptions, she increased student engagement by collecting data from her students to design an early alert system and intervention.

Throughout her implementation, Ashley made a change in how she collected data and changes to her intervention by making it personalized for students. She was overall pleased with her plan.

I gave a pre-survey and then an intervention. I planned to give a post-survey but felt the Skype conference covered all that was needed. I tried to use a Blackboard survey but then after it was completed, I realized these surveys were anonymous and not what I needed for analysis. I now use a Google form instead that will create a spreadsheet.  
I make slight changes to the intervention information as I learn more about what my students do not know about their career choice (Reflection Journal-After 5, Page Lines 22-25; 27-29).

Finally, Ashley became more mindful of her students and learned that her students were initially not utilizing the necessary support to ensure they were successful.

Students are not seeing an advisor as often as they should. They are scared to ask for help but then grateful when approached out of concern. The feedback from the SFI is shocking; students comment that my concern for their success is not like other professors. This is disheartening for me, as we are teachers and should be caring people who are concerned about our students. Not that we baby them but just showing that we care and offer resources makes the learning environment

so much more positive with more positive results (Reflection Journal-After 5, Page 1. Lines 34-39).

**Dorothy.** Dorothy, who is the fifth participant, was also very committed to her students and Valencia College as it related to early alert and intervention. Her reflection uncovered a few major themes, such as perspective transformation, personal connections, value, instructional strategies. She noted that she made changes to her initial early alert system and intervention plan. Her plan encompassed ongoing monitoring of student progress who often tend to be disengaged.

I have described the early interventions in my previous reflection. As the semester progressed, I continued to monitor student progress and pay particular attention to students who appeared to be disengaged in the class. Two students in particular (one in each class) sat in the back row, did not participate in discussions, or engage with other members of the class. I made a point of speaking with each of these students during a workshop time when the class was working on an essay assignment it

Due to making personal connections and incorporating high-impact practices with her students, Dorothy did reap positive outcomes with her early alert strategies and intervention and with her students. Dorothy immediately spoke to her students, encouraged them to use college support services such as the advisor, and followed-up with them.

When I spoke with the first student, he expressed that he didn't know what he was doing here (Valencia), saying that he did not belong. He said he knew who his advisor was when I asked him and I encouraged him to speak to his advisor, reminding him that he was selected for the Bridges program because others felt that he was a good candidate and that it was both an honor and awesome opportunity that very few students received. When I saw him the following week, I asked if he had seen his advisor and he replied that he had and that he was ready to continue. The other student said he was going through a tough family situation and that he would be dropping out of Valencia after the summer term and getting an apartment and full-time job for himself and his sister. I again asked if he knew his advisor and if he would speak with the advisor before making any final decision to withdraw, losing his full scholarship to Valencia. It happened that my

Dean was doing a classroom evaluation and overheard the conversation. After class she asked me to share the student's name so that she could follow up with the student and his advisor/Bridges coordinator.

As a result of these interactions with these two students, they were both able to successfully complete the course and both indicated that they planned to continue (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 1. Lines 14-26; 28-29).

Dorothy indicated that there were sustainability issues as a result of the rigid and ambitious early alert strategies and intervention plan she initially created.

I don't think I will make any changes at this point. I originally had a more rigid plan where students had to fill out a questionnaire indicating their concerns and problem areas before meeting with me during a scheduled time in my office. We then set up a time for a follow-up meeting. I found over time that this was time-consuming and cumbersome, so I have reverted to a more flexible 'just-in-time' plan to address problems as they arise before, during or after class (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 2. Lines 39-45).

However, as for the overall success of her students, Dorothy noted that only one student was deemed unsuccessful. On the other hand, Dorothy did explain that she did not feel as though her plan could have aided him in passing the course.

In the end, only 1 student out of 41 did not pass the course. His grade had been a C, but by missing assignments and submitting substandard work toward the end of the semester, he dropped to a D. I don't think that any of the strategies or interventions I employed were not effective, though in retrospect, I might have interacted more with this one student, especially toward the end of the semester (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page Lines 32-36).

Dorothy, who taught developmental reading and writing courses at the time of data collection, discerned that students' lives tend to be complex, they experience hardship, and at Valencia, there are resources and support staff who can provide assistance. Based on her experiences, she encountered a perspective transformation. She realized the importance of engaging with students, developing empathy for her students, and being an advocate for them.

I have learned that students' lives outside of the classroom can be complicated and sometimes, troublesome, and that this may have a strong effect on their

performance. While I am not in a position to solve or directly influence any problems they may be experiencing, I can be more understanding without sacrificing my expectations of my students. I have also learned that Valencia has resources and services that can help students with a myriad of problems and that my encouragement can help students access those resources (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 2. Lines 46-52).

As for her teaching practice, Dorothy learned that closely engaging with students and developing empathy can assist her in meeting her students' needs.

I have learned that personal connection with students can make a big difference in their success within my classes. I have also learned that in working with students who are taking a developmental reading/writing course, I can influence their work habits, ability to manage their time, and their knowledge of college resources (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 3. Lines 55-58).

Dorothy's final point about the teaching profession was that this career was not something to take lightly. It is more than just teaching your lesson.

Teaching is more than just delivering discipline content. I am always reminded that my role is as much to be a 'cheerleader' and advocate for students as it is to assist in their learning. When students recognize that I am 'on their side' and that I am willing to work with them, they relax and open up to listen to my suggestions and advice (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 3. Lines 60-63).

Table 11 provides an overview of the third stage in the research process. In this stage, faculty discuss their intervention and any changes they were able to identify following their intervention. This section also addresses Research Question 3 and phases 6 and 7 of transformative learning. In phases 6 and 7, faculty reveal their changes in their practice when implementing their early alert strategy and intervention. Faculty completed their After Implementation Reflection Journal which correlates with the two final phases and research questions.

Table 11: Alignment of Conceptual Framework (Transformative Learning), Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 3

<b>Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 3</b>		
<b>Data Collection: After Implementation Journal</b>		
<b>Transformative Learning Phases</b>	<p>Transformative Learning Phases 6-7</p> <p>Phase 6: Revising assumptions and perspectives to make them more open and better justified.</p> <p>Phase 7: Acting on revisions, behaving, talking, and thinking in a way that is congruent with transformed assumptions or perspectives.</p>	Described in this section’s narrative
<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>RQ3.</b> If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results?	<p><b>Major Themes</b></p> <p>5. a. Intentionality            b. High Impact Practices            c. Value            d. Perspective Transformation            e. Personal Connection            f. Instructional Strategies</p>
<b>Journal Questions: After Implementation</b>	<p>JQ2. 6 Describe your engagement (e.g., email, phone call, and in-person appointment) with struggling students.</p> <p>JQ3.1 Now that you have implemented the early alert system, describe your interventions for your struggling students.</p> <p>JQ3.2 What positive outcomes led to implementing your early</p>	

**Details of Conceptual Framework, Research Process, Research Questions, Data Collection, and Themes: Research Stage 3**

**Data Collection: After Implementation Journal**

	<p>alert strategy and intervention in class?  JQ3. 3 What strategies were not effective in the implementation of your early alert strategy and intervention in class?  JQ3. 4 What changes in your early alert plan do you intend to make as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?</p> <p>JQ3 .5 What have you learned about your students as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?  JQ3. 6 What have you learned about your teaching practice as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?  JQ3.7 What have you learned about yourself as a teaching professional?</p>	
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Summary

The final phases of transformative learning, 6 and 7, encompass Revising Assumptions and Perspectives and Applying the Revisions and Thinking in order to display transformative learning. In this section, I documented that all of the participants noted that they revised their approach to make it more sustainable or to improve the effectiveness of their approach. Overall, the faculty participants experienced changes in



their early alert and intervention implementation as a result of students' success. Furthermore, these educators experienced a change in their mindset regarding teaching. Because their responses show a sense of value in early alert and intervention, faculty relayed that they would incorporate high-impact practices and personal connection with their students.

### Themes

The analysis of the documents, which was described in Chapter Three, resulted in the emergence of the following themes that (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 2010): personal undergraduate experience, student success, empathy, early alert systems, reflection, adult learning, at-risk behaviors, transformative learning, early alert strategies, intervention, taking ownership of an approach, value in early alert system, student engagement, connecting, and talking and learning from colleagues. However, after reviewing the conceptual framework, literature, data from participants, and finally, the themes multiple times, I realized that they could be placed into eight major themes or concepts (Yin, 2015).

### **Student Success**

According to the responses participants provided regarding student success, they defined it as students being able to manage their time, apply content to real life, possess life-long learning and study skills such as questioning, determine the expectations of the professor and the requirements of the course, acquire financial responsibility.

**Claire.**

So one is time management, and one is to have clearer, clearer learning goals. One [skill] is to ... for them to know their own strengths and weaknesses with their reading, and with their writing, to know what they need to work on. ..., and to, to have the motivation and to, to see the reasons why, to improve their own reading and writing. ..., so to have concrete goals that they're working toward for their own reading and writing, but to have the buy-in (Transcript 2, Page 10. Lines 27-32).

### **Ashley.**

And then, the skills that they need to really be successful, really has nothing to do with content. And it pretty much has to do with more life skills, organization. In fact, I just came from an appointment with a student and they needed a planner. And I don't know why they think they can memorize all this in their head.

.... They need to be ... They need motivation. .... That's a key thing to be ... And just to have, and be positive about learning, because I'm going to expose you to a lot of things you don't know. And if you have this thing in your head that's telling you something is hard, and I can't learn it; you're gonna really struggle. (Transcript 5, Page 5. Lines 110-113; Transcript 5, Page 6. Lines 115-118).

I identified other examples of student success from the participants' experience as undergraduate students. Although they struggled at some point in time during their undergraduate experience, these educators conveyed that they overcame their obstacles as a result of identifying their purpose, possessing self-motivation, embracing engagement and accessing support from individuals or services from the institution.

### **At-Risk Behaviors**

The participants represented at-risk characteristics in their undergraduate experiences. Collectively, all of the participants indicated that at some point throughout their undergraduate experience they struggled with their academics. One participant had indicated the first time he went to college he left because he felt as though he had no purpose; he didn't know the reason he was in college. Other examples of at-risk characteristics shared by the participants entailed struggling in math and lacking in

motivation and college readiness, which included an unawareness of college expectations, resources, and support services.

**Dorothy.**

Students like either dropping out... withdrawing from class, or just not showing up anymore. ..., not doing well in class. ..., you know, in developmental education, ..., these are students that are not as well prepared or ready for college as they should be, so... they need to be pretty much on target from the beginning. And... it's very easy for them to kinda slip through the cracks if, ..., I'm not aware of what they're doing from the start (**Transcript 3, Page 3. Lines 25--30**).

**Cole.**

“..., well, a student's not succeeding, students struggling, ..., no consistency between struggling ... Stuff like that, like, very individualized, like, students do better with certain things” (Transcript 3, Page 4. Lines 25--30).

The participants further explained that their students who began to display at-risk behaviors demonstrated problems in time management, incomplete assignments, test-taking, and study skills.

**Personal Connection**

Another theme that surfaced was personal connection, which is a construct of empathy (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). As noted in Chapter Two, empathy comprises learning about individuals by evaluating what they say, do, think, and feel (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). After reviewing all faculty responses from journals and interviews, 100% of the participants stated that they personally connected with their students, especially when they were implementing their intervention. They either conversed with their students informally or created a set time to meet with their students. Faculty explained that these conversations with students consisted of either summative feedback, problem-solving, a

personal issue that may be preventing them from completing the class successfully or partnering on resolving their at-risk behaviors by creating some plan of action such as a study plan. From their responses, personal connection goes beyond student-faculty interaction.

**Claire.**

I think they're crucial. I think they're so, so, so important, because you get halfway through a class, it's too late. . . ., six weeks in even, it's a little late to be saying to a student "Hey, you, you really, really, really need to do an about-face to make it through this class". Why not the second week? . . ., and to have some kind of personal connection with the student makes it all the more effective too. To have that personal connection, because you're teaching the whole student. You're not just teaching math. You're not just teaching English. You're teaching, . . ., the whole student, the whole person. . . ., and I fully believe that (Transcript 2, Page 5. Lines 21-24).

Personal connection is not limited to working on activities that are with course-related or non-course related, prompt feedback, receiving prompt feedback from instructors or discussing grades or course-related assignments. Based on the participants' responses, approximately two of the five participants noted that they spoke to students about their personal issues that may hinder their completion of their class. Furthermore, each participant personally connected to their students when disseminating an intervention such as a study plan or advising.

**Instructional Strategies**

All of the participants indicated that they used some form of instructional strategy to identify struggling students or students who may be developing at-risk tendencies. One of the instructional strategies consisted of an assessment that two of the five participants implemented. One of the professors, however, assigned mid-semester reflection to continue to monitor their progress in class in addition to the assessment. Another

instructional strategy utilized by two other participants contained an observation of students' behaviors. One faculty member mentioned that they noticed some students were not completing homework assignments.

**Dorothy.**

My early alert strategy involves keen observation of any potential problem behaviors or performance including grades, preparation with materials, assignment completion, attendance, demeanor in class, participation, and any other signs that might indicate a current or future problem. After identifying students, I casually meet with them to discuss the problem area and express my willingness to help them get on track and succeed in the course (Reflection Journal-During 3, Page 1. Lines 11-15).

**Cole.**

Shortly before the first essay was due. Certain behaviors, such as not having completed readings or not having drafts ready for peer review were indicators. This would be around three weeks into the class.

I addressed students individually, and we collaborated on strategies to help them navigate their individual challenges.

I engaged in whatever manner was most comfortable and effective for each student. I let them set the level of interaction so as not to feel intrusive (Reflection Journal-During 4, Page 1. Lines 13-15; 18-19; 26-27).

Another participant indicated she not only noticed missing assignments but also reviewed student grades along with student engagement in the classroom. The fifth professor had an amalgam of instructional strategies as well, which consisted of students responding to the instructor's letter, diagnostic tests, and an individual conference with the students to better know each student.

**Claire.**

After implementing the letter, individual conference, and goal setting, I was able to bring in specific readings that the two students who were reticent/struggling were personally interested in. I was also able to personally connect to students' goals and to make the learning more personally meaningful through knowing their career goals and their reasons for wanting to succeed in the class and in college (Reflection Journal-During 2, Page 1. Lines 28-32).

Participants applied these instructional strategies to help determine or identify at-risk behaviors early on in the semester. Furthermore, three out of the five participants demonstrated an intentionality towards applying these strategies early on in the semester.

### **Intentionality**

After reviewing each participant's early alert system and intervention after implementation reflection, a major theme that surfaced was intentionality. Participants shared a state of awareness that resulted in either purposefully integrating more activities or changing their approach to their practice or encounters with others, especially when they are disseminating their early alert strategy and intervention. According to Epstein (2007), intentional teaching "is planful, thoughtful, and purposeful. Intentional teachers use their knowledge, judgment, and expertise to organize learning experiences for children; when an unplanned situation arises (as it always does), they can recognize a teaching opportunity and take advantage of it, too" (p.2). Although intentional teaching is connected to child development, participants in this study, such as Cole, indicated that they would be more mindful and add more approaches or activities to their practice.

#### **Cole.**

Adding more informal touchstone points that allow for immediate attention ... Prevention is better than treatment approach. I have become more mindful of student behaviors and identifying potential roadblocks" (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 31-32; 49).

For example, two of the five faculty noted that their initial approach was not realistic. One of the professors explained there was no linear approach or a set plan when implementing an early alert plan. These educators found a rigid structure was ineffective.

## **Perspective Transformation**

The participants experienced a perspective transformation as they engaged in implementing and refining their early alert strategies and intervention. According to the responses from all of the participants, they expressed a change in their practice, mindset, or approach to early alert strategies and intervention, which is a representation of transformative learning. Transformative learning is defined as a theory that entails individuals' change in perception due to their engagement in critical reflection, discourse, active learning activities and questioning (King, 2004; Taylor & Cranton, 2012). The participants were able to see not only the need, but later realized how to apply it successfully or how it provided a new meaning to their roles as professors. First, the participants indicated they learned that their initial plan was unsustainable or they had to make slight changes or tweaks to their plan. All in all, participants indicated iterations of their plan were made.

### **Cole.**

Adding more informal touchstone points that allow for immediate attention ... Prevention is better than treatment approach. I have become more mindful of student behaviors and identifying potential roadblocks" (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 31-32; 49).

### **Claire.**

In the future, I am going to make the individual conferences thirty minutes instead of twenty. For some students, we only needed fifteen minutes, but for the students who needed longer, I want to have the length of time set aside (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1.Lines 18-22; 27-29).

### **Martin.**

During my initial implementation, my positive outcomes weren't as great as I would expect because this was my 1st attempt at implementing the C.A.R.E. program. My success rate was slightly under 50%. After, that initial implementation, I was able to make minor tweaks based on the individual student(s) behavior to improve my success rate with student(s) study habits and

passing the course. Ultimately, increasing both their creative and critical thinking was my goal (Reflection Journal-After 1, Page 1. Lines 29-34).

**Ashley.**

I gave a pre-survey and then an intervention. I planned to give a post-survey but felt the Skype conference covered all that was needed. I tried to use a Blackboard survey but then after it was completed, I realized these surveys were anonymous and not what I needed for analysis. I now use a google form instead that will create a spreadsheet.

I make slight changes to the intervention information as I learn more about what my students do not know about their career choice (Reflection Journal-After 5, Page Lines 22-25; 27-29).

**Dorothy.**

I originally had a more rigid plan where students had to fill out a questionnaire indicating their concerns and problem areas before meeting with me during a scheduled time in my office. We then set up a time for a follow-up meeting. I found over time that this was time-consuming and cumbersome, so I have reverted to a more flexible 'just-in-time' plan to address problems as they arise before, during or after class (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 2. Lines 39-45).

Second, four out of the five participants learned the importance of their role as educators. One participant noted that he became more mindful and intentional when teaching his students, especially identifying potential roadblocks. Furthermore, he became more responsive to students' issues and feelings. Another faculty member's role transformed into an education advisor in addition to teaching education courses.

**Dorothy.**

Teaching is more than just delivering discipline content. I am always reminded that my role is as much to be a 'cheerleader' and advocate for students as it is to assist in their learning. When students recognize that I am 'on their side' and that I am willing to work with them, they relax and open up to listen to my suggestions and advice (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 3.Lines 60-63).

**Claire.**

I have learned that in a usual class that I do not get to know my students all that well; whereas, with this early alert strategy I was able to really get to know my students very fast in a very genuine way and to open up a two-way line of



communication that enabled a deeper level of learning to take place (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1. Lines 34-37).

In addition to intentionality, faculty not only shared their awareness, but it was also coupled with what they have learned and changed their practice. First, 100% of the participants indicated they learned that their initial plan was unsustainable or they had to make slight changes or tweaks to their plan. All in all, participants indicated that they made iterations of their plan. Second, 80% of faculty learned the importance of their role as educators. One participant noted that he became more mindful and intentional when teaching his students specifically identifying potential roadblocks. Furthermore, he became more responsive to students' issues and feelings. Another faculty member's role transformed into an education advisor in addition to teaching education courses.

### **High-impact Practices**

According to the CCCSE (2014), there are 13 high-impact educational practices to help improve student success and engagement. Some of these practices include familiarizing students to college resources and services, developing individual goals, teaching skills and strategies, such as time management, test-taking and study skills, real-life application to content, and one-on-one academic assistance. After analyzing participant's responses regarding their intervention, several sub-themes emerged such as college readiness, guidance and support, and resources.

### **Dorothy.**

I have described the early interventions in my previous reflection. As the semester progressed, I continued to monitor student progress and pay particular attention to students who appeared to be disengaged in the class. Two students in particular (one in each class) sat in the back row, did not participate in discussions, or engage with other members of the class. I made a point of speaking with each of

these students during a workshop time when the class was working on an essay assignment.

When I spoke with the first student, he expressed that he didn't know what he was doing here (Valencia), saying that he did not belong. He said he knew who his advisor was when I asked him and I encouraged him to speak to his advisor, reminding him that he was selected for the Bridges program because others felt that he was a good candidate and that it was both an honor and awesome opportunity that very few students received. When I saw him the following week, I asked if he had seen his advisor and he replied that he had and that he was ready to continue. The other student said he was going through a tough family situation and that he would be dropping out of Valencia after the summer term and getting an apartment and full-time job for himself and his sister. I again asked if he knew his advisor and if he would speak with the advisor before making any final decision to withdraw, losing his full scholarship to Valencia. It happened that my Dean was doing a classroom evaluation and overheard the conversation. After class she asked me to share the student's name so that she could follow up with the student and his advisor/Bridges coordinator.

As a result of these interactions with these two students, they were both able to successfully complete the course and both indicated that they planned to continue (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 1. Lines 1-11; 14-26; 28-29.)

These sub-themes all connect to the high impact practices to improve student success and engagement that the participants applied to intervention. Mutually, all of the participants described how their mindset and role altered as a result of their early alert and intervention.

**Ashley.**

And then, I started learning, wait a minute, we don't even have an education advisor, and they're going to this advisor and that advisor; or they're not going at all (Transcript 5, Page 6. Lines 23-25; Transcript 5, Page 7. Lines 1, 2 4-8, 9-13). First, two of the five participants explained they have taken on a supportive role

in addition to teaching their content. For example, one is now an education advisor and the other considers herself to be a cheerleader and supporter of her students.

## **Value**

Another significant theme was valued. During the face-to-face interview, I asked participants to share anything they would like to add about early alert and intervention. According to their responses, all participants explained they were able to see value in early alert and intervention. One participant noted that it should be mandatory for all incoming faculty who are in the tenure-earning process.

### **Martin.**

..., I would say that it's definitely a great program. It's something that I really think every professor should, ..., somehow, ..., see the need, if, even if we could actually make a mini-course of care, and they don't have to go through the entire one, or we make it a requirement as part the, ..., ILA, ..., TLA. ..., and I don't know if it is part of the TLA, but I think it's something that, ..., should be considered, because again, when you sign on and you become tenure, you should have this, ..., you're taking, going for the tenure, basically, you've already considered that this is your passion, that you want to teach (Transcript 1, Page 4. Lines 20-30).

Another professor indicated liking having the autonomy to independently create early alert and intervention that suited past experiences with students. An additional valuable component in early alert and intervention consisted of intentionally identifying struggling students early on in the semester, such as the first or second week of class. For example, one of the participants noted, on two separate occasions during her summer implementation, she was able to assist to students who conveyed to her that they were going to withdraw from class. She was able to connect them to advisors who provided them with resources. When she followed up with the two students, they conveyed to her that they were going to continue with their education.

To demonstrate the analysis of the conceptual framework, Tables 12 to 14 displayed the alignment of the conceptual framework, research questions, and the phrases identified in the interviews and journals. The Transformative Learning Phrases in Data exhibits sample responses from the participants.

Table 12: Analysis Using Conceptual Framework: Research Question 1

Research Question	Conceptual Framework	Data Analyzed for Research	Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data
<p>RQ1. Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences?</p>	<p>Phase 1: Creating an Activating Event</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p><i>Theme- At-Risk Behaviors:</i> Ashley Students did not have <i>access</i> <i>Don't even have an education advisor</i> Dorothy Students <i>not doing well</i> Students like either <i>dropping out</i> Students that are <i>not as well prepared or ready for college</i> <i>Slip through the cracks</i> Help with <i>retention and persistence</i> Cole Student's <i>not succeeding</i> <i>No consistency</i> <i>Lacked college readiness</i> <i>Performed poorly in class</i></p>
	<p>Phase 2: Articulating Assumptions</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p><i>Theme-Perspective Transformation:</i>  Ashley We make assumptions, like, we kind of know when a student is struggling and, kind of, maybe, why; but until we really ... really get the research and get the data, it confirmed my hunches. And there were a couple more. So, so, <i>I made those assumptions</i>; and then, with my care plan, the data that I had to start collecting was ... I did a survey (Transcript 5, Page 8. Lines 12-14; Page 9. Lines 1-7; 9-11).</p>

Research Question	Conceptual Framework	Data Analyzed for Research	Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data
	Phase 4: Openness to Alternatives	Interview	<p><i>Theme - High Impact Practices:</i></p> <p>Dorothy            “I continued to <i>monitor student progress</i> ...I encouraged him to <i>speak to his advisor</i> (First student).I again asked if he knew his advisor and if he would speak with the advisor before making any final decision to withdraw...</p> <p>Ashley            “And then, I started learning, wait a minute, <i>we don't even have an education advisor,...</i>”</p>

Table 13: Analysis Using Conceptual Framework: Research Question 2

Research Question	Conceptual Framework	Data Analyzed for Research	Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data
<p>RQ2. While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred?</p>	<p>Phase 3: Critical Reflection</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p><i>Theme –Values:</i>            Martin            I would say that it's <i>definitely a great program</i>.            ... It should be that extension of it...            (Transcript 1, Page 4. Lines 20-30).</p>
	<p>Phase 3: Critical Reflection</p>	<p>Reflection Journal- After</p>	<p><i>Theme- Intentionality:</i>            Cole  <i>Adding more informal touchstone points that allow for immediate attention ... I have become more mindful of student behaviors and identifying potential roadblocks”</i> (Reflection Journal-After 4, Page 1. Lines 31-32; 49).</p> <p><i>Theme-Perspective Transformation:</i>            Claire            I have <i>learned</i> that in a usual class that I do not get to know my students all that well; whereas, <i>with this early alert strategy I was able to really get to know my students ...to open up a two-way line of communication ...</i>            (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1. Lines 34-37).</p>
	<p>Phase 4: Openness to Alternatives</p>	<p>Reflection Journal- During</p>	<p><i>Theme- Instructional Strategies/Personal Connection:</i>             Claire            After implementing <i>the letter, individual conference, and</i></p>

Research Question	Conceptual Framework	Data Analyzed for Research	Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data
			<p><i>goal setting</i>, I was able to bring in specific readings ... personally interested in. I was also able to <i>personally connect to students' goals</i> and to make the <i>learning more personally meaningful</i> ... to succeed in the class and in college (Reflection Journal-During 2, Page 1. Lines 28-32).</p>
	<p>Phase 5: Constructing Knowledge: Discourse, Evidence and Exploration</p>	<p>Reflection Journal-During</p>	<p><i>Theme- High Impact Practices/ Instructional Strategies:</i></p> <p>Ashley The strategy had 4 parts: 1] <i>pre-survey</i> that asked students about their knowledge of their education requirements ... knew who their advisor may be. 2] an <i>intervention</i> that gives students <i>resources</i> to answer the survey questions 3] give <i>survey</i> again after <i>intervention</i> 4] <i>discuss survey</i> results via <i>Skype group conferences</i> (Reflection Journal-During 5, Page 1.Lines 10-16).</p>



Table 14: Analysis Using Conceptual Framework: Research Question 3

Research Questions	Conceptual Framework	Data Analyzed for Research	Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data
<p>RQ3. If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results?</p>	<p>Phase 6: Revising Assumptions and Perspectives</p> <p>Phase 7: Acting on Revisions</p>	<p>Reflection Journal- After</p>	<p><i>Theme- Intentionality:</i> Dorothy ...I can <i>influence their work</i> habits, ability to manage their time, and their knowledge of college resources (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 1. Lines 46-52).</p> <p><i>Theme- High Impact Practices:</i> Claire ...going to make the <i>individual conferences thirty minutes</i> instead of twenty. For some students, we only needed fifteen minutes, but for the <i>students who needed longer, I want to have the length of time set aside</i> (Reflection Journal-After 2, Page 1.Lines 18-22; 27-29)</p> <p><i>Theme- Value:</i> Ashley Students were <i>very thankful</i> that I took <i>the time to address these issues...</i> (Reflection Journal-After 5, Page 1. Lines 4-8).</p> <p><i>Theme -Perspective Transformation:</i> Martin During my <i>initial implementation</i>, my positive outcomes weren't as great ...I was able to <i>make minor tweaks based on the individual student(s)</i></p>

Research Questions	Conceptual Framework	Data Analyzed for Research	Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data
			<p><i>behavior</i> to improve my success rate with student(s) study habits and passing the course. Ultimately, increasing both their creative and critical thinking was my goal(Reflection Journal-After 1, Page 1. Lines 29-34; 39-41).</p>
	Phase 4: Openness to Alternatives	Reflection Journal-During	<p><i>Theme- Instructional Strategies:</i> Dorothy <i>My early alert strategy involves keen observation ... grades, preparation with materials, assignment completion, attendance,... I casually meet with them to discuss the problem area ...to help them get on track and succeed ...</i> (Reflection Journal-During 3, Page 1.Lines 11-15).</p>
	Phase 5: Discourse, Evidence and Exploration	Interview	<p><i>Theme- Personal Connection:</i> Claire I think they're crucial,... to have some kind of <i>personal connection</i> with the student makes it all the more effective too. To have that <i>personal connection</i>, because you're <i>teaching the whole student... You're teaching, ..., the whole student, the whole person. ...</i> (Transcript 2, Page 5. Lines 21-24).</p> <p><i>Theme-High Impact Practices</i> Ashley</p>

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Conceptual Framework</b>	<b>Data Analyzed for Research</b>	<b>Transformative Learning Phrases Identified in Data</b>
			<p>...I started learning, ..., <i>we don't even have an education advisor</i>, and they're going to this advisor and that advisor; or they're not going at all (Transcript 5, Page 6. Lines 23-25; Transcript 5, Page 7. Lines 1, 2 4-8, 9-13).</p>

### Summary

The above analysis delineated each research question, conceptual framework, data collection, and themes associated with the participants' quotes. Several themes emerged from the data collection. Because I associated participants' responses with the corresponding literature in Chapter Two along with current best practices to enhance student engagement and success, I clustered themes and sub-themes to provide a consistent representation of the study. In summary, the themes represented high-impact practices, instructional strategies, student success, perspective transformation, value, at-risk behavior, personal connection, and intentionality. In Chapter Six, I explained each emergent theme and support from the participants or literature relative the significant statements.

## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Overview

The goal of this research study was to analyze faculty perspectives and participation through the use of the conceptual framework, transformative learning. Furthermore, participants applied an early alert strategy and intervention that they designed for their course. This study of Valencia College faculty, who completed the professional development course, examined their experiences and perspectives while implementing their early alert strategy and intervention for their classes. Typically, early alert systems entail a predictive analysis technology tool (Lynch-Holmes et al., n.d.), such as Civitas, or faculty alerting an advisor about a struggling student. However, in this study, I examined each faculty's approach to early alert and intervention when using critical reflection, and revisiting their perception or approach to determine if there was a change in their practice, overall mindset, or their students' success. Additionally, I focused on identifying possible best practices, tools, and resources professional development might consider when facilitating an early alert strategy and intervention course. I used participants' responses and the data collection to determine if transformative learning occurred during implementation of their early alert strategy and intervention.

In this study, there were three main research questions which focused on faculty explaining their experiences with their early alert system and intervention plan:

**RQ1.** Did faculty have experiences (personal, professional, life, or other) which assisted in realizing and responding to the need to develop an early alert system and

intervention for their course at a state college? If faculty had such experiences realizing or responding to the need for an early alert system and intervention, what was the nature of those experiences?

**RQ2.** While faculty implemented an early alert system for their courses and engaged in reflective processes, what, if any, changes and results occurred?

**RQ3.** If changes were experienced by faculty members regarding their teaching practice or perspective, how did they describe those changes? If there were other changes among faculty, what were the nature of those results?

As a result of analyzing faculty interviews and using During and After Implementation Journals regarding their experiences with early alert and intervention, several major themes emerged. I revealed the following themes in this study: 1) at-risk behaviors, 2) high-impact practices, 3) intentionality, 4) personal connection, 5) perspective transformation, 6) value, 7) student success, and 8) instructional strategies. After identifying keywords or phrases that appeared in each participant's responses and tabulating the word count, I was able to identify the frequency number per theme. Keywords relating to at-risk behaviors consisted of 32-word counts. As for perspective transformation, the word count entailed 27 times in faculty's responses. High impact practices, student success, and values appeared 26 times. Keywords or phrases of personal connection was identified 25 counts. Although two of the five participants noted that they would be mindful or purposeful in their approach to early alert and engagement with students, each participant provided specific approaches, strategies or activities which demonstrated their intentionality on improving student success in the courses. In regards to instructional strategies, participants mentioned words related to engaging with students

20 times. In Chapter Six, I described the relationship of the conceptual framework and the findings of the study. She presents the implications and recommendations for future research, along with the overall summary.

### Faculty Designed Early Alert Strategy and Intervention

Faculty members are in close contact with students, and they can observe students who are becoming disengaged in the classroom and who are struggling in their academics. As mentioned earlier, early alert systems have traditionally been a form of a technology-enhanced predictive analysis tool coupled with advisors being alerted by this early alert system so that they can reach out to students (Lynch-Holmes et al., n.d.). Therefore, if faculty become more invested and lead the development of early alert and intervention, researchers show it may increase student engagement and reduce student attrition (Fletcher, 2013). In order for adult educators, such as faculty, to see the value, invest time, and lead the development of early alert strategies and intervention in their practice, they must be placed in an environment or provided an opportunity that promotes questioning and critical reflection such engaging activities have also been found to encourage transformative learning (Cranton, 2006; King, 2004). In the literature, Lawler and King (2000) indicated that there are several components to remember when encouraging a perspective transformation. It is necessary to be actively engaged, provide opportunities for active participation, support collaboration inquiry, offer real-life application, and provide instructors with an opportunity to be successful.

Faculty often utilize specific learning strategies to help deepen student learning and engagement. As a result, faculty who design early alert strategies for their specific

course and intervene with struggling students may be able to contribute to greater student support, engagement, and persistence (Kuh et al., 2011).

For these reasons, this study highlighted Valencia College's C.A.R.E. program, which focuses on faculty-designed early alert strategy and intervention plans.

Participants, who implemented their early alert strategy and intervention plan during the 2017 Summer B session, shared their experiences and changes they identified during their implementation.

In the following section, I addressed Cranton's seven revised facets of Mezirow's ten phases of transformative learning. Cranton (2002) noted that these phases are no longer viewed as steps or as a linear process. However, the seven facets of transformative learning should be utilized as an approach to encourage transformative learning, especially in a learning environment (Cranton, 2002).

### Cranton's Seven Facets of Transformative Learning

Creating an activating event may encourage transformative learning so that adult learners, such as faculty, can gain a deeper level of meaning from their educational or personal experience (Cranton, 2002; Magolda, 1992). In this study's context, faculty who are learning and later implementing their early alert and intervention may value and devote time in successfully integrating their plan and become more intentional with their approach in improving student success.

### **Creating an Activating Event**

Overall, all of the participants had experienced a struggle or demonstrated at-risk behaviors as an undergraduate student, and expressed that they had experienced some

form of early alert system that led them to believe a similar system would be effective in the classroom. One participant provided an automotive example of a similar system. Based on personal experiences, Ashley noted that when a vehicle indicates a problematic issue, it warns the driver to seek a technician soon for service. Cole, Dorothy, and Claire also commented on their personal experience using early alert system and hence saw the value in integrating early alert systems in the classroom. The participants' experience is consistent with the premise that if individuals are offered an opportunity to reflect on meaningful connections with their engagement with others and society, then they can transform their learning (Zajonc, 2006). Next, I asked participants to explain what brought them to realize that they needed to implement an early alert system in their course. Collectively, the participating faculty desired to see their students succeed in their courses and beyond their class, as well.

Additionally, in reference to creating an activating event, participants relayed that they initially assumed that the set plan that they created for their plan would apply to all of their students, but mutually, they realized they had to make changes to their plan. Each faculty member created a plan, but they never indicated that they met with their students prior to creating their early alert strategy and intervention plan. However, during their implementation, they conversed with their students and had to modify their intervention accordingly. Each participant engaged in effective discourse by meeting with their students formally and informally, either during a scheduled meeting or spontaneously. If faculty desire to design an effective plan for their students, it is important to possess empathy and to have empathy, it is necessary to communicate with them. As noted by IDEO, when designing a product, or in this case a plan for students, it is necessary to



infuse a human-centered approach through the use of empathy (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). When using empathy, faculty should collect data, such as communication observation, emotions, and actions, from students (Kelley & Kelley, 2013).

During the faculty development course for early alert strategy and intervention, faculty created their plans using their assumptions or past experiences. As a result of discourse, faculty conveyed that they did not keep the same plan “as is.” They either made minor or major modifications in their approach to engaging with students regarding their early alert strategy or intervention. Kelley and Kelley (2013) explained that when there is a deeper engagement between the designer and the designee; the designer will have a better grasp of how to assist the consumer and in this case, students. Figure 7 displays an empathy map, adapted by IDEO that captures each participant’s interaction with their students during their implementation. I asked participants to share the at-risk behaviors their students began to display in class. The empathy map captures students’ thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and comments during faculty’s engagement with their students.

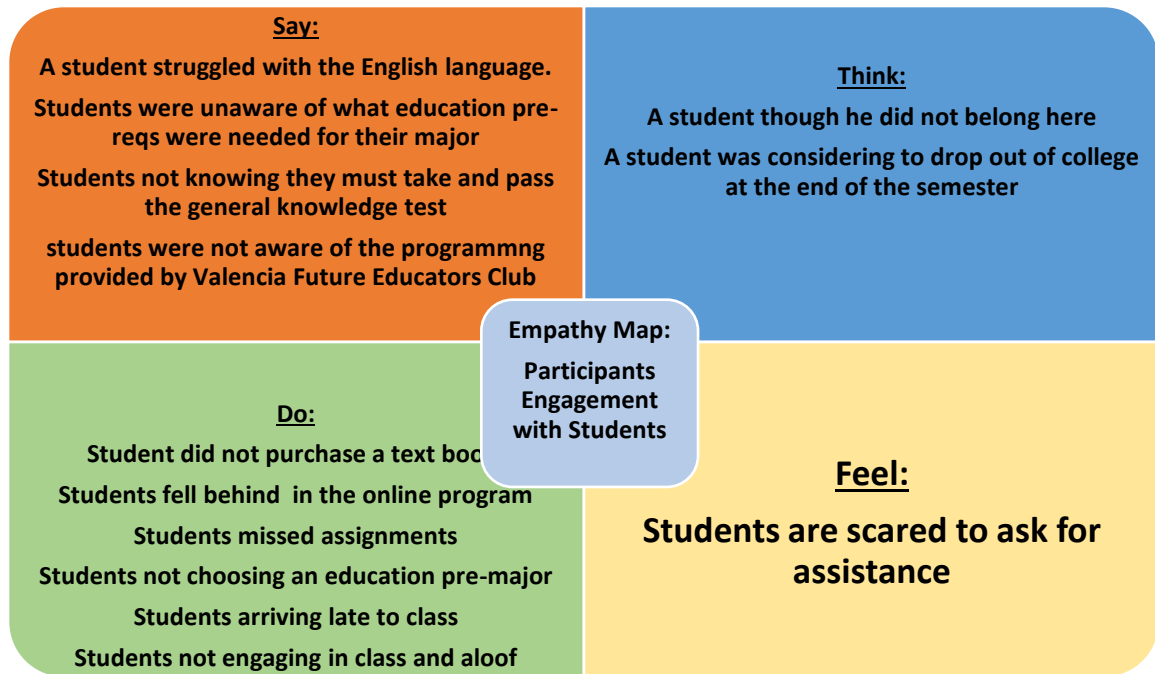


Figure 7: Empathy Map. What, if any, were the at-risk behaviors your students began to display in class?

Adapted from IDEO Model (Kelley & Kelley, 2013)

### Articulating Assumptions

As noted in Chapter Two, articulating assumptions is when an individual's experience can reveal an underlying belief through the use of activities such as questioning or discourse with others, which triggers individuals to share their thoughts (Cranton, 2002; 2006). Initially, the purpose of using this strategy for this study was to determine if faculty would draw upon their own personal, professional or life experience as the impetus for conducting an early strategy and implementation. Faculty articulated their assumptions that their initial thought was to implement a plan they had surmised to be effective or to address their students' issues. Faculty desired to address at-risk behaviors, advising, college readiness, and to improve student success using a systematic process. However, based on their professional experience, after their engagement with

students or collection of data from their students, they realized that they had to make adjustments depending on each student's problem.

### **Critical Reflection**

Typically, faculty who have completed the early alert strategy and implementation course were not tasked with reflecting on their practice or implementation using a transformative learning framework, and as a result, this study was designed to allow faculty to critically reflect on their practice and themselves in addition to articulating their assumptions (Cranton, 2002; King, 2004). During this study, faculty reflected and shared their approach, changes or outcomes, and lessons learned. As a result of their reflection, faculty were able to disclose the following: intentionality, value, failures, changes, connection with students and the use of high impact practices. In this study, participants indicated that reflection on their practice enhanced or modified their pedagogical approach (Manrique & Abchi, 2015, Schön, 1983).

### **Openness to Alternatives**

Faculty displayed an openness to alternatives when they exposed themselves to various perspectives such as their colleagues and students (Cranton, 2002, 2006). In other words, the transformation may not occur if a person is not willing to be open or receptive to accepting other perspectives. However, as it relates to their students, the participants realized that they had to make adjustments to their early alert or their intervention following their engagement with students. Their engagement encompassed communicating with their students early on and throughout the semester and using formative and summative assessments and reflective activities (Angelo & Cross, 1993;

Kelley & Kelley, 2013; Kuh et al., 2011). Each faculty member indicated the need to make slight or significant modifications.

### **Engaging in Discourse**

Post implementation, faculty members expressed their perceptions about the experiences. Faculty members shared their values, awareness, and reactions as a result of engaging with students. Participants stated that as a result of their implementation, they valued the outcome of their plan. First, I offered them an opportunity to share anything, or their overall insights about early alert and intervention during the interview.

Participants shared that they believed early alert is crucial and important for all faculty to integrate into their practice because they can identify at-risk students early on in the semester. Secondly, participants also shared that there is no “one size fits all,” and that faculty are “teaching the whole student, the whole person” and that faculty need to genuinely care about their students.

### **Revisiting Assumptions and Acting on Revisions**

Participants had an opportunity to revisit their assumptions because as noted in their interviews, they enacted their plan more than once; after meeting and engaging with students, participants evaluated and modified their plans accordingly. One faculty member indicated his initial implementation was not successful because his success rate was under 50%. He made revisions to his plan by creating individualized interventions, which increased creative and critical thinking skills. Other participants articulated that they desired to have formal and informal touchpoints with students depending on what

they had observed in class. Finally, Ashley revisited her intervention strategy because initially, it was ineffective once she learned more about her students.

I gave a pre-survey and then an intervention. I planned to give a post-survey but felt the Skype conference covered all that was needed. I tried to use a Blackboard survey but then after it was completed, I realized these surveys were anonymous and not what I needed for analysis. I now use a google form instead that will create a spreadsheet.

I make slight changes to the intervention information as I learn more about what my students do not know about their career choice (Reflection Journal-After 5, Page Lines 22-25; 27-29).

Therefore, when faculty assessed and weighed the impact of their plan, they made the necessary changes to improve student success.

Figure 8 is a suggested revised model of Cranton's Seven Facets of Transformative Learning in comparison to Figure 2 in Chapter 1.

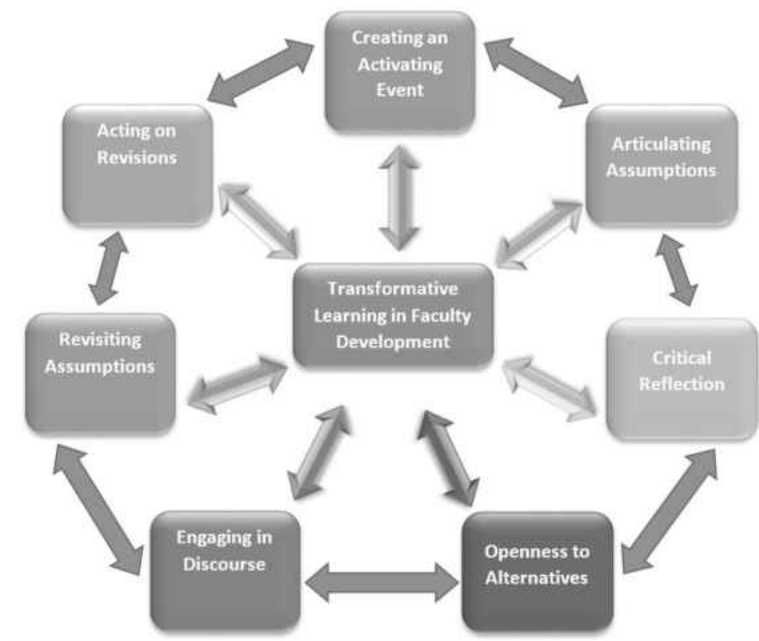


Figure 8: Revised Model of Cranton's Seven Facets of Transformative Learning As Applied to Early Alert Implementation

In summary, Cranton's (2002) seven facets of transformative learning were not distinct stages but interwoven based on the findings. In this study, the participants

experienced some of the components during and after the implementation of their early alert and intervention plan. Faculty drew upon their professional experiences and engagement with students when revising their assumptions or expressing the importance of using early alert strategies and interventions in their course. Therefore, the changes that occurred were based on the participants' interactions with their students while implementing their early alert and intervention or the process participants experienced while learning about early alert and intervention.

#### Limitations/ Delimitations

Initially, there were minimal delimitations in the study. This study was only limited to Valencia College faculty members who completed the early alert and intervention course, C.A.R.E. Furthermore, this study represented disciplines and to all faculty, adjuncts and full-time. However, due to the timing of the study, the limitations consisted of the following elements.

First, the sample size was limited to this study. When I first sought out to conduct the research, the intent was to select faculty from the summer session, which consisted of a Summer A and Summer B session. Because the IRB from the University of Central Florida and Valencia College approved the study after the start of Summer A, I was unable to invite all of the qualified summer faculty. Only the Summer B faculty members, who completed C.A.R.E., received an invitation to take part in the study.

The final limitation of this study entailed my positionality. As a facilitator, Faculty Fellow, C.A.R.E. team member, it was necessary for me to reveal my bias. At the start of my study, I disclosed her experience as a fellow, and her interactions with faculty, especially in faculty development. To ensure that her bias as a researcher did not impact

or influence the study, I utilized a multiple coder method to code data, which consisted of another researcher identifying the prominent themes that emerged from the data.

### Implications and Recommendations

#### **Recommendations**

Faculty-designed early alert strategies and intervention plans can impact student success if they are provided with the right methods, such as reflection and resources. In this study, faculty members provided their early alert strategy and intervention approach, experience, process, and feedback. Overall, there were prominent methods all of the participants applied to their plan is section. This study also focused on Cranton's modified tenets of transformative learning as a conceptual framework to help determine if there was a change in the participant's practice or mindset when using an early alert strategy and intervention. As a result of the above-mentioned objective of this study and its findings, this section provides the following recommendations when faculty are engaged in early alert strategies and intervention.

**Process.** When analyzing participants' experiences, it is important to consider an efficacious approach when faculty are developing and learning about early strategies and intervention. Depending on the discipline, students, or learning outcomes in the course, faculty must realize that there are different techniques when applying early alert strategies and intervention plans. In some cases, a specific procedure might be in place or a spontaneous method should also be considered.

More than half (60%) of the participants indicated that they used a systematic process or approach when implementing their plan. Participants intentionally identified

struggling students the first or second week of the semester. Three out of the five participants had a structured or rigid method for their early alert strategy and intervention, with specific surveys, assessments, or activities in place. Then faculty members would meet with their students and provide an intervention, followed by a follow-up or informal touch points. This strategy would allow faculty to gauge whether or not they needed to provide an alternative intervention.

Spontaneity or flexibility of faculty should also be considered. Faculty should be ready to think fast on their feet when a problem arises in class and should have a toolbox of early alert strategies and intervention tactics available. In this study, two of the five of the faculty members indicated that they encountered issues during class when they had to immediately reach out to students who were displaying signs of distress or disengagement. They quickly intervened and followed-up with their students after the intervention. On one occasion, a dean was present in the classroom, overheard the conversation between the professor and the student, and willingly provided additional support to ensure that the student received the necessary resources to complete the class successfully.

Finally, faculty should realize that they need to concentrate on the whole student, and there is no “one size fits all.” All of the participants closely engaged with their students to address the needs of those who were struggling. For learning to take place, faculty must be mindful of the needs of students they may have in their classes. One faculty member indicated, after meeting with her two students regarding their goals and problems with specific readings in class, she connected their goals to her lessons and “to make learning more personally meaningful through their career goals.”



**Faculty Development.** When teaching faculty how to create and implement early alert strategies and intervention for their discipline, there are several recommendations to consider.

First, a recommendation for faculty development, when offering a professional development course on developing and implementing an early alert strategy and intervention plan, is to consider explaining the reason for adopting this practice in their course (King, 2004). The participants indicated a turning point in learning about early alert was connected to personal and professional lives. Faculty, such as Ashley, need to know why they should adopt an activity or strategy in their course so that they can apply it into their practice.

**Ashley.** Okay. Well, I'll share with you. So, when ... Before I took the care destination track, ..., I was running out of care, I was running out of options to take for destinations. And care was the only one that I hadn't taken. So, when I first looked at care. I was like, "What is this? But it sounds interesting." The word care, okay. I still had ... Going two weeks into the course, I still could not figure out what the world discourse was about. So, that will be some feedback I give you later. So, I'm sitting in there and I'm going, "I teach technology." They're asking me to think about, you know, do they have problems with certain skills in Math. And I'm going ... You know, I really don't have those content skills; and so, the more I thought about it, I'm like, "Hey, wait a minute. They ... A lot of students, by the time they make it into my course, they are on their way out of Valencia." And I want to change that. I want them as a Freshman. So, that I can kind of get to know them. Get them on the right path. And then, I started learning, wait a minute, we don't even have an education advisor, and they're going to this advisor and that advisor; or they're not going at all (Transcript 5, Page 6. Lines 23-25; Transcript 5, Page 7. Lines 1, 2 4-8, 9-13).

All of the participants did have some form of early alert and intervention exposure in their personal or professional experience. Their experiences may show that this

approach is a common practice used on a daily basis, whether it may be from a doctor's office, credit card company, or even a car light indicator.

Secondly, faculty development should demonstrate methods in integrating best practices as it relates to early alert strategies and intervention. The participants indicated that they used surveys, active learning activities, one to one meetings, and observation as best practices to identify students early on in the semester.

Next, if faculty developer would like faculty to gain a deeper meaning and to avoid making assumptions about their students when designing early alert strategies and interventions for their classes, it is prudent to conduct transformative learning activities such as critical reflection, discourse with colleagues and students, and questioning (Cranton, 2002, 2006, Kelley & Kelley, 2013; King 2004). This practice was evident when participants indicated the types of engagement they conducted with their students such as active learning activities, formative assessments, and personal connection. Transformative learning activities will allow faculty an opportunity to think about their practice and how to employ their approach more mindfully and intentionally.

Another recommendation is to consider teaching faculty about the importance of empathy and personal connection. As noted by IDEO, if faculty want to design an effective plan for consumers or in this case, students, they need to know their students before issuing an intervention or an overall plan (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). Holistically, each participant stated that modifications to their interventions had to be made once they determined their student's needs. Another reason for embracing or encouraging the use of personal connection and empathy, participants needed to have ongoing discourse with their students to develop a better approach with using their plan and developing a better

understanding on how this engagement can impact their practice and purpose as a faculty member. Participants shared that they are more intentional and mindful of their practice. They also emphasized they are more devoted when it comes to their engagement with students and to their profession.

In reference to sustainability, faculty development should assist faculty in being thoughtful with their plan if they choose to use a structured process. Faculty must understand that some at-risk behaviors unexpectedly. Some participants in this study conveyed that their overall plans were not sustainable. It became overwhelming for them to sustain, which can prevent faculty from buying into early alert, as they are inundated with other responsibilities. Therefore, it would be prudent to help faculty in planning their early alert strategies approach.

**Institution.** Faculty who design their early alert strategy and intervention may not only need to incorporate high impact practices, such as 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, into their instruction, but they may also require support from support staff and services. Some of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills may entail life and career skills. It is necessary for students, especially adult learners, to be-self-directed and to demonstrate critical thinking (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, n.d.).

Support services can offer comprehensive support and retention programs to help address at-risk behaviors and to help improve student success (Kuh et al., 2011). Based on participants' feedback, four of the faculty noted that they used or had used support services, which are not limited to counselors and tutoring. Another support that may be required to assist faculty with their plan or intervention is support from administration,

such as the faculty's dean. As one participant mentioned in her journal, her dean willingly provided assistance to the struggling student in her class.

**Dorothy.**

When I spoke with the first student, he expressed that he didn't know what he was doing here (Valencia), saying that he did not belong. He said he knew who his advisor was when I asked him and I encouraged him to speak to his advisor, reminding him that he was selected for the Bridges program because others felt that he was a good candidate and that it was both an honor and awesome opportunity that very few students received. When I saw him the following week, I asked if he had seen his advisor and he replied that he had and that he was ready to continue. The other student said he was going through a tough family situation and that he would be dropping out of Valencia after the summer term and getting an apartment and full-time job for himself and his sister. I again asked if he knew his advisor and if he would speak with the advisor before making any final decision to withdraw, losing his full scholarship to Valencia. It happened that my Dean was doing a classroom evaluation and overheard the conversation. After class she asked me to share the student's name so that she could follow up with the student and his advisor/Bridges coordinator.

As a result of these interactions with these two students, they were both able to successfully complete the course and both indicated that they planned to continue (Reflection Journal-After 3, Page 1. Lines 14-26; 28-29).

According to Dorothy, because her dean provided support, in addition to her interaction with her students, both students were able to complete her course. This might be indicative of the importance of administration providing support to faculty and their early alert system and intervention plan.

As explained in Chapter Two, there are multiple modalities or programs of early alert system, which mainly incorporate a computerized reporting system or provides information to the advisor from faculty (Fletcher, 2013). Therefore, I recommended that the institution as a whole possess a culture and adopt early alert and intervention as a common practice. Fletcher (2013) revealed that administrators would be supportive in possessing an approach to improve student success through communication and other means to contact students. Furthermore, all faculty should be aware that campus

presidents or provosts are also in full support of faculty designed early alert and intervention.

### Implications for Future Research

This qualitative study was comprised of a document analysis of participants' experiences implementing their early alert strategies and intervention plan, and the subliminal infusion of transformative learning to help detect significant changes in their practice and professional approach.

Based on my recommendations, there are a few implications for future research. First, this study focused on faculty experiences with early alert and intervention. Faculty will have their perception of success when it comes to their courses. However, students may have a different viewpoint on success and if they felt their engagement with faculty was effective. Student engagement comes in different methods, as well. Therefore, it would be prudent for students to specifically share what assisted them throughout the semester to ensure that they are highlighting significant attributes of early alert strategies and intervention.

Next, Fletcher (2013) determined that faculty perspectives were minimal in literature pertaining to early alert systems. Administrators could benefit from collecting faculty perspectives on early alert. A larger sample size would provide more substantiative support as to the effectiveness of using a faculty-designed early alert strategy and intervention. If faculty share their approach about early alert and interventions used in the classroom, the more researchers can disseminate which early alert strategies and interventions, it might be of use to all faculty or specific disciplines. In the study, some faculty members explained that they used a systematic approach to

implement their early alert strategies and implementation plan, and some participants explained they used an informal approach. Those individuals indicated that often it is not a linear process, but a random observation. A larger sample may verify whether or not faculty should have a list of early alert strategies and interventions that may be effective when teaching classes on hand. Additionally, a few professors noted that they were unable to sustain their plans. A larger sample size could also speak to sustainability and which method might work best with a specific targeted student population. A final point to address when trying to capture faculty's feedback through reflection is to consider conducting a post-interview regarding their during and after implementation. The researcher can provide the faculty member with the guiding questions prior to the post-interview. At the time of the interview, the researcher should audio record their responses to allow more of a substantive reflective response regarding their implementation. My five participants had to submit their journals during the final week of the Summer B session. I noticed that their responses were brief or vague and it left me as the researcher wanting to know more about their implementation. As the researcher, I could have asked for more follow-up or responsive questions to gain more information about their implementation.

Finally, future research is necessary to define early alert strategies in comparison to an early alert system. Early alert system is prominent in research and has been clearly defined in the literature as a systematic or predictive analysis tool to identify struggling students or at-risk behaviors. Early alert strategies are different from early alert systems. Early alert strategies are similar to active learning strategies that faculty use to engage learners; there are strategies faculty are using to identify at-risk behaviors early on or

throughout the semester (Lynch-Holmes et al., n.d.). Moreover, researchers need to determine which intervention strategies faculty are using to address student's needs or issues.

### Researcher's Reflection

As a Faculty Fellow in faculty development and a professor, I have been able to engage with faculty in addition to engaging with students. Additionally, my role in early alert strategies and intervention has enabled me to possess a better understanding of faculty's approach to early alert. Throughout this research, I have reflected on the history and mission of community colleges and our role as educators.

My experiences led me to a more comprehensive understanding about community colleges providing open access to prospective students, and that it is crucial that we provide support to students. These prospective students enter with different levels of readiness. It made me reflect on an educator's role in a community college and how I can play a part in providing my students support.

Although I had a small sample size for my study, the conversations I had with these participants were very enlightening. Collectively, all of these individuals devote a significant amount of time to aid students and to be involved with Valencia College's efforts in improving student success and their experience. We all had something in common, which is our commitment to student learning. Our similarities of being committed to the college may speak to further research as well regarding the individuals, staff, and faculty, who are committed to enhancing student success. Furthermore, the majority of the participants possess a strong semblance of commitment to the mission of Valencia College. Therefore, the question that comes to mind is, why do we do what we

do? What makes us committed? We all struggled at some point in time in our personal and professional experience such as our undergraduate experience. Did those experiences influence or change our mindset to have the desire to help others like our students?

My final thought pertaining to my experience with my study is a comparison between with students possessing open access community college and with a nonathletic individual having open access to running. Being a runner who is affiliated with a running group provided me with a new perspective. I never knew that I was capable of running a marathon until I joined a running club in my neighborhood. This running club is filled with an ample amount of support and guidance from the coaches and the other runners. Throughout my training and during the marathon, I was provided with a tremendous amount of support. While running the marathon, my body and mindset were in such complete distress that I was going to give up. Luckily, my coach and my running partner provided me with a significant amount of support and guidance. They did not carry me to the finish line; I ran to it because of their support.

My marathon experience transformed my perception on crossing the finish line. Therefore, my experience makes me think of my students. My desire is for students to cross the finish line and if needed, with support. At some point and time, during their schooling, some students will be mentally or physically distressed. Community and state colleges should provide them with the same support my running group has given me. My experience running a marathon has offered me the drive and the endurance to complete my dissertation.

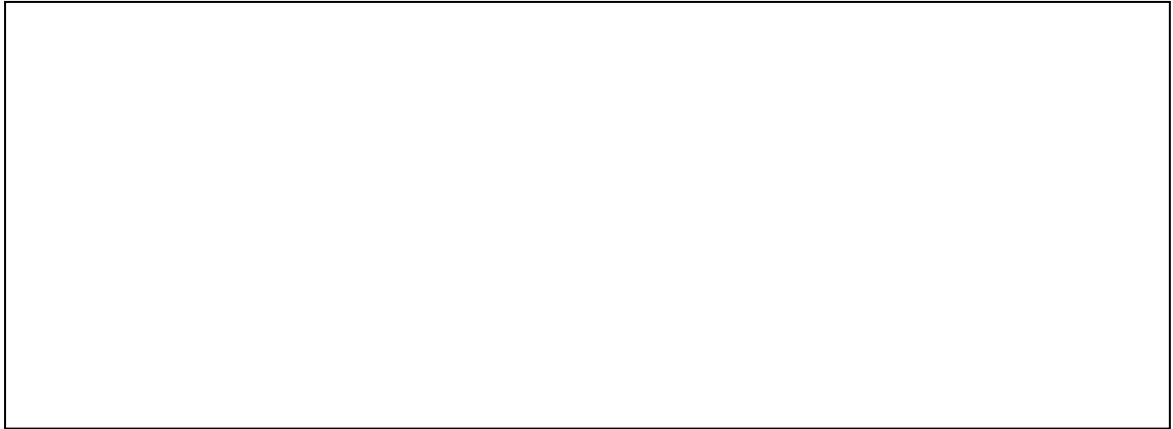
I once read an article by Engstrom and Tinto (2008) that was titled, "Access Without Support is Not Opportunity." Providing support, especially as it relates to our



students, is the key to success from all change agents, such as faculty, within an institution. Therefore, I hope this study helps to provide more insight into early alert and to remind faculty in community colleges that access without support is not opportunity.

APPENDIX A: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
INTERVIEW

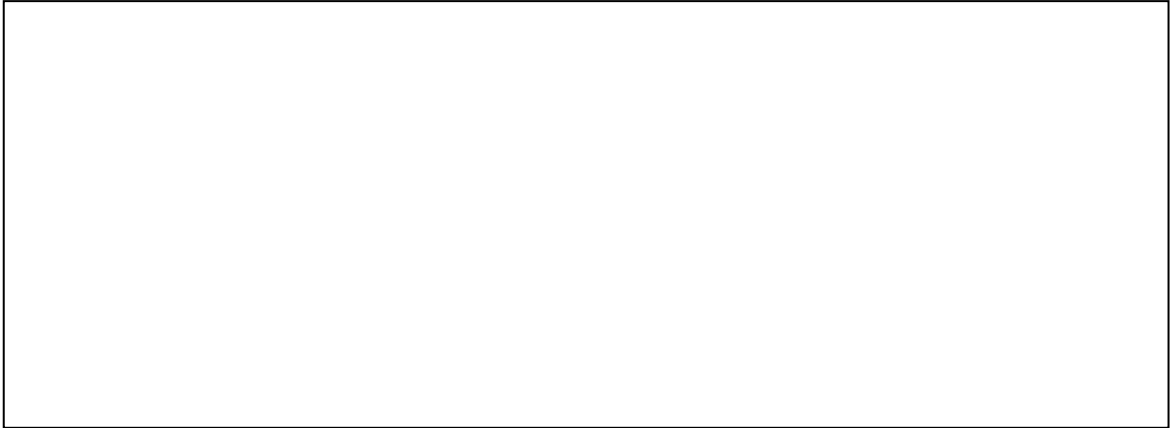
IQ1.1 Describe your experience as an undergraduate learner in college.



IQ1.2 What strategies or methods do you think are required in order for your students to be successful in your course?



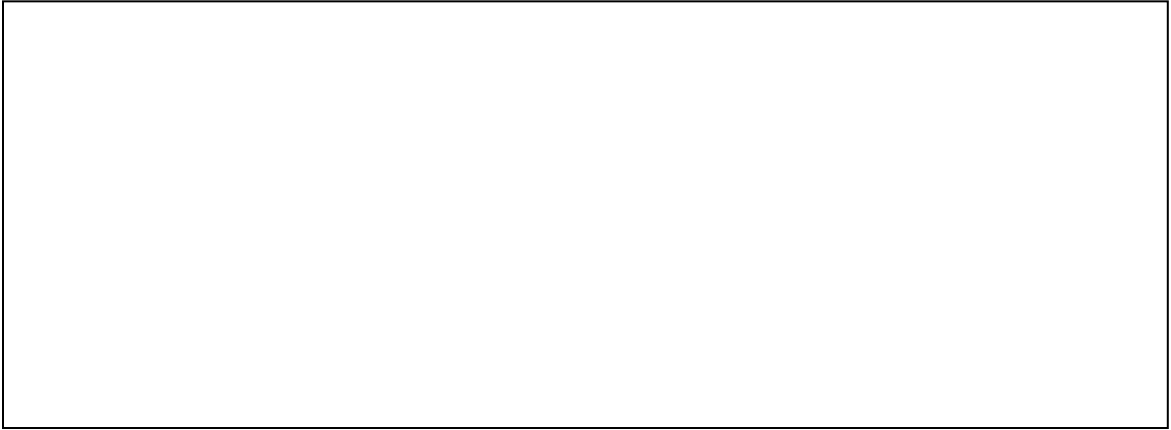
IQ1.3 Outside of academia, what other early alert systems have you experienced that led you to believe a similar system would be effective in a college classroom?



IQ1.4 What led you to realize that you needed to implement an early system in your course?



IQ1.5 Describe the process that led you to learn more about early alert intervention strategies. Whom did you consult? What resources did you seek out?



IQ1.6 At this time, is there anything else you would like to share about early alert systems?



IQ1.7 How many years have you been teaching at Valencia College? Where else have you taught?

IQ1.8 How many professional development courses have you completed prior to the early alert and intervention (C.A.R.E.) course?

IQ1.9 What is your highest level of education?

IQ1.10 What is your field of study?

IQ1.11 What classes are you teaching or have taught at Valencia College?

IQ1.12 What is your gender?

IQ1.13 What is your race?

IQ1.14 Will you be implementing your early alert system and intervention plan in an online or face-to-face class?

IQ1.15 Are you a full-time (how many months), part-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty member? If part-time, do you have an Associate Faculty Certification?

APPENDIX B: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
EMAIL INTRODUCTION

Date TBD  
Valencia College  
1800 Kirkman Rd,  
Orlando, FL 32832

Dear Valencia Faculty Member,

According to our records, you have completed the Continuous Assessment Responsive Engagement (C.A.R.E.) Strategies course. As you know, this course assists faculty in developing an early alert system for your students who may be struggling in your course/s. In order to improve the effectiveness of this course, including the theories and strategies, I would value your input for my dissertation while you are implementing your early alert plan and intervention. On (Date TBD), I will email another formal correspondence requesting for volunteers to be part of my research. I hope you would consider being part of this research. I look forward to hearing from you. Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to learning about your implementation and reading about your journey while implementing your early alert strategies and intervention if you decide to participate in my research.

Thank you very much for your attendance,

**Claudine Bentham**

Claudine Bentham, M.A  
Doctoral Candidate/ Higher Education and Policy Studies  
University of Central Florida  
College of Education and Human Performance  
[Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu)



APPENDIX C: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
FORMAL LETTER I

Date TBD  
Valencia College  
1800 Kirkman Rd,  
Orlando, FL 32832

Dear Valencia Faculty Member,

Many college students continue to struggle in their courses. Because you completed the C.A.R.E. professional development course, you have become more familiar with the need to help struggling students: Therefore, to help remedy students' at-risk behaviors, it is important that I acquire faculty's feedback in order to discern which strategies, procedures, and overall experiences are effective in their implementation.

I am writing to ask you for your assistance in sharing with me your experience, implementation and practice in hopes of producing an early alert student engagement system and intervention professional development course that will help faculty create a successful early alert system and intervention. My research will entail faculty's voluntary participation.

I am asking if you would be one of my volunteers during the next eight to sixteen weeks. Furthermore, I would like you know if you could kindly inform me of a convenient time to interview you so that you can share the impetus for participation in developing an early alert system and intervention. During and after your implementation, you will be asked to complete two reflective journals which include questions regarding your early alert system.

If you are interested, below is the link to the select preferable times to conduct the interview.

[Doodle](#)

[Reflection - Process](#)

[Reflection –After](#)

Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Thank you very much for your participation,

**Claudine Bentham**

Claudine Bentham, M.A

Doctoral Candidate/ Higher Education and Policy Studies

University of Central Florida

College of Education and Human Performance

[Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu)

APPENDIX D: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
FORMAL LETTER II

Date TBD  
Valencia College  
1800 Kirkman Rd,  
Orlando, FL 32832

Dear Valencia Faculty Member,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this study.  
Please note your availability to conduct the interview in Doodle by selecting the link below, Furthermore, during your implementation, you will need to complete two journals that will include reflective questions to be answered during and after implementation of your early alert system.

Doodle  
Reflection - Process  
Reflection –After

During this study, your responses will be voluntary and confidential. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to learning about your implementation and reading about your journey while implementing your early alert strategies and intervention.

Thank you for your support and participation,

**Claudine Bentham**  
Claudine Bentham, M.A  
Doctoral Candidate/ Higher Education and Policy Studies  
University of Central Florida  
College of Education and Human Performance  
[Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu)

APPENDIX E: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
FORMAL LETTER III

Date TBD  
Valencia College  
1800 Kirkman Rd,  
Orlando, FL 32832

Dear Valencia Faculty Member,

Last week, I mailed you a letter asking for you to consider participation in my research. As a reminder, I am asking if you would be one of my volunteers. I would appreciate it if you would select the best times you are available in Doodle to conduct an interview with me. Additionally, during your implementation, you will be asked to complete to reflective journals that are comprised of reflective questions that you need to answer during and after implementation of your early alert system.

Doodle  
Reflection - Process  
Reflection –After

Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. I look forward to learning about your implementation and reading about your journey while implementing your early alert strategies and intervention.

Thank you very much for your participation,

**Claudine Bentham**  
Claudine Bentham, M.A  
Doctoral Candidate/ Higher Education and Policy Studies  
University of Central Florida  
College of Education and Human Performance  
[Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:Cbentham@valenciacollege.edu)

APPENDIX F: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
REFLECTION JOURNAL- DURING IMPLEMENTATION

**Process**

Q2.1 When did you implement your initial early alert strategy that you developed during the Valencia College Faculty Development course?

Q2.2 What type of initial early alert strategy did you apply in your course?

Q2.3 What, if any, were the at-risk behaviors your students began to display in class this semester? How soon?

Q2.4 After implementing the early alert strategy, what actions did you use in your curriculum?

Q2. 5 How did you engage with your students after you implemented the strategy or strategies?

Q2. 6 Describe your engagement (e.g., email, phone call, and in-person appointment) with struggling students.



APPENDIX G: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
REFLECTION – AFTER IMPLEMENTATION

## **Content**

Q3.1 Now that you have implemented the early alert system, describe your interventions for your struggling students.

Q3.2 What positive outcomes led to implementing your early alert strategy and intervention in class?

Q3.3 What strategies were not effective in the implementation of your early alert strategy and intervention in class?

Q3.4 What changes in your early alert plan do you intend to make as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?

Q3.5 What have you learned about your students as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?

Q3.6 What have you learned about your teaching practice as a result of implementing the early alert strategy and intervention in class?

Q3.7 What have you learned about yourself as a teaching professional?

APPENDIX H: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
PERMISSION FROM INFOGRAPHIC

SEARCH TOOLS Sent Items - cbentham@valenciacollege.edu - Outlook

FILE HOME SEND / RECEIVE FOLDER VIEW ADD-INS SEARCH

Ignore Clean Up Delete Reply Reply Forward Meeting UCF Doctoral To Manager New Email Items Junk More All IM Done Team Email Reply & Delete Create New Move Rules OneNote Unread/Read Categorize Follow Up Search People Address Book Filter Email

ernesto X Current Folder

All Unread A to Z

Inbox 3113

Sent Items

Deleted Items 74

All Folders

Claudine Bentham

Ernesto J. Lu...  
RE: Citation Inform... Sun 9:04 AM  
Hello Ernesto

Claudine Ben...  
Claudine Bentham... Wed 1/18

'Kathy (Kathi...  
Claudine Bentham... Mon 1/16  
Hello Dr. King. It

Ernesto J. Lu...  
RE: Infographic Sun 1/15  
Thank you!

Ernesto J. Lu...  
RE: Infographic Sun 1/15  
Hello Ernesto

Showing recent results...  
[More](#)

Reply Reply All Forward IM

Sun 1/15/2017 8:20 PM

Claudine Bentham

RE: Infographic

To: Ernesto J. Luna

From: Ernesto J. Luna [mailto:ej-luna@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2017 8:06 PM  
To: Claudine Bentham <cbentham@valenciacollege.edu>  
Subject: Infographic

Hi Claudine,

I'm glad you are interest in the infographic. Of course you can use it as long as you give me the proper credit in the reference section of your dissertation. If possible! Let me know when it gets published or approved.

Best,

Ernesto J. Luna

On Jan 16, 2017, at 12:48 AM, cbentham@valenciacollege.edu <no-reply@weebly.com> wrote:

See more about Claudine Bentham.

Mail Calendar People Tasks ...

ITEMS: 5 REMINDERS: 1 ALL FOLDERS ARE UP TO DATE. UPDATING ADDRESS BOOK. CONNECTED TO: MICROSOFT EXCHANGE 100%

APPENDIX I: EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION:  
PERMISSION FROM INFOGRAPHIC



Reply Reply All Forward IM



Medina, Mia <mmedina@p21.org>

Claudine Bentham

10/17/2016

Re: Request to Infographic

You replied to this message on 10/17/2016 9:49 PM.

Hi Claudine,

Thank you for your inquiry. Our materials and educator resources are free for educational purposes. We are happy to grant you permission to use P21 materials, as long as no P21 materials and references are used to imply P21 endorsement. Please see our full terms of use here: <http://www.p21.org/our-work/use-of-p21-content> Additionally, could you please send us the title of your dissertation and university? We like to keep a record of dissertations.

Thank you for citing P21 and linking to our website - [www.P21.org](http://www.P21.org).

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Warm Regards,  
Mia Medina

Mia Medina  
Administrative Assistant  
Partnership for 21st Century Learning  
One Massachusetts Ave. NW Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20001  
Tel: 202-798-0755  
Twitter: [@P21Learning](https://twitter.com/P21Learning)  
[www.p21.org](http://www.p21.org)

On Sun, Oct 16, 2016 at 12:04 AM, Claudine Bentham <[cbentham@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:cbentham@valenciacollege.edu)> wrote:

Greetings,

See more about Medina, Mia.



sks ...

 Reply  Reply All  Forward  IM

Medina, Mia &lt;mmedina@p21.org&gt;

Claudine Bentham

10/17/2016

**Re: Request to Infographic** You replied to this message on 10/17/2016 9:49 PM.

Hi Claudine,

Thank you for your inquiry. Our materials and educator resources are free for educational purposes. We are happy to grant you permission to use P21 materials, as long as no P21 materials and references are used to imply P21 endorsement. Please see our full terms of use here: <http://www.p21.org/our-work/use-of-p21-content> Additionally, could you please send us the title of your dissertation and university? We like to keep a record of dissertations.

Thank you for citing P21 and linking to our website - [www.P21.org](http://www.P21.org).

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Warm Regards,  
Mia Medina

Mia Medina  
Administrative Assistant  
Partnership for 21st Century Learning  
One Massachusetts Ave. NW Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20001  
Tel: 202-798-0755  
Twitter: [@P21Learning](https://twitter.com/P21Learning)  
[www.p21.org](http://www.p21.org)

On Sun, Oct 16, 2016 at 12:04 AM, Claudine Bentham <[cbentham@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:cbentham@valenciacollege.edu)> wrote:

Greetings,

 See more about Medina, Mia.

sks ...

APPENDIX J: UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA APPROVAL OF  
EXEMPT OF HUMAN RESEARCH





University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
 Office of Research & Commercialization  
 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
 Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
 Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

**Approval of Exempt Human Research**

From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
 FWA00000351, IRB00001138  
 To: Claudine C Bentham  
 Date: June 09, 2017

Dear Researcher:

On 06/09/2017, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
 Project Title: FACULTY PERSPECTIVES AND PARTICIPATION IN IMPLEMENTING AN EARLY ALERT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTION IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
 Investigator: Claudine C Bentham  
 IRB Number: SBE-17-13215  
 Funding Agency:  
 Grant Title:  
 Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Renea C Carver on 06/09/2017 10:14:01 AM EDT

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX K: VALENCIA COLLEGE IRB APPROVAL

VALENCIA COLLEGE  
Human Research Protection (HRP) Institutional Review Board (IRB)

IRB Determination Form

Title of Research Protocol: Faculty Perspectives and Participation in Implementing an Early Alert System and Intervention in a Community College

Principal Investigator (PI): Claudine Bentham

Date Received by IRB Chair: June 14, 2017

IRB Number: 17-0020

Based on the IRB Protocol Initial Submission Form (or, as appropriate, the IRB Continuing Review/Termination Form or the IRB Addendum/Modification Form) submitted by the Principal Investigator and for the project identified above, the following determination has been made by the Valencia IRB:

- The research is exempt from IRB review.
- The research is eligible for expedited review and has been approved. Expedited review category: 7
- The research is eligible for expedited review but requires modifications and re-submission before approval can be given.
- The research is subject to full review and will be discussed at the next IRB meeting, currently scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- The research has been subjected to full review and has been approved.
- The research has been subjected to full review and has been disapproved.

Period of Approval: 6/13/2017 to 6/13/2018

Additional details specific to this determination are attached to this letter. It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to read, understand, and comply with these attachments.

If you have any remaining questions about Valencia's IRB process, contact the IRB Chair at [irb@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:irb@valenciacollege.edu)

L. Shari  
Signature of IRB Chair or Designated Representative

6/13/2017  
Date

C: IRB File, IRB Members, PI Supervisor/Administrator

APPENDIX L: INITIAL CODING NOTES OF THE STUDY'S THEME  
DEVELOPMENT

<b><u>Codes: w/ color</u></b> <b>(With Sub Topics)</b>	<b><u>Definition</u></b> <b>(Literature )</b>	<b><u>Participant's</u></b> <b><u>Definition/</u></b> <b><u>Examples</u></b>
Student Success: 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills Student Engagement	Students who receive degrees; embrace college experiences w/ activities; possess deeper learning; post-grad success	Student success: Time management Application to real life; study skills; life-long learning skills; Financial responsibility Questioning
Empathy: Personal Connection Partnership	Use as evidence by communicating with students; getting to know them. Observe students ( say, do, think and feel) behaviors & interactions; Challenging assumptions about students; Human-centered approach	Personal connection; observe; Discuss/ discourse w/students;
Early alert systems	Early alert systems entail a system or procedure designed to warn of a potential or an impending problem	
Personalized EA system Early alert strategy and intervention for specific students		Creating individualized EA system
Reflection Reflec. On Action Contemplative Inquiry	Contemplative practice- a reflective practice that allows individuals to produce deeper learning.  Reflection-on-action – a reflective practice that allows teachers to ponder on the experience in order to generate awareness of their beliefs, cultures, and values.	

<b><u>Codes: w/ color</u></b> <b>(With Sub Topics)</b>	<b><u>Definition</u></b> <b>(Literature )</b>	<b><u>Participant's</u></b> <b><u>Definition/</u></b> <b><u>Examples</u></b>
At- Risk Behaviors	At-risk characteristics encompass individuals who possess a high probability of not completing their schooling as a result of detrimental circumstances such as disabilities, health and financial issues, and abuse	
Transformative learning Transformed Changed Learned	Transformative learning incorporates individuals encountering experiences that allow them to change their way of thinking and to make new meaning of their experiences.	
Early Alert Strategies/ Approaches		
Intervention	Interventions are tools or resources to aid in remedying the problematic issues an individual may be experiencing	
Taking Ownership of an approach		Incorporating an approach into practice;
Value in EA system		

<u>Codes: w/ color</u> (With Sub Topics)	<u>Definition</u> (Literature )	<u>Participant's</u> <u>Definition/</u> <u>Examples</u>
<u>Additional Themes/</u> <u>Codes/ Patterns</u>		
Using outside resources	i.e. co-workers, etc. To assist with EA	
EA failure	low success rate	
Support		

APPENDIX M: CODING NOTES OF THE STUDY'S THEME  
DEVELOPMENT



<u>Codes</u> (With Sub Topics) And Findings	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>
<u>Pseudo Names</u>	<u>Cole</u>	<u>Dorothy</u>	<u>Claire</u>	<u>Ashley</u>	<u>Martin</u>
<p>Personal Undergraduate experience</p> <p>Findings: :</p> <p>What helped them to succeed?</p> <p>Adult learning= purpose / self-motivated</p> <p>111 60%</p> <p>Engagement 11 40%</p> <p>Support 1111 80</p>	<p>First experience was terrible</p> <hr/> <p>went back older, it was much easier because I knew why I was there</p> <p>and recession.</p> <p>Also had some life experience.</p>	<p>struggled when they put me in calculus, um, and I wasn't prepared for that at all and ended up not doing well and deciding that math was not going to be in my future.</p> <p>college was just, you know, was just fun. I just found it exciting and I was lucky to be able to take courses that I wanted to take</p>	<p>I need a degree to have a job that I actually really like, and makes any kind of money". So I went back to school,</p> <p>and in school Procrastinated</p>	<p>First two years: poor performance; impassionate; unmotivated; not serious</p> <p>Transformed with upper-level courses</p> <p>Disengaged with professor</p> <p>Later became engaged; Support network</p> <p>dedicated little library, so a study room</p> <p>you could always find someone in there to go (peer support)</p>	<p>for me I wasn't nervous, because I had <b>SUPPORT</b> somebody as a mentor, and, um, my mother was determined that she wanted her kids to go to college, and,</p> <p>of a reality check for me, and a reality check in a way that, um, the A's that I was-used to get, I wasn't getting, and the classes were a lot large</p> <p>75 and 200 students in a class, so if you go from like 20 in a <b>LACKED STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION</b> class or 25 in a class to that large of a</p> <p><b>getting through undergraduate is basically networking, and</b></p>

<u>Codes</u> (With Sub Topics) And Findings	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>
<u>Pseudo Names</u>	<u>Cole</u>	<u>Dorothy</u>	<u>Claire</u>	<u>Ashley</u>	<u>Martin</u>
					getting together with other students, and then a lot of study time. speaking and communicating with your professors having a great interaction,  doing extracurricular, like joining clubs
Student Success:  21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills Required behaviors/ skills 2. Student Engagement  3. Accessing Support New  4. Resources	be able to ask questions. They should also understand that failure is not a bad thing  , knowing what their goals  Purpose: wanna know why I have to write all that stuff."	Time management  aren't, um, really prepared for the amount of work  maybe losing some habits  skimming over material rather than reading it careful  listening, paying	time management  clearer learning goals , to have the motivation  strategies or methods I think are required in order for students to be successful in the course	And it pretty much has to do with more <u>life skills, organization</u>  <u>They need motivation</u>  <u>kind of what you call basic skills, life skills</u>  <u>. an easier time transferring and can take advantage of the resources</u>	, they have to know what they're signing up to. Okay, so expectations. The expectations of what's in, not only in the syllabus, but making sure that they actually hear what the professor is saying. That is, um, the requirements of the class, what's, what the, um, the, uh, professor's expectations are, and then also, having great

<u>Codes</u> (With Sub Topics) And Findings	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>
<u>Pseudo Names</u>	<u>Cole</u>	<u>Dorothy</u>	<u>Claire</u>	<u>Ashley</u>	<u>Martin</u>
Findings:	Submitting work on time	attention, avoiding distractions	*they need to care.  Accomplish academic goals  I could offer tips on where to find information needed for transfer/prereqs along with addressing questions they may have about the GKT and other relevant education info.		time management,  <b><u>increasing both their creative and critical thinking was my goal.</u></b>
Empathy:  Personal Connection  Partnership  Findings:	reaching out. Reaching out to people.  Engagement during implementation:  n:	observed classroom performance  My early alert strategy involves keen observation of any potential	You're teaching, um, the whole student, the whole person.	<b><u>I think, that personal connection.</u></b>  <b><u>We make assumptions, like, we kind of know when a student is struggling</u></b>	Meet with the students at the scheduled appointment and complete the course of action section of the Self-Assessment

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	<p>Verbally and through email as supplements to summative feedback.</p> <p>engaged in whatever manner was most comfortable and effective for each student</p>	<p>problem behaviors or performance including grades, preparation with materials, assignment completion, attendance, demeanor in class, participation, and any other signs that might indicate a current or future problem.</p> <p>casually meet with them to discuss the problem area</p> <p>was able to meet face-to-face with most students either before, during or after class.</p>		<p><u>and, kind of, maybe, why; but until we really ... really get the research and get the data, it confirmed my hunches.</u></p> <p><u>Alleviating assumptions :</u></p> <p><u>What data helped you to realize that, you know, these assumptions were either accurate or inaccurate?</u></p> <p><u>Okay. So my assumptions were ... I had like about four or five of them that ... I'll try to think of them off the top of my head, I know they are in here. That</u></p>	<p>based on the students' assessment.</p>

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		Upon further observation, I made sure to follow up with students.		<p><u>the student, when they take my class, they did not, um, know about the prereqs that they needed to get into the College of Education. They did not know about the GKT, and I'm saying this as, like, you know, I would say more than half didn't know.</u></p> <p><u>Personal commitment</u></p> <p>See early alert approaches. I spend lots of time (unpaid) building relationships with students; even though I</p>	

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				<p>am not compensated for this time, I will continue to care for my students because it is the right thing to do.</p> <p><b><u>I discuss survey results via Skype group conferences</u></b></p> <p><b><u>addressed these issues directly with my students</u></b></p> <p><b><u>I was available for my students in many ways and at times convenient to them.</u></b></p>	

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				Personal investment: Students were very thankful that I took the time to address these issues  Ashley possessed a personal investment in students	
Early alert strategy  Findings:	I originally included a questionnaire and checklist to identify and address behaviors  Shortly before the first essay was due. Certain behaviors, such as not having completed readings or not having drafts ready for peer review were	toward the middle to end of the second week, I reviewed student grades and missing assignments and observed classroom performance to identify those students who were falling behind in these intensive 6-week courses.	write me a letter in response to my letter to them (included) as an informal writing sample. I then met with students in an individual conference to go over their Letter to ... assignment, Diagnostic Essay, Reading Diagnostic, and to set up academic and	So, that I can kind of get to know them, <b><u>Get them on the right path.</u></b> And then, I started learning, wait a minute, we don't even have <b><u>an education advisor, and they're going to this advisor and that advisor; or they're not going at all.</u></b>	<b><u>Why EA:</u></b>  <b><u>they talk about a lot of stuff that's outside of the academic portion of college, like being able to use a counselor,</u></b>  <b><u>, strategies to prevent them from having to repeat a class, those are the things as an advisor, I, um,</u></b>

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	indicators. This would be around three weeks into the class.		personal goals (form included).	<p><u>1] pre-survey that asked students about their knowledge of their education requirements needed for transfer, clubs at Valencia that will help them with their career, and if they knew who their advisor may be.</u></p> <p><u>2] an intervention that gives students resources to answer the survey questions</u></p> <p><u>3] give survey again after intervention</u></p> <p><u>4] discuss survey results via Skype</u></p>	<p><u>would have communications with those students.</u></p> <p><u>Components of EA:</u></p> <p><u>two (2) or more of these criteria:</u></p> <p><u>EA was able to self-assess their study habits early and during the semester</u></p> <p><u>it really like would be, and a- and again, this would be something like paying your bills, (laughs), okay?</u></p>



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				<u>group conferences</u>	<p><u>I know if you have something like that, giving the students their contract is what we call the syllabus, they have that early alert to let them know</u></p> <p><u>if I see in my students that they're falling behind or they're not being successful, then I'm able to, you know, capture them earlier, to make sure that they get what they need.</u></p> <p><u>if I see that student, or those students that are falling behind, I'm able to capture, capture them early on.</u></p>

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					<p><u>the GPA tool to calculate their estimated GPA at mid-semester.</u></p> <p><u>Complete the Mid-semester Self-Reflection</u></p>
Personalized EA  Findings:			I had the students write me a letter in response to my letter to them (included) as an informal writing sample.		because each student had/has their own unique situation as it related to learning styles/studying habits and personal issues
Reflection  Findings:	Through critical reflection there is no “one size fits all” for interventions  Revisited teaching approach and	Undergrad:  What helped her to succeed?  But I love learning, so for	Undergrad experience:  then I realized "Oh, I need a degree to have a job that I actually really like, and makes any	<u>Reflection Interview</u>	

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	<p>perspective on teaching practice</p> <p>Being more mindful or conscious/ awareness of student behaviors ( Does that mean building empathy)</p> <p>Potential roadblocks</p> <p>Carl Rogers (A <u>Way of Being</u>): <u>Responsive to students issues and feelings</u></p>	<p>me, college was just, you know, was just fun. I just found it exciting and I was lucky to be able to take courses that I wanted to take. Students now are very proscribed in terms of their major. My major was sociology, anthropology. I had tons of electives and I just had fun. I took philosophy and all kinds of crazy things.</p>	<p>kind of money".</p> <p>Prior to taking the course: , "What can I take just to make myself a better teacher?"</p> <p>have learned that in a usual class that I do not get to know my students all that well; whereas, with this early alert strategy I was able to really get to know my students very fast in a very genuine way and to open up a two-way line of communication that enabled a deeper level</p>		

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			of learning to take place.  it's about the people in the room, and the more I know about the students, the more effective my teaching become		
Adult Learning/ Purpose  relevant to learning			make the learning more personally meaningful through knowing their career goals and their reasons for wanting to succeed in the class and in college.		
At- Risk Behaviors  . What faculty experiences (personal,	, a student's not succeeding, students struggling	student who had not purchased the textbook,	the students began to display were to arrive late	Not seeing an advisor and/or an advisor who was familiar with education requirements  . Not choosing an	· <b><u>Failing grades;</u></b> · <b><u>Skipping class and/or multiple classes;</u></b> Sleeping in class

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professional, life or other) are required for them to realize the need to develop an early alert system and intervention for their course at a state college?	<p>you're not turning stuff in</p> <p>time management</p> <p>not having completed readings or not having drafts ready for peer review were indicators</p>	<p>Other students who had fallen behind in the online program</p> <p>another student was having obvious struggles with the English language,</p> <p>student who had missing assignments</p> <p>Students not doing well.</p> <p>dropping out, um, withdrawing</p>	to not have the online reading logs	<p>education pre-major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Not knowing what education prereqs needed for their major</li> <li>· Not knowing a student must take and pass the GKT</li> <li>· Not aware of the programming provided by Valencia Future Educators Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Lack of motivation;</li> <li>· Lack of self-discipline;</li> <li>· Change of study habits;</li> <li>· Problems with communicating with the professor.</li> <li>· Excessive procrastination;</li> <li>· Uncharacteristically poor work/study habits;</li> <li>· <b><u>Inconsistent work</u></b></li> <li>· <b><u>Repeated request(s) for special consideration</u></b></li> <li>· <b><u>Career/Major indecisiveness</u></b></li> </ul> <p>Challenges are <b><u>non-traditional, they have</u></b></p>

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					<u>difficulty getting into the MathLab on more occasions to complete the quizzes</u>
Transformative learning  Transformed  Changed  Learned   Findings:	Not effective:  rigid structure of an intervention sheet I originally planned to use  Prevention is better than treatment approach.  Adding more informal touchstone points that allow for immediate attention and less overwhelm.  have become more mindful	I have learned that personal connection with students can make a big difference in their success  within my classes. I have also learned that in working with students who are taking a developmental reading/writing course, I can influence their work habits, ability to manage their time, and their knowledge of college resources.  Learned about students' lives	<u>more effective, caring teacher</u>  make the individual conferences thirty minutes instead of twenty.  students who needed longer, I want to have the length of time set aside  really get to know my students very fast in a very genuine way  that enabled a deeper level of learning t	I make <u>slight changes to the intervention information</u> as I learn more about what my students do not know about their career choice.  <u>I spend lots of time (unpaid) building relationships with students; even though I am not compensated for this time, I will continue to care for my students because it is the right thing to do.</u>	<u>initial implementation</u> , my positive outcomes weren't as great as I would expect because this was my 1 <sup>st</sup> attempt at implementing the CARE program. My success rate was slightly under 50%. After, that initial implementation, I was able to <u>make minor tweaks based on the individual student(s) behavior to improve my success rate with student(s) study habits and passing the course.</u>

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	of student behaviors and identifying potential roadblocks.	and Valencia resources:  I have learned that students' lives outside of the classroom can be complicated and sometimes, troublesome, and that this may have a strong effect on their performance. While I am not in a position to solve or directly influence any problems they may be experiencing, I can be more understanding without sacrificing my expectations of my students. I have also learned that	The good teacher is always learning. And, it's not just about my content knowledge or about pedagogical delivery—it's about the people in the room, and the more I know about the students, the more effective my teaching becomes.  What I have learned about myself as a teaching professional is that the more I seek to improve my practice through experts, through theory, through	Education Advisor/ Mentor	

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		<p>Valencia has resources and services that can help students with a myriad of problems and that my encouragement can help students access those resources.</p> <p>Modified plan:</p> <p>originally had a more rigid plan where students had to fill out a questionnaire indicating their concerns and problem areas before meeting with me</p>	<p>practice, through <i>caring</i>, the more I improve each and every year as a professor, as a human being. And, when I help just one student, I do change the world.</p>		



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<p>Intervention</p> <p>College readiness</p> <p>Guidance</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>Findings: high impact practice</p>	<p>more course correction and guidance than a full intervention</p> <p>students just needed help establishing a point of focus.</p> <p>develop as a personal framework to understand how to adapt to individual student needs</p> <p>I addressed students individually, and we collaborated on strategies to help them navigate their individual challenges.</p>	<p>There was one student who had not purchased the textbook, so we discussed ways he could access the material until the time he could purchase the book (copy pages from another student's book, take pictures of the assigned reading, use the textbook available in the Learning Center). Other students who had fallen behind in the online program we use in the class were given one-time extensions to make up those assignments, with the understanding that all future assignments</p>		<p>This way students will know where to go to get the information in case they forget or may need to access it in the future.</p> <p>Students are not seeing an advisor as often as they should.</p> <p><u>intervention that gives students resources</u></p>	<p><b><u>•Meet with me and agree to the course of action that both mutually developed</u></b></p> <p><b><u>• Follow through by completing their plan.</u></b></p> <p>communicating with my students via email, math-lab engagement and in-person appointments/meetings.</p>

<b><u>Codes</u></b> <b>(With Sub Topics)</b> <b>And Findings</b>	<b><u>Participant</u></b>	<b><u>Participant</u></b>	<b><u>Participant</u></b>	<b><u>Participant</u></b>	<b><u>Participant</u></b>
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		<p>must be completed by due dates. Yet another student was having obvious struggles with the English language, and I gave him the schedule for the summer grammar boot camps and highly encouraged him to attend the sessions. For any student who had missing assignments, I spoke to them directly to ensure that they understood the assignments, knew how to access them in Blackboard, knew how to submit assigned work, and were using some system to keep track</p>			

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		of dates when assignments were due.			
Taking Ownership of an approach  Findings:				I will continue to do what is right and help my students succeed.	<p><u>Creating a substantive change in individual students.</u></p> <p><u>Engaging students as full partners in the learning process, with students assuming primary responsibility for their own choices.</u></p> <p><u>Create and offer as many options for learning as possible.</u></p> <p><u>Assisting students to form and participate in collaborative learning activities.</u></p> <p><u>Defining the roles of learning</u></p>

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					<u>facilitators by the needs of the students.</u>
Early Alert Strategies/ Approaches  Findings:	Collaboration	Observation	I had the students write me a letter in response to my letter to them  Diagnostic Essay, Reading Diagnostic, and to set up academic and personal goals	survey (anonymous)  The feedback from the SFI is shocking; students comment that my concern for their success is not like other professors. This is disheartening for me, as we are teachers and should be caring people who are concerned about our students. Not that we baby them but just showing that we care and offer resources makes the learning	

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				environment so much more positive with more positive results.  The strategy had 4 parts: SEE NOTES ABOVE	
Value in EA system  Findings:	reaching out. Reaching out to people.  Providing a specific resource is more effective:  Hey, did you hear about this?" Just drawing it into the conversation because I think, um, when things are approached as "this is a	<u>Past tenure work likened EA:</u>  <u>did some of my tenure work not specifically about early alert strategies but about intervention strategies that would help, um, help with retention and persistence, you know? 'Cause I want students to go beyond just</u>	students felt comfortable to meet with me in my office and came by often. Students would email and call when they had any questions.  I do not feel like any part of the strategies were ineffective. The letter set the tone for the class and gave me wonderful	Benefits:  But, basically, it's whatever I want that system to be..  It's whatever I think that that student needs..  So, that I like. I like that you've left it up to us.  I think that's really ... I think that was intentional	<b>. It's something that I really think every professor should, um, somehow, um, see the need, if, even if we could actually make a mini-course of care,</b>  <b>I don't know if it is part of the TLA, but I think it's something that, um, should be considered, because again, when you sign</b>

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	<p>problem to be fixed"</p> <p>Desired to implement EA in his class :</p> <p>a student's not succeeding, students struggling, um, no consistency between struggling ...</p>	<p><u>my course. It's fine if they pass mine, but the goal, of course, is to have them, uh, can- continue on.</u></p> <p><u>wish everyone would be onboard with them</u></p>	<p>information about each student to enable me to be a more effective, caring teacher</p> <p><u>system think they're crucial. I think they're so, so, so important, because you get halfway through a class, it's too late. ... six weeks in even, it's a little late to be saying to a student "Hey, you, you really, really, really need to do an about-face to make it through this class". Why not the second week</u></p> <p><u>They need to see the personal</u></p>		<p><b>on and you become tenure, you should have this, uh, you're taking, going for the tenure, basically, you've already considered that this is your passion, that you want to teach. The second part of that passion is, is caring about your students, and that's not just coming to class, teaching, and then going home. It should be that extension of it, which is the care and compassion part of the students.</b></p>

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			<u>application.</u> <u>How is this</u> <u>going to help</u> <u>me in my</u> <u>life?...</u>		
Student Engagement  Findings:			students felt comfortable to meet with me in my office and came by often. Students would email and call when they had any questions.		communicating with my students via email, math- lab engagement and in-person appointments/ meetings.
<u>Additional Themes/ Codes/ Patterns</u>					
Connecting/ learning from colleagues  Findings:	Asked me questions about the course prior to taking it.		<u>I had talked</u> <u>with, ... She</u> <u>had done the</u> <u>LifeMap</u> <u>certification,</u> <u>and found it</u> <u>really helpful</u>		
Additional Notes	Final thoughts on EAS	Best practice:  Teaching is more than just		Outcomes from EA	Minor Changes:

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Findings:	<p>There's no right way to do it.</p> <p>some wrong things to do, but you can learn that from classes, but I also think a lot of that stuff comes with experience and no early alert system works perfectly for every student.</p> <p>but it's having, just, understanding the idea of what early alert systems are and kinda being proactive about it.</p> <p>something specific where you do this</p>	<p>delivering discipline content. I am always reminded that my role is as much to be a 'cheerleader' and advocate for students as it is to assist in their learning. When students recognize that I am 'on their side' and that I am willing to work with them, they relax and open up to listen to my suggestions and advice.</p> <p>Positive outcomes</p> <p>Both students:</p> <p>As a result of these interactions with these two</p>		<p><u>And now, I'm one of the faculty mentors, along with one of my colleagues, for education. And I've already given them all this stuff about my care plan, it's just like right in line with what Title Five. It's all career readiness and ready to transfer, and that is what my care plan is.</u></p> <p>... <u>BUILDING A COMMUNITY/ FACULTY/ STUDENT INTERACTION</u> before you walk into my class, I send you an email.</p>	<p><u>if flex, I would address accordingly</u></p>



<u>Codes</u> (With Sub Topics) And Findings	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Participant</u>
<u>Pseudo Names</u>	<u>Cole</u>	<u>Dorothy</u>	<u>Claire</u>	<u>Ashley</u>	<u>Martin</u>
	<p>and it follows this.</p> <p>It's ... 'Cause it's not ... It's not about the system, it's about the student so whatever you can do to help that student succeed.</p> <p>Positive Outcomes:</p> <p><b>Students being more successful.</b></p>	<p>students, they were both able to successfully complete the course and both indicated that they planned to continue.</p>		<p>So, if you were to enter my class</p> <p><b><u>POSITIVE FEEDBACK</u></b> Students were very thankful that I took the time to address these issues</p> <p>Ashley possessed a personal investment in students</p>	
<p>challenges of EAS</p> <p>explain how participants had experienced</p>					

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