

A CASE STUDY OF FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT PLAGIARISM

A Dissertation

by

CANDACE HASTINGS SCHAEFER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2010

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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ABSTRACT

A Case Study of Faculty Perceptions of Student Plagiarism. (December 2010)

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This study examined faculty perceptions of plagiarism in the classroom using a qualitative case study methodology. A single university was used for the case study to locate all data under a single institutional culture. A purposive sample of eleven faculty were interviewed and content analysis was conducted on the data. The data were analyzed using Lave and Wenger's theory of legitimate peripheral participation, a learning theory which proposes that all learning takes place in a community of practice and that learning takes place as a result of interactions between members of the community of practice.

Because the data were analyzed using legitimate peripheral participation, faculty were asked to reflect on how they learned to write in their discipline, how they view their role in working with students as they become proficient in writing in their discipline, and what happens when students violate community practices. This study attempted to reframe scholarship that approaches plagiarism as a right vs. wrong issue and recast scholarship on plagiarism as an issue of students moving toward full

participation in the community of practice of academic scholars under the tutelage of faculty members.

Research participants saw themselves as mentors to students as they developed their academic writing standards and abilities, a philosophy in keeping with the tenets of legitimate peripheral participation. Research participants attributed violations of community standards to institutional constructs such as grades, social constructs such as culture or generation, or individual constructs such as moral character or upbringing.

DEDICATION

I have been blessed to have had a long career in teaching. This study is dedicated to my students, for they have taught me much and have shaped my life's path. And if one of them was inspired by something I said or did, then certainly that's a life full enough for me.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism, often thought of as the most venial of academic sins, has been the subject of much discussion and study in multiple disciplines, including education, composition and rhetoric, and psychology. In addition, student plagiarism has received copious attention from the media since the advent of controversial plagiarism detection software products such as Turnitin.com have promised to combat online plagiarism with online detection tools. As much as the issue has been researched and discussed, however, it remains as a pervasive problem on American college campuses.

Plagiarism is commonly referred to in college textbooks and student handbooks as the representation of ideas or words of others as one's own (Faigley, 2003; Glenn, 2006). Most universities have clear statements regarding what constitutes plagiarism and the penalties for committing such crimes. Specifically, the university in this case study defines plagiarism as the "appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit" ("Definitions of academic misconduct," 2009). Penalties for plagiarism vary, ranging from a student receiving a lower grade on a paper to being dismissed from the university.

Why has a problem that seems so easy to define and one that has garnered so much attention been so difficult to solve? Most importantly, practitioners are tempted to

The style and format of this dissertation follows that of *The Journal of Higher Education*.

frame the issue as a binary one (Howard, 2001), and most policies are written with this either/or simplicity: either students have plagiarized or they have not. To simplify the issue is to ignore notions of individual authorship and ownership of ideas and text.

In addition, much of the research on academic dishonesty consists of analyzing responses from surveys that ask students to self-report instances or motivations for cheating. Although quantitative data gathered from surveys are useful to show that a problem exists or to determine the scope or range of the problem, self-reported surveys are by and large unable to factor the context surrounding the self-reported incident into the plagiarism equation. For example, surveys often ask students to self-report whether they have ever plagiarized or if they have plagiarized while in college (Bowers, 1964; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). The question only allows for yes or no responses. Binary questions such as these do not address the issue of a varied range of connotative or denotative definitions of plagiarism, nor do they address situational factors that may affect a student's decision-making process. Ashworth, Freewood, and Macdonald (2003) address the problem of using surveys to conduct research on academic dishonesty, stating that although the research results can be interesting, the "usefulness of studies of this nature is lessened by such presuppositions as that the *meaning of plagiarism is unequivocal*" (p. 262). The authors assert that the acknowledgment of committing plagiarism does not reveal how students perceive plagiarism as a concept, nor does it inform scholars how students "*live their studentship*" (p. 262).

It appears, therefore, that existing quantitative data do not get at the context necessary to understand how students perceive plagiarism issues. In addition, to assume that institutions view plagiarism uniformly is perhaps an erroneous assumption. To this end, Flint, Clegg, and Macdonald (2006) reviewed published policies of British universities and noted that although the universities had definitions of plagiarism similar to traditional textbook definitions, the published university policies differed in the way they were framed. For example, some universities focused on correct citation of sources, while others emphasized holistic concepts such as taking responsibility for one's work.

Broad-based surveys, therefore, can be and have been useful to establish the issue as one worth studying. However, reducing the issue of plagiarism to a mathematical formula and examining it outside of its social construction is to doom a complex issue concerning authorship and ownership to surface renderings and therefore may not yield insights into the complexities of the problem. Plagiarism needs to be examined with a lens that takes into account the social construction of concepts of authorship and facets of membership within the academic community. In "It Takes a Village: Academic Dishonesty," academic integrity scholar Donald McCabe (2005) states that in order to create a culture of academic integrity on college and university campuses, academics must see the issue not as an issue of stopping cheating, but rather as an obligation to fully educate their students. In order to achieve this, McCabe argues, it will take the efforts of students, administrators, and faculty members, for all of them are stakeholders in the effort.

McCabe (2005) says that if it is the goal of an institution simply to police cheating, then measures such as stricter penalties and enforcement of policies, along with plagiarism detection software products such as Turnitin.com, could be effective in mitigating incidences of cheating in the classroom. However, as McCabe notes, broadening the chasm between teacher and student rather than bridging it can alter the culture of the university classroom, as it pits teacher against student. McCabe advises educators to “find innovative and creative ways to use academic integrity as a building block in our efforts to develop more responsible students and, ultimately, more responsible citizens” (p. 29) and asserts that “campuses must become places where the entire ‘village’—the community of students, faculty, and administrators—actively works together to achieve this goal” (p.29).

To this end, McCabe and his colleagues (McCabe et al., 2001; McCabe & Trevino, 2002; McCabe & Trevino, 1997) place academic integrity issues within a societal and contextual framework, arguing that situational factors are prime determiners of when and where students cheat. McCabe (2005) argues that peers are perhaps the most powerful deterrent to cheating and advocates using honor codes within the student population; however, he acknowledges the important role that faculty play in creating in creating a culture of academic integrity. If contextual and situational issues play a significant role in determining the level of academic integrity in their classes, as McCabe asserts, then faculty are an important part of the academic integrity equation. Researchers who study academic integrity issues from a faculty perspective argue that although there have been exhaustive studies of students, research on faculty perspectives

on cheating in general and plagiarism in particular are few and far between (Flint, Clegg, & Macdonald, 2006; Robinson-Zanartu, Pena, Cook-Morales, Pena, Afshani, & Nguyen, 2005; Burke, 1997; Roig, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

McCabe and Pavela (2004) note that a survey of 2500 faculty members conducted in 2002-2003 revealed that less than one-third of faculty addressed issues of academic integrity in their syllabi. As Robinson, Amburgey, Swank, and Faulkner (2004) noted, however, although telling students not to cheat is important, it is not enough to deter cheating. Research conducted by McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2001) showed that contextual factors influence student cheating in college. These contextual factors include peer pressure, college culture, and penalties for cheating. According to McCabe et al., 44% of faculty indicated that they had ignored at least act of academic dishonesty in their classrooms. If students see faculty turning a blind eye to acts of academic dishonesty, McCabe et al. note, then cheating is likely to increase in proportion to its perceived lack of enforcement.

Although much research has been conducted on what motivates students to cheat, little research has been conducted on faculty perspectives on acts of plagiarism in their classrooms. McCabe et al. (2001) reported that faculty are reluctant to report incidences of plagiarism via institutional policy procedures and prefer to handle incidences of academic dishonesty individually. McCabe's study was quantitative in nature, so although a representative random sample was taken, few qualitative studies have

heretofore explored the internal and external factors that influence faculty actions when they encounter acts of academic dishonesty in their classrooms.

Therefore, this study focused on the insights, views, and perceptions of the faculty, an often forgotten component of research studies on plagiarism, to gain greater insight into how faculty perceive issues of plagiarism in their classes and, even more importantly, how they exist and teach inside a university community where student violations of established academic integrity policies can at times be disruptive and disconcerting. As Ashworth, Freewood, and Macdonald (2003) stated, plagiarism is culturally and socially constructed and not a “human existential” (p264); therefore, it is important to view the issue within a social context that will inform researchers and practitioners trying to understand the phenomenon. To understand the problem within context, I chose qualitative case study as my research method.

Merriam (1998) describes case study as being distinguished from other types of research because its focus is limited to a single entity (p.12). In case study, therefore, plagiarism can be studied within the context of a single university that has its own policies, procedures, and cultural and social influences that affect how plagiarism is perceived. I considered the complexity of the issue and peeled back the layers of meaning within the topic with, as Merriam (1998) says, discovery as the result of the study. By limiting the case study to a single university and by focusing on the faculty perspective, I hope to contribute to the body of knowledge on student plagiarism by examining how faculty affect and are affected by student plagiarism and how they respond within the context of university policies, practices, and procedures. The

university I chose is a viable candidate for a single case study, primarily because it is one of the few schools to have an honor code and has had a centralized honor code office since 2004 to facilitate adjudication of violations and keeps statistics on reported violations. In addition, it is a large research-extensive university, which provides a large pool of faculty to draw from, all of whom operate under the same university policies.

At the case study university, from 2004 to early 2007, 235 cases of plagiarism were reported to the Honor Code Office. Of those 235 cases, 170 of those were instructor-reported and subsequently handled by the instructor; 61 of them were instructor-reported and handled by the Honor Code Panel; 1 of them was reported anonymously; and 3 of them were student-reported violations (“Violation Statistics,” 2007). Not all cases are reported to the Honor Code Office, and a component of my research explored faculty perceptions of institutional structures put in place designed to promote academic integrity and to ensure that student due process is followed in an attempt to try to discover why faculty choose to follow or *not* to follow university policy.

Although case study presented itself as the likely methodology to yield the most valuable data, a theoretical framework makes meaning out of the raw data I collected. Yin (2009) emphasizes that viewing data through a framework will determine and shape the data analysis. To that end, I used Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation to frame my research questions and data analysis. Lave and Wenger’s theory of legitimate peripheral participation positions learning within communities of practice, which illuminated issues of plagiarism and practices within the

academic community, since legitimate peripheral participation presumes that learning always happens within a contextual community of practice.

Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that anything that is learned exists within a social construct and assert that this social construct is determined by a community of practice. Learning communities, according to Lave and Wenger, are dynamic. All participants are learners, and they move in and around the center of the community as practices change and as participants begin to speak and understand the discourse of the group. Lave and Wenger ascribe names to the positions people hold in the community, even though those positionalities may change and overlap. *Newcomers*, or students in this context, move toward full participation by interacting with *full participants*, or disciplinary scholars, and *old-timers*, or professors, in this learning situation. *Masters* are the ultimate authority within the community, and although they do not normally interact with newcomers directly, “they are often crucial in providing newcomers to a community with legitimate access to its practices” (Lave, 1991, p. 68.). In studying documentation and citation practices, then, the equation could be made that the masters are the crafters of citation practices in academic disciplines, such as key members of the Modern Language Association and the American Psychological Association who determine proper citation and documentation form and update style guides accordingly, or disciplinary journal editors and reviewers. In addition, college administrators and policy makers act as *masters* as they determine what happens to those who violate agreed upon practices. Even instructors themselves would be masters when they sit on honor code violation committees or committees that draft documents on plagiarism

policies and procedures. The most obvious full participant or *old-timer* is the classroom instructor in this study, and this positionality is at the heart of my rationale for studying their perspectives.

I have categorized the positionalities of learners, perhaps at the risk of misrepresenting the dynamic and fluid nature of positionality within a community of practice in order to capture and frame my population, for it is the old-timers that I am interested in knowing more about. Instructors are in a position of both acting as mentors and guides and yet also have the responsibility of censuring or sanctioning those student or newcomers who act outside of the accepted boundaries of the communities. Therefore, documentation practices in scholarly work and violations of community boundaries can be viewed through the theory of legitimate peripheral participation since the theory also allows a lens with which to view existing power structures and gatekeeper roles.

The theory of legitimate peripheral participation within communities of practice may help bridge the chasm that seems to exist between students and their teachers regarding issues of authorship in academic writing, because at times both professors and students are at various locations within that community of practice. Since a learning community is dynamic, changes to academic practices regarding citation and documentation make all learners newcomers at particularly volatile times, since language practices and academic constructs concerning acceptable practice are dynamic rather than static. However, in most situations, communities of practice focused on academic, researched writing, recognize that the course instructor is the “oldtimer,” or

full participant, and the student is the “newcomer.” As Beaufort (2000) explains, in situated learning, students learn from others in the community and very little teaching, as one would define general knowledge, is taught in a formal setting. Citation and documentation practices are often referred to but rarely are explicitly taught outside the realm of the freshman English composition classroom. However, faculty members expect students to understand and to abide by documentation practices in their discipline, even if the student has not been formally taught specific conventions. In fact, it may be that plagiarism is a violation of practices within a community where students may neither understand those practices nor value the tenets of that community.

Understanding how faculty perceive student plagiarism is predicated on understanding how faculty themselves developed within the community of practice and how they see themselves in relation to the student as the students become members of the community. To this end, four research questions were developed to guide the study:

1. How do faculty members learn to speak the language of academic discourse in their disciplines?
2. What role do faculty see themselves playing in teaching students about scholarly writing in their discipline?
3. What do faculty perceive when they encounter acts of student plagiarism in their classrooms?
4. What dissonances occur between faculty and students regarding plagiarism in their classrooms (cultural, generational, experiential)?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate selected higher education faculty perceptions of plagiarism in their classrooms. This study investigated contextual factors that affect the actions of faculty when they encounter acts of plagiarism. Gaining insight into how faculty shape or influence a student's environment is predicated on understanding the scholarly world of the faculty and how faculty define themselves within this community of practice. So much is written on the plagiarism problem, and yet the answer is still elusive. The intent of my study was to show how faculty influence and are influenced by their own community of practice as seen through Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation. Ultimately, my purpose is to help scholars get closer to understanding why students plagiarize and what can be done to mitigate plagiarism. However, my premise is that to understand students, we first have to understand the faculty and their relationship to their students in a particular community of practice. Chapter II provides a literature review on academic integrity and plagiarism. Chapter III outlines the methodology used in the study. Chapter IV provides an analysis of the data as viewed through legitimate peripheral participation. Chapter V summarizes the findings of the study and recommends areas for future research.

Operational Definitions

Analytic Generalization: "a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study" (Yin, 2009, p. 38).

Bracketing: a technique in which the researcher acknowledges that he or she has prejudgments about the phenomenon being studied and then puts them aside in order to study the phenomenon without presuppositions (Creswell, 1998).

Case Study: a method of qualitative research that is bounded and limited to a single unit of study that is “particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29).

Communities of Practice: “a group of people who engage in a shared activity; the community is ever evolving as newcomers learn the beliefs, values, and practices of the group” (Merriam, Courtenay, & Baumgartner, 2003. p. 171).

Emergent Design: a design strategy unique to qualitative methodology or field studies which enables the researcher to allow new insight and information that he or she receives from the participants to influence the strategies the researcher is using to allow the researcher to discover information that he or she had not known at the outset of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Full Participants: a group of people within a community of practice who are full members in the community with full access and some measure of authority (Lave, 1991).

Legitimate Peripheral Participation: a learning theory developed by Lave and Wenger that suggests all learning takes place within a social context, an ever-changing community of practice learning takes place by participating as a member of that community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Masters: members of a community of practice who are considered to be experts; members of this group make rules and determine practices for all members of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Member Checks: a researcher shares interpretations of the data with the participant to ensure that the researcher has understood the participant's perspective (Creswell, 1998).

Newcomers: members of a community of practice who are moving toward full participation in the community but who would still be considered to be a novice (Lave, 1991).

Old-timers: members of a community of practice who are full participants, knowledgeable, who can act as mentors to newcomers (Lave, 1991).

Patchwriting: "copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one synonym for another. . . Even when patchwriting is accompanied by citation and documentation, our standard academic rules label it a transgression subject to punishment." (Howard, 1999, p. xvii).

Plagiarism: The "appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit." ("Definitions of academic misconduct," 2009).

Purposive Sampling: participants are not chosen based on representation or the ability to generalize to a population but on the relevance of their experiences to the research questions (Patton, 1987).

Semi-Structured Interviews: an interview technique that has a list of questions to ask or topics to discuss, but the interviewer may reword and reorder questions to best respond to the natural progression of the conversation (Merriam, 1998).

Situated Learning: a learning theory asserting that all learning takes place within a social context (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Significance of the Study

Since research shows that contextual factors influence student academic integrity (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001), researching students is only addressing a part of the problem regarding understanding why plagiarism continues to be such a difficult problem to solve. It is paramount to understand what faculty think when they encounter students who plagiarize and what role faculty feel that they play within the institution's plagiarism policies and the Honor Code Council. In addition, viewing the issue under the lens of Lave and Wenger's theory of learning rooted in communities of practice accounts for the complex layers inherent in considering issues of authorship, ownership, and scholarship as well as how a faculty member operates under university policy and cultural norms. I do not propose that this dissertation will solve the problem of plagiarism, but I hope that it will further the conversation by gaining understanding of faculty perceptions and positionality, thus illuminating one dark corner of the issue.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although multitudes of texts are devoted to plagiarism, many of them are rooted in composition theory or language studies (Howard, 1995,1999; Buranen & Roy, 1999; Eisner & Vicinus, 2008; Marsh, 2007) and are either theoretically-based arguments or empirical small-scale studies of students. Not all research emanates from composition studies, however, and interdisciplinary interest in the topic ranges from psychological studies to business journals to studies rooted in educational disciplines. Although the interdisciplinary interest in plagiarism points to the large-scale interest in the problem, the interdisciplinary nature of plagiarism has made it more difficult to research, because no one discipline “owns” the plagiarism problem.

In addition, most large-scale research studies explore student academic integrity issues as a whole and include plagiarism as a component or subset of a whole host of forms of academic dishonesty, including using crib notes on exams, copying off another student’s paper, or collaborating on individual assignments (Bowers, 1964; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). Therefore, all transgressions tend to be lumped into a singular broad category. A student who copies answers off of a classmate’s exam is examined in the same way a student who plagiarizes a text. Thorpe, Pittinger, and Read (1999) found that cheating behaviors cannot be combined into one general category because the individual variables are too great. Instead, they suggest that future research should differentiate between different cheating behaviors to better understand the complexity of each behavior.

Although a preponderance of sentence definitions of cheating exist in the literature, Genereux and McLeod (1995) define cheating as “the attempt by students to obtain a desired academic outcome through prohibited or unauthorized means” (p. 687). It is this umbrella term that plagiarism has lived under in broad studies and surveys, and this is the landscape that many faculty traverse when they deal with issues of plagiarism in their classes, even though plagiarism encompasses the notion of authorship and ownership of ideas, a much more complex concept than indicated by Genereux and McLeod in their definition. Discussions of plagiarism are laden with contextuality, and contextuality differs among institutions, cultures and even among disciplines (Price, 2002). For example, citation conventions in the humanities tend to be quite different from those in engineering, and communities of practice can be quite focused and specialized even though the issue affects the broader academic community. In addition, plagiarism relies on cultural constructions, specifically, capitalist concepts of individual ownership of ideas and words. In his work on student plagiarism and the appropriation of ideas, Hess (2006) pointed out that Foucault used Marx’s text without attribution. According to Hess, Foucault argues that the educated reader should recognize the words of Marx and that established citation processes promote the author as capitalist. Situational factors such as disciplinary practices and political philosophies, therefore, contribute to the complexity of plagiarism and warrant innovative and thoughtful empirical research.

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty specifically tied to synthesizing and analyzing the words of others, and even researchers who focus on plagiarism issues do

not agree on the level of complicity students have in plagiarism issues, particularly plagiarism that stems from paraphrasing and summarizing works (Roig, 1999; Hale, 1987). For example, Roig's (1999) study found that students have great difficulty paraphrasing and summarizing work without committing unintentional plagiarism, but Hale's earlier study (1987) discovered that most students do, in fact, understand the concept of plagiarism, thus debunking the notion that many students commit unintentional plagiarism, or plagiarize without being aware that they are doing something wrong or dishonest. To complicate the issue, Roig's study (2001) on faculty revealed that not only did faculty disagree on what constitutes plagiarism, but approximately 30% of the professors in the study were given a sample paragraph to paraphrase and committed unintentional plagiarism themselves. In addition, because defining plagiarism in general terms is easy, but conceptualizing it into policy is difficult, plagiarism policies are often moving targets for both students and faculty. Understanding how faculty perceive and act on instances of student plagiarism is difficult, if not impossible, without a framework that contextualizes the academic world in which plagiarism occurs (Adler-Kassner, Anson, & Howard, 2008).

Because plagiarism is generally included as a component or a subset of broader academic dishonesty issues, it is indeed important to consider the broader studies on academic dishonesty in order to situate plagiarism within existing research. Therefore, I begin my literature review with an analysis of research conducted on students and faculty regarding academic integrity in higher education institutions. However, because the complexity of plagiarism differentiates it from general incidences of classroom

cheating, I also focus on the smaller body of research conducted specifically on plagiarism issues in multiple disciplines, including composition studies.

Student Academic Dishonesty Research

The typical academic dishonesty research article uses survey methodology to report either the numbers of students who have cheated or to discern why a particular student cheated. However, although multitudes of quantitative studies have focused on student cheating since Bowers (1964) conducted the first large scale study of American undergraduates in the 1960s, no one researcher has found the silver bullet to answer the question why students cheat and what can be done to stop it.

Research texts reflecting the preponderance of cheating on college campuses are nothing new. As early as 1941, Drake conducted research on a small number of undergraduates and found that 23% of the students studied reported having cheated at some time in their college careers (as cited in Bolin, 2004). The first seminal large-scale research study conducted by Bowers in 1962 surveyed five thousand students at 99 higher education institutions. Bowers (1964) concluded that 75% of the population surveyed admitted to at least one incident of academic dishonesty. Whitley's 2001 study concluded as many as 70% of all students self-reported committing at least one act of academic dishonesty. Cizek (1999) reported that surveying students is the most frequent method of gathering data and that this method is reasonably accurate; however, the results and conclusions among researchers vary and in some instances contradict each other.

Part of the difficulty with self-reporting is that the answers to survey questions tend to be rather general and cannot be broken down into individual parts. For example, McCabe and Trevino's (1997) survey of college students that replicated the Bowers study showed only one percent increase in self-reporting of cheating on written assignments. However, McCabe (2005) posits that the students in the that study had different perceptions of what constituted cheating behaviors from those students in the Bowers study. Student comments indicated that although students engaged in the same behaviors, the students in McCabe and Trevino's study did not see their actions as cheating behaviors. Some of the acts that Bowers' participants self-reported as being cheating behaviors, students in the McCabe and Trevino study did not perceive as being dishonest, particularly in the cases of plagiarism. In general, students in the study expressed confusion over the need to cite sources when material is paraphrased. McCabe's research highlights the fact that surveys need to be clear in defining what actions constitute cheating. In addition, studies that do not share operational definitions may get strikingly different results, making generalization difficult. Shared operational definitions, therefore, are key factors in getting accurate data.

It is widely assumed that cheating has increased over the years, particularly because of the publicity the issue has received. However, the attention that the media has focused on cheating in higher education, particularly sensational stories regarding academic dishonesty at service academies (Schmitt, 1994) has raised the hype and the garnered the attention of academia and the general public. Brown and Emmett (2001) question the assertion that cheating in college students has increased over the years.

They point to the wide variance in results of studies conducted on college students and conclude that the number of practices listed in student questionnaires affect the overall results of the percentage of cheating self-reported by college students. Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (1995) question the validity of the percentage rates researchers report regarding student cheating, because the numbers of self-reported cheating instances are affected greatly by the different types of cheating behaviors. Cole and McCabe (1996) agree that it is difficult to make comparisons between different studies over time, even when replicating a study on similar student populations, because in some cases, what students and faculty perceive as cheating behaviors may vary.

In addition to trying to pinpoint the scope of the problem, researchers have also attempted to parse out a single cause or variable that significantly influences cheating behaviors among students, but their results are at times contradictory and inconclusive. Some studies focus on individual characteristics and internal forces that may cause students to cheat, including gender, grade point average (McCabe et al., 2001), major (Rakovski & Levy, 2007) and self-efficacy (Finn & Frone, 2004). Studies regarding academic dishonesty tend to focus on two main underpinnings: a) students have some sort of internal locus of control based on either biological or psychological characteristics which makes them more or less likely to commit acts of academic dishonesty; or b) learning is situated within a social situation, and as such, should be examined within its social context.

In the first set of studies, cheating is thought to be anchored to a particular biological or psychological characteristic. Bolin (2004) examined students using a

framework of deviant behavior and delinquency and found that cheating occurred at the intersection between a lack of self-control, a personality trait, and perceived opportunity, which may exist within a college classroom or by membership in a fraternity or sorority.

A slightly different twist on this research perspective focused on the importance of a student's grade point average (GPA) to a student's college life, noting that maintaining a high GPA was more important to students than learning course material and may be an impetus to cheat (Becker, Geer, & Hughes, 1995). Yet another study by Finn and Frone (2004) found that cheating was related to both performance level and self-efficacy. When students have high self-efficacy and identify with the schools they attend, according to Finn and Frone, they are less likely to cheat. Even students with high performance were more likely to cheat if they had low self-efficacy, particularly students who are motivated by grades rather than learning. However, Tang and Zuo (1997) asserted in their study that there were no connections between self-esteem and cheating.

Although personality traits tend to be a popular subject of study, some researchers argue that biological factors affect the propensity to cheat as well. Thorpe, Pittinger, and Reed (1999) noted that more males than females self-report incidences of cheating. Whitley (2001) countered this finding, asserting that there are no differences in the numbers of self-reported incidences of cheating by females; however, other researchers concluded that males display more positive cheating-related behaviors, perhaps because women are socialized to avoid deviant behavior (Tibbetts, 1999;

Whitley, 2001). McCabe and Trevino (1997) found that in replicating the Bowers study, there was an increase in the numbers of females who self-reported cheating.

The other orientation or approach to research on student cheating in higher education places learning within a specific social context; therefore, researchers say cheating behaviors may be relevant to social structures and situations. Much of the seminal work regarding situational ethics and environmental influence on college cheating has been done by McCabe, Trevino, Butterfield, and Pavela, who have worked both collaboratively and individually in examining the issue. Their studies tend to focus on large-scale, multi-campus, multivariate studies (McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). In early studies, McCabe and Trevino (1997) asserted that although individual characteristics of students who cheat may provide helpful information, the results of a survey of 6,096 students from 31 colleges indicated that 61% of the students denied responsibility for cheating by indicating that the act was beyond an individual's control. Students reported that cheating was the only way to survive, particularly because their peers were cheating as well. Most of McCabe's studies indicate that contextual influences on cheating such as peer behavior, severity of penalties, chances of being caught, honor codes, and student understanding of academic integrity policy at school tend to be more influential on student behavior than individual characteristics students may possess. In addition, McCabe and Trevino (1997) found the strongest influence on behavior to be peer behavior. Like McCabe and Trevino, Robinson, Ambergey, Swank, and Faulkner (2004) found that social influences such as professor/student interaction

and peer influence were much more significant in determining student behavior than factors such as age, grade point average, or campus living arrangements.

Cheating also tends to be more prevalent on larger campuses (McCabe & Trevino, 1997), where peer influence would be more difficult to discern or enforce. However, Robinson et al. (2004) studied students in a rural university in Appalachia and found that the results of their study mirror other studies conducted on urban college students. Moeck (2002) cites the dearth of studies conducted on community college students but emphasizes that the problem of academic dishonesty is a recognized problem in community college students as well as in four-year urban and rural universities. No matter the size or scope of the institution, cheating is a source of major concern; therefore, it may be possible to identify factors that would influence academic integrity at an institution beyond size and geographical location.

Pulvers and Diekhoff (1999) note that even something as simple as classroom climate can have a positive or negative influence on student cheating. Students who cheat tend to justify their actions by asserting that they are more likely to cheat when the faculty is distant and the class is depersonalized. McCabe and Pavela (2004) assert that faculty should tell students that they value academic integrity and create a classroom environment that promotes academic integrity. Strange and Banning (2001) argue that college students' physical and psychological environments will influence the quality of their experiences. They further argue that students learn best when they are active participants in communities that provide a sense of belonging and security.

Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton and Renn (2010) refer to Lewin's interactionist perspective, $B=f(PXE)$ as being a foundation for the study of student development. Lewin's formula asserts that "behavior (B) is a function (f) of the interaction (X) of person (P) and environment (E)" (p. 29). Understanding how students relate to their environment and how environment can shape student development is particularly applicable in examining plagiarism in the classroom, because a macro definition of classroom (facility, faculty, institutional policies and procedures) define a large part of a college student's environment. Although it is not the scope of this study to tie faculty perceptions back to student behavior, looking at how students perceive their environment and act in relationship to that environment can lend contextual texture to research conducted on faculty perceptions and conversely how faculty shape environments in the college classroom.

Research on Faculty

If contextual influences such as classroom environment are paramount in determining whether or not students plagiarize, then studying faculty perceptions of academic dishonesty may very well contribute significantly to understanding the problem, since faculty determine much of the context regarding classroom environment, including instructional design, classroom procedures, and enforcement of institutional policies.

Faculty perceptions must be attended to in order to address situational contexts that promote academic integrity. However, few studies focus specifically on faculty perspectives, even though most incidences of cheating and plagiarism take place within

the construct of the classroom. McCabe (1993) adds that the studies that are conducted on faculty tend to be small in scale, often focusing on a single institution. In addition, at times faculty and students differ regarding what constitutes a violation of academic integrity (Schmelkin, Kaufman, & Liebling, 2001; Flint, Clegg, & Macdonald, 2006); therefore, research on student perceptions can be complemented by research on faculty perceptions. Burke's (1997) study of community college faculty in a Southern urban community college system confirmed that faculty recognize academic dishonesty as a serious one at their campuses. Burke recommended further study on this topic, suggesting that qualitative methods may be a productive way to examine the problems faculty face at a micro level.

Although most faculty recognize cheating as being a problem, they face many obstacles in addressing issues of plagiarism and other instances of cheating in the classroom. In the fall of 2008, a business instructor at Texas A&M (TAMU) International University posted the names of students whom he accused of plagiarism on his public course blog (Jaschik, 2008). He was summarily fired for his actions. He stated that he felt that the administration did not support faculty and encouraged teachers to overlook transgressions to maintain retention and continued state funding. Some faculty at TAMU International agreed with the instructor, saying that they were hesitant to report plagiarism for fear that the students would receive more support than the professors would. Other faculty noted that posting student names on a public blog constituted a FERPA violation. A TAMU International administration representative emphasized the students' right to due process and noted that the instructor should have

reported the violation to the Honors Council rather than handling the matter himself. Instructors find themselves in the crosshairs of bureaucracies that they do not trust or understand, and many of them try to deal with the problem under the radar of honors councils or review boards. In addition, Kezar and Lester (2009) argue that faculty exist within a multiplicity of subcultures. They live both in their academic disciplines and within institutional cultures, and values between these subcultures can vary. Faculty members caught between the values of discipline and institution, particularly in the context of detecting student plagiarism, can find themselves in a no-win situation.

Jendrek's (1989) study of full-time faculty at a public midwestern university revealed that 60% of the 337 faculty surveyed reported seeing a student cheat during an exam. Of those professors who reported witnessing an incident of cheating, 67% of them counseled the student, and 8% of them ignored the cheating. Only 20% followed the university's stated policy, which included meeting with the student and the department chair. When asked whether reporting a student would harm a student's record or employment opportunities, faculty responses indicated a lack of awareness of what would happen to a student who was reported for an academic integrity violation even though the penalties are stated in university policy. Jendrek notes that this lack of awareness may affect a professor's tendency to stray from university policy. However, she argues, professors who do not follow university policy are denying the students their right to due process, and professors who handle incidences of cheating on an individual basis may be allowing students to commit multiple violations without the university's knowledge.

Perhaps, however, there is a reason that faculty do not feel comfortable operating under university policy. Flint et al. (2006) noted that faculty who did not follow university policy sensed discord between university policies as they perceived them and their personal perceptions regarding how incidences of plagiarism should be dealt with. The study revealed that faculty felt that they were robbed of their individual professional judgment. Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson, and Ressel (2003) also found that faculty who do not have confidence in the university are less likely to follow institutional policy when dealing with academic dishonesty issues. They pointed out that although most universities are loosely coupled, faculty and administrators are forced to work in tandem in addressing academic integrity issues. In the status quo structure of the university, faculty members are called upon to make academic, autonomous judgments about student learning issues every day. University-wide, administratively-driven policies can be seen as a threat to faculty autonomy over academic matters.

McCabe (1993) explored whether faculty reactions to academic dishonesty are affected by having a student honor code, since schools with student honor codes have, for the most part, fostered a shared responsibility from administrators, faculty, and students in addressing the issue of cultivating a climate of academic integrity. McCabe compared faculty at code and non-code institutions and discovered that although faculty at institutions with honor codes are more likely to report incidences of cheating, only 69% of the faculty of honor code institutions reported following reporting procedures established by the institution. Even when faculty are collectively included in the process, therefore, they hesitate to fully participate in it individually. Nevertheless, Pavela and

McCabe (1993) do advocate for instituting honor codes because they establish a culture of fairness that students are likely to respond to.

Legal Issues Regarding Academic Dishonesty

Although the research shows that many faculty prefer to handle incidences of student dishonesty on their own, sometimes because they fear litigation, the irony is that a faculty who does not follow university policy may be more vulnerable to legal action. It is true that students are more litigious now than in the past. The growing trend of using the courts to resolve academic disputes originates from the courts' rejection of "*in loco parentis*." Prior to the rejection of *in loco parentis*, the courts bestowed to the schools the same powers that parents had over their children (Kaplin & Lee, 1995). A delicate balance exists, indeed, between doing what is best for the student and what is best for the institution. Historically, the burden of balance has rested on colleges and universities. Fox (1988) notes that in recent years, a student is more likely to file a lawsuit than appeal to the college administrators for clemency, and she reported that there was a significant increase in academic misconduct cases from the mid-1970s until the late 1980s, when her article was written. The increased litigiousness has not made solving academic conflicts any easier, however. In *Clayton v. Trustees of Princeton University* (1985), United States District Judge Ackerman asserts that dealing with academic misconduct issues is always difficult because of the intense emotions on both sides of any academic misconduct controversy.

The landmark case illustrating this shift in philosophy away from *in loco parentis* is *Dixon v. Alabama Board of Education* (1961). In refusing to hear the case, the

Supreme Court sent a message that the courts were no longer willing to allow public educational institutions to wield authority over students in violation of their rights (Fox, 1988). In *Dixon v. Alabama Board of Education*, the court considered the legality of the expulsion of several African American students by officials at Alabama State College by considering the students' right to due process under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Fourteenth Amendment states "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Most plaintiffs who bring lawsuits against faculty, administrators, and institutions do so under the auspices that their right to due process under the Fourteenth Amendment has been violated by the institution in some way. For example, in *McDonald v. Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois et al.* (1974), three medical students were charged with cheating on a comprehensive exam, were found guilty, and were expelled from the university. They were given a chance to pass the comprehensive exam and then be readmitted at a later date. The students charged that their Fourteenth Amendment right to due process had been violated. The U.S. District Court of Illinois reviewed the case and found no violation of due process. The court ruled that the students received a fair hearing; they were allowed counsel and the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses; and they were allowed to present testimony and evidence in their behalf. The finding of the tribunal was not arbitrary or capricious; rather, it was based on the evidence presented in the hearing. The district court in *McDonald* stated that the

students were “not entitled to a federal court collateral review of that hearing more penetrating than that required by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.”

At times, however, institutions are accused of not following their own policies, which puts them at risk. In *Hill v. Trustees of Indiana University* (1976), a student who was accused of plagiarism filed suit, claiming that his Fourteenth Amendment right to due process had been violated. In this case, there was a discrepancy between the procedure in the Student Code of Conduct and the Faculty Handbook, which is the procedure that the professor used in dealing with the student. When the Associate Dean discovered the discrepancy, he contacted the student and informed him that the Student Code of Conduct would be used instead of the procedure outlined in the Faculty Handbook. The student dropped out of the university and filed a suit in federal district court. The court found that even though there was a discrepancy in the initial notification of the procedure, that the procedure that was ultimately followed did not violate the student’s right to due process.

Clayton v. Trustees of Princeton University (1985) exemplifies that small discrepancies in procedure do not automatically violate a student’s rights. A student who had been found guilty of cheating on a biology lab practical charged the university with violating its own procedures. The U.S. District Court of New Jersey noted that small deviances from procedures do not constitute violations of due process and asserted that Clayton was “accorded basic procedural fairness.” In establishing policy for academic integrity issues, administrators keep current and landmark case law in mind as they craft and revise policies and procedures; however, implementing such a policy that accounts

for the role a faculty member plays in the classroom is much more complex, especially in plagiarism cases.

Many lawsuits filed by students regarding academic dishonesty focus on the issue of due process. Many cases are interpreted, appealed, reversed, appealed to higher courts, and some are reversed yet again. The lack of consistency in rulings from state courts to federal district courts to appellate courts, along with the plethora of cases available for review, indicate that this is an area of unsettled law. Although many of the due process complaints that eventually make it to court are found to be without merit, faculty and administrators are placed in stressful situations as their policies and procedures are tested and tested again. It is no wonder that McCabe's research reveals that faculty are hesitant to get involved in a process which may well lead them to court. Although a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in an academic dishonesty case may well settle the law, it is likely that this increase in litigiousness will go on indefinitely. In addition, potential future litigated areas may include students' challenging of using certain technologies to identify plagiarized works. Professors who apply procedures arbitrarily or capriciously may find that their judgments are challenged based on inconsistencies in procedure.

Research on Plagiarism

Making a distinction between plagiarism and other cheating behaviors can be difficult, as faculty have varying perceptions of the relationship between them. Flint et al. (2006) identified four models that faculty conceptualized when discussing plagiarism. Model A positioned cheating and plagiarism as being identical; Model B identified

cheating as being completely different from plagiarism; Model C incorporated some overlap, but faculty saw differences in the thought process between the two. Model D treated plagiarism as a subset of the larger category of cheating. My literature review followed Model D because most of the literature either deals with plagiarism individually or it includes plagiarism as a category of cheating.

One study that characterizes plagiarism as a sub-component of cheating surveyed 1800 students revisited nine of the schools studied in the Bowers' study, and the results revealed only a slight increase in self-reported overall cheating; however, the study found drastic increases in unauthorized collaboration on written assignments (McCabe & Trevino, 1997). As was the case with McCabe and Trevino's study, within the broader topic of academic integrity research, plagiarism is usually treated as a subtopic of cheating in general, and data are collected by asking students to self-report certain behaviors. For example, one survey asked students to indicate if they had failed to cite references in their written work (McCabe & Trevino, 1997). Although this is excellent data to have, the survey question does not probe the assumptions that lie behind the question or below the surface. For one, it assumes that students know how to cite sources correctly and that not citing references is a conscious and intentional act. Flint et al. (2006) conducted a qualitative study of 26 faculty in an Australian university and discovered that while some infractions constituted plagiarism among faculty of all disciplines, such as lifting material from sources without attribution, some faculty struggled with more complex issues such as collaboration and intent.

Devlin and Gray (2007) further distinguished between cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is always intentional, they assert, whereas plagiarism could be intentional or unintentional. Therefore, studies that ask students to self-report or to report observations of others may not answer the question of why students plagiarize. Devlin and Gray conducted a qualitative study of Australian college students to try to understand why students plagiarize. They asked students to report on observations of their peers rather than self-reporting their own actions. Semi-structured interviews revealed that students categorized plagiarists into eight distinct categories, including ill-prepared students who lack academic skills, students who do not understand plagiarism or feel that they have not been taught how to document properly, students who feel pressure from school, students who are lazy, students who take pride in plagiarizing, and students who have enough money to buy papers or pay for extra tutorial services.

Technology and Plagiarism

Some researchers assert that intentional plagiarism has increased dramatically because of the ease of access to information via the Internet (Robinson-Zanartu et al., 2005). Researchers also assert that the problem has increased in the past 20 years because the Internet and other electronic media tools have made it easier for students to access and use electronic information (Martin, 2005). Szabo and Underwood (2004) surveyed undergraduate students at a large university in the UK and found that over 50% of students surveyed reported that they would consider using the Internet to plagiarize, particularly in independent researched writing assignments. Willen (2004) cites a New York Times article revealing that 38% of students surveyed acknowledged plagiarizing

from the Internet during the year they were surveyed and asserts that in order to solve the plagiarism problem, academic integrity scholars must understand the conditions under which plagiarism thrives.

Defining Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be a much more complex problem than just cutting and pasting from the Internet, however, because of the layers and complexities of authorship and appropriation of texts, including discordance and misunderstanding between faculty and students in negotiating issues of plagiarism and appropriation of texts. As Grossberg (2008) states, changing notions about sole authorship and “postmodern claims about the cultural contingency of all social constructions have fostered uncertainty about the link between textual construction and ownership that challenge that understanding of plagiarism” (pp. 164-165). Many studies on plagiarism, however, use a binary either/or notion of plagiarism. Plagiarism is viewed as something a student does or does not do, regardless of the social context or social construction of the academic discipline the student is writing in.

To that end, Martin (1994) attempts to clarify the issue by providing some clear distinctions regarding what may be perceived as being plagiarism:

- 1) Word-for-word plagiarism: copying material from a text using the exact wording without acknowledging the source, using quotation marks, or both.
- 2) Plagiarism of secondary sources: copying text from a secondary source and giving credit to the original source but not the secondary source.

- 3) Plagiarism of ideas: taking an idea from a source without using the text and not acknowledging the source of the idea.
- 4) Plagiarism of authorship: taking an entire document written by someone else and putting one's own name on it. (p. 37)

Although Martin's definition further classifies incidences of plagiarism, it still does not address the complexity of how students acquire, assimilate, and acknowledge the ideas of others in their academic writing. Adler-Kassner et al. (2008) acknowledge the "challenge of moving the conversation beyond a moral dualism, reductionism, and oversimplification" (p. 232). It is this simplification of a complicated issue that prompted me to look for a new way of framing plagiarism to better understand the issue and to recognize it for its complexity and social contexts.

To complicate matters, faculty and students tend to perceive plagiarism differently regarding the seriousness of an offense. Students tend to view exam cheating as a more serious form of cheating than plagiarism or unauthorized collaboration (Thorpe, Pittenger, & Reed, 1999). However, in much of the literature on plagiarism, plagiarists are often referred to in the most virulent of criminal terms, painting them as being morally bereft. Kolich (as cited in Howard, 1999) refers to plagiarists as being "unworthy of our shared virtue, and they are not generally teachable, or worse, have refused teaching. Once they plagiarize an essay, their problems are essentially moral and not pedagogical" (p. 90). The act of plagiarism itself has been referred to as a "heinous crime within the academic community" (Pecorari, 2003, p. 317).

It is McCabe's premise regarding community and culture that helped me understand that I needed to find a new way to look at the problem to try to gain new and meaningful insights into ways to build a culture of academic integrity. It is my intent to build on McCabe's notion that it takes a village to educate a student. I also draw from the notions of Adler-Kassner et al. (2008) that plagiarism is framed within academic institutions, where faculty members are awarded or denied tenure based on sole ownership of ideas. As Adler-Kassner et al. state, "For academics, it is difficult to imagine doing research for an institution, writing it up, and not wanting to 'own' it" (p. 239). It is for this reason that it is important to position the faculty within the discussion of plagiarism issues, even going so far as to focus on the faculty members themselves. However, an assumption that all of a certain group share definitions and values would be erroneous, because these definitions and values tend to be culturally and politically bound. According to Adler-Kassner et al., "many cases of so-called plagiarism occur at the borders where one set of (typically academic) values and practices blurs into another (typically public) set of values and practices" (p. 239). In addition, multiple communities of practice exist even within a single university, which makes plagiarism a moving target for students, faculty, and administrators.

It is important to examine and consider how students learn within this contextual landscape, where opinions and practices are disparate and confusing. Citation conventions are often explicitly taught in freshman composition classes. Although teachers in subsequent classes in all disciplines may require students to use source material, they may not explicitly discuss documentation practices in their own discipline,

or they may not provide practice in documenting sources as a part of the course curriculum. As Beaufort (2000) mentions, this method of teaching writing assumes that students are able to apply general principles to specific contexts, but she notes that students can only become an expert at a task if they have context-specific knowledge and understand how to apply that knowledge to practice. Schuetze (2004) conducted a study of developmental psychology students and found that students who were tested on their knowledge of plagiarism, including identifying plagiarized material, did not improve their ability to document sources properly, but students who completed a hands-on homework assignment on documentation and citation did improve their skills. She concluded that just teaching students about plagiarism does not give them the ability to apply that information; students need the opportunity to practice documentation skills with instruction and feedback from the professor to improve their skills.

Marsh (2007) notes that the research paper, most often taught in freshman composition classes to teach students proper research techniques in hopes of curtailing plagiarism, may have ultimately had the opposite effect, since the garden variety term paper encourages students to draw from scholarly research in a mechanical way, discouraging the voice of the student writer and emphasizing propriety in drawing from source material to cobble together a research paper. If students are taught a cut and paste method for research, then the typical freshman research paper may actually encourage plagiarism rather than discourage it, according to Marsh.

Beaufort (2000) also notes that in situated learning it is important for learners to understand the *whys* as well as the *hows* of a given learning activity. Therefore,

exploring the role faculty play in their classes in bringing students into the community of practice of scholarly writing, with all of its explicit and implicit rules and conventions, can lend insight into the relationship between faculty and students. In addition, understanding how faculty operate both within and outside of constraints or guidelines of a single university's institutional policies and practices layer institutional context onto classroom context. Instructors at the case institution must include an academic integrity statement information on their syllabi. Further instruction is provided to faculty through the institution:

Upon accepting admission to [name of university], a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the [name of institution] community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. ("Syllabus Requirements," 2009)

Although faculty are required to include statements about academic integrity, one of my research questions asked how faculty support student learning of acceptable practices, including activities or lessons that support or strengthen their students' knowledge of acceptable research practices and conventions. For example, at SUNY Buffalo, when psychology professor Scheutze (2004) evaluated the effectiveness of a short homework assignment she gave to her students to teach them how to cite sources correctly and how

to avoid plagiarism, she reported that students who completed the homework assignment expressed confidence that they would be able to avoid plagiarism in the future.

As Price (2002) argues, faculty are put in a precarious situation because their responsibilities include both teaching students about plagiarism and punishing them for their offenses. This dual role leads to a need for faculty and institutions to make plagiarism issues non-contextual and absolute. However, decontextualization is impossible, Price says, and she argues for teachers to communicate a contextual understanding of plagiarism to their students: “Acknowledging that the definition of plagiarism does not persist stably across contexts will, paradoxically, help open up that safe space that we wish to offer our students. We can explain that what we call plagiarism is located in a specific setting: *this* historical time, *this* academic community” (p. 90). If we accept Price’s argument, then faculty in all disciplines and in all classes share the responsibility for teaching students to practice good researched writing skills.

Case Study

In addition, if plagiarism can be located within a particular social construct, then using case study for my research seemed to be the most logical choice of methodology, because it is not generalizable beyond the case itself, yet it can yield data that may help illuminate the very notion that plagiarism is socially constructed within the academy. In addition, although studying the issue with quantitative broad brush strokes may have provided a base for study, it may now be time to examine the phenomenon from the inside out for a view of the issue that takes into account the academic community within which it occurs. Yin (2009) indicates that quantitative data collected by surveys can

attempt to gather information on both phenomenon and context, but the survey is limited in the depth at which it can explore context. Case study design does not separate phenomenon and context. This focus does limit researchers who wish to generalize, however. Stake (2005) advises using case study design that focuses on understanding the specific case and warns researchers not to design a study with intent to generalize. It is my goal, however, to find out what faculty operating within the specific construct of one university perceive; therefore, my intent is by its very nature focused and limited to *this* phenomenon, in *this* context.

One way of approaching qualitative methodology is to find a strategy that will provide the best lens to viewing the problem or issue being studied. The case study is a method of qualitative research that is bounded and limited to a single unit of study that is “particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29). One particular type of case study focuses on a phenomenon within a single bounded system (Merriam, 1998). My case study focused on the single phenomenon of student plagiarism, and my study was limited to faculty perceptions of student plagiarism at a single university. Yin (2009) calls this a “typical case” (p. 47) because it represents a common phenomenon. (Stake, 2005) defines case studies as being intrinsic, instrumental, or collective. A researcher designs an intrinsic case when the most important thing to understand is the case itself. The instrumental case is used when an issue is studied through the lens of an individual case. The collective case consists of multiple cases examined together. My case study design was primarily instrumental, because I wanted to discover as much as possible about how faculty perceive incidences of plagiarism in their classes; however, I

anticipate that my design will naturally embed intrinsic elements because the case study university is a large, public Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive university that has some unique characteristics, including an honor code, a long tradition of military service, and a conservative student population. As Hancock and Algozzine (2006) emphasize, the point of case study research is discovery; therefore, through interview data, observations, artifacts, and other pertinent materials, a picture of the phenomenon emerged and the contextuality of the case was unpacked.

Merriam (1998) describes case study as an “intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single unit or bounded system” (p. 12). She goes on to explain that case study can be combined with other qualitative research methods. I will combine this case study with what Merriam terms the “basic” qualitative study, which seeks to understand how the participants view an event, phenomenon, or process. Case studies are dependent on social context and construction and the phenomenon or process cannot be understood outside its natural context. The researcher interviews a purposive sample and analyzes the data by finding commonalities as well as differences between them. These commonalities form categories and themes that emerge during the research. In this dissertation, the categories were analyzed within the single unit of case study because all of my participants will be faculty at a single university. Therefore, I was able to draw from the common culture the faculty share; in addition, I was able to review policies and procedures unique to the case university to frame the study in its natural context. As Merriam (1998) states, the aim of case study is to understand process and discovery, and perhaps to shape future policy and procedures within the context of the study.

Theoretical Framework

My research was a case study of faculty perceptions of student plagiarism which uses Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation as a clarifying lens with which to view many of the issues that emerge between faculty and students when faculty encounter student plagiarism. To that end, I found Lave and Wenger's theory of legitimate peripheral participation and communities of practice particularly suited as a lens with which to view the plagiarism issue because it allows for the dynamic nature of learners interacting within confines determined by the membership of the community. Much of Lave and Wenger's work focuses on hands-on, vocational learning, but I believe that Lave and Wenger's emphasis on community practice is particularly applicable to this case. Professors have been telling students about plagiarism for years, but for the most part, many of them placed the onus of responsibility on the student, who is often ill-equipped to understand the nuances of textual assimilation and synthesis.

This theory allowed me to look at the problem with the context necessary to understand the issue that I am tackling. Although other researchers (Howard, 1999; Adler-Kassner, et al., 2008) have referred to the nature of community in determining plagiarism rules, Lave and Wenger's theory gives voice to the essence of the role community plays in any socially constructed activity or skill and places it into a concrete frame with which to look more closely at how people learn. Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss learners within the community as being newcomers, old-timers, or even masters. It is the responsibility of the old-timer to provide access to the newcomer, and learners

are dynamically positioned within the community regarding full participation. See Figure 1 below.

The Dynamic Positionalities of Legitimate Peripheral Participation

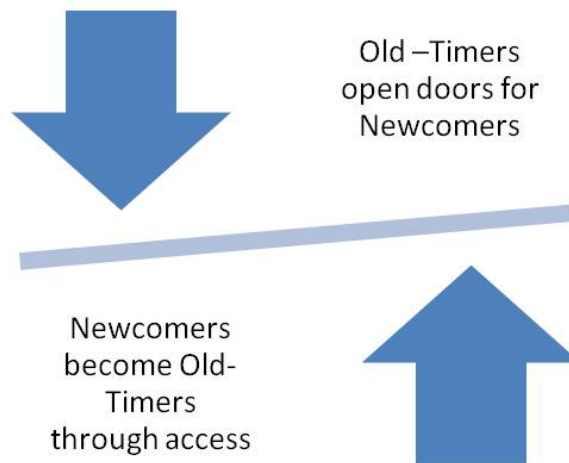


FIG 1. The Dynamic Positionalities of Legitimate Peripheral Participation

However, learners can occupy more than one position in the community, or if they do not occupy one position, the positionalities are so fluid that they appear to occupy more than one position. As practices change, learners change positions within that practice.

Newcomers become old-timers and old-timers can become newcomers. See Figure 2 below.

The Overlap in Positionalities of Legitimate Peripheral Participation

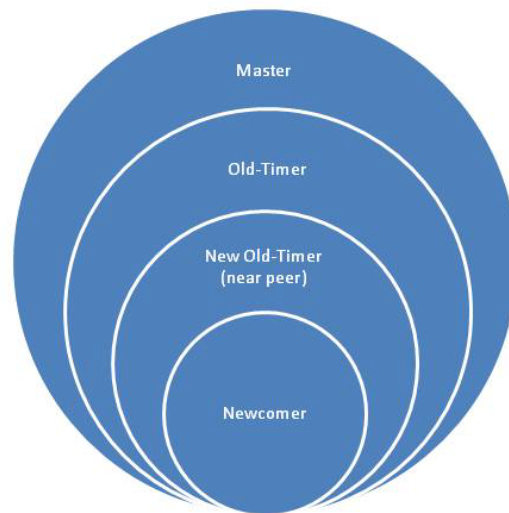


FIG 2. The Overlap in Positionalities of Legitimate Peripheral Participation

Rather than seeing plagiarism as a crime against academia where teachers are forced into a position of “catching” plagiarists, I examined how students, faculty, and administrators are positioned within a community of practice and how that community of practice functions, or how those multiple communities of practice function through the eyes of the instructors, or the *old-timers*. Adler-Kassner et al. (2008) urge educators

to use “the concept of ‘plagiarism’ as a starting point for teaching students to recognize and adapt to the wider variations in the values information the creation, use, and representation of text in the academy and the larger culture” (p. 232). Although this is appropriate advice for faculty, my research was designed to discover what faculty actually perceive as their role within the context of the classroom and the university community at large when violations of codes of ethics occur.

As Lave and Wenger (1991) assert, access to a learning community is regulated and limited by the discourse that consumes it. One must learn to speak as a member of the community, and a member of the community is defined by his or her participation in the discourse. To that end, learners then do not learn from talk; rather, they learn *to* talk as members of the community. Therefore, students do not learn how to synthesize source material in their writing by being told about it; they learn by doing it. This theoretical concept directly relates to Howard’s (1999) argument that citation practices act as gatekeepers to preserve the elitist nature of the community:

At one time, being literate was a mark of membership in the intellectual elite.

Now the great majority of the populace is literate. How, then, do intellectuals mark their superiority? By making non-membership (signaled by the absence of a difficult textual skill) a crime, and by persuading everyone—members and nonmembers alike—that the definition of this crime is not arbitrary, but that it proceeds from natural, necessary textual values expressed in the binaries of collaboration/autonomy, mimesis/originality, and, especially, plagiarism/authorship. (pp. 96-97)

Howard's notions about the social constructionist nature of the community of practice regarding citation practices and plagiarism dovetail into Lave and Wenger's (1991) assertions about how faculty operate within their communities in general and provide a framework for examining plagiarism from within a community of practice or multiple communities of practice, allowing the issue the complex analysis it deserves rather than re-establishing what is already known: that plagiarism is a problem on today's college campuses. My goal was to understand the complexity of plagiarism by understanding the views and the perspectives of one key group within that community of practice: the faculty member. Not all faculty are the same, of course. Some faculty use the same reductionist terms that have been used in many articles about academic plagiarism; others see their role as being mentor to the newcomer. However, my research positioned faculty by listening to them and understanding how their perceptions affected their interactions with students.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), all learning takes place within a social context, and learners learn by becoming a part of a community of practice. They learn from speaking the discourse of their community and do not learn from being talked to about the discourse of their community. Legitimate peripheral participation is a "descriptor of engagement in social practice that entails learning as an integral constituent" (p. 35). Lave and Wenger believe that "belonging is a condition of learning" (p. 35). They describe legitimate peripheral participation as a learner's existence within a dynamic social practice. In their theory, peripheral is not a negative term; rather, it suggests access to a community of practice. Lave and Wenger insist that legitimate

peripheral participation is not pedagogy, but it is a way to understand how people learn, and they encourage others to view academic pedagogy through the lens of legitimate peripheral practice to better inform practice.

Lave and Wenger (1991) also question the effectiveness of the traditional teacher/learner relationship and stress that learning does not mean to blindly assimilate but to become a part of the every changing community. As Lave and Wenger state, the “status quo needs as much explanation as change” (p. 57), and there will be conflict within the community as practice changes. Therefore, as postmodern notions of authorship and ownership of ideas change, so changes the community. Lave and Wenger suggest a dramatic shift from the “individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world” (p. 43). Understanding that the world is socially constructed, Lave and Wenger assert, eliminates false dualities and abstractions which can obscure understanding. It is impossible to understand plagiarism without understanding that academic discourse is in and of itself socially constructed by old-timers and masters within the community.

It is this context that Stanley Fish (2010) referred to in his *New York Times* opinion piece entitled “Plagiarism Is Not a Big Moral Deal.” He recalled an instance where he discovered two professors had plagiarized his work in their book. He noted that the authors were “professionally culpable” for the offense, but he made the point that the offense was an offense against a community of practice and not against moral law:

Everyday disciplinary practices do not rest on a foundation of philosophy or theory; they rest on a foundation of themselves; no theory or philosophy can

either prop them up or topple them. As long as the practice is ongoing and flourishing its conventions will command respect and allegiance and flouting them will have negative consequences. (para. 15)

Because I examined the community of practice and did not just focus on the singular act of plagiarism, I gained insight into why some faculty share Fish's attitudes about the severity of violations while others assign moral value to the act.

In addition, the framework I chose is apt because although my research participants are faculty, the study takes into account the entire community. Most studies are conducted on students, but yet faculty are the ones who are put in a position to make value judgments on student work every day. Therefore, my attention was focused on the faculty to gain a greater understanding of their positionality in the community of practice, their perceived roles in working with students, and their perception of the university community at large in dealing with student authorship issues.

And as is the case within a community of practice or "village," as McCabe (2005) terms it, faculty members are sometimes unsure of or do not share definitions of what constitutes plagiarism. Roig (2001) states that there is no real operational definition for paraphrasing and that sources vary regarding what is acceptable in academic practice. Rebecca Moore Howard (1999) even argues that appropriation within complex texts is a part of the learning progression and terms this appropriation as "patchwriting," which she asserts should not be categorized as plagiarism.

Howard (1999) proposes that plagiarism is more than an either/or proposition. Students appropriate as part of the learning process, according to Howard. She notes that

“patchwriting” is the act of “copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym substitutes” (p. 90). Rather than railing against the evil nature of plagiarists, she asks her readers to consider that patchwriting happens when readers have not yet completely synthesized the ideas in the writer’s text and are not yet to the point in their learning to integrate the textual ideas as their own, completely. Rather than portraying patchwriters as plagiarists, Howard argues that patchwriting is a component of learning a new idea or concept. However, she states, patchwriting is considered to be a subcomponent of plagiarism, and plagiarism in turn is a subcomponent of academic dishonesty, so there is currently no real room for a discussion that considers the process of learning something new, only the final outcome of not learning the social conventions that determine membership into the academic intellectual community. It is this space that deserves attentive exploration. To this end, Roy (1999) found in her study of faculty that as readers, they took offense at the lack of ethos in the writer who plagiarized or they were affronted and victimized by students who plagiarized, taking it as a personal offense. In many cases of plagiarism, students are neither lacking in ethics nor are attempting to steal from the academic world. If the problem were that simple, one of the multitudes of studies would have found the smoking gun at the root of the plagiarism problem.

In some cases, however, Howard’s assertion regarding patchwriting as learning has created more contradiction than clarification of the issue. Marsh (2007) contends that Howard’s assertions regarding knowledge acquisition at the summary stage of writing ignores the complex relationship between knowledge acquisition through reading. Marsh

questions that critical reading leaves no visible trace of textuality. His reflection is not intended to disprove that knowledge acquisition does *not* take place in the process of moving from patchwriting to summary; rather, Marsh is pointing out the difficulty of pinpointing “how, when, and where the work comes to pass, so to speak, as a recognizable, and thus recognized, good habit of mind” (p. 117). Marsh ends his argument in flux, saying “there really is no knowing what happens on the way from reading to writing” (p. 118).

However, Howard’s body of work on plagiarism and the nature of authorship has reframed the argument and taken it out of a binary state, i.e., either the student did or did not plagiarize. Howard suggests that learning complex information requires one to move progressively from appropriation to synthesis and urges professors to recognize that “we are all plodders, in the sense that we all collaborate with source texts, not just conceptually, but also linguistically. Hiding the traces of linguistic writer/text collaboration is an esoteric skill that only those immersed in textual studies are likely to develop” (p. 96).

Even if students were skilled at eliminating textual footprints from other writers, a more basic skill is the discernment of common knowledge in the field. When I give presentations and workshops on avoiding plagiarism, no question is more complex than how to know if something is common knowledge. Many students are told that if they find the information in four or more sources, or if the information that an educated audience would know, then the information can be considered to be common knowledge. However, students who follow these rules blindly may find that they have

committed unintentional plagiarism. England (2008) researched student essays to gain insight into how common knowledge is taught and understood by undergraduate students. She found information from a single news source that had been repeated or syndicated multiple times on the web, thus constituting four different sources in an undergraduate's eyes. England asserts that the Internet may be redefining what constitutes a source, just as the Internet is often blamed for being the root of all plagiarism evil. It is likely that faculty and students have different ideas of what constitutes common knowledge, even though both groups are following the same general parameters, because they occupy different spaces and roles in their community of practice.

England (2008) also discovered assumptions behind general definitions of what constitutes common knowledge. She asserts that many definitions are vague and that faculty assume that students will be able to know what their audience knows and does not know. In addition, England states, the examples students are given to model common knowledge are often too general and vague for students to synthesize and apply that knowledge to their own writing. Students are also asked to make judgments about common knowledge based on contextual clues about what is acceptable truth in a given field. England argues that students are expected to pick up on these cues as an expert in the field would be able to do. Perhaps England's most apt point, however, is that in many common texts and in faculty lectures, common knowledge is assumed to be immutable and does not account for new information or sea changes in thought in a particular discipline.

The assumptions that England discusses can be the source of misunderstanding between tacit faculty expectations and student intentions. General statements on syllabi regarding plagiarism rarely discuss all of the contextual clues that students may need to avoid unintentional plagiarism. Classifying patchwriting and errors regarding common knowledge as plagiarism further alienates the student and the professor. If, in fact, we have not yet found the cause and remedy to academic dishonesty among college students, it may be due to the way we examine plagiarism as an act of self-volition within the student academic population rather than examining it within the constructs of teaching and learning.

Therefore, examining plagiarism within the academic community through the faculty's eyes may provide further insight into the issue, because as Merriam, Courtenay, and Baumgartner (2003) state, studying communities of practice can provide insight into the "interrelationship of participation, practice, learning, and identity" (p. 187). In addition, according to Merriam et al., learning is not only gaining knowledge but also forming an identity within the community itself. Faculty have an identity in this community, and it is important to know where they position themselves and how they position their students to navigate issues of authorship, appropriation, textual synthesis, and knowledge acquisition. Ultimately, and more to the point, it is important to explore what happens when things fall apart—what do faculty feel and what do they do when they discover plagiarism in their classes? How teachers, or old-timers, operate within their community of practice and interact with newcomers and masters may help

researchers and practitioners understand one of the most pivotal roles in the community of practice: the faculty.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This case study focused on faculty from a single institution rather than a number of institutions. Yin (2009) notes that there are multiple rationales for choosing a single unit case study rather than a multiple unit case study. One rationale is that the case is a “typical case” (p. 47) which is representative of a commonplace occurrence. The unit chosen for this case study is typical because plagiarism is commonly associated with being a major problem in universities, and faculty often hold the same positionality from university to university. This single unit case study was combined with what Merriam (1998) terms the “basic” (p. 11) qualitative study, which seeks to understand how participants view an event, phenomenon, or process. Case studies are dependent on social context and construction, and the phenomenon or process cannot be understood without this context. Therefore, the focal point of this study is to find out how faculty at this particular university understand incidences of plagiarism in their classes.

Another rationale for single unit case study is to test and confirm or test and expand an established theory. Since understanding plagiarism begets an understanding of how faculty perceive standards in academic writing, it was necessary to consider examining the problem with a lens that allowed for the complexities in the teaching/learning process. In addition, Yin (2009) states that choosing an appropriate theory during the design process will influence the research question and in turn, the analysis of the data, which Yin terms *analytic generalization*. Therefore, the theory acts

as a framework through which to examine or compare the data. The theory can also test or extend the theory.

Population

The population of this study includes a purposive sampling of 11 faculty from various academic disciplines, from all university colleges except one and multiple departments within those colleges, representations by both males and females, a mix of ethnicities, and with differing levels of rank within the university, from lecturer to full professor. My other criterion included seeking out both faculty who had gone through this university for either their graduate or undergraduate study and faculty who had studied and taught elsewhere. This was important because I was curious about differences in responses by Gouldner's (1958) notions of locals, whose loyalty is focused on the organization or institution to which they belong, and cosmopolitans, who prioritize their expertise within their scholarly community over their membership in a single institution. In addition, it was important that the faculty member was currently or had recently taught writing in one of more of their classes. Since the university has a writing in the disciplines program, many of the faculty currently teach a writing in the disciplines designated course. In addition, I received referrals from faculty members on campus. Since the university has an active writing in the disciplines program, I focused on writing-intensive course instructors in a variety of disciplines. I began by speaking to those faculty members, and I used snowball sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to facilitate finding other faculty on campus to interview. My sampling methods garnered faculty from multiple positions within the university as well as gender, age, and

ethnicity. Figure 3 is a summary chart of the participants' demographic and personal information:

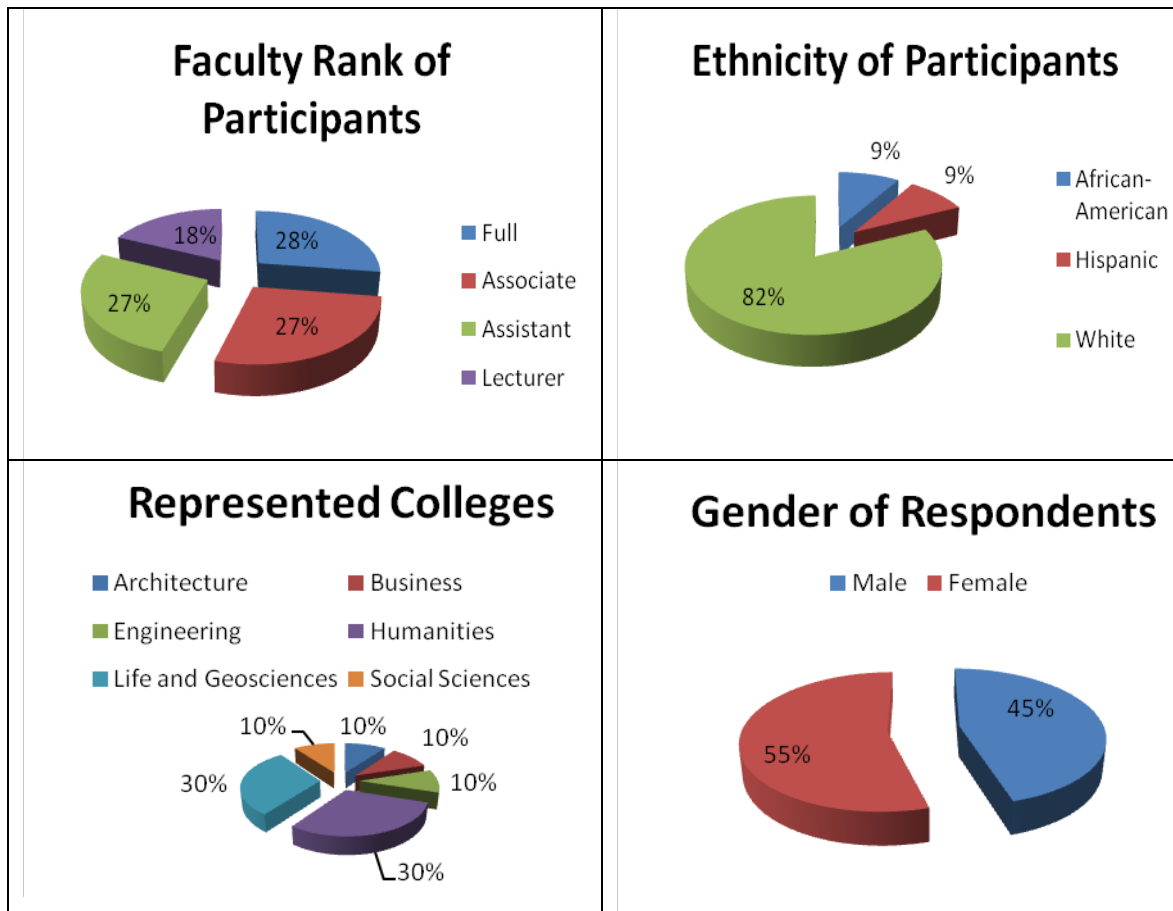


FIG 3. Demographics of Faculty Participants

Although I sought a wide spectrum of faculty demographics, matching to university demographics was not possible or practical because of the purposive sampling method I chose regarding interviewing faculty who teach writing either as a core component of their classes or who teach a writing in the disciplines course. Although I

cast a wide net to get a variety of perspectives, qualitative research does not attempt to make broad generalizations across a population; therefore, this study examined the subjective perspectives of participants who have experienced the phenomenon being studied. I did not include teaching assistants, however, because they are not yet old-timers. In my data, however, my participants discussed being models for their teaching assistants as they worked through student plagiarism issues.

Validity Issues

The researcher interviewed a purposive sample and analyzed the data by finding commonalities as well as differences within the data. As Patton (1987) stated, triangulation of data can occur through observations, interviews, documentation, and by examining consistency within these data. I verified the data by using triangulation of data sources by examining pertinent documents, including university policies and an interview with the Honor Code Office director. I compared that information with data from interviews from participants and my own observations of actions the participants take in dealing with student plagiarism issues.

Since I used emergent design, I was sensitive to the direction the data lead me and did not try to predict results or possible interpretations before analysis. Patton (1987) suggests examining the data in different ways to see if different results or interpretations emerge to increase validity. He notes that alternative explanations are not intended to discount or disprove initial interpretations; rather, it encourages the researcher to look for the best interpretation and not the only interpretation.

These commonalities for categories and themes that emerged during the research were analyzed using Lave and Wenger's communities of practice learning theory, which also allowed for triangulation of theory. Theory triangulation did not necessarily help validate my findings, but offered an alternative interpretation of the data (Rothbauer, 2008). In addition, Patton (1987) notes that description of the data is not sufficient to understand the problem and asserts that description must be examined in the light of analysis.

The categories were analyzed within the single unit of case study because all of my participants are faculty at a single university. Therefore, the common culture provided a solid basis for discussion, since all faculty operate within similar constructs, although departments and disciplines many time have their own subcultures; in addition, I reviewed policies and procedures regarding academic practices, including plagiarism, to frame the study in its natural context. As Yin (2009) suggests, using construct validity can define and focus the research problem and provide a way for the researcher to accurately measure the research questions. Multiple sources of evidence were used for triangulation and to corroborate multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2009).

Interview Techniques

I used a hybrid of two interview techniques to structure my interviews. I used the interview guide and the informal conversational (Patton, 1987) approaches to interview participants. In using the interview guide approach, I prepared a list of questions to ensure that I explored the same topics with each participant. However, I needed flexibility of rewording or reframing questions within the conversation to ensure that I

followed lines of conversation naturally as they occurred. Therefore, I also used the informal conversational approach, where questions are derived from natural conversation, and individuals have the freedom to explore ideas and notions that might arise in an individual interview. This technique was particularly helpful as participants shared stories of student plagiarism and their responses to those stories. One problem with the informal conversational approach is the difficulty of gathering any type of consistent data; in addition, I wanted to keep my interviews at approximately an hour and a half. Therefore, I used a list of prescribed questions by using the interview guide approach and then used the informal conversation approach to be true to my commitment to emergent design and to be open to alternative ideas, because even though I designed questions based on what I have read and learned about the research problem, the informal conversational approach ensured that I had not limited my study by my own unintentional omissions of unforeseen questions and issues. In addition, the informal conversational approach both allowed and led to follow-up interviews with one participant who wanted to share thoughts based on an experience that happened after our interview. That follow-up was completely guided by the informal conversational approach.

One additional interview was conducted with a staff member familiar with honor code office procedures at the university, and this interview was used to triangulate the data to improve validity. This interview was helpful in providing an alternative narrative to many of the comments made by the faculty and helped discern fact from urban legend.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation was the researcher, who conducted personal interviews lasting approximately one to one and a half hours. Approximately 8-10 open-ended questions was used in a hybrid interview technique, which allows the participant to elaborate on responses and allows the interviewer to follow up with questions that arise during the interview. The premise behind hybrid interviewing is to gain insight and not to hypothesize or explain (Fontana & Frey, 1998) and yet to ensure that I gathered the same type of data from each participant. An emergent design strategy was used; therefore, the process was iterative as the researcher learns more from the participants, and interview questions were added and deleted or rewritten throughout the process.

Role of Researcher

In addition to interviews, documentation which focuses on academic integrity policies and procedures were collected from the case institution to allow for further analysis. Since case study research requires the researcher to spend more time immersed in the environment to understand the situational factors that affect the phenomenon (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006), my positionality and familiarity with the traditions, policies, and structure of the university assisted me in understanding the context where plagiarism occurs.

As I am the researcher, and I am the primary instrument, I acknowledged that my own perspectives on the phenomenon may shape the way I looked at the issue. Although I bracketed those perspectives in order to facilitate the discovery of new information, I found that I have had many of the same experiences as the participants I interviewed,

although we may have had different perspective on the experiences. As a former community college writing teacher, community college academic administrator, and a university writing center administrator, I have had extensive experience in working with students in developing their academic writing abilities and in working with students who have breached standards of practice, either intentionally or unintentionally. Because of my familiarity with the issue and my ability to relate to the participants, I used Yin's (2009) term "participant-observer" (p. 111) to characterize my role and relationship with my participants.

Procedures

Interviews with participants were conducted in person, and conversations were digitally recorded using an Apple ITouch. Field notes were taken on occasion to note follow-up thoughts or observations, but the recordings provided the data used in the study. The researcher met face-to-face with participants for approximately one to two hours for a personal interview. The informal conversational interview strategy was used to enable pursuance of relevant information not included in the interview questions and to allow for multiple conversations over time if necessary (Patton, 1987). Participants designated a location that was most comfortable for them to speak on campus. Consent to participate in this research study was assumed by the participant's participation in the interview; however, the participant was informed that he or she may withdraw from the study at any time throughout the process. All participants signed consent forms before the interview began.

The researcher transcribed all of the digital recordings personally, which allowed for progressive intimacy with the data. As the data were transcribed, categories and themes began to emerge even before conscious analysis took place. While listening to the recorded session through earphones, the researcher spoke into a separate computer microphone where Dragon Naturally Speaking was used to transcribe the data. The researcher first trained the software to recognize her voice to improve accuracy. After transcription, the transcripts were reviewed for accuracy and edited for error. By doing all of the transcriptions personally and through multiple reviews of the data through member checks and multiple methods of coding, the data became familiar.

Member checks were conducted after digital recordings were transcribed. Each participant received an electronic copy of the transcript to review. Participants were asked to review the document for contextual or content errors. In addition, they were given the opportunity to omit any data that they were uncomfortable with during the review of the document. They were also invited to share any other comments or observations via email or via a personal follow-up interview. Follow-up interviews were scheduled with two participants on their request. One participant was a faculty member; the other was the honor code director whose data were used for triangulation. Another participant sent a follow-up email with further thoughts, and that email was added to the original transcript.

During the second interview with the honor code director, corrections and omissions to the transcript were made during the session, and I took the hard copy of the corrections with me. The other interview was a true follow-up interview. The participant

wanted to add information based on recent experiences. I transcribed that interview from the digital recording and sent the file to the participant for a member check on the follow-up, which was approved without changes.

Numerical pseudonyms were assigned to participants and used consistently throughout the process to assure confidentiality. Normally, pseudonyms would have been assigned, but in this study there were concerns that even identifying some of the participants by name, rank, race or ethnicity or gender may risk confidentiality in a case study that focuses on the practices at a single university.

Data Analysis

The data were transcribed and printed on 4" X 6" index cards, with data cards broken up by single units of meaning or ideas. Each card had the participant's pseudonym on it along with a corresponding card number.

The method of coding is adapted from Creswell (1998) and assumed the following format:

1. I made a list of initial codes or categories from the data. Creswell suggests making a short list first (5 or 6 categories) and then extending the categories as the data is analyzed, then reduce the categories back to 5-6 themes.
2. I did not count codes, nor did I use prefigured codes, in an attempt to let the categories or themes emerge through the data analysis.

3. Codes consisted of information that would be expected to find in this study, as well as surprising or unusual information that further the discovery process.

During data analysis, I followed the theoretical propositions I used to construct the case study (Yin, 2009). All data were examined within the framework of Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation, and this framework not only guided my analysis, it also served as a constructive framework that organized and prioritized the collected data.

In addition to printing index cards, the volume of data suggested that I needed to find a way to cross-reference and organize what I had in order to mitigate the possibility that I may overlook data because of the sheer volume of the cards. Therefore, I used ATLAS TI software to conduct keyword searches within and across my transcripts and then to compile those keyword results into separate files that contained transcript data on a single topic or keyword from multiple participants. In this way, I neither overlooked outliers, because I had individual transcripts in both card and document form, and I also had cross-referenced documents based on common terms used by faculty during the interviews.

Preliminary Interview Questions

1. How did you learn to write in your discipline?
2. What mistakes did you make when you were learning to write in your discipline?
3. What is plagiarism?

4. What is your role in working with students regarding ethics in academic writing in your discipline?
5. How do your research and writing practices inform how you work with students to help them understand plagiarism and how to avoid it?
6. Tell me about a time when a student plagiarized in your class. How did you decide what to do when the student plagiarized? With whom did you share your experiences and why?
7. How does culture influence standards of practice regarding plagiarism?
8. How do you reconcile differences in standards of practice or values between you and your students?

Assumptions

1. The participants being interviewed understood the scope of the study, the interview questions being asked by the researcher, were competent in their responses, and responded honestly.
2. Interpretation of interview data accurately reflected the intent of the participant.
3. The methodology proposed and described here offered a logical and appropriate design for this particular research study.

Limitations

1. This study is limited to selected faculty at the case study university who have encountered acts of plagiarism in their classrooms.

2. This study is limited to the information gathered from the literature review, interviews, researcher observations, and institutional documentation.
3. The generalizations of this study are limited to the faculty who agreed to be interviewed.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Analysis of the Data

The purpose of this study is to gain greater insight in how faculty perceive their role in developing students as academic writers, particularly regarding standards of writing and ethical boundaries. The data were analyzed using Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice to better understand the pivotal role faculty play in the learning process. Four research questions guided this study:

- 1. How do faculty members learn to speak the language of academic discourse in their disciplines?*
- 2. What role do faculty see themselves playing in teaching students about scholarly writing in their disciplines?*
- 3. What do faculty perceive when they encounter acts of student plagiarism in their classrooms?*
- 4. What dissonances occur between faculty and students regarding plagiarism and standards of practice?*

Case Study Institution

The case study institution is a large, public, research-intensive, land-grant university and was chosen because it is both reflective of other large public universities and yet maintains a rich history of traditions and identity, including an honor code and honor code office responsible for adjudicating honor code violation cases. In addition,

students at this university are required to take two writing-intensive courses in their majors, usually in their junior or senior years. Six of the participants I interviewed teach writing-intensive courses on a regular basis. One of the participants served on the honor code council at the time of the interview; another participant was on the advisory committee that helped form the honor code requirements.

Coding and Categories

A number of categories emerged as I coded the data. My interview questions were based on my research questions, and from that data, I discovered themes that helped answer one or more of my research questions. Participants discussed their development as academic writers, and, in turn, reflected on how they help students develop as academic writers, including how they incorporate ethics or standards of practice into teaching writing in their discipline. In addition, they discussed what happens when their students commit ethical breaches, whether they be intentional or unintentional. Much of the interview time was spent hearing the stories of faculty who recalled what they thought and felt when they discovered that a student plagiarized, and most of them had vivid stories to tell. Some of them also expressed concern about other faculty members and the way campus or departmental culture affected their actions. Some of them also suggested that technology influenced behavior of both faculty and students, but not all of them framed the use of technology in the same way.

Addressing the Research Questions

Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory lends insight into how people learn, and they do not apply their theory to modern classroom practices. They state that their intent is to

understand the process and not to engage a certain pedagogy. They do note, however, that if one wanted to understand how students learn in school, it is essential to look at social constructs existing outside the single classroom that affect learning. Studies that solely examine classroom interaction as learning and draw conclusions about student achievement ignore the relationship between other more wide-reaching influences on learning. Whereas looking at classroom activity may lend insight into how we *school* children, or how we inculcate them in the school environment, it does not lend insight into how children learn, since an examination of learning would need to encompass all of the social constructs and learning communities that shape that classroom experience. Many classroom environments assume that teachers teach and students learn. Lave and Wenger (1991) counter this notion, saying, “learning is never simply a process of transfer or assimilation: Learning, transformation, and change are always implicated in one another, and the status quo needs as much explanation as change” (p. 57). Therefore, faculty are shaped by their own transformative experiences and in turn help shape the transformations of their students. I wanted to understand how faculty transitioned from being newcomers to old-timers, and how their perceptions of their roles as old-timers influenced the way they in turn shape newcomers. In addition, I wanted to explore what external social forces in the learning community supported or detracted from this perception.

Institutional Practices

The research questions provided an overview of how old-timers work with newcomers, particularly when standards of practice are violated. Often, however, the

issue moves beyond the classroom to the institutional level. At the case study university, this means that when students plagiarize, faculty must make a choice whether or not to pursue institutional sanctions against the student. The university has an honor code office to ensure that a student's right to due process is protected. In addition, the office also serves as an information clearing house to ensure that students who have multiple violations across departments are tracked accordingly. Institutional systems, however, affect and are affected by department and college standards, norms, and cultural practices. Even when the honor code office works the way the faculty thinks it should, at times departmental or disciplinary cultures influence faculty practices.

Framing the data in a natural context requires an overview of the institutional procedures and policies regarding plagiarism to lend understanding to the positionality of faculty within the university. Prior to the establishment of the honor code office, if a professor caught a student cheating, the student could be sanctioned. If the student appealed the sanction, the matter was handled as a grade dispute. Because the incidences were handled at the department level, repeat offenses went undetected, and there were discrepancies in how cases were handled across the university. Although the university has a long history of consciously instilling students with honor and integrity, particularly because of its history of preparing students for military service, the university did not establish an official honor code office until 2004. The current system institutionalizes the handling of reported cases of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, but it adds another layer of complexity to the community, because faculty may find themselves caught between sub-communities of practice that have disparate perspectives.

The honor code office director was interviewed to triangulate the data and to lend insight into the university's operationality of policy and procedures. When the honor code office was established, according to the current honor code office director, there was a deliberate decision not to house the office in student affairs, where many schools house their programs. Because many schools house their honor code programs in student affairs, which also handle issues of student misconduct, the issue can become muddled and sometimes short shrift is given to issues regarding academic misconduct, according to the honor code office director.

Using the current system, on a first violation, the faculty member can choose to handle the incident independent of the honor code committee. The faculty member files a report online, preferably with the student present, and assigns a sanction. Students who are found to have plagiarized may be required to take a remediation course where they receive information about library research, counseling services, and citation and documentation assistance. The honor code office director noted that many faculty want the students to have an educative rather than a punitive experience, and out of the 300 students who had gone through remediation up to the fall of 2009, fewer than four have had subsequent violations.

Eighty to eighty-five percent of all academic dishonesty cases are handled by the faculty member, according to the honor code office director. However, the student has the right to appeal the sanction, and then the matter is investigated by the honor code office, which may result in an honor code committee appeal hearing. The honor code committee is comprised of volunteers and includes graduate students, undergraduate

students, and faculty. Members undergo training for honor code committee service regarding protocol, procedures, and policies. Repeat violators require an honor code hearing. Records are kept of all students who are found to have violated the honor code, whether the matter is handled by the individual faculty or the honor code committee. Eight of the eleven participants said that they had reported at least one student for an honor code violation. Two of the eleven noted that they had participated in an honor code council hearing.

It is in understanding institutional practices at this university, in this context, that allows for a rich understanding of how Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation frames academic practices and standards regarding student plagiarism. First, to understand what values the participants bring with them to the institution and how they learned to speak the language of their community of practice lays the foundation for their stories and perceptions. Then, hearing their stories positions them in their current community of practice. Finally, knowing what perceptions they have of the reasons students violate practices allow newcomers to be seen through the eyes of old-timers, which may lend insight into the *whys* as well as the *whats* of plagiarism.

Research Question #1

How do faculty members learn to speak the language of academic discourse in their disciplines?

Lave and Wenger (1991) move the conversation on learning from individual cognitive learning experiences to learning as a part of a larger social practice or

construct. They argue that learning is an external, social practice rather than an internal, individualized process. An individual's relationships with others within the community will *be* the learning. To this end, I wanted to discover how faculty become members of this community of academic writers. To find out how faculty moved from being newcomers to old-timers would ultimately be integral to understanding how faculty, as old-timers, would then work with newcomers, their students.

As Lave and Wenger state, since learning is a social construct, there is no difference between thinking and acting, for they are inextricably intertwined, and they are constantly being negotiated as the doer interacts with others in the community. Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasize that learning encompasses the person as a whole, and that person in relation to others. They state that "learning thus implies becoming a different person with respect to the possibilities enabled by these systems of relations" (p. 53). This transformation is referred to again and again as the participants reflect on their development as writers and as scholars.

In legitimate peripheral participation, being a part of a learning community does not just provide context for the learning experience; rather, it *is* the learning experience. Lave and Wenger (1991) state the following:

Knowledge of the socially constructed world is socially mediated and open ended. Its meaning to given actors, its furnishings, and the relations of humans with/in it, are produced, reproduced, and changed in the course of activity (which includes speech and thought, but cannot be reduced to one or the other). (p. 51)

In other words, one can talk about the learning, and one can think about the learning, but one must *do* the learning in legitimate peripheral participation, and to *do* the learning means being in participation with the community.

Therefore, being a member of a community means occupying a space in that community. Lave and Wenger (1991) categorize roles in a learning community not to stratify members or to indicate arrival at a positionality, but rather to show how dynamic forces within a community continually reshape and redefine membership within the community. It is this precept that guided my thought in asking participants to recall their own development as academic writers and scholars. Their insights show the dynamic nature of moving toward full participation as they discuss their apprenticeships with their professors as undergraduates and graduate students.

Old-Timers Reflect on Being Newcomers

The participants as a whole described their development as academic writers as being a matter of doing and practicing, often under the scrutiny of a major professor or old-timer. In some cases, these same mentors helped shape the participants' development as teachers. In other cases, participants recalled their high school and early undergraduate experiences. As Lars, a scientist, stated, "I will tell you, my high school teachers would be *shocked* that I do this, that I do writing. I was a *horrible* English student. However, the participant also recalled that he asked his teachers what the A papers looked like: "Oh, these are beautiful, and insightful, and tie these enormous things together," and I'm like, 'Why would you want to write that way? I want to be clear and concise. I want to convey powerful ideas and for people to understand them

quickly.’” This participant also stated that he learned to write from his father, who also was a scientist. In this case, there appear to be learning communities within learning communities, with each discipline having a different set of values and practices, and students must negotiate through each community as an undergraduate, sometimes with varying levels of success.

Five of the participants recalled specific mentors in graduate school. These mentors, or old-timers, influenced the participants in a variety of ways. Some were exacting, others were nurturing. The one thing they had in common was that the participants recognized and revered the influence these old-timers had on their writing and teaching practices. Not having a mentor proved to be painful for some participants. Emily talked about struggling through her thesis alone:

It was the worst experience of my entire life. I can tell you that I locked myself in my house for three weeks. People brought me food. I threw the phone into the front yard. Not a lie. And I did not go out into the public until I wrote my entire thesis. In three weeks. It was awful.

She further reflects on the experience, saying, “I think to that experience, I was, I felt like I had all this pressure, you know, and I had this perfection I was trying to reach.” Some mentors opened the door for participants, however, showing them different ways of approaching tasks that suited their learning styles. When Emily wrote her dissertation, she had a chair who offered specific assistance:

For my dissertation, my advisor gave me a tape recorder, and said, “You transcribe yourself, you answer these questions,” and then gave me questions. I

answered them. I wrote down what I had said, and that became my framework for my dissertation. Because he was realizing I couldn't process what I was writing.

Joseph mentioned the influence of having an advisor who also served as an expert witness in his discipline:

And because of that, if he doesn't get published, he loses legitimacy in the courtroom. He also taught me a lot about attention to detail and how important that was from an academic writing standpoint. Because he learned the hard way, where something might not have gone well, and people brought it up in court. So the attention to detail, for me, is probably a little bit more rigorous than some of my peers.

Joseph does tell the story of his struggle as an undergraduate, however, saying that he made a 25 on his first college paper in his major. He reflected, "It was a shock, and I had to completely re-hone my writing style and I had to start learning how to do things correctly. And so that broke all of my bad habits from high school."

A common thread in participants' responses was that they all recall learning by doing. Lars reflected on his graduate school experience:

And you have to do it all the time. I mean, I was lucky in that I had advisors who gave feedback, and they were relentless in their feedback. And I just had to keep doing it over and over again until it was good enough. Especially in graduate school. To him [the advisor], it was real simple. This is not good enough. This is not how we do things.

Paul, who recalled multiple old-timers by name, reflected on one particular style of feedback he received in graduate school:

In graduate school I never got a piece of writing that I had done as an assignment with a red pencil or mark on, never was my writing corrected, and that's not to say that it was perfect, far from it, but that's not what their approach was. They had a philosophy that Kenneth Dawst calls the epistemic approach, that writing is a way to, to discovery of self and the world around you, and all that. And that's how they pushed you . . . Professors there will typically comment more on your paper than you wrote. Some of them, like [name of professor], had beautiful handwriting, and would flip over your paper, write on the back in her beautiful longhand script, and it was, what was really intimidating about that, was that it was a tremendously well-written comment. There wouldn't be a line-out, there wouldn't be a cross-out. It was absolutely humiliating to see that. Her comment was better than my final draft.

Working with old-timers who took the time to read his work and who put as much effort into helping him as he put into writing the piece proved to be influential in his development as a writer and a teacher:

So there was this terribly positive reinforcement, that gave me a lot of confidence, to the point that when you left there, I kind of felt, well I may not have done it before, but I can figure it out. Then when I got to [name of university] and saw my colleagues, being in a literature-based program, they were lost when it came to teaching the writing. And I wasn't lost. I didn't feel

lost. And that may sound like a lot of arrogance and stuff, but I just feel that I was intensely prepared.

At times this mentorship extended beyond the confines of the graduate school experience, as Megan continues to publish with her post-doc advisor. In addition, mentorship may include challenging and pushing the mentee. Alyx recalled that she never felt that her teachers valued her intelligence until she found a mentor as an undergraduate who exacted the best from her:

I never ever felt that my teachers thought I was smart. They were always kind of surprised that I was, that I had any kind of intelligence. . . . so when I had a mentor she sort of cracked the whip. So I'd always had, I never had anyone who really tore my writing apart. I never had anyone who said, I either got, well, you're a good writer, check plus, keep moving or superficial feedback, basically, and so [name of mentor] was the first person who is like, no. I think you can take your writing to the next level, so she was really kind of hard-core with me.

As this instance shows, interestingly enough, part of the mentoring process, or as Lave and Wenger (1991) would phrase it, the apprenticeship process, was refusing to accept work that would perpetuate their newcomer status. It may seem counterintuitive, but old-timers deny participation to newcomers as they learn disciplinary writing. Until they can *do* it, they continue to be newcomers in apprenticeship to their mentors. However, this is different from power imbalances that prevent newcomers from ever being old-timers. Old-timers continue to give the newcomers feedback, asking them to repeat the task

again and again until the newcomers, or the research participants, achieved proficiency. As Alyx said, her mentor “was the catalyst for my academic writing.”

Rick remembered his mentor as being someone who was always able to find the good in his students, something that he said he hopes to emulate and model. Although his reference is to music composition and not written composition, the analogy is apt as he talked about watching his mentor work with a fellow music student:

Everybody else wanted to leave the room before he played, and he said, oh, I see this and I see that, and this is where you can go and he was able to say for once anything to him. He didn't want to leave and he could find good in it, and so he did teach me that directly, he always just did that for me, so I'm glad that I was able to glean that and realized that that was what I appreciated most about him.

Mentor or not, not all development was without struggle. Trish discussed the transition from undergraduate study to graduate study. She said that although she wrote a great deal as an undergraduate, she had never written anything more than 15 pages. The demands of graduate school and the emergence of computer-based writing challenged her entire writing process:

So when I got to graduate school, and it was clear, in my generations, that [writing longhand on paper] was not how one did it anymore. I sat down at the computer and looked at this blank screen and this cursor going, and just was terrified because I didn't have anything to say. I hadn't written it yet. I didn't have anything to say. So I eventually had to come to what I talk about now with

my students as my vomit draft. And my vomit draft was, “How do I replicate the process with pen and paper on the computer?”

What many students now take as an understood process, this participant had to figure out how to make the word processor a part of her process. Trish said that changing her writing practices made her think “more explicitly about process, about a vomit draft, that you are then going to come back to, with changes in between.”

Within the community, then, there may be direct interaction, and it may be tempting to look at only that immediate context in examining a learning situation. However, Lave and Wenger (1991), using an example of classroom learning, point out that the classroom environment also exists within a larger construct of schooling and social forces that shape the schooling environment, including technology. In the theory of legitimate peripheral participation, Lave and Wenger (1991) bring transparency to the whole, to view learning within the context of social structures. So as participants moved from newcomer to old-timer and perhaps eventually to master, they brought their experiences with them, for the way they were shaped when they were newcomers affects how they themselves help shape newcomers under their tutelage, whether they be undergraduate students, graduate students, or teaching assistants.

Moving from Newcomer to Old-Timer

Since Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory accounts for dynamic positionality and motion, their theory is well-suited to understand how the participants continued to learn and grow even after they moved into “old-timer” positions as lecturers and junior

professors. Alyx talked about thinking about her writing as a scholar and setting a research agenda:

So this is my third year here at [name of university] and I finally feel like I've had time to take a breath and think about what it is that I'm trying to do. I'm not just trying to make it any more and whatever the next short-term goal is. I'm trying to, I can actually create an agenda and think about what I want to do with my writing.

But it is not just junior faculty members who continue their growth. Two participants, full professors with publishing and editing experience, both of whom could be termed masters, commented on their development as writers and as editors. Rose commented on her writing process now:

I struggle with my writing. I used to think I was a pretty good and fluent writer, but the older I've gotten, the harder it is to express things simply. But it is true, I do believe, the only way you begin to think is by writing, and so I have come to discipline myself in my writing, or my thinking about a subject, by saying I have to write these ideas down.

Elaine mentioned that although she always wrote well, she often gets bogged down in the minutia of journal requirements. She noted that people are much too focused on citation rules and miss the point of documentation all together. No matter the position one occupies in the community, the position is always dynamic.

Perhaps the best example of Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of the dynamic nature of learning communities is rooted in Rose's comment on the recursive nature of developing a writing style:

What got me better at writing was reading a lot of student work. It's iterative. I know what I want to read in an article and then when I read what students are writing, and then I can say, no you're not telling me what I am going to be reading and I'm getting lost. There are not enough signposts for me to pay attention to where you're going. That's made me a better writer myself, because I'm putting more of these kinds of signposts in and try to get students to do that as well.

Even as an old-timer and arguably a master, this participant acknowledged the lack of stasis or positionality in academic writing.

According to Megan, students or newcomers misperceive the dynamic nature of legitimate peripheral participation and how even old-timers work toward improving their craft. As she said of a journal article she is writing, "I won't pretend. I worked on it all day yesterday, and I am nowhere near happy with my introduction yet." When asked if she thinks her students know how much time she spends on her own writing, she responded, "No, I don't think they have any idea. I'm sure it just looks easy or whatever."

Two of the participants were current editors or associate editors of academic journals in their field, which puts them in some ways in both old-timers' and masters' positions, because they both make and uphold writing standards in their academic disciplines. Rose commented on how junior professors grow as academic writers in their

discipline, reinforcing Lave and Wenger's (1991) assertion that positionalities are dynamic, even when professors are in the position to pass judgment on the work of others:

I think when you send an article out to assistant professors, a lot of times they may pick at little things, but they don't have an overall look at it, because they're developing their expertise. And you send an article out for review to somebody who's been doing this for a while, and they see the big picture. And they have kind of a different level of criticism.

Elaine complained about the disparity between journals even within the discipline, saying, "I publish regularly in three journals and each one has a different style sheet, which just drives me crazy."

In addition, as disciplinary philosophies change, changing language reflects changing philosophies. For example, using third person and passive voice constructions pervade some disciplines because they are thought to convey objectivity on the part of the researcher. Rose talked about having to adjust to changes in disciplinary practices, noting a shift in tone: "It was all third person impersonal, and then here in [names discipline], even in the mid-80s people were beginning to do the 'I am going to answer,'" using first person in journal articles. She said that she had to adjust to what she termed a "postmodern approach" to writing about research.

One notable commonality emerged as faculty reflected on their development as academic writers. Almost all of them mentioned that they had models or mentors who allowed legitimate peripheral participation and nurtured them as they developed as

graduate students. The mentorship or modeling took place in different ways and in different contexts, but eight of the eleven participants mentioned specific people by name or by role who helped them traverse the landscape. The participants, then, had significant experiences as apprentices in this community of practice, and they grew to full participation in the community under the tutelage of a mentor. As Lave and Wenger (1991) note, “Acceptance by and interaction with acknowledged adept practitioners make learning legitimate and of value from the point of view of the apprentice” (p. 110). These participants learned as the result of the relationship with a practitioner in the community who validates their own identity in that community of practice.

Research Question #2

What role do faculty see themselves playing in teaching students about scholarly writing in their disciplines?

From Newcomer to Old-Timer

Either consciously or subconsciously, many participants used their own newcomer experiences to bear on their view of helping students develop as scholarly writers. Alyx, who said that she had not had a mentor in graduate school, noted, “graduate students are flocking to me . . . part of it is because I am young and more recently experienced.” This participant also said that mentoring graduate students has been a focus for her: “As soon as I got here I tried to start identifying students who I can be working with to publish.”

Later, some of these participants reflected on their responsibility to develop and mentor their own students, to help them become different people, just as their mentors

helped shape them into being different people. Emily, who struggled as a writer herself, noted that she feels that she is more empathetic to students who struggle themselves: “I think I’m much more empathetic and more patient than most, just because I know, I know what it takes for me to sit down and type a paper up. I know that most of them are probably feeling that same anxiety.”

Megan said that she did not receive much instruction from her mentors, saying that “no one sat down with me and taught me how to do it, you know you just sort of did it. And you got the red marks back. You worked on it some more.” She said that her approach with her students is similar: “I honestly don’t know what to say. You’ve read so many papers in your life that you go ‘Okay, I know I need to write an abstract.’” She continued, “I learned this style by reading and doing it yourself.” These experiences helped faculty define their roles.

Faculty Roles

Three participants referred to what Lave and Wenger (1991) would term as the “masters” within their communities. Paul termed them “graybeards,” describing how their positionality privileges them within the institutional culture:

When the student got a little disrespectful of me [during an honor code hearing], and nobody corralled him, I’m not going to respond to him and I’m not going to approach him the way he’s approaching me. I don’t think I should be cast in this role, and I will tell you that senior professors won’t do that, and if they walked in and that happened, they’d walk out or something. And they wouldn’t have been polite. When you are tenured faculty making six figures, been here over 20 years,

and you bring in millions of dollars of research a year, you're not going to buy that. And all those people [points to hall with senior professors] . . . they're the graybeards.

From Paul's perspective, the masters in some ways transcend the institutional community, primarily because they have so much knowledge and power in their own academic community. Rose, another master, had a plagiarism case go to the honor code committee and described the ordeal, which ultimately led to a restructuring of the system:

So, long story short, we went to the honors, it was investigated, it went to the honor code committee, and this girl was there with her mother and her lawyer, and the honor committee found that she was not guilty. There are faculty, students [on the committee] and one of the students on this committee happened to work for the [name of dean's] office. And she went back to [name of dean] and said to [name of dean], this is wrong. We talked about it and as a result of that, [current director] was hired and the woman who was in charge of the honor code committee . . . left the university. And that was that. The whole system changed.

However, some of the participants challenged the authority of the masters or very old-timers. As Lars mentioned, "And at the moment what we do is a typical thing is, you have your 65-year-old white hair American male saying, I'm a great teacher, always been a great teacher and my evidence for this is that I'm a great teacher. Not the person with the whitest hair is the authority." Alyx described feeling alienated as an undergraduate,

saying “My advisor was, he was a good, great guy but he was in the astronomy department, like this old white man, you know.”

Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral practice shows the relationship between what is learned and the community of practice that shapes that learning. Lave and Wenger focus on this relational space as being a place of community activity that is dynamic and requires one to understand that learners are not static in their positionalities, and that there are more nuanced roles in a community of practice than the standard positionalities of “teacher” and “learner.” Rather, Lave and Wenger look at sustained participation of learners over time.

Lave and Wenger (1991) move beyond the teacher/learner structure because it indicates stasis. They acknowledge the dynamic nature of learning community membership and show how newcomers can become old-timers and masters. They move beyond a binary view of roles, asserting that there are many spaces to occupy, including being relative old-timers and near-peers. They also nod to the dynamic nature of learning communities, as newcomers become old-timers, and old-timers move out through a generative and regenerative process.

Because learning communities have members and activity, they also have history and structure, production and reproduction. This notion of roles is integral to examining how faculty perceive their roles in working with students in developing their potential as writers and as scholars. For example, faculty consistently defined their roles with words associated with helping personalities, using terms such as “trusted guide,” “coach,” and “mentor” to define themselves and their roles. In using Lave and Wenger’s theoretical

framework of legitimate peripheral participation, they see their role of mentor as having a responsibility to provide access to participation to their students, the newcomers.

In fact, Troy used the term “coach” five times in the interview as he described his work with students, saying that they even refer to him as “Coach” at times:

I think that *coach* label works. . . . I work hard to let them know I'm on their side, that I'm sincere, that I want to help them, and that I know it's difficult for them, but that this is the only way they are going to get better. And I think they see me as a guide.

Lars also used the word *guide* in describing his role in working with students:

My role is trusted guide. And a trusted guide needs to make the path, needs to make the journey interesting and fun. And so sometimes you do tell fun and silly stories, but it's about trusted guide, so it's a balance and it's hard, and if you go off the deep end, people feel so bit, and are so pained that they don't trust you anymore, it's so they just can do no right.

However, the terms that faculty used to define themselves as they work with students contrast drastically with the term used by honor code office to refer to faculty who report violations, as one participant mentioned. When an instructor files a report on a student, the faculty member is officially called “the accuser.” The honor code office director noted that from a legal perspective, students have a right to face their accuser to ensure due process protected by the law. However, faculty who have never been to an honor code hearing may not be familiar with the fact that the official university term for a faculty who reports an incident is the *accuser* once a violation has been reported. Paul

was shocked to hear himself described as the accuser when he attended an honor code violation hearing:

I guess I envisioned myself as a reporter of the facts. And that's the role I'm stuck with. And I'm sitting there listening to flaws in his [the student's] argument, but I felt at the time, and I don't know if I'm right or wrong in my conclusion, but I felt at the time that to assume the role of interrogator would have been inappropriate, and it could have easily been seen as disrespectful by the committee. And I felt it would have been. To be honest with you, I would report it again, out of my loyalty to the concept, but I don't know that I would bother with the process. If it was a second offense, honestly I would say no, I don't need to take time out of my day to go down there to be grilled, and indirectly shown what all my shortcomings are, and told that I'm wrong, or whatever the result is, and I refuse to take on that role.

In that session, Paul was placed into a position of accuser and interrogator, a role he refused to take on, particularly since this student was currently a student in his class. During the interview, he wondered how he could go back into the classroom and work with the student for the rest of the semester, particularly since the two were pitted against each other in a formal hearing. His concerns echo Lave and Wenger's (1991) assertion that learning takes place because of the community and not just within a community. What happens within that community when traditional roles that faculty see themselves in are blown asunder by institutional interference? The term *accuser* would

be used to bar or disallow participation in the community. Paul reflected on this change in positionality after the hearing:

The issue that I have is that if you are going to, as faculty you have no choice but to report these incidences, especially the second one, the first one you can handle, the second one you cannot, so I'm there not by choice, I'm there because I'm a Boy Scout and I'm complying with the rules. Then you bring me in, and you cast me in this adversarial role. I'm not done with that student for the semester and I'm not done with that student because he's not graduating. I will see him again. You cast me in this adversarial role, and then you seem to be indicating that I should have done, performed the role of a prosecutor, and come in and come in here loaded for bear, that's not how I see the process.

Just as Paul expressed concern about his role in working with students after a violation, Emily talked about what happens to the student after he or she has been found guilty of plagiarism by the university honor code office. She reflected that once students are accused of plagiarism, particularly those whose violations were unintentional, they can be paralyzed by fear, unable to write at all or unable to generate work.

Once faculty are placed or place themselves in the role of accuser, Emily noted, students are unable to take the risks inherent in developing as academic writers. She recalled that one of her students was unable to write because her co-teacher spent the first four hours of the class lecturing them on plagiarism:

That right there is the worst thing I have seen in my entire life. And I've had so many students bounce back from that and not know what to do. What she says is,

“I’ve never had a class where I’ve not had somebody cheat and I’ve sent them to the Honors Office.” So one of you is going to the Honors Office this semester—it’s almost like I’ve defined you so now I can keep my credential of sending someone every semester. And here’s *my* philosophy: None of you will ever do this, so I’m not worried about you, and then there’s her. And that’s been a huge struggle for me to balance, but I’ve seen that, because I want them to learn from it, I don’t want there to be this “I’m going to chop your fingers off.” And half of those students *work* at this university. So you send them to the honors office, and you are the [names position on campus], and let me tell you what that does for you! [Name of student] is in my class. She’s sitting in my class and she hears this, and she is the [names a position at the university]. What do you think she does? She freezes. I mean she comes to me with everything, and it’s like she’s a wonderful writer, and a very bright student, but she just, “I have no room for error. None. I can’t mess up.” So. How many papers have I read, where on the side I’ve said, “Needs citation. Needs citation. Needs citation.” That’s part of learning. What I hear her [the other teacher] saying is that “if I have to write that down,” I hear it, I don’t know if it’s true, but “you are going to the Honors Office.”

In this case, this participant defined her role very differently from that of her colleague and had a keen awareness of what role fear plays in this high-stakes environment.

As Rick put it, “the anxiety of influence” pervades students who are unsure of acceptable standards in any given field. Rick explained that the anxiety of influence is

not just an issue of writing, but of creating in any medium and that this is an important conversation to have with students:

And there is another book that was actually called *After Beethoven*, and it talks about composers, about the anxiety of influence after Beethoven and Beethoven having really well, killed the symphony, in a good way, and how Brahms Symphony mimics the chorale at the end of Beethoven's last symphony in a respectful way, and it took 10 minutes to work up to it and it sounds like a graduation march. In Mahler, in his first symphony has done the opposite. It looks like a twisted Picasso version of it and is very dissonant.

Because of the anxiety of influence, Rick noted, composers have reacted by investing less of themselves into the art by taking on personae:

This one guy, Uwe Schmidt is his name, at least this technique is representative of a tendency to, instead of investing so much in yourself and what you make yourself, he has dozens of personae, he invents personae and produces very specific musical styles in the names of those personae. He's not creating music anymore. He created Señor Coconut, whose conjunto band does covers of early Latin American bands in German electro-pop. And he even, on one album, spoke as Señor Coconut, in accents and everything. I think that's crossing a threshold because there's a mask there, and he did a lot more to be that person, and evolutionary. It's safety in diversity. It's also, if one fails, that was this persona, and anyone who's doing electronic or hip-hop have had these DJ names and they are more disposable, and so I think there is a level of safety that helps, dealing

with the anxiety of influence that there is at least, at least it lowers the stakes in a way and makes it easier in a way for you not to have ruined your whole life. You've just ruined this temporary made-up bubble of a life. And so I think we're in a society where composers never die. Beethoven is still around and even more so, and Bach came back after Beethoven died and never went away, and it's an increasingly crowded room, and so even for people who are finding new ways of music.

It may very well be in this community where students may be using their professor's research in their own writing, or when they write in an area where the professor is an expert or master, the anxiety of influence can paralyze students, and although not all participants reflected on this idea, they all acknowledged that students struggle with how to balance source material with their own ideas. This struggle may be particularly daunting when the faculty is both an old-timer as a writer and a master as an expert in the field the student is writing in.

Although the example Rick referred to does not focus on academic writing, it provides an essential insight into the relationship between newcomers who are asked to create and co-exist with old-timers who have created and shaped the community. Megan reflected on this problem in a very different way. She noted that her students are always asking her how to rephrase the words of others or how to put the ideas and assertions of others into their own words without violating standards of practice, a task that academic writers are called on to perform.

Trish acknowledged this relationship between newcomers and old-timers in a very personal way. She provides her students with a way to respond to the pressures of their environment, and as a result, they avoid doing substandard or unethical work:

As I have said, there are times in a semester where it's crazy, and it gets hectic, and if you find yourself, and I have colleagues who totally disagree with the fact that I do this, but, I say, I'm a reasonable person I know that things can just happen, and what you do plan to do is not what you are able to do. If you find yourself in a position where you are not able to produce what you know you can and you are tempted to do something that you know you don't want to do, you know, contact me, and we can have a conversation about it. I don't think there's actually ever been a time when I have not granted someone an extension for a legitimate reason. And the fact of the matter is if you are conning me, if you're snowing me, the bad karma accrues to you and the universe. You've got to do that. And sometimes you know and I know when we look across the table from each other what's going on. So be aware of that. But if there are legitimate reasons, extenuating circumstances, or even not extenuating circumstances. I totally screwed up. I completely mismanaged. If I don't pass this test, I fail my chemistry midterm, I'm on probation, I've got a paper due. I screwed up. Can I have a week? Yeah. You could have a week. It's 15% of the grade, right? Yes. You may have an extension. You're honest. You owned up to the situation, and I think we need to, again that's my own policy, and I know a number of my colleagues disagree with that. And in some respects, rather than having to be

completely selfless, because I don't want to necessarily frame it that way. I say to my students as well, it is also very hard for me to read crappy papers. It's very difficult. And I would much prefer that you take an extra week and produce something that you, and then we can work with. It saves me a lot of anguish.

Because I do anguish.

In the relationship, then, between newcomer and old-timer, there is a path that Trish has intentionally carved out to allow legitimate peripheral participation. It allows the student an out, and yet it forces the student also to move toward participation. The participant realizes that the student who is pressed by external or internal forces to do substandard work will then submit substandard work. She then opens the door to true participation and in turn can be the mentor, since now the student has written “something that you, and then we can work with.”

In addition, in this community of learning by doing, faculty who have their students practice the skill are more in line with Lave and Wenger's (1991) assertion that learners have to have access to do the skill and not just be lectured to about the skill they are hoping to learn. Lars put it aptly in the following analogy about his students not having the background skills in his discipline:

If I'm teaching students how to play tennis, the problem is not that they can't identify a pushup, or they can't do one pushup correctly, but you need to be able to do ten or twenty pushups, maybe even a hundred, for your body to be strong enough to swing the racket for an hour. And they just couldn't do it, so it's not

that they're stupid, it wasn't that they hadn't seen it, it's just that they hadn't done it a lot, and what we needed was for them to be good at it.

Lars needed his students to be able to perform a task and not just understand what the task was about. Lave and Wenger (1991) note that learners who only learn cognitively, through lecture, are often prevented from being full participants because they are not given the opportunity to practice their skills. Lars gave an example of what participation looks like in working with graduate students:

“I want to schedule my thesis defense,” and I say, “Great, go ahead and schedule it, but your thesis isn't ready.” “Well, when should I schedule it?” “When it's ready.” “When will it be ready?” “When you're done with it.”

Rick also referred to skill building and what happens when students plagiarize or cheat on his assignments:

It's really setting them up for really disappointing work later on. It's skill building. It's kind of like the mummy's curse. I may not know, I may not penalize you right now, but it's going to get you, at least statistically.

Joseph discussed that many graduate students do not have the preparatory academic writing skills necessary to succeed in his program. He noted that there are no mandatory writing classes in graduate school and that the responsibility often falls on the professors, who do not necessarily share the same standards, even in the same department. He recalled working with a student who was struggling with citation and documentation:

One of them said, “This is kind of time consuming.” And I said, “Not if you do it as you’re finding the numbers. Yes, it is time consuming if you put all of those numbers in there and you don’t remember where you got them from. But that’s not my problem. That’s your problem. Your problem is that the numbers are not yours. So where did they come from?”

In all of these situations, the participants are requiring not just that students learn about citation and documentation; rather, they are requiring students to *do* citation and documentation, and in this way, the participants are opening doors to full participation to the newcomers, even if the newcomers do not acknowledge or recognize it. In addition, Lars commented on when he knows a student has passed from newcomer to old-timer: “When a student says, ‘It’s time for me to graduate, dammit, you’re not keeping me here any longer,’ they’re ready. It’s a separation process. It’s in many ways the same as moving out of one’s parents’ house.”

All but two participants discussed assignment design as being important as it relates to teaching students to write in their discipline, and five of the participants mentioned that the way they designed assignments had an added benefit of mitigating plagiarism or making it apparent when it happens. In addition, four of the participants mentioned that in their assignment design, proper documentation and citation constituted a significant point value. In this way, students were not necessarily penalized for academic misconduct at an institutional level; rather, students who did not fulfill the requirements of the assignment were penalized by deducting points off their assignment grade. In this way, then, perhaps, faculty who embed standards of practice regarding

citation and documentation into their assignments can maintain their preferred roles as mentors and guides.

Trish has her students submit their work in stages, and she noted that there is a unique benefit to the way she crafts her assignments:

In writing intensive classes, they turn in a paper prospectus that gives me an overview. They have to give a preliminary bibliography, they have to show me a draft, again there's no way that they can lift; they can't plagiarize this paper. So trying to craft assignments as well that make it virtually impossible for them to do something different. I think has been, it has served the goal of helping me avoid the issue of plagiarism while also just being a good pedagogical tool, so it's just been a benefit, that it's helped me avoid the issue of plagiarism. I mean I didn't set out to explicitly say, when I thought about these assignments, how can I best avoid plagiarism? It would seem to me that strong assignments can do that. If I just gave them a list of topics and said, hand in anything to me about religion in the 17th century British Atlantic, well then I open the door for them to, as I say to them, not listen to their better angels.

In this case, the faculty member defines her role as being one who expects high standards but also realizes her responsibility in crafting assignments that help newcomers develop their skills. Paul expressed a similar perspective:

I've told students that I will modify their assignments just to relieve that pressure. Because you can't ask them to reach further than, exceed their reach, because then they have fight or flight, and they'll do ridiculous things. Honestly I

think you have to bear some responsibility for that, now, you know, you're not the one who, you didn't coerce them into committing the violation, but you have to be very sensitive to that. And you know, gosh I can remember the year, back in the day, [mimics old professor]: "You will write three term papers for this course, and you will have a bibliography like this and like this and." You know I didn't plagiarize those papers, but gosh, it must have been painful for someone to read them because I had no idea what the heck I was doing. They were really bad. I threw those away.

Ultimately, there seemed to be a difference in agency between some of the participants, as all of them define their roles; however, at times some of them reported that their roles were defined for them, by the institution. And seeing themselves as guides, mentors, and coaches did not mean giving up exerting authority when necessary, although some of them criticized other faculty members who were unwilling to hold students to standards or who refused to report students for honor code violations. Rose asserted that dealing with plagiarism is a professor's job. However, she observed that "there are a lot of professors who are very uncomfortable about taking that kind of authoritarian role. They want to be their friends." Elaine, who had been on the initial task force that created the honor code office, had a similar perspective of other faculty who are hesitant to deal with ethical issues:

What really got me was the faculty. Some of the faculty members like [name], he said I'm not going to give an F* to some kid, for blatant cheating, and then it's on

his record and it ruins his life. And then I thought well there you go, there you go.

Although all faculty saw themselves as mentors and guides, none of them shirked their responsibilities in dealing with students from a position of authority. However, how they dealt with the issue regarding reporting infractions institutionally varied greatly. In addition, the stories they told revealed a great deal about how they see themselves in working with students.

Research Question #3

What do faculty perceive when they encounter acts of student plagiarism in their classrooms?

This research question could have singularly made up the total focus of this case study, but without understanding how the participants developed as writers and as teachers, the research addressing this question would have lacked the context and depth that frames this question within Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation. It is not enough just to tell the stories of plagiarism, as entertaining and emotion-laden as many of them are: it is essential to understand why they are so laden with meaning. The most ridiculous and outrageous stories become urban legends within departments and among colleagues, thus becoming part and parcel of the culture of this community of practice. Two participants referred me to other faculty members because they had encountered incidences of plagiarism so egregious that the stories themselves lived in perpetuity, told over and over again.

Stories are important for a multitude of reasons, argue Lave and Wenger (1991). Telling stories within a community of practice both instruct newcomers and construct the collective and individual identity of full participants. In addition, there are multiple newcomers in this community of practice. At first glance legitimate peripheral participation seems to encompass the teacher/student relationship. In this case study of multiple layers and dynamic positionalities, however, old-timers tell stories to inform a different type of newcomer: the faculty member who is either new to teaching or new to the institution, or specifically in Emily's and Megan's experiences, to inform their teaching assistants. These stories both instruct and codify membership in the community. In a community of practice, then, talking about the practice create stories to instruct and stories to create identity, both of which create culture within the community itself.

The Researcher's Story

I understand this culture because I live it. One incident stands as clear in my mind as it did the day it happened 24 years ago. I was a young English teacher at a community college in Southern California, and I had just finished counseling a student who had committed unintentional, yet substantial plagiarism on her major research paper. I had shown her what she had done incorrectly, explained that this was plagiarism, and deducted her grade accordingly, as many teachers did in the time before honor codes. She begged and cried, saying that she did not know what she had done. I held firm and handed her the Kleenex box. All of this happened in front of my two male office partners, both of them as young and as green as I was. When she finally left, one of my colleagues said that *he* had made a young *man* cry the week before. It was then

that my other office colleague, a bespeckled, soft-spoken young man proclaimed, “That’s nothing. I made a surfer dude cry last week!” I remember this incident because it was in one way amusing, yet in another way it seemed like a grotesque misuse of the power we had. We could have shown our students the way, opened the door to legitimate peripheral participation, and yet we acted as impediments to access because of our adherence to standards that were meaningless to us beyond the rules we were taught as students. We taught as we were taught, and although all three of us were well-liked, respected, smart young faculty with bright futures, I also remember that moment with regret, because I could have done so many things so differently. It was easier just to follow the rules, particularly the rule that required us to turn in grades at the end of the semester. Incompletes were frowned upon, so working with her on her individual skills on revisions were not an option. I know that I taught this material. I showed them models, I lectured them on rules and regulations. However, I could have done better; I could have worked with her in the way that Lave and Wenger (1991) advocate regarding me, as a new old-timer, providing access to legitimate peripheral participation for that young freshman. If not me, then who would do that for her?

That incident is just one encounter that stays with me. I’ve had others, and it is the memory of all of those incidents that urged me to explore what other faculty have experienced during their careers. What follows are excerpts from their stories. Some are funny, some are ridiculous. Others are frightening or frustrating. They all ring true, however, and the fact that learning communities base their existence in communal relationships make these stories an integral part of understanding what happens to

faculty when students plagiarize. As Lave and Wenger (1991) state, community reproduction is “a historically constructed, ongoing, conflicting, synergistic structuring of activity and relations among practitioners” (p. 56).

Academic culture can be influenced by discipline, institutional culture, and departmental norms. Therefore, the stories new faculty tell often reflect not only an isolated incident, but an immersion into a culture that they are not always familiar enough to traverse. Alyx told the story of being a new faculty member at the university and encountering plagiarism in the papers of one of her graduate students:

The situation that I had my first semester was a student who took an entire article and pasted it into an assignment without any citation and just kind of claimed it as their own and then. [Hesitates.] Oh, what else, he must have done something with his final paper as well because the way that this all worked out, I mean there were some other assignments that were a little bit sketchy to me but there wasn't anything I could, it just was wasn't right, but I couldn't Google it or find any substance to it.

So there was this one assignment that had the article pasted into it. And the day that I came to talk to him about it, I e-mailed him about it and he never responded to the e-mails, and so the next class happened to be the last day of class. And their final papers were due, so I tapped him on the shoulder while they were doing their course evaluations, and said come talk to me out in the hallway. So, and they had already turned their papers and at this point, and he came and I talked to him in the hallway about this previous assignment and of course he

said, “I have no idea like what you're talking about. I didn't know that I couldn't do that.” Basically. So we had a conversation in the hallway about what would need to happen, but then he went back into the classroom.

I had a conversation with other students about other issues and then when I took the papers home, his paper was not in the stack and so he had gone back in and taken his paper because I know I had seen him. He must have plagiarized part of that paper as well. That I never addressed. He failed the course because he didn't have a final paper, and I said I didn't get your final paper. I thought I saw it in the stack, in fact, I remember asking you specifically something about it. So I remember he had his paper in the stack. I e-mailed him in the ensuing weeks and he just never responded, so he got a zero on the major assignment.

As a new member of the university faculty, Alyx had teaching experience at other colleges and universities, but she was new to the culture of *this* university and *this* culture:

I [turned him into the honor code office] despite, I was advised not to do that. I was advised not to go to the honor council by my colleagues here. They advised me not to turn him in. I think they said that he didn't really mean it. It wasn't really that big of a deal at all. He probably just really didn't understand that you can't do this. And to turn him into the honor code office was too serious. It was my first semester here, so it was really hard for me to negotiate that in terms of the—well, to me this is really egregious. I've never had a situation where this has happened before and for a student not to come and talk to me about it, at least to

understand where he's coming from. When I finally did talk to him he denied it completely. I was just really caught, so I did end up turning him in, but I just I didn't do the full on where they do [go to honor code committee hearing], you just give them an F on the assignment and you handle it yourself. But I wanted there to be an official record in case it happened again because it was early in his program.

Alyx reflected on her decision to go against the wishes of her department:

So I feel like I did the right thing. And I would hope that I would do it again. But it was hard enough. It would've been a lot easier for me to just let it go and not rock the boat, because he could have very easily have appealed it, it could have been something much larger than that and I don't know that I would've gotten the backing of the department at that point so it was a bad situation to be in, you know, being a new faculty. . . It was an introduction to institutional culture that I was not prepared for.

Alyx got conflicting messages from what should have been the same community of practice, but within the university culture, there exists multiple subcultures that sometimes have competing and contradictory viewpoints. She said that she finds her baseline at home:

Because my husband teaches in the [department name] department so we come home and discuss these things all the time, and he's the first person I'll talk to about. Okay, I have this thing going on and, especially. I can talk to my colleagues here about things but I kind of already know what that culture is like

so I tried to get like the, okay, reasonable person perspective for my husband.

Not to say that people here are not reasonable, but I already know what they're

going to say. He'll talk about his experience with his students. We'll talk about, is

it worth it to stick your neck out on this particular incident? And sometimes it's

not. You decide it's not worth it and might just let it go.

The essential question is when sub-communities of practice have different values or standards, how does an individual make a decision regarding what sub-community to follow? In this case, Alyx made an individual decision based on mores and standards that she brought with her to the institution. Upon reflection, however, she realized the importance of not violating the subculture of her department, even if that department's values are at odds with institutional values. Her reporting an incident threatens her membership in the community and her identity within that community. Decisions regarding how to deal with students who plagiarize are not devoid of cultural context, and Alyx's story points to being caught in the crosshairs of competing values within the same institution.

Faculty Reactions

In making decisions on acting on student incidences of plagiarism, including decisions regarding reporting them to the honor code office, most participants made a clear distinction between a student's intent and level of ability to think critically and wholesale cut and paste plagiarism. In Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory, old-timers would see one issue as one of readiness and access and the other as a clear violation of community standards. Sometimes discerning between the two is easy, as participants

identified. Other times, participants said it was difficult to know how best to address subtle issues or issues that require students to think critically or at a higher level than they are prepared for. For example, Trish grappled with how to work with students as they learn to work with source material:

It seems to me that while they have come to understand, many of them, that you can't just wholesale take somebody else's stuff, they don't necessarily know what that stuff is, or how to identify that stuff. For some of them it is meant as well that has very much influenced how they think about the writing process in broader discussions about writing, in this community of knowledge. Those two things seem antithetical to them. And there is a bit of a nuance there but, at least in my mind, they are pretty separate things. They are very separate things.

I specifically, for example, in my survey courses, require that they write on documents that they have read in class, that I have read in class. And they write on questions that I have formulated in consultation with my teaching assistant. From that standpoint there is no way they can plagiarize that paper because we've talked about it in small groups. It's already been a discussion. Some of them struggle with it and say, "Didn't we talk about this? Didn't you tell us the answer to this? Didn't we kind of talk about this in class?" And my response is, yes we did talk about these documents in class. And so think about how that is going to inform what you are going to say. You don't have to come up with something completely and utterly different. The way you frame it, the way you present it, the evidence, the quotes you use from the document, the

arguments that you're going to make about, makes it your paper, and makes it your argument. So again, trying to model a different way for them, the intersection between those two things, has been, I have felt, has been really important.

In this instance, Trish understood that learning to write in the discipline means that the student must develop critical thinking and writing skills in using sources, and her assignment is designed to help them develop their skills. As Lave and Wenger (1991) note, old-timers create opportunities for newcomers to learn and for them to speak as members of the community.

However, there are times when the newcomers themselves, whether because of artifice in the system or because of undue external pressure, as some participants suggested, commit acts of plagiarism so obvious that the faculty member is taken off guard. In fact, although Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss how some communities limit or prevent access to participation, they do not discuss issues that concern newcomers who try to circumvent the system. To this end, two participants reported that students had actually plagiarized from the participant's own work. Megan told the story of one particularly surprising case of a student who turned in a model essay that she herself had written:

[A] student submitted my own assignment to me. I don't know how she thought we wouldn't catch that. But she submitted my own, and I don't think she had changed anything, maybe a few words here and there, but my whole assignment,

the whole essay that I had written, it was one of the CPR [Calibrated Peer Review] essays, and she copied and submitted that.

As incredulous as that seems, three participants said that their own students had submitted their own work back to them or that someone they knew had had that happen to them. Emily discussed her surprise at seeing her own work in the presentations of her students:

Let me tell you what has happened this semester. And it borderlines plagiarism, and it borderlines just ticking me off. We are a communications class now, for the first time, and what we have done is, the lab before each exam, we have four exams, and they are on Wednesdays, the lab before each exam is presentation day. And I may have covered four or five theories, but there's three chapters they cover on presentation day. If you are thinking about it, it could be used as a review, okay?

But there are groups of four to five, and each one of them has to speak for at least five minutes. All of those rules are spelled out. Number One rule: you will not use my Power Points and you will not re-teach the material. This is an application-based presentation. End of story. Case studies, movie clips, skits, role plays, activities, nothing can be re-taught from my class. You will take what I've taught. You will advance from there and you will do application or you will not get a good grade. Do you understand what I mean? And we've had some, they were just phenomenal, there's a case study for each chapter, for goodness' sakes, just copy it, run it off and give it to the students. Make copies and use it. You've

got the book. It's not hard. Eighty percent of them? My Power Points. My information. They feel that they have to do that before they can do the application. Because this is the first semester I have ever put my Power Points online. Guess what they are doing? They are using my Power Points. And I'm like, "That is plagiarism! That is my stuff and I told you you can't do that."

They all know it's my stuff because it's from my class, and I've put it on there for you to use, but really? So that's my new . . . frustration for me that I didn't see coming. They have the chance to spend 50 minutes doing something really creative and fun, and you re-teach the same crap I did Wednesday?

Egregious acts such as these are the fodder for urban legends, and as Lave and Wenger (1991) consider, they act both as instruction and to indicate full participation. And as these stories are told over and over by other faculty, they become more ingrained in the culture of the practice. Troy told the following story of a colleague:

One of the students plagiarized from a paper she had written. She read this and said, "This sounds familiar. I wrote this! And he is plagiarizing this on my assignment." You almost think this person must, no matter how many times you try to explain it, he just doesn't get it. He really doesn't get it. He's got to be unbelievably stupid or he just really still doesn't understand, that he would think maybe she just doesn't know it's hers or since it's hers I don't have to show it is hers, not even quotes around it. It's so bizarre. You don't quite know what to do.

Faculty tell and retell these stories, and in these stories one can see a culture emerging in the stories that pits old-timer against newcomer. As Lars recalled, "You know, I've had

enough cases of students doing just crazy things. No concept of propriety . . . Every time I tell someone the story of the egregious ones, we all laugh and say, ‘Yes, that’s pretty egregious.’” Lars continued:

My favorite was this one kid, who cut and pasted the entire thing from Wikipedia. And he didn’t even change the background color. So he turned it into Word, and he had the background color from Wikipedia. I mean it was unbelievable!

Most faculty realize that these stories are “war stories” (Lave & Wenger, 1991), but for teaching assistants, these stories may be their first introduction to plagiarism from the instructor perspective.

Teaching Assistants as Both Newcomers and Old-Timers

Although I did not interview any teaching assistants, two of the participants discussed their responsibilities in working with graduate students who were teaching assistants under their supervision. Lave and Wenger (1991) speak to this dynamic positionality. In this community of practice, the teaching assistant is what Lave and Wenger (1991) might term a “new old-timer.” Teaching assistants may well be well-versed in academic writing and academic standards, but they are newcomers as teachers:

Moving toward full participation in practice involves not just a greater commitment of time, intensified effort, more and broader responsibilities within the community, and more difficult and risky tasks, but, more significantly, an increasing sense of identity as a master practitioner. (p. 111)

One of the key terms used here is “risk.” The participants who supervise teaching assistants noted that they were attentive to what the teaching assistants needed to learn in dealing with student plagiarism issues. They were unwilling to allow them to incur all of the risk or burden of dealing with the student alone, but they wanted their teaching assistants to understand and learn from the experiences. As Emily reported, “I don’t put that [responsibility] on their shoulders. They don’t make enough money for that. They are in on the conversation, though. Most of them say, ‘Please don’t make me do this. I don’t know what to say.’”

Emily recalled modeling for her teaching assistant in a meeting with a student who had plagiarized:

My first reaction is “We know you've done this. Do you know you've done this? Where did you find your information? This paper is really well done, and it sounds not like you write at all.” (I honestly don't say that, but... [laughs]) “Your paper has brought up some questions, so where did you get your information? How do you go about writing it?” I am very inquisitive because I don't want to get into blaming. I don't even know half the time if they know. I'm going with one where the student really didn't know. This is a funny one. So I'm going, “Did you find your information, how did you go about writing this, what did you do?” And he goes on, and then I say “Let me tell you what I see. And what I found. And here's what you wrote, and here's what I'm reading. This is your paper, this isn't your paper, and they look exactly the same. What does this tell me?” And he

said, “Well I found a really good source.” And I said, “No, this is called plagiarism. And you can't do this. This is not right.”

And we started talking about it. And this poor kid, he started talking, “But I'm a really good kid and I—” and he started talking 1000 miles an hour, “and my mama raised me right, and I go to church every week, and I would never cheat, and I want you to know that I was really doing this” and he went da-da-da-da-da-da, and he started getting red, he started sweating, and you could really tell, and then he just said, “I need to talk to my mom.” Like, literally. That was his last word. He said, “Can I just call my mom?” And it was like, literally 1000 words in 30 seconds. My TA was trying not to laugh. She was like, “He's going to explode!” And finally, the last thing was, “Can I call my mom?” And I said, “You are going to be okay. If you want to call your mom that's fine, but you have to call your mom with me in here because I'm not sure what you're going to tell her, what you are doing, but let's not call your mom right now, let's just figure this out. And let's take a deep breath.”

He was just literally falling apart. He knew he got the information, he thought he had done what he was supposed to do, he didn't know that, it was completely wrong. He was oblivious. He literally just wanted to call his mom, “I just want her to tell me she loves me because I'm not a bad person.” Literally. He thought. He started justifying it, saying “I go to church, I am a good person. I would never do that.” It was his integrity and his being that was being questioned. And this kid, you could tell that he was—“I go to class every day I'm

a good student I go to church and my mom makes me and my dad is going to be so mad at me and I never do this and I've never done this before—" and I can't tell you he was just giving... snippets. I really wanted to. I did, I got up and gave him a hug. I said, "Let me give you a hug. You can call your mom, and you're going to be okay." And he didn't cry, but there was just this--and then, I've got to call my mom. You could just tell he needed a hug, and he needed to be told that he was going to be okay. Because his whole being, his core, was being questioned. And the TA [teaching assistant] was trying not to laugh, because he was going to explode. He was going to explode.

In this instance, the teaching assistant was in a position to observe a faculty member acting adeptly, in reaction to the student. However, at times faculty are in position where they do not feel that they have agency to define themselves or assert their authority. Since faculty at times fill a dual role, in granting access to students and also granting access to teaching assistants, they can find themselves in difficult situations, as Megan described:

I made it very hard decision about one of the students who turned in my own essay to me. And I decided that she would fail for the semester. And then she came, of course, crying to my office, or cried when I told her she was going to do this. And so then she went to the honor office and they basically said well, if you get [the professor] to just agree to give you a D, you can still pass and go on to nursing school that you are supposed to start in a month. And so, she talked to the undergraduate [name omitted] office, the advisers, she talked with the honor

office. She called me on the phone from the honor office saying, “Dr. xxx, if you can just give me a D I could pass and go on.”

I gave her the D. I felt very pressured to do that, and it made me so angry that I could just barely contain myself. I did not feel the pressure from my department, and I talked to my associate head about it because I was really angry and I felt like the advisers were not backing me up because they were saying, “Well yes, if you get a D you can still graduate.” I don't think they realized they were undermining me. They were saying here are some options, and if you can get [the professor] to give you a D. then you can pass, and you can graduate.” And the same thing, I think, with the honor office. “If you can get her to give you a D or a D star or whatever, you can still graduate and go to nursing school.” I don't want that on me. I didn't want the F on me. Not graduating. Not going to nursing school.

I'm still angry about it, to this day. And so, I don't know what the solution was. I could have stuck to my guns, and then like no, no, you did something really really bad, but I mean, she did have to go through a process where she took some online courses, [for remediation] so they let her do that on line and graduate. But I was very very angry because she is in that office, and she calls me when she's in the office, and then she put someone on the phone in the office who says, “If you can give her a D she can graduate.” And I just thought I can't believe I'm having this conversation. It was one of the caseworkers.

And actually this year, at the beginning of the year, I signed up to be part of the Honor Council. But I haven't gone to do any of them yet. And I feel bad because it's been a year now, but I was so angry about it that I decided I'm going to go find out what's going on over there. I was going to go find out what those people were doing over there. It made me so angry.

So I went over there and I did the training, and I left with the sense that we do not discipline people very well here. I have the sense that you have to practically shoot and kill somebody to get kicked out of the University or really to be disciplined in a meaningful way, was the take-home message for me. I'm just appalled, frankly. And I know they try to mete out some punishments, but very few students get kicked out of the University. I have a feeling more of them should be. But we are here to take tuition, and make money, and so I don't know where the conflict comes. And I do realize that some of these things are very hard to deal with, but I don't know, but for those examples I felt like, an F, and you're done, and so I didn't like the fact that I felt undermined, and pressured in some sense, but not from the University. It was the student pressuring me, but she clearly had, the backing isn't fair, but she clearly had talked to people who gave her the idea that if you can just talk [the professor] into it, you can pass and get through, and that really frustrated me.

What bothered Megan the most, however, was that her teaching assistant watched all of this unfold: “The other thing that was discouraging is that I was setting the example for

my teaching assistant.” She recalled her teaching assistant telling her how well she had handled the situation in talking to the student initially:

My TA had really appreciated the way I had handled the student, and she thought that giving her an F was an entirely appropriate section, and so frankly it was embarrassing to me later to go back and to say, ultimately, I let her pass. And so that also angered me. Here I am, the example that she’s learning from because she wants a research job in an academic institution and she will deal with this one day . . . Frankly, it made me feel really good when she came to me and said, “I was really impressed with that,” and so I felt good about that, and I felt good and how it ended with the student until two days later, when I had to go back, I had to go against what I thought was right, which was an F. And so it was extremely embarrassing to me, and yet I went and told my TA, you know I hate to say this, but here’s what I ended up having to do. She didn’t say anything bad or anything, but she said, “Oh, that stinks.”

As Lave and Wenger (1991) note, there are ways that we *school* students institutionally that may affect how teachers and students work together. One of these constraints is the grading system. In Megan’s case, the issue was not that the student denied cheating or that her right to due process was in question; it was a matter of assigning a particular grade, jumping through a particular hoop, so the student could graduate and move on, regardless of her inability or unwillingness to participate in the community of practice. In addition, Megan felt that in her dual role as professor to the

undergraduate and as mentor to the teaching assistant, she fell short of fulfilling her role for both of them.

Two other participants commented that grades and grade inflation interfered with their ability to work with students. Emily noted, “I hate grades. Honest to goodness I think that grades are the most insane thing we do as educators, but I know we have to do it.” And as Paul said, “I’ve told students here that I would prefer not to grade their work, and that doesn’t go. They look at me as though I’m strange.” These participants expressed concern that grades interfere with the real work they want to do with students and create an artificial environment that pressures students to plagiarize. Two other participants talked about being able to have a more authentic experience with students when they were not grading them. As Elaine noted, “This is a pass/fail course. That’s the beauty of it. So it’s really about improving their writing. It’s nothing for a grade.” Lars discussed being a graduate student under his mentor, “There was no sense that you get an A or a B or a C. It was, ‘This is pass/fail. Is it good enough?’” Lars also mentioned the artifice of giving graduate students credit on research projects:

It’s the Lake Wobegon effect. You can’t say somebody is average. To say somebody is average is—so if you say he’s an average student at Harvard—you just can’t describe a student as being average. It’s just, you can use the word, but you have misconveyed by being accurate. And you have done damage.

The Influence of Technology

In addition to time-honored traditions such as grades, newer technological tools are being both blamed as the source of student plagiarism and the swift sword that can

solve all plagiarism issues. Faculty complain that it is just too easy to copy and paste text from the Internet and that institutional pressures cause students to, as Trish put it, “not listen to their better angels.” That plagiarism has increased because of the Internet might be difficult to prove. Rick discussed intellectual property pre-Internet:

Even when I was in high school, I was working at Kinko’s . . . and I was really surprised at the assumptions of some people that, they would come in and say, “I want 50 copies of this, I found it in a newspaper.” I would say, “This isn’t yours,” and they would say, “Well, I bought the newspaper,” and many of them couldn’t get their minds wrapped around intellectual property and stuff.”

Paul also referred to plagiarism before the era of the “copy and paste” Internet:

In those days we did not have the Internet, and so I was one of a handful of investigators who would be brought the packet. It would go to the committee and then it would go to one of us, and unfortunately our department head was the chair of the committee, so typically it came back to me, and I’d have to do the research. There was no Internet. I’d have to go to the library.

Whether or not the problem is a *new* one or not is probably a moot point, however, since many of the participants mentioned that students look to the Internet for their information and that most intentional plagiarism are “cut and paste” instances, as Rick noted: “It’s become normal that we are not a community of creators by default any more. We are a community of borrowers. So they [students] build up their own identity by stealing this image from this web site.” Elaine expressed concern about how easy it is to copy and paste and how that affects student work:

What I can't sympathize with is somebody who writes a bunch of stuff and I see pictures. I'll see the pictures or copies of files that they made with no citation and no idea where it came from. Because I have an example that I put [on the class web site] that they can click on the web site and it shows a student who did this very well. Figure One. Here's the title. Here's the URL. But I've had students who go in there and they've taken like a map or a graph and they've got the figure and the title and no source.

To help faculty battle technology with technology, the case study university contracted with Turnitin.com, an online plagiarism detection service. In addition to scouring a number of online databases, Turnitin.com keeps copies of previously submitted papers to prevent multiple submissions of the same paper from different students. When a faculty member or a student submits a student paper to Turnitin.com, the service provides a color-coding match report to Internet and other selected online database repositories.

Participants had different opinions of Turnitin.com. Lars put his entire textbook into Turnitin.com so he could compare his work to the work of his students. He commented, "When I wrote my own textbook, I had to put the whole textbook in as sample papers. There are only 22 chapters, so I put it in as 22 sample papers." He bemoaned the lack of accuracy in Turnitin.com in tracking other works, however. He said that some works he put into Turnitin.com did not make a match, but when he put the same work into Google, he found the source of the student plagiarism. Alyx said that she also "googled" some of the papers she suspected of plagiarism.

Although Megan uses Turnitin.com, she expressed concerns about using the tool:

I have misgivings about Turnitin. Some people don't like to use it because their information is out there somewhere, and I'm a very private person myself, and so I understand that misgiving, that now your essay that you have written is in some huge database, and so you've sort of given that away. And so I appreciate that as an issue. And I had a few students who asked me about it when I used it the first semester, and I said, well, sorry. And so I haven't had anybody ask in a while, but I would just say, sorry, this is a requirement for my class, and if you cannot meet the requirement, then you'll have to go take a different class.

To Megan, using Turnitin.com is a necessary evil, but she said she would rather deal with student complaints about Turnitin.com than send students to the honor office, because as she noted, "That stinks for everybody." And it might be that using Turnitin.com gives a professor a modicum of institutional security, as Paul discovered when the honor code office representatives came to his office to question him about a student he had reported: "They would ask a question, and I would answer them, and they would make furious notes, no reaction. But the kinds of questions were, 'Did you turn it into Turnitin.com?' 'No, I did not.'"

Lars felt that a sophisticated level of technology could actually solve the plagiarism problem: "I think we are finally entering a stage where technology has the possibility and probably has had the capability to really change the way we teach." He noted that giving students constant, immediate, high-quality feedback on their work would help them learn faster and better. He acknowledged, however, that "high quality feedback is very expensive . . . it means that they have to be writing a lot, and they have

to be getting a lot of feedback.” He advocated “moving this stuff to the computer” to accommodate the large numbers of students at the case study university.

However, understanding how students use and think about technology might be more important in understanding plagiarism than engaging in the cat and mouse game that Turnitin.com facilitates. Rick put the issue in a different perspective:

Our presence is manifested in so many different ways, our Facebook status, and IMs and SMS messages, and I’ve been kind of informally studying how presence is manifested in each of those things in a way when you’re writing this status update, you’re present with your audience (or some semblance of your audience) but they can’t see your status, and so they are present with you, I should say you’re present with them when they get around to reading them. So your presence is conjured in that way, disembodied in that way.

Rick’s point that the way students communicate a presence without being present and yet exist in that presence further complicates traditional notions of identity and authorship. Emily also commented on the effect that social media have had on student communication: “Sending a text or email, or a Facebook message, is communication. They don’t see that as writing. Even though it is. They don’t recognize that. And I don’t know why. It’s not writing, period. It’s just communicating.”

Research Question #4

What dissonances occur between faculty and students regarding plagiarism and standards of practice?

Participants who recognized or experienced dissonances regarding standards saw these dissonances stemming from cultural, generational, and/or experiential differences between the faculty members and the students. Not all faculty members categorized or qualified students who violated practices, but some specifically commented that they felt that some international students came from cultures that did not share the same views on ethics or the same methods for standards of practice in academic writing as American universities did. Other faculty felt that generational factors were at play in creating dissonance, and one participant reported that she felt that dissonances were neither cultural nor generational. Rather, she said that the dissonances were caused by lack of experience.

Cultural Dissonances

The university at the subject of the case study has a large international graduate student population, and urban legends focus a great deal of attention on this subset of the population regarding cheating in general and plagiarism in particular. Joseph noted that it is very difficult to put in the time necessary to get international graduate students where they need to be regarding academic writing ability: “Working with them has been very strenuous in terms of getting the writing style correct. Because this is the dissertation, and they obviously want to do something in academia, or academic related.” He noted that since he works in draft stages with graduate students, he can help them revise their drafts to avoid plagiarism issues. He mused that “the concept of plagiarism overseas is, I don’t mean to use the word *foreign*, but the concept itself, I don’t think it’s taught over there at all.” Troy speculated that over half of the plagiarism he has dealt

with have been with international graduate students: “I do think there’s a different set of expectations. They come from a different mindset, different experience, different cultural norms. Troy told the story of one incident:

I wonder sometimes when, you know I stood in front of [name of class], and really laid it out. And one of our deans stood right next to me, and he let them have it. It wasn’t two weeks later that we had a paper from one of those guys, just lifting, cutting and pasting. And, it was an international student.

And I almost get the feeling sometimes, and I want to be careful not to, not to generalize, or something, or misunderstanding what’s going on, but I wonder if sometimes a different cultural perspective leads someone to think they don’t really mean it, they’re just going through, they just have to say this, but they don’t really mean it. I don’t know how else they can do this, after, it was, you could have cut the tension with a knife in that room, that dean. I thought I was being tough, and then he upped it. He said some stuff that made *me* uncomfortable it was so hard. It was so threatening and strong. His language was really strong. And two weeks later. . .

Other participants put the incidences within a socio-political context. Rose attributed differences in practices to cultural differences:

It’s just different. It’s sincere appreciation to copy somebody’s work, and the whole idea of working as a group and helping everybody in the group. And so the group produces something and that’s ingrained in modern Chinese society

based on traditional Chinese society. So we have to turn them into a bunch of little capitalist creeps.”

Rose followed up her statement, however, by noting that although she sees cultural differences in practices in some students, she asserted that the biggest cases in her college are American students. Elaine offered a similar perspective, saying that in working with collectivist cultures one has to understand that everyone in the group succeeding is more important than one person succeeding at the expense of others. She also noted that on occasion, her international students have not spoken English well enough to understand her directives. No matter the cause, however, the honor code office director said anecdotally that a large percentage of the plagiarism cases at the case study university are committed by international graduate students.

Not all offenses are caused by graduate students, however. Paul told of an encounter he had with an undergraduate Latina student. He said that she used the fact that English was her second language as an excuse to plagiarize. He told her, “It’s not an excuse. There are others in the same boat with less proficiency that you have, and given as articulate as you’ve been during the time you’ve been sitting here, you have no difficulty with fluency in English.”

Paul continued to muse on the situation:

I found it odd because I’m Hispanic, and ever culture’s got their own nuance, and generally that culture is focused on family connection and family as a unifying social contract, and family honor, so probably the worst thing you could say to somebody, even somebody my age, is “What would your mother say?” And my

mother's still alive. She would not be pleased, and you know, that's not going to go over well, it's not a culturally accepted thing, now, and so, the first thing I said was, "Hey, this is not my first language either. So what? All that means is that you have to work harder. Because you've chosen to come here to study, get credentials from America, which are highly valuable, and you're going to go back, and whether you are aware of it or not, people are going to assume that you are fully bilingual.

In this case, Paul and the student may have shared similar cultural backgrounds, and perhaps that increased the dissonance between them as the student attempted to use her background as an excuse to plagiarize.

Generational Dissonances

If there are any urban legends destined to be attached to this generation of college students, it has to be centered on the excesses of the Millennial generation, the generation of children born from 1982 on (Howe & Strauss, 2000), or, more specifically on the "helicopter parents" of the Millennial generation who are involved in every phase of their child's life, including their college classroom achievement. As Elaine noted, "a lot of them [students], they've gone to the web [to plagiarize], and they feel like, I don't know, maybe it is generational, I don't know." Three participants referred to the student's upbringing as being pivotal to the way he or she will behave regarding ethics in the classroom. As Joseph noted, "My parents were hard-working, and nothing came easy to me. So I worked hard to get everything I have now. And there are a lot of students

who just want to take the easy way out.” He credited his parents with shaping his work ethic:

And that upbringing kind of sets you on a certain path . . . so my parents, I essentially embody the best things that they have taught, even though it might not have been anything to do with writing, but the way I pursue things has helped me greatly in terms of how I write, how I teach in a classroom, and all those other things, attention to detail.

This notion of how a parent raises a child sets the child on a particular path resonated with more than one participant. Paul recalled an incident that he happened when he took his son to the playground years earlier:

He was in the sandbox and some kid had left a toy, and I said, “No, you have to put that back,” and he said, “Why?” and I said, “Because it’s not yours.” And he said, “Finders Keepers!” and I said, “No, if that were yours. . .” you know, just lessons, you can’t walk away from a small thing and you can’t walk away from that teaching moment. You just can’t do it, because it will come back to you in a heartbeat.”

Four of the participants related student behavior regarding ethics and plagiarism back to parental upbringing. Troy talked about being a responsible parent in teaching children ethics:

I am a person who believes that you have to teach your children directly. You have to teach them principles. And you have to force them to question their

behavior and process. I think one of the big, one of the primary ways we teach ethics to our children is by modeling it.

In addition, one participant and the honor code office director discussed dealing with overprotective parents. Joseph recalled that he had dealt with a couple of angry parents:

It's interesting, because I had one parent call because her son was failing my class, and the reason her son was failing my class was because he hadn't, he essentially dropped the class but he hadn't formally dropped the class. So I got a call from his mother, and she was pretty irate, why her son was flunking my class. And I said, it's pretty simple, he hasn't been in my class for weeks now and he didn't turn in any of the first two assignments. And the parent was like, "Oh, okay." And I said what I think is happening is your son just dropped my class but he hasn't formally done so through the computer, and the parent was very understanding.

The honor code officer director interviewed for this case stated that he has had conversations with angry parents, many of them donors, who are so angry that they say that they will tell other people never to attend this university. He said that most students understand and take responsibility for their actions, but on occasion the parents try to intervene and interfere with the process.

Even though Lave and Wenger (1991) do not address baggage that learners might bring with them to the learning situation, one has to assume that to be even a newcomer in a community of practice that the newcomer has to act on his own volition.

However, learners bring context with them, and entering a new world or a new community of practice that they do not always understand may cause dissonance for both students and parents.

Experiential Dissonances

Perhaps the more applicable dissonance, from Lave and Wenger's (1991) theoretical perspective, comes from the participant who saw the dissonance coming simply from a lack of experience with and in the community of practice and the world in general. Emily stated:

I think there is one thing I'd like to say about our students. I don't think they realize that they are going to be writing the rest of their lives. And I don't think they realize that plagiarism is going to be the big deal outside of my class. And this citation thing, giving credit where credit is due, not copying off a web site, when I get to give a presentation of course I'm going to be able to copy this off of a web site and use it for my presentation. Because nobody's going to know the difference, or care where I got it from. Really? First of all, they don't think they are going to write. All you are going to *do* is write. We live in a writing world. So they don't understand that. I don't think they realize that that's part of what we do every day.

When asked if this is endemic of the current generation of traditional college students, she mused:

It's an experience thing, more than it is a generational thing, and that's maybe a generational thing, they haven't had the experience because they are in this generation. And I think, I mean I know about the hovering parent and all of that, I don't think it really plays in, I just think they are young. They don't know. They haven't been exposed. And the reality isn't real. It's here. It's this beautiful little bubble, and this is their reality, and so one of the things I do for my class, is that, you walked through my class feeling that it's irrelevant. I know you have . You have memorized, and you have regurgitated. You wrote your papers and you've been done. What you don't recognize is what I've taught you, you will be doing for the rest of your life. It's leadership. You will see it and experience it as a follower and as a leader throughout your life. But you don't know that because you don't have experience.

Emily is like many faculty members who see beyond the newcomers' limited world view and tries to impart the importance of wisdom and experience to her naïve students. Her thoughts perhaps reflect best the intent of Lave and Wenger's theory. Students don't know because they don't know. It is up to old-timers to open the door to them.

Faculty Investment

No matter what faculty perceive as contributory factors to student plagiarism, faculty encounters with student plagiarism can be, for many faculty, as Megan put it, "agonizing." The honor code office director interviewed for this case study noted that in his dealings with faculty who have reported incidences of plagiarism, many of them see the incidences as "personal affronts." He further noted that although his information is

anecdotal, from his view, the full professors seem to be more upset with cheating issues, and he speculates that many of them just do not have the teaching load that the junior professors do, so they would not see as many incidents. Nevertheless, he says, “the parties can tend to be emotional on both sides.” He says that faculty who are emotionally invested in the situation are “in it to win it.”

One of the reasons Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation is an appropriate lens is that it unpacks the contextual nature of learning communities. It is therefore easier to understand not just what happens when students violate standards of practice but *why* these violations strike at the core or at the heart of faculty members. A learning community is just that—a community, and since the doing and the learning are one, faculty often find themselves emotionally, intellectually, and mentally embroiled by the challenges presented when their students violate the very code of conduct that faculty hold so dear. As Paul told his students after a plagiarism incident took place,

You have entered into the profession of the scholar, you know, whether you realize it or not, that’s what you are doing, and the coin of the realm here, is knowledge, it is research-based, the knowledge that comes from the fruit of someone’s intellect. How dare you steal it! How dare you claim it as your own!” So those are the values and the ethics by which the community in which you are currently participating, that’s what they live by. And that’s the coin of the realm.

Paul's oratory reflects feelings conjured in many faculty when confronted with student plagiarism. He admitted that he has difficulty dealing with plagiarism on an emotional level:

Plagiarism, that whole area, it's just one of those things that I, it gets me very emotional. But I keep it under control, but it does raise my dander and I, you know, when I walk in, the tone of my voice changes when I talk about the subject.

Troy expressed having similar emotions:

My typical reaction that happens is to first get really pissed off. Because it's not like, you know I feel like we have bent over backwards to try to coach you and help you to not have this problem, and to violate these rules. And you're just saying, "To hell with it. I'm going to do it." And my first reaction is to get pissed off.

Troy noted that the student who plagiarizes is the exception rather than the rule: "Eighty percent of them are fabulous. Fifteen percent of them are pretty darn good. But that five percent—you couldn't trust them to drop a letter in the mailbox for you. You wouldn't know what they would do with it." Even teaching assistants get upset, and sometimes they are angrier than the faculty member. Emily said that her teaching assistants "are so angry because they are so invested in them. 'I spent five hours with them on this paper, how could they not get this?' They are so mad they want to chop their heads off. Or persecute them." Emily said that she empathized with the teaching assistants:

And it's bitten me. I've had those who have tried to blow me over, "Oh, I'm always in class, and I would NEVER, EVER, I didn't mean to do that." Are you kidding? "I didn't mean . . . I wrote that myself, and it just happens to sound like that paper". . . And it's even more disappointing when I really know the student, and no, I know you better than that. And you know better than that. So that's like a slap in the face and that really makes me mad. I can turn on them just like that.

Not all participants expressed anger, however. In addition to referring to the experience as "agonizing," Megan also expressed a modicum of fear:

And frankly, I'm a little bit, you know, creepy things happen, I'm a little bit scared of somebody doing something crazy if I give them an F or something, you know that floats through my mind. As silly as that is that it does. I had somebody really, really, pressuring me last semester for a C in my class, and he barely got a D and he kept sending revised essays and asking me if I would please grade, even though it was two months later, I didn't cave to that. I said no. "You are getting your D because this is a well-earned D." But I had this brief flutter of okay, and this seems really paranoid and crazy, but it does float through my mind that somebody might try to come and do something to harm me. And then that crazy biology woman in Alabama that kills all of the people in her department, and then you know this stuff really does happen.

In these cases, it seems as if there is an understanding of the investment of time and emotional energy on the part of the faculty that may not occur to the student. Rather, students may feel that illegitimate peripheral participation is possible. That is, they think

they can be a part of the community of practice without actually understanding or learning the practices. Lave and Wenger (1991) state, however, that there is no such thing:

Thus, in the terms proposed here there may very well be no such thing as an “illegitimate peripheral participant.” The form that the legitimacy of participation takes is a defining characteristic of ways of belonging, and it therefore not only a critical condition for learning, but a constitutive element of its content. (p. 35)

The participants in this case study know that there is no such thing as an illegitimate peripheral participant, and that may well be one source of the seemed chasm between faculty and students in these emotionally-laden plagiarism cases.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Overview of the Study

This case study examined the perceptions of faculty at a single large public university to lend insight into how faculty develop their own skills in writing in their discipline, how they work with students to develop their skills in writing in their discipline, and how faculty perceive incidences of plagiarism in their classes. The study was designed to view student plagiarism from the faculty perspective, because although a great deal of research has been conducted on student perceptions, very little research has been done on faculty who encounter student plagiarism in their classes. However, unlike other studies conducted on faculty, this study examined the faculty member's own development as a writer in his or her academic discipline and considered how, in turn, faculty work with their students to develop writing standards in their disciplines. These data were important in understanding the context surrounding faculty perceptions, and

the results add to existing scholarship that researches faculty perceptions of academic dishonesty.

However, plagiarism is a complex issue of authorship and warrants its own body of scholarship. Most studies on academic dishonesty frame plagiarism as a component of broad-based studies on academic dishonesty. Several problems arise from this model. First of all, students and faculty may not share definitions of plagiarism. As McCabe (2005) noted, students who are asked to self-report incidences of plagiarism may not define plagiarism in the same way the researcher does. In addition, students and faculty do not always share definitions of plagiarism, nor do they ascribe the same negative value to it. Moreover, sometimes students do not even recognize plagiarism, as the data in this study revealed. Even students who have clearly copied and pasted material into their papers may not understand how they have violated university policy, as in Emily's student who became so upset he asked to call his mother and told her that he went to church every week.

The data were examined using Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation as a framework for analysis. The initial impetus for using this framework came from the work of McCabe and his colleagues (McCabe et al., 2001; McCabe & Trevino, 2002; McCabe & Trevino, 1997), who found in their research that contextual influences are many times determinants of student perception and behavior regarding cheating and academic dishonesty. Lave and Wenger (1991) situate all learning situations in a community of practice, and all learning takes place as a result of learners interacting with each other in this community. Therefore, in Lave and Wenger's

learning theory, context is not just important to consider; it is the only thing to consider, because people learn in relation with other members of the community. Although Lave and Wenger's theory (1991) is best applied to informal learning contexts where one-to-one apprenticeships are the norm, the theory is uniquely suited to understanding how students learn writing in their disciplines, for although the argument might be made that content can be known without being applied or practiced, writing cannot be *known*; it can only be *done*. In addition, examining how faculty developed as academic writers reinforced the apprenticeship-type model that Lave and Wenger use in the applications of their theory. Participant faculty attributed their development as scholarly writers to mentors such as graduate student advisors or undergraduate professors who allowed the professors to develop from newcomers to old-timers by giving them constant and appropriate feedback on their writing. These mentors made them write and rewrite until their writing met the standard of the community.

Although qualitative research does not attempt to make sweeping generalizations across a population, looking at the data through Lave and Wenger's theoretical framework allows for what Yin (2009) terms, "analytic generalization" (p. 38). By looking at the precepts of the framework and how these data and findings fit or do not fit the framework, the data is anchored within a context that is recognizable. In addition, if the data are valuable within a recognizable context, then the data can be realized and actualized within that framework. Particularly, viewing these data within the framework of legitimate peripheral participation provided a way to view the problem within its natural context, leading to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

Summary of Findings

Throughout the data analysis, I found commonalities in participant comments throughout and across the research questions I posed. I identified these commonalities because at times, they permeated all the questions and were not specific to one particular question. These commonalities, viewed collectively within the framework of legitimate peripheral participation, comprised my study findings.

- **Students need to write and receive high-quality feedback on their writing to be able to move from newcomer to full participant.**

Academic writing is a skill that students are expected to have, but students may not have had ample access to practice academic writing throughout their college careers. Trish noted that seniors and juniors who take her survey class are shocked when they learn that they have to write academic papers in the class. Their experience has been that in survey classes, students take multiple-choice tests, and students don't have to write in those classes. Therefore, students take writing-intensive classes in their discipline, but if they do not have to take freshman composition, they may not write anything substantial until their junior or senior years. The fact that students are not practicing writing throughout their career does not allow students access to legitimate peripheral participation.

And in an institution where students may place out of freshman composition and then may very well not write an academic paper of any weight until their junior or senior years, in this sense, the faculty and the instruction, in collusion, are denying students

access to legitimate peripheral participation. Because in order to be a participant in the community, one must participate by practicing the craft. The participants were quick to blame high school instruction, community college instruction, and even other departments within the university, but the truth of the matter is that it takes a village, as McCabe says, to create a culture. Although the university has made efforts to integrate more writing into the curriculum through its writing in the disciplines program, it is not a curriculum that values writing at its core. Unless students are enrolled in majors that require them to practice academic writing, they may have very little practice writing scholarly papers.

The participants in this case study consciously worked with undergraduates to help them develop the skills they need to write in their discipline by having them practice writing in the discipline. However, in my purposive sampling, I only chose faculty who integrated writing into the curriculum in order to be able to discuss incidences of plagiarism. Across the university, however, many students are learning all of the disciplinary practices of their discipline except writing throughout their college careers, since there is a slight chance that the only time they will be asked to write is in their writing-intensive courses during their senior year. In addition, this is not just an undergraduate problem. As Joseph pointed out, there is no class at the graduate level in his program that teaches students to write in their disciplines. Rose, however, said that in her program, graduate students take a class to learn how to write in their discipline. Therefore, the level of preparation that a graduate student may have at any given time would be dependent on his department and degree requirements.

In reality, the institution is saying one thing with its writing in the disciplines program, that writing is a skill that is valued, that students are expected to know how to write in their disciplines, and yet students often do not get an opportunity to practice and gain access to this intellectual community. Students see behind the façade. The university values writing and wants its students to be able to write, but it does not value it enough to give them opportunities to *do* the writing it takes to become full participants in the community. One reason may be because of the preponderance of large survey classes that make it difficult if not impossible to give students the feedback they need to become full participants in the community. As Trish mentioned in her interview, however, she completed her undergraduate degree at a large public university approximately the same size as the case study university, and writing feedback was provided by breaking large sections into small groups headed by a teaching assistant, and this is how she currently integrates writing into her large survey-based classes.

Therefore, it isn't enough to talk about the writing; students have to do the writing. McCabe (2005) states that in order to create a culture of academic integrity on our college campuses, academics must abandon the cat and mouse game of adopting more wily ways of catching cheaters and plagiarists. Rather, he said, academics must embrace the obligation they have to wholly educate their students. The findings from this study take McCabe's notions just one step further. In order to create a culture of academic integrity regarding scholarly writing, colleges and universities must find ways to create writing cultures at their institutions. I remember taking my daughter on whirlwind tours of multitudes of universities during her senior year. Most of the tours

are a single blur now, with one rare exception. One student tour guide told the students that if they were not comfortable writing that they should go ahead and cross the university off the list, because there were no Scantron multiple-choice exams there. All exams included some form of writing. What amazed me was that the student tour guide was not complaining about the writing; rather, she was reflecting her culture, a culture where all students and all faculty wrote. Whether plagiarism is a problem at this university is of course impossible to know, but creating a culture of writing can only reinforce and open access for students to become full participants in this community of practice.

Because of this opaqueness, students may not see plagiarism as a serious academic offense, at least not as serious as cheating on a test, as Thorpe, Pittenger, and Reed (1999) found in their research. In contrast, as Adler-Kassner et al. (2008) point out, most academics see individual ownership of research as a necessary part of their practice and ascribe a great deal of value to individual ownership of words and ideas. In addition, faculty disagree on what constitutes plagiarism, and this is both individually and discipline-based. For example, Lars asserted that scholars in his field do not argue about the words; they argue about who owns the ideas. Megan, however, said that she was constantly being asked by her students for examples of how to reword concepts and ideas. Although she modeled examples for them in class, she reported that scholarly writing was just something she had to learn by doing, which is exactly what students need to have the opportunity to do.

- **The participant faculty were comfortable in authoritative roles.**

In this case study, the participants wanted to retain judgment over academic matters and felt comfortable doing so. None of the participants expressed any hesitation about talking to students about plagiarism issues, although Megan reflected that at times she worries about what may happen to her if a student were to become really angry about a grade she has given. The study results are consistent with the literature, as McCabe et al. (2001) found that faculty prefer to handle incidences of academic dishonesty themselves.

However, participant faculty wanted those authoritative roles to be educative rather than punitive. Even though participants were willing to report instances of serious or egregious plagiarism, they wanted to talk to students to ensure that the students learned proper documentation and citation practices. Price (2002) reported that faculty have a dual function to both teach students the rules and sanction them when those rules are broken, and negotiating those roles can be complex at times. Even when the participants were angry, they were still educative. As Paul said when he recalled working with a student who had plagiarized, "I'm still teaching. I'm still teaching."

Although all of the participants felt they had the authority to deal with students who plagiarized, not all of them felt that they had the agency. One participant seemed to not want the authority; she wanted the honor code council to make the decision for her, without her presence, regarding the proper sanction for the student. However, when the participant initially encountered the student, she assigned a failing grade and willingly accepted the authority by assigning the failing grade. When she was pressured to change her grade, she felt her agency had been compromised. When she was challenged, she

wanted someone else to make the ultimate decision which would determine whether the student graduated. Troy said that he always turned his students into the honor code office, but he also admitted that someone in his department actually filed the paperwork for him and handled any conflicts that arose as a result. He felt that he had agency to deal with the student, but he also was willing to allow the college dean to do the paperwork and manage situations for him. In this way, he was able to maintain the coach role that he felt comfortable with.

Therefore, one common finding in the study was that the participants' satisfaction with the system or situation at hand had a great deal to do with the agency that the faculty members felt they had. All participant faculty wanted to play the type of role in dealing with the student that Lave and Wenger epitomize. As old-timers, their role is to open access to the newcomers to allow legitimate peripheral participation. None of them felt that it was problematic to make these judgments regarding how students should learn and how they work with students who violate community practices. Internal and external conflict occurred when faculty were required to work within the confines of institutional constructs, including negotiating differences between departmental practices and individual values, as in Alyx's case, or in working through moving from teacher to accuser and back to teacher, as in Paul's case. Without the larger community or institutional rules or constraints, even including the necessity of assigning grades, as Emily reflected, the faculty members felt comfortable and confident in their role as old-timers.

One area where participants felt strongly about holding on to both their authority and agency was discerning student intent in dealing with plagiarism issues. Although some of them knew that it might be impossible to know intent, as Trish said, they all wanted to understand or wanted to feel that they understood the intent of the student. Identifying intent in students, however, may be more complicated than the participants think it is.

McCabe and Trevino (1997) noted that the replication of the Bowers study did not show that student cheating had gone up, but they speculated that the way students defined cheating had changed over the years, particularly regarding collaboration and plagiarism. His conclusions apply to the data in this study, because originally I had presupposed it would be very apparent to faculty when the student didn't understand the assignment and when students blatantly disregarded the rules. For example, patchwriting without using quotation marks but citing the source would seem to be unintentional, and copying and pasting something wholesale would be clearly intentional. However, in Emily's case, it was clear that material was copied and pasted from the Internet, and yet the student clearly did not realize that this violated community standards and practices. Also, in working with one particular international student who continued to plagiarize, Elaine discovered that the student's English proficiency was lacking and that he just did not understand what she was telling him. The faculty member dealt with it in kind, but it came down to discerning intent. These participants were constantly looking for cues from the student that might help guide them in their judgments. In talking to students, the participants tried to decide if the students were being honest with them. Taking on

student intent is a lot of authority for the faculty to embrace, and perhaps that is where the honor code office serves its purpose to look at each case from an objective perspective, although faculty might not perceive it as such. As Megan said, the honor code office is watching out for the university and not necessarily the faculty member or the student.

Participant faculty were willing to report honor code violations in egregious cases, i.e., from improper paraphrasing of a significant amount of text or copying and pasting text without citation. However, participants became frustrated with the system when it did not seem to work fairly. Of the participants I interviewed, only three had negative experiences with the honor code office and one of those was before the office procedure changed. After the procedure changed, Rose noted that although instructors need to make a concerted effort to communicate their standards and procedures to the students in writing, she also noted that she no longer felt that the honor code office took the students' side, as she had observed before.

Of the eight participants who reported incidences to the honor code office, only two were upset with the process—one faculty had a case go to an honor code hearing, and the other one felt that she was unduly pressured by those operating within the system to change a grade. So, the six participants who filed online reports and never went to hearing were satisfied with the process. It seemed that when the system did not seem to work, it was when the student appealed the case. In Paul's case, then, he felt that he was placed in an adversarial role, and his agency was in question. Although the outcome of the hearing is protected by confidentiality, which Paul did not breach in his interview,

the outcome probably is not as important as the perception of the way the process worked. Paul said that he did not want to participate in something like that again, although he said that he would report violations. He said, however to be pitted against the student in a trial-like situation was a difficult burden to bear.

I expected to see a relationship between those participants who had one or more degrees from the case study university to be more loyal to institutional constructs than disciplinary constructs (Gouldner, 1958). What I found, however, was that the participants were not influenced by their loyalty to the institution as much as their loyalty to their positionality as a faculty member or old-timer in relation to the student or newcomer. The local vs. cosmopolitan construct didn't seem to matter in this case.

Legitimate peripheral participation is not a utopian world, however. One impediment to an idyllic notion of the community of practice where everyone learns in relation to one another is the mistrust old-timers often have of each other. Lave and Wenger (1991) address these issues of conflict in the community:

One implication of the inherently problematic character of the social reproduction of communities of practice is that the sustained participation of newcomers, becoming old-timers, must involve conflict between the forces that support processes of learning and those that work against them. (p. 57)

In reality, the forces are not obviously at odds. There is no good vs. evil precept at work here. Rather, faculty disagree about how best to bring students into the community. It is clear that faculty have misgivings about what goes on in other professor's classrooms. This is particularly true, as Elaine noted, when faculty publicly announce that they will

not turn students into the honor code office. And as Rose said, some faculty refuse to accept the authoritarian role that being a faculty member requires. They just want to be their friends.

Lave and Wenger (1991) nod to the dynamic nature of positionality within the community of practice, because old-timers are ultimately replaced by newcomers who have become old-timers in the regenerative process. However, they do not directly deal with power issues between old-timers themselves, although they do address the regenerative nature of communities of practice. They nod to the fact that there will be conflict in a regenerative process. Lave and Wenger (1991) assert the following:

Shared participation is the stage on which the old and the new, the known and the unknown, the established and the hopeful, act out their differences and discover their commonalities, manifest their fear of one another, and come to terms for their need for one another. Each threatens the fulfillment of the other's destiny, just as it is essential to it. Conflict is experienced and worked out through a shared everyday practice in which differing viewpoints and common stakes are in interplay. (p. 116)

If faculty send mixed messages to students, then, it may be because they approach the same problem from different perspectives. For example, if a student is reported to the honor code office and the student either accepts the sanction or is overruled in appeal, then that incident goes on the student's record. It does not go on the transcript. It is sealed, and it is private, but if a student applies to law school or other graduate schools, the student is required to report incidences of disciplinary action taken against the

student. The honor code office director said that the students are usually able to explain the incidences. However, Trish expressed concern about putting that type of marker on the student and struggled with the idea that although she had reported a student to the honor code office and probably would do so again, that somehow the level of punishment was too far-reaching. Even if the student learned from the mistake, the stakes are so high in this case that Trish wondered if the punishment actually fit the crime, so to speak. When the incident goes on the student's record, it may limit the student's access to participate in that community of practice later on. Trish makes the point that these students are young, and that they will make mistakes, and in this case they will make mistake that will shadow them the rest of their days. Other faculty felt that reporting them to the honor code office was the way to help them learn from their mistakes.

In a way, however, it is difficult to fit every instance of conflict that arises from construct into Lave and Wenger (1991)'s framework. They themselves emphasize that the theory is not intended to be application-based or pedagogically oriented. They note that it may be useful in understanding schooling and school structures, but they also state that they do not give in-depth attention to certain issues, particularly those issues that stem from power struggles and hegemonic practices that prevent full participation or mastery in a learning community. They suggest that power imbalances be studied to better understand how "these relations generate characteristically interstitial communities of practice and truncate possibilities for identities of mastery" (p. 42). Therefore although I used Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral

participant as a frame for examining my data, I pushed against some boundaries that Lave and Wenger intentionally did not cross, such as power struggles between old-timers who disagree on ways to provide access to newcomers.

- **Participant faculty perceived intentional plagiarism as a moral wrong.**

Participants felt that students who knowingly violated community practices, for example, those who copied and pasted work into a paper, sometimes without changing the web site's background color, had committed a moral wrong and not just a professional wrong. Although the participants understood that their students at times were affected by the "anxiety of influence" inherent in learning how to use sources to construct their own arguments, the participants I interviewed felt that students who defied the rules established for them had crossed a line. This notion differs from Fish's (2010) assertion that although plagiarism violates community practice, it does not constitute or indicate shortcomings in one's character or moral fiber. Four of the participants referred to the students' upbringing being influential in students making decisions about their academic lives that led them on a particular path. There is perhaps a connotation to the word "honor" code that urges the members of the practice to attach more moral significance to plagiarism and creates a false dichotomy for professionals in the field. The use of the word "honor" is indicative of moral character, and to violators, of moral turpitude. In addition, participant faculty reacted more emotionally to students they had invested personal time into. As Emily noted, her teaching assistants were more upset than she was when one of their students was caught plagiarizing, and Emily said

that it was because the teaching assistants spend a significant amount of time working one-on-one with those students in situations such as labs, recitations session, or tutorials.

In terms of students knowing how they are expected to behave, they would be hard-pressed to *not* know what is expected of them. Students are given information on the university's honor code in formal ways, such as on their syllabi, and in informal ways at presentations at new student orientations and also at campus life orientations. Even the video that students watch on notable alumni during their campus life orientations feature videos of alumni who said that they were attracted to the university because it called on students to lead lives of integrity and character. In fact, with all of the face time that the honor code gets with students, it is more confounding to hear faculty recall incidences of plagiarism in the classroom. If students know so much about how they are expected to act, then why does plagiarism exist, or any other act of academic misconduct, for that matter?

It is through the lens of Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation that this seeming paradox can be explained, or at least can begin to be understood. As Marsh (2007) posits, in the traditional freshman composition class, students are asked to construct a thesis and then gather multitudes of source material to surround that one statement. Marsh argues that the research paper, as it is traditionally taught, may actually encourage plagiarism rather than curb it. In borrowing source material and patchworking it into their papers, students actually affect a multitude of identities, none of them their own, much like their online lives. In reality, then, not all newcomers know what the standards are, and in those circumstances, most of the

participants saw themselves as guides or mentors who try to get students to practice those standards. And in extreme circumstances, students who should seem to know what they have done, as in Emily's case, the student who started hyperventilating and asked to call his mother.

Not all participants reflected on the complexity of authorship and ownership, but they all were concerned with students who do not quite understand proper appropriation. In Emily's class, it might be the anxiety of influence that prompts her students to copy her Power Point slides and present them to the class. It is as if they are afraid *not* to use the material, because even though they are told not to use the Power Points, they use them as a cushion or as a way to ensure that they are covering the right material. As Emily said, she was not sure if she was angry because they were plagiarizing or they were just not getting it. Either way, she was exasperated.

- **Technology affects the way teachers and students relate within the community.**

Although using technology to teach students how to cite and document properly or to provide students with high-quality feedback on their writing has promise, as Lars suggested, fighting Internet plagiarism with Internet-based plagiarism detection tools reinforces Price's (2002) concept of a "gotcha" game that has no winners. Of course, some faculty participants used Turnitin.com as a tool for students to use to check their own work. Only one participant used it for all students as a true plagiarism detection tool. However, it seems like a de facto way for the university to ensure that a faculty member is treating all students fairly. Paul found this out when the members of the

honor code council asked him if he used Turnitin.com or if he had scrutinized all of the student papers personally. From a university perspective, it seems to be a safe solution to the plagiarism problem; however, using Turnitin.com does not teach students to write like scholars. It teaches them not to plagiarize in eight-word strings. As McCabe (2005) stated, this puts students and teachers across a chasm that universities should be trying to bridge.

In addition, changes to identity and authorship within social media affect thinking about ownership and authorship in the world of academic writers, particularly when lines are blurred between social media and digital accession of academic source material, such as sharing academic resource materials on Citeulike, finding source material in Google Scholar, or putting a link to WorldCat.org on one's Facebook page. It is possible that making academic digital resources more accessible and appealing to students has further blurred the line between their online social lives and their online academic lives. When library databases can text message the Library of Congress number of a library book to a student's cell phone, a service that the case study university has, then social media has permeated the academic world.

In and of itself, this is not problematic, for it allows students easy access to the faculty member's world. The challenge is in helping all members of the community understand that although some practices change, some remain the same, and newcomers are not empowered to change the practices of the community until they are old-timers or masters, and perhaps not even then. If students are comfortable with borrowed identities, as Rick mentioned, old-timers are not. Students are newcomers to the world of academic

discourse, with all of its rules And, to a certain extent, some faculty are newcomers to the student world, where, as Rick puts it, students can create multiple identities for themselves, all of them borrowed and assembled to create a façade of an identity. All borrowing is fair game in this world, and as Rick puts it, it is a “community of borrowers.” In this world of Uwe Schmidt and Senor Coconut, identities are not real and yet they exist. They exist in Facebook and texting and instant messaging, and although students may be comfortable in that world, academic writing and academic style manuals still struggle with the proper way to reference a web site.

Limitations of the Theoretical Framework

In their research, Lave and Wenger (1991) shied away from analyzing situations that have traditional school contexts. Although this omission was an intentional attempt to separate learning from “schooling,” it also was intended to consider learning in contexts outside of the traditional school situations to offer a broader historical look at learning. In addition, it was also important not to use “schooling” as an unintentional way to compare all other learning situations to schooling contexts. Therefore, since this study examines faculty perceptions, school and schooling structures are inevitably a part of the study. Nevertheless, the theory is an appropriate way to view the data because it contextualizes how students and faculty interact within this community of practice. In addition, the participants in this study often expressed frustration with what they saw as artificial constructs of schooling that interfered with the learning process. This frustration corresponds to Lave and Wenger’s notions that social constructions often interfere with the ability to provide access to newcomers to become full participants

within the community. For example, Lave and Wenger address the inadequacies of training meat cutters by noting that their education mimics traditional school situations where students do not have an opportunity to become full participants in the trade. In addition, newcomers often are assigned tasks that will not prepare them for full participation, such as operating one machine for years until another apprentice comes along. The newcomer never learns how to fully participate as an old-timer does. Therefore, although Lave and Wenger consciously do not address pedagogy or school-related topics, their theory is uniquely appropriate for this study, since I was interested in understanding how faculty and students operate within a community of practice and how they interact with each other and with their environment.

However, Lave and Wenger (1991) do not address what happens when a newcomer wants to participate in the community without actually developing the skills necessary to participate in the community. This might not be an omission on Lave and Wenger's part; rather, this omission may be due to the fact that the students and the faculty have two different notions of what participation looks like. Faculty live in the world of the university, and they train students in the way of the university. Many students, however, have no plans to be professors and therefore would not have any reason for wanting to be a full participant in a community they did not choose. They must just pretend to participate to be able to pass *through* the community. In this way, Lave and Wenger do not account for newcomers who might not desire the same the level of participation that the old-timers expect of them. In addition, because legitimate peripheral participation is a learning theory and not a teaching theory or a pedagogy, it

would be logical not to address illegitimate peripheral participation, because in a learning theory, there would be no such thing.

Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory does account for conflict between old-timers by asserting that conflict is a natural part of the regenerative nature of any community. However, they do not discuss conflict between old-timers arising from differing perspective on how to provide access to newcomers. There seems to be a shared notion of how to open access, but what I found was that participants did not always agree on the best way to provide access to newcomers.

Recommendations for Future Research

This dissertation focused only on the perceptions of faculty, because it is in understanding faculty perceptions that one can understand how old-timers work with newcomers to facilitate legitimate peripheral participation. However, a qualitative study of an incident or a series of incidences of plagiarism that included interviews with both faculty and students may yield even more insight into the misunderstandings between faculty and students in plagiarism issues. In addition, it might also be fruitful to take the revelations that the participants in this study had and then develop a broader-scaled quantitative study of faculty at other universities, since this study only looked at the community of practice in this university. Finally, because the research that applies Lave and Wenger's (1991) tends to focus on informal learning experiences, testing the theoretical framework that I have used by applying it to other formal learning contexts, without, of course, misinterpreting the theory, would test the theory's applicability beyond this study.

Recommendations for Practice: Faculty, Students, and Administrators

There may always be a segment of the student population who will engage in wholesale cut and paste plagiarism. Beyond designing assignments that make it more difficult to plagiarize than not to plagiarize, there probably is not anything more a faculty member at this case study can do except use the honor code office to monitor and track repeat offenders and to mete out appropriate sanctions. And although all of the participants who used the online reporting system expressed satisfaction with the system, the two participants who actually had to appear before the honor code council had negative experiences. The dissatisfaction seemed to be rooted in what they felt was a misrepresentation of the situation and that their agency had been stripped from them. The trial simulation pitted student against teacher, which threatened both their authority and their perceived relationship with the student. Megan mentioned that she would rather the committee just make decisions based on the reported data, without a committee hearing where students are allowed to plead a case in a very public way. The honor code committee also repositions an academic issue as a misconduct issue, which may further interfere with the old-timer/newcomer relationship that Lave and Wenger advocate.

Furthermore, what the data in this study revealed is that in many cases, even wholesale cut and paste plagiarism cases can be dealt with by the faculty member in an educative way, since the source of the plagiarism may have stemmed from the student not understanding the practices of the community. If we want to help students become part of this community of practice, faculty need to make the process transparent to students. When asked if her students knew how much time she spent writing her own

journal articles, Megan responded that she thought they had no idea how much time she spent on her writing. Here was a missed opportunity to show students what academic writing looks like. Many students think that academic writing is a talent rather than a skill. And while some students are inherently better writers than others, faculty make the process more mysterious by telling students what to do rather than engaging them in the process. They should be writing together; they should be sharing their work. If we want our students to be able to write well in their discipline, then we cannot pass off the responsibility or the blame to the high school English teacher or the freshman composition class. Students who need to learn how to write in their discipline need to be able to learn to write in their disciplines from faculty who write in those disciplines.

In addition, if we want students to be able to write proficiently and confidently in their disciplines, without violating community practice, then we need to create an environment where students are able to practice writing and more importantly, are able to get high-quality feedback on their writing in a formative way. In many ways, we are slave to the artifice of the system. In order to manage mass education, we have large survey classes, semester-length limitations to learning, and grades. All of these artifices can interfere with learning because they are, according to Lave and Wenger (1991), institutional structures that make up the larger community of schooling, not learning. However, they are our reality, and we have to work around them or through them, but we should examine the institutional structures that prevent students from becoming full participants in the community and find new and innovative ways to provide access. For example, at the case study university, the writing center provides assistance to faculty

who want to integrate writing into their classes. In addition, they provide writing assistants to faculty who teach writing intensive classes. These assistants are not intended to take the place of faculty instruction; in fact, the assistance they provide is generalist in nature; however, having help can free time for the faculty to engage students in an old-timer/newcomer relationship.

Significance of the Research

This study will not “solve” plagiarism, but it does offer a new way of looking at how faculty interact with students within a community of practice. By identifying how faculty learned to be faculty and by examining how faculty help students learn the practices of writing in their discipline, a window of opportunity has been opened to understand how students really learn to *do* the work of scholarly writing. It is time to stop thinking about plagiarism without social constructions or outside of communities of practice, for these communities of practice determine how students, or newcomers, become full participants in the community. In addition, when students violate standard practices within the community, it is important to examine why these violations occur and how the community responds. In Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory, old-timers can either increase access for newcomers or prevent them from accessing the community, and it is up to old-timers to assess and re-assess how to give newcomers the practice they need to help them become full participants. The task is not easy, because it demands much of the old-timers, but it is worth the effort.

Studying faculty perceptions of student plagiarism in the classroom through the lens of legitimate peripheral participation, therefore, can frame the plagiarism issue in a

new way that views the issue for the multi-layered problem that it is. That students should be told, “just say no” to plagiarism and then punished when they plagiarize is a viable solution from the institutional perspective, because a public declaration has been made that the institution and its members value academic integrity, will do due diligence to promote academic integrity, and will sanction violations. If the problem were one of obeying community rules, this seems like a reasonable solution. However, the problem is not one of obeying community rules, or even reciting community rules. Rather, the problem is one of having access to the community, to becoming part of the community by being able to do the work of the community. If we want students to become part of the community of practice, we have to provide ways for them to do so, and students can only become full participants in the community under the guidance of the faculty. It is for this reason that faculty need to be a part of the equation. We can conduct multiple studies that ask students to self-report plagiarism, and we can conduct multiple studies that ask faculty to report student plagiarism, but this study attempted to unpack the problem for what it is. As Lars so aptly said,

If I’m teaching students how to play tennis, the problem is not that they can’t identify a pushup, or they can’t do one pushup correctly, but you need to be able to do ten or twenty pushups, maybe even a hundred, for your body to be strong enough to swing the racket for an hour. And they just couldn’t do it, so it’s not that they’re stupid, it wasn’t that they hadn’t seen it, it’s just that they hadn’t done it a lot, and what we needed was for them to be good at it.

If we want students to write with integrity, it is not enough that they can identify or recite rules on plagiarism, and it is not enough that they can handle simple writing assignments that ask them to use sources. They need enough practice to be able to write with integrity in their disciplines, to become scholars and writers in their own right, to play the whole game. In addition, they must practice under the tutelage of faculty who have the agency and authority to allow students full access to the community. It is by having them practice writing with integrity and providing them with high-quality feedback that faculty can help students move toward full participation. Unless we reframe the way we look at plagiarism, we will perpetuate the “gotcha” system we have now.

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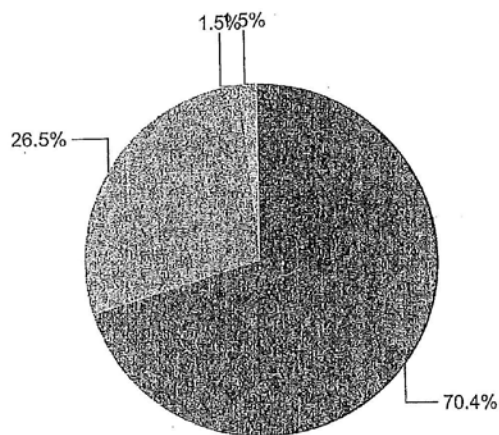
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APPENDIX A

Violation Statistics

For All Violation Reports

As of 1/30/2007



Instructor-submitted Violation reports (Handled Autonomously)	70.4%
Instructor-submitted Violation reports (Handled By Honor Council)	26.5%
Student-Submitted Violation Reports (Anonymous)	1.5%
Student-Submitted Violation Reports (Confidential)	1.5%
Total:	100.0%

Report Source Violation	Number of Violations	Percentage
<u>Instructor-submitted Violation reports (Handled Autonomously)</u>		
Aiding and abetting others in cheating or plagiarizing.	26	4.5%
Cheating on a test/assignment.	157	27.0%
Fabrication of data or results.	8	1.4%
Falsifying research or academic records.	3	0.5%
Other.	35	6.0%
Plagiarism.	170	29.3%
Violation of department or college rules.	7	1.2%
Submitting an assignment from another class for credit.	3	0.5%
Subtotal:	<u>409</u>	<u>70.4%</u>
<u>Instructor-submitted Violation reports (Handled By Honor Council)</u>		
Aiding and abetting others in cheating or plagiarizing.	8	1.4%
Cheating on a test/assignment.	44	7.6%
Fabrication of data or results.	8	1.4%
Falsifying research or academic records.	3	0.5%
Other.	20	3.4%
Plagiarism.	61	10.5%
Violation of department or college rules.	6	1.0%
Submitting an assignment from another class for credit.	4	0.7%

<u>Subtotal:</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>26.5%</u>
<u>Student-Submitted Violation Reports (Anonymous)</u>		
Cheating on a test/assignment.	6	1.0%
Fabrication of data or results.	1	0.2%
Other.	1	0.2%
Plagiarism.	1	0.2%
<u>Subtotal:</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1.5%</u>
<u>Student-Submitted Violation Reports (Confidential)</u>		
Aiding and abetting others in cheating or plagiarizing.	1	0.2%
Cheating on a test/assignment.	2	0.3%
Other.	2	0.3%
Plagiarism.	3	0.5%
Violation of department or college rules.	1	0.2%
<u>Subtotal:</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1.5%</u>
Grand Total:	581	100.0%

VITA

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