HELPING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS BECOME COLLEGE LEVEL WRITERS: SUPPORTING DUAL ENROLLMENT WRITING INSTRUCTORS

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APPROVAL OF THE CAPSTONE PROJECT

This capstone project, *Helping High School Seniors Become College Level Writers: Supporting Dual Enrollment Writing Instructors,* has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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Abstract

Dual Enrollment (DE) English is intended to prepare students to write at the college-level, yet the majority of high school student writing remains below college-level while DE English programs continue to grow nationally. Student writing outcomes in DE English might improve, however, if teachers are provided discipline-specific professional development opportunities that include curriculum support. This capstone looks specifically at the alignment and enactment of DE English in one school district and the writing instruction occurring in two DE English classrooms and the professional development that supports it. Specifically, I developed a descriptive multiple-case study and collected data from several sources: interviews and classroom observations with two DE English teachers in the same school district; interviews with the interim director of dual enrollment and off campus programs, director of secondary education, lead coach and English coordinator, and English department chair; various documents related to professional development and curriculum support. I provide my findings regarding writing instruction, professional development, and policy with respect to how leaders can better aid DE English instructors as they work toward improving student writing. This capstone concludes with a variety of recommendations to Aspen School District and Poplar Community College regarding how to improve the professional development and curriculum support for DE English instructors.

Keywords: DE English, college-level writing, writing pedagogy, professional development, curriculum support

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DEDICATION

To my mother, father, husband, and son.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges powerfully identifies the need for individuals to be writers, explaining that "The reward of disciplined writing is the most valuable job attribute of all: a mind equipped to think. Writing today is not a frill for the few, but an essential skill for the many" (2003, p. 14). Strong writing illustrates strong thinking. Indeed, learning to write well has a variety of benefits including demonstrating what individuals have learned (Bangert-Drowns, Hurley, & Wilkinson, 2004). Unfortunately, students generally are not prepared to write at the college level (Dennihy, 2015; NCES, 2012; National Commission on Writing, 2003), including those who have received first-year college writing credit during high school (Hansen, 2012). This is troubling.

Consequently, the aim of this chapter is to address this national problem of practice, and one way to do so is to help students taking first-year college writing credit during high school, in the form of Dual Enrollment (DE) English, become stronger writers. A possible way to help these students is to address the professional development (PD), and the embedded curriculum support, that is provided to their instructors who are English teachers expected to work within a liminal space between high school and college. To understand this problem of practice it is important to be informed about how students obtain first-year college writing credit, the national context of DE programs, the current research on professional development (PD), and the state of DE writing instruction. Furthermore, to better understand how support might aid DE English instructors nationally, this study will examine a local problem of practice focused on how one school, its school district, and the

sponsoring community college support DE English teachers with PD and curriculum support, how teachers receive and use this support, and potentially identify ways to improve PD and curriculum support. Ultimately, this study hopes to build on the limited research available on dual enrollment English teachers and to amplify their voices within the ever-changing landscape of educational research.

Obtaining First-Year College Writing Credit

There are a variety of ways in which students can obtain first-year college writing credit, and understanding these composition course options may provide clarity as to why some students elect to enroll in DE English. Students can obtain first-year college writing credit in the following ways: First Year Composition (FYC), international baccalaureate (IB) programs, Advanced Placement programs (AP), and DE English. Hansen (2010) explains that these ways in which first-year college writing credit can be obtained should be viewed as brands within a composition market, and students elect to take specific types of composition courses in part because of the way that credits are exchanged after high school graduation. Universities and colleges decide what credits they will accept, as well as how and if those credits replace FYC, which impacts the composition course students take. Ultimately, this may indicate that the exchange of credits is more valuable than what students are learning in regards to composition (Hansen, 2010). Thus, student motivation is not centered on becoming better writers but instead may be about obtaining college credit. Furthermore, each composition course, and the system that provides for it, include unique requirements for teachers and offer specific services.

FYC courses are typically taught at the college or university and "is a course about writing, one in which the main objective is to have students produce frequent writing and in

which their grade depends mainly on the success of their writing" (Hansen, 2010, p. 10). Broadly speaking, they are also typically taught content centered on a specific theme with an emphasis on the writing process (Hansen, 2010). FYC courses are taught through the specific college or university that students attend, and thus there is little issue with transferring credits. Because the relationship each course has with a college or university varies, so too does the support provided to FYC instructors by the college or university employing them.

In contrast, IB programs are intended to "facilitate the international mobility of secondary students preparing for higher education by providing secondary schools with a curriculum and diploma that would be recognized by universities around the world" (Hansen, 2010, p. 13). Due to the unique curriculum of IB, it is difficult to make a direct comparison of what students learn in this system to a writing course. This may be because writing is not a specific subject, but more a process or method used to demonstrate learning in other subjects. Regardless, IB curriculum does emphasize the writing process typically found in FYC (Hansen, 2010). Additionally, IB provides PD to teachers, which include online and face-to-face workshops focused on instruction and leadership (International Baccalaureate, 2018).

The AP program has two courses that relate to FYC and may fulfill the first year composition requirement: Literature and Composition and Language and Composition. Colleges, however, determine if and what courses can count for FYC, as well as what score on the AP test students need to receive in order to be awarded credit (Hansen, 2010). Both courses have a corresponding test that students can take with or without having taken the course, and a trained professional assesses them. There are a variety of PD offerings for AP instructors, including face-to-face weeklong summer institutes and one-day workshops as

well as online offerings, although the online offerings seem specifically focused on AP history (College Board, 2018).

DE English, alternatively, does not provide FYC credit based on a final test, but instead is offered in a similar fashion to FYC courses. It is unique from FYC courses, however, in that it is made available to students who are currently enrolled in high school. DE English is operationalized differently, with some students attending the physical location of the sponsoring university or community college, some taking the course online, and others attending the course in their high school (Hansen, 2010). Like FYC courses, it is highly contextualized due to the unique relationship between the high school and the sponsoring university or community college providing credit, so the course may look noticeably different in a variety of contexts. This is a dramatic difference from IB and AP programs, which are far more regulated and consistent. Regardless, DE English students receive college-credit based on their grade from a sponsoring university or community college that can, based on relationships between the sponsoring university or community college and other schools, be transferred to a school of the students' choice. The special relationship between a sponsoring university and school district results in unique PD offerings, and while the National Alliance of Current Enrollment (NACEP) asks that professional development be offered to DE instructors, there are relatively few accredited institutions and most partnerships are not formalized under the NACEP (NACEP, 2017).

Students have several options by which to obtain first-year college writing credit, some of which are highly programmatic like AP and IB, while others are more contextualized and impacted by the sponsoring university or community college, such as FYC courses and DE English. Understanding the various ways in which high school

students can receive first-year college writing credit relates to the problem of practice because students in DE English are electing to take a college course taught by an instructor who is expected to adhere to the requirements of the sponsoring university or community college while attending high school. They elect to take DE English instead of waiting to take a FYC course or participating in IB or AP, if their schools offer these programs. In addition to showcasing the choice that DE English students make when taking this course, the PD offerings for FYC, AP, IB, and DE instructors highlight that professional development that includes curriculum support can be provided to first-year college writing instructors, though the support provided to DE English is specific to the relationship between the sponsoring university or community college and school district.

Overview of Dual Enrollment

The landscape of DE is multifaceted by nature, in part because of the individualized relationships between high schools and sponsoring universities or community colleges as well as the different approaches to education across states (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015). The diversity of DE can be demonstrated by simple consideration of the term Dual Enrollment: DE can be used to describe college level courses not based on exams in which high school students enroll, such as Advanced Placement (AP) courses or International Baccalaureate courses (Taylor & Pretlow, 2015); or it can refer to any partnership that awards college credit in high school, thus including AP (McWain, 2018). The concept of DE itself also has different labels across the nation. Terms such as concurrent enrollment and postsecondary enrollment options are used synonymously with DE (Taylor & Pretlow, 2015). For the purpose of this capstone, the term DE will align with Taylor and Pretlow's (2015)

definition, and will focus exclusively on college coursework provided at the high school level.

Changes to Dual Enrollment

Regardless of the terminology used, the phenomenon of awarding college credit to students in high school has changed dramatically since DE first began in the 1970s (Klopfenstein & Lively, 2012). DE programs were originally intended as a type of acceleration program directed at helping students identified as academically talented (Howley et al., 2013; Klopfenstein & Lively, 2012) and served only a small proportion of the national population (Howley, Howley, Howley, & Duncan, 2013). However, in years following 2000, the purpose of DE programs shifted dramatically by focusing on providing DE courses to a broad range of students rather than an advanced few. Howley, Howley, Howley, and Duncan (2013) describe this shift, explaining "the tenor of the discourse has shifted from academic excellence to academic equity" (p. 80), and the growing number of students participating in DE may provide evidence of this shift. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) first recorded how many students enrolled in DE in 2002-2003 and reproduced the same survey in 2010-2011, finding an astonishing 66% increase in student participants in that eight-year span (Taylor & Pretlow, 2015). Specifically, 15,000 public high schools (82%) enrolled students in college courses and in the last eight years an additional 3,000 public schools developed partnerships with sponsoring universities to provide college courses to high school students, as recorded by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NACEP, "Fast Facts"). DE programs across the nation are expanding rapidly, and will likely continue to do so (Tinberg & Nadeau, 2011). This expansion is often justified by the appealing benefits DE provides both students and schools.

Appeal of Dual Enrollment

Cowan and Goldhaber (2015) identify three common features of DE that appeal to students and schools:

> First, dual enrollment programs aim to increase the rigor of the high school curriculum either by offering advanced courses at the high school or allowing students to enroll in courses on nearby college campuses. Second, they subsidize the costs of college by providing tuition-free enrollment in courses that count for college credit. Finally, they tend to have institutional features that may incentivize enrollment in particular kinds of colleges by locating courses on a college campus or by negotiating transfer agreements for credits earned while participating. (p. 3)

Providing a rigorous high school curriculum has proven to benefit students in a variety of ways. For example, Long, Conger, and Iatarola (2012) studied public school students in Florida and found that students who participated in rigorous courses in high school were more likely to graduate from college. It is important to note that this study also demonstrated that there were larger effects for disadvantaged youth, speaking to the power of equity over exclusivity in DE courses.

Additionally, DE programs may subsidize the cost of college. President Obama acknowledged DE programs as a way to save money and time when he released his 2013 *Fact Sheet on the President's Plan to Make College More Affordable* (White House). The President's response illustrates the political pressure for states to provide DE, in part because of its cost effectiveness. While there is significant debate about if and how DE saves students money (Mangan, 2018) viewing DE as a way to save time and money is still a significant shift away from the program's original intent of challenging advanced students.

Lastly, a common appeal of DE is that it helps incentivize students to attend local colleges. For example, receiving DE credit helps students to enter a pipeline of degree achievement, allowing them to transfer these credits to a community college or receive an

associate's degree and guaranteed admission to a four year college (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015).

These primary purposes for DE focus on the impact that receiving college level credit has on students, yet this system of providing college level instruction at the high school level greatly impacts stakeholders, including leadership and teachers at both the high school and sponsoring university or community college. Consequently, it is important to look at how high schools and sponsoring universities or community colleges negotiate providing DE credits and how they support DE instructors.

Partnerships Between High Schools and Sponsoring Community Colleges

Students who enroll in DE courses at the high school are provided college-credit through a partnership between the school and/or school district and the sponsoring community college. The sponsoring university or community college is tasked with working with a high school to award students college credits. NCES data provides evidence to the fact that community colleges provide the most support for DE programs nationally. Specifically, 98% of community colleges offer DE courses to high school students (Marken, Gray, & Lewis, 2013)—a logical partnership given the physical proximity between community colleges and high schools (Talor & Pretlow, 2015). Additionally, the partnership benefits the community college because dual enrollment programs have become "a central strategy for increasing college-going rates of local high school students" (Hoffman, Vargas, Santos, 2009).

Policy surrounding the relationship between how community colleges negotiate credits for DE programs varies across states. Taylor and Pretlow (2015) explain, "Many state community college systems are the primary providers of dual enrollment (e.g., Arizona,

California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Virginia, Washington, etc.)" (p. 4), but this is not true of all states. Thus, understanding the relationship between a sponsoring university or community college and high school is "contextualized, shaped, and constrained by the policies of the state in which they are located" (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015, p. 9).

While the relationship between sponsoring universities and community colleges and high schools vary greatly across the nation, there are attempts to codify what this relationship should incorporate. The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) was established in 1999 to help create a nationally recognized set of standards for DE programs. The organization attempts to ensure that DE courses are as rigorous as college courses through a strict accreditation system for dual enrollment partnership programs to be completed by the sponsoring university or community college, which is then expected to ensure these standards are met at the high school. Accreditation is a voluntary two-year process, and the standards cover five categories: curriculum, faculty, students, assessment, and program evaluation. Although this could help identify and even create strong DE programs, it is both costly and time-consuming (NACEP, 2016). Moreover, there seems to be little to no incentive for schools to join because there are few state or national expectations to promote membership—only Iowa requires its community colleges to obtain DE accreditation (Iowa, 2016). However, it may be advantageous to members because it provides structure and support for DE programs. This type of grass-roots program may increase in popularity in the future, helping to promote stronger DE programs in high schools, but currently only 19 states are participating (NACEP, 2016).

Regardless of the popularity of NACEP, the accreditation process and affiliation has been a positive experience for Lewis and Clark Community College. Scheffel, McLemore,

and Lowe (2015) describe the impact of qualifying for NACEP accreditation on Lewis and Clark Community College, recognizing a variety of benefits for students, secondary schools, instructors, and colleges. The community college works with over 130 teachers across 18 high schools, though it is unclear how they collected data from these teachers to draw their conclusions. Regardless, they found greater collaboration between high school and college faculty, which likely resulted from NACEP's mandated PD. They explain that teachers appreciate this PD because:

> Many districts have made cuts to their professional development budgets and generally focus on pedagogy rather than continued discipline-specific training. The sessions offered at the college are an opportunity to meet with college faculty in the shared discipline and colleagues teaching the same courses in other schools to share ideas and gain information that aids student instruction. A majority of high school teachers now look forward to the meetings and value the time spent at the college. They also receive professional development credits that apply toward their recertification. (p. 99)

The PD that these DE instructors received varied from their typical PD experiences. Instead of focusing on best practices applicable to teachers generally, the PD provided by the community college allowed for discipline-specific training that included curriculum support, an approach required by NACEP (NACEP, 2017). Thus, the context of this partnership and the focus on working together supports how adults learn.

When districts and sponsoring universities or community colleges work together to award high school students college level credits, they are also entering into a relationship with the instructors who teach these students. This relationship with instructors should include discipline-specific PD that features curriculum support. Because of this, it is important to look at what makes PD effective, including DE-specific PD and writing pedagogy PD.

Professional Development

In order to understand if and how discipline-specific PD that utilizes curriculum support can help DE English instructors improve student writing, which may help to address the national problem of practice, it is necessary to understand what makes for effective PD, the PD recommendations available specifically for DE, and effective PD for writing instruction.

Effective Professional Development

PD has been researched extensively (Clark & Hollingsworth, 2002; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001), so much so that Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) were able to identify and analyze 35 studies that identified PD instructional strategies which significantly impacted student learning. They conceive of effective professional development as "structured professional learning that results in changes to teacher knowledge and practices, and improvements in student learning outcomes" (p. 2). An important distinguishing point regarding this research is that while teacher behavior is important to study, student learning is as well. As a result of their research they identify seven common characteristics that contribute to effective PD: "1. Is content focused. 2. Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory. 3. Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts. 4. Uses models and modeling of effective practice. 5. Provides coaching and expert support. 6. Offers opportunities for feedback and refection. 7. Is of sustained duration" (p. 4). Notably, some of these characteristics overlap with what is outlined within adult learning theory, including: incorporating active learning utilizing adult learning theory, supporting collaboration, providing coaching and expert support, and offering opportunities for feedback and refection. Effective PD includes a focus on content,

which for some may include curriculum materials that support teachers' content areas. Desmione explains "curriculum materials can be a source of professional development when they're designed to be "educative" (2011, p. 69). Specifically, curriculum materials provided to teachers can "influence individual teachers' work" (Ball & Cohen, 1996, p. 6) and curriculum materials are effective when they cross boundaries, improve instruction, and work within the context of a partnership with teachers. Grossman and Thompson (2008) found that new English teachers initially work closely with curriculum materials, but gradually make modifications to the curriculum, and the authors argue that teachers need greater critical engagement with curriculum materials. Indeed, content-focused PD can incorporate, and be supportive of, curriculum materials.

Overall, the characteristics that make for effective PD helps to establish that there are ways in which PD can significantly impact student outcomes *if* the PD is designed in a way that supports adult learners by incorporating a variety of strategies and supports. Because the problem of practice is situated within the unique context of DE, it is necessary to understand what expectations, if any, exist regarding PD for DE instructors.

Recommendations for Professional Development Specific to DE

Due to the contextualized nature of DE (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015) it can be difficult to understand what recommendations, if any, sponsoring universities or community colleges have for DE instructors. However, the NACEP (2017) has made recommendations within their faculty standards and discipline-specific brief directing what types of PD should be offered to DE instructors.

The NACEP faculty standards (2017) are centered on the role of the sponsoring university or community college's liaison. According to the NACEP, this individual is

expected to provide course training for new DE instructors, which includes "course-specific training in course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment prior to the instructor teaching the course" (2017). In addition to this, there are recommendations for annual discipline-specific PD and ongoing interactions to support instructors (NACEP, "Concurrent enrollment brief," 2015). Discipline-specific PD is particularly important because of the way in which it intersects with curriculum support. Indeed, discipline-specific PD may include curriculum support in order to help teachers improve instruction. While these recommendations may serve DE instructors working with sponsoring universities or community colleges who are accredited by NACEP, they do little for teachers working at unaccredited schools because these standards do not apply to them.

Overall, the burden of discipline-specific PD, and the incorporation of curriculum support, for DE teachers is focused on what the sponsoring university or community college should do for instructors. The district, and school where the instructors work, may also provide valuable PD and curriculum support to DE instructors, though this specific support and its effects are not prevalent in the DE research. Understanding PD, and its embedded curriculum support, provided to DE instructors helps to address part of the problem of practice, however, it is necessary to also understand what contributes to effective writing PD in order to help DE English students become stronger writers.

Effective PD for Writing Instruction

There is limited empirical research regarding effective writing instruction within the context of DE English (Denecker 2013, McWain, 2018). What is available, however, seems to support the overall idea that teachers can improve their writing instruction when aided by effective writing-focused PD. Denecker (2013) found that the PD partnership between a

sponsoring university and DE instructors was transformational for the teachers, and identifies specific areas of the PD that were helpful, including: calibrating grades, developing course assignments, and discussing pedagogy and instructional challenges. Indiana University Bloomington's Advance College Project found similar results from a PD program that was more limited in time and scope, although the results were not derived in a systematic, empirical way.

In addition to the writing-focused PD provided by sponsoring universities, the National Writing Project (NWP) is a national network of universities and school districts focused on writing instruction for teachers of all levels and contents (NWP, 2018). Gallagher, Woodworth, and Arshan (2015) found that teachers trained through the NWP College-Ready Writer's Program had students who were better writers than those who did not have teachers trained in this way. The training focused on professional development (45 hours/year), curricular resources, and a formative assessment tool. This study points to the efficacy of PD focused on writing and that PD provided to DE English instructors can come from a variety of contexts, not just the sponsoring university. Moreover, it shows that curriculum support provided within the context of PD impacts student outcomes.

The problem of practice of helping DE English students become stronger writers, and ultimately more critical thinkers, is complex. However, effective discipline-specific PD that includes curriculum support and is focused on writing instruction may help improve student outcomes. Because of this, it is essential to understand the larger scope of this problem of practice.

Problem of Practice

Providing Support to DE English Teachers: A National Issue

Many students entering college are not prepared for college-level writing expectations (Dennihy, 2015; NCES, 2012; National Commission on Writing, 2003). DE English is explicitly a college-level composition course (Hansen, Jackson, McInelly, & Eggett, 2015), and while writers develop in slow and varied ways (Sommers & Saltz, 2004), the general lack of student preparedness to write at the college level after having taken DE English is particularly disconcerting (Hansen et al. 2015). In fact, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) recommends that first-year college writing courses should not be replaced by other alternatives, but instead should build on high school courses and provide students with additional writing instruction (NCTE, 2013). This is an extreme alternative, considering that it would eliminate all DE, IB, and AP courses focused on writing instruction, and this may not be necessary if DE English courses can become more effective at preparing students for writing. To better understand the efficacy of DE English programs, it is important to understand the liminal academic space it inhabits and how that impacts the ways in which PD support is provided.

Liminal academic space. DE English students, nationwide, may lack strong or even proficient writing skills due to the composition threshold of DE English and the liminal academic space it inhabits. Students receiving college credit while still attending public high school are in a liminal academic space: they exist in a state that is between high school and college, and incorporates elements of both (McWain, 2018).

Specifically, students who are taking DE English are in a particularly difficult liminal space because composition expectations at the high school and college level are at times

perceived as misaligned (Foster & Russell, 2002). This misalignment is evidenced by the study enacted by Fanetti, Bushrow, and DeWeese (2010). They interviewed university, middle school, and high school teachers and found that "secondary teachers feel compelled to teach to the test, and college instructors wish students hadn't learned so well in high school that an essay is five paragraphs and a thesis statement can appear only as the first or last sentence in the first of those five paragraphs" (p.79). Fanetti, Bushrow, and DeWeese suggest that a way to resolve this is for teachers at the high school level to stop viewing "high school as its own end" (2010, p. 83). Arguably, DE English instructors understand best that high school is not the end of their students' academic trajectory because of their task of teaching college level curriculum.

Indeed their role is to help students navigate the composition threshold, which refers to the secondary and post-secondary writing expectations placed on them (Denecker, 2013). When students are enrolled in a post-secondary writing course taught at a high school they may encounter a variety of writing expectations, and it is the role of the DE English teachers to help students navigate these sometimes divergent expectations. Indeed, DE English teachers need to be supported in this endeavor.

Support for DE English instructors. The lack of writing preparedness by students who have taken DE English courses could come from of a lack of support and communication from sponsoring universities (Dennihy, 2015). There has been a frequent call for more support from national councils and associations to help improve student writing outcomes by working with DE programs (Addison & McGee, 2010; Dennihy, 2015; Tinberg & Nadeau, 2011). Interestingly enough, many national councils and associations have responded with recommendations for how to support DE English instructors.

The Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) addressed this issue through an executive committee statement, explaining "college courses taught by high school faculty at the high school often have minimal oversight by the sponsoring colleges because of limited budgets. The lack of sufficient release time for collaboration between college faculty and high school faculty makes the quality of instruction difficult to guarantee" (2012), and recommends that high schools and sponsoring universities follow the guidelines outlined by NACEP. The NACEP (2017) guidelines provide some expectations for DE partnerships between the school district and sponsoring university or community college, but are not specific to DE English. Instead, the NACEP provides global suggestions for how all relationships between a sponsoring university or community college and DE program should work, which include recommendations regarding oversight, discipline-specific PD, and curriculum support (2017). The TYCA, however, is uniquely situated to provide English-specific recommendations as it professes to represent the needs of English instructors at two-year colleges. This connection to English instruction should imply that the provided guidelines are specific for DE English, yet they fail to address the nuances of teaching DE English and writing composition.

Alternatively, the Conference on College Composition & Communication (CCCC) is a national organization focused on composition and released a more detailed statement on DE composition teachers than the TYCA. In it, they ask for the following support for DE instructors:

> a. There should be funds, space, and postsecondary faculty expertise necessary for initial and follow-up discipline-specific training seminars that introduce the selected secondary teachers to the partnering college composition curriculum: course goals, assignments, readings, and assessment, as well as current theory and practices in the field of composition. The initial training seminars should be at least equivalent to on-campus instructor preparation.

> b. Financial support (stipend, travel) should be provided for training seminars (initial and follow-up), books and materials, graduate credit for the training course, and, if possible, additional English graduate coursework to ensure quality and incentive. Partnering English departments with graduate programs should be encouraged to adjust their course offerings or to institute new certificate or degree programs to meet this need and further the collaboration between secondary DC/CE teachers and on-campus composition instructors.
> c. Ongoing support mechanisms—follow-up seminars, regular classroom site visits, classroom observations, review of syllabi and student work—need to address secondary teachers' strengths, weaknesses, concerns, and ideas as they arise. (2012)

The CCCC's call for additional training, funds, and ongoing support may be helpful for DE English instructors, though it does little to explain how to make these requests come to fruition or what the programs should practically look like. Ultimately, it appears that researchers and professional organizations all favor increasing support for DE English programs, but they lack specifics for implementation and the content that should be included, which may be due to the limited research regarding the support available to DE English instructors (Denecker, 2013; McWain, 2018). This limited research may be due to funding or because DE is neither exclusively a high school nor college course, making it a more niche area of study.

Indeed, the voices of DE English instructors are notably absent from the research on DE. Attempts have been made to understand the views of principals, teachers, and counselors on DE, but most data are focused on how DE benefits students (Hanson, Prusha, & Iverson, 2016) and do not look at how much support is available or needed for DE English instructors (Addison & McGee, 2010). McWain (2018) makes this clear when writing about DE English instructors when she writes "So little research exists foregrounding the experiences of high school dual enrollment instructors that any scholarship in this vein must necessarily be preliminary and general" (p. 421). This lack of research regarding DE English instructors is particular disconcerting because Denecker (2013) found that "the most powerful element for

moving students from point A to B as writers may lie not with the students themselves but with those who plan, oversee, and carry out dual enrollment composition instructions" (p.31).

The teacher is the single most important factor that impacts student learning (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2005), and so it is essential to study the support provided to DE English instructors as it impacts students' writing instruction and, ultimately, their writing abilities. Furthermore, effective PD that includes curriculum support can improve student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). Thus, to help students improve as writers, it is essential to analyze the support provided to the writing instructors in order to identify and disseminate effective PD that incorporates curriculum support that promotes positive writing outcomes. Addressing this support at a local level will help to provide a foundational, preliminary, and general outlook regarding the professional and curriculum support DE English teachers experience when teaching college level English in high schools.

Supporting DE English Teachers: A Local Issue

Aspen School District (ASD) is focused on improving student writing, and one way to do this is to analyze the writing instruction provided by DE English teachers and determine ways in which it can be improved. Specifically, ASD is interested in looking at discipline-specific PD, including how it supports curriculum, made available to DE English teachers from the school, district, and sponsoring community college and identify ways to increase the efficacy of this support to improve student writing outcomes. To this end, the study focuses on teacher perceptions of the curriculum support and PD provided to them, as well as their insights regarding recommendations for what curriculum support and PD might help them improve as writing instructors.

Aspen School District. Aspen School District (ASD) is a school division in central Virginia. While explicitly positioning ASD within Virginia gives up some anonymity to the study, it is an essential step because of the contextualized nature of DE programs with sponsoring community colleges and state regulations. The state of Virginia operates DE programs under the Virginia Plan for Dual Enrollment (VPDE), which is ratified by the chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, Secretary of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (VPDE, 2008), and all DE programs in Virginia operate under institutions in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) (Pretlow & Patteson, 2015). The VPDE instructs community colleges and public schools to collaborate, which includes having a DE coordinator who works with the high school and requires Virginia DE programs to adhere to the criteria established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). SACS provides further instructions for DE instructors in their 2018 policy statement, and defines the instructor of record "as the faculty member qualified to teach the course. This person has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the syllabus and for issuing grades. The faculty member will provide direct instruction for the course" (p.1). The instructor of record should use the syllabus provided by the sponsoring community college. While it is beneficial to explain the scope of the instructor of record, neither VPDE or SACS adequately address specific PD or curriculum support for DE English instructors.

ASD is a large school district, with a geographical footprint of over 700 square miles and about 100,000 residents. The district serves 13,910 prekindergarten through twelfth-grade students from suburban, urban, and rural environments. Student demographics include 10% English learners, 20.4% receiving free and reduced meals, 11.9% disabled, and 9.8%

gifted. Over 1,000 students graduated in 2016-2017 (94.7%), and 58% of that group reporting plans to attend a four year college and 22% reporting plans to attend a two year college. The district has four comprehensive high schools (9-12), three of which provide DE English courses through Poplar Community College (PCC), part of VCCS. The demand for DE in ASD is increasing, with 817 students enrolled in 2016. The graph below shows the growth of ASD's DE programs from 2011-2016.

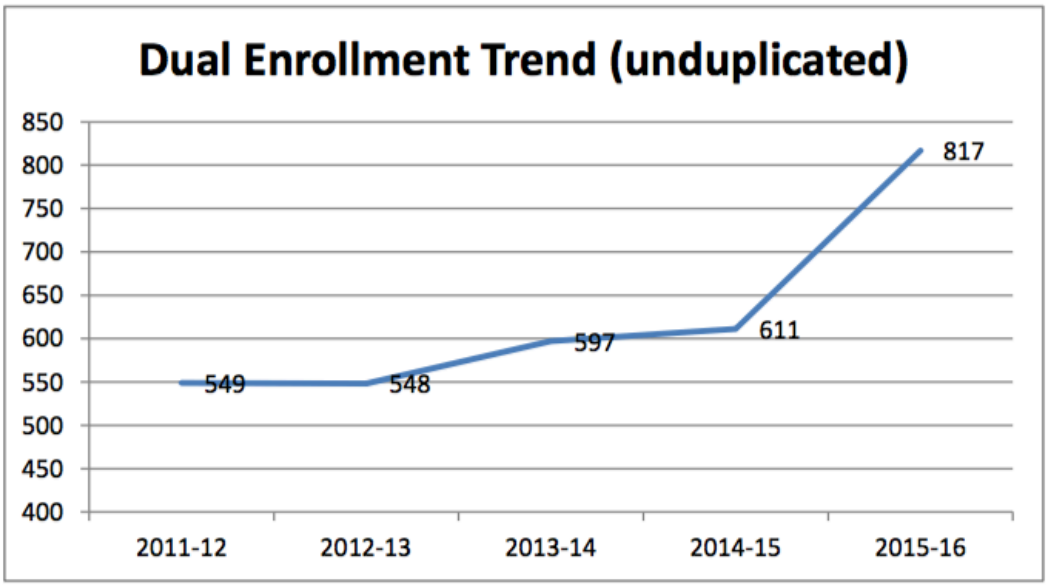


Figure 1.1 Dual enrollment trend. This figure illustrates the increasing growth of DE programs in ASD. It represents overall enrollment. Research by subject enrollment is not publicly available.

Addressing writing in Aspen School District. ASD recognizes the need to help their students improve their writing abilities, and to this end has created an internal document regarding reading and writing excellence, which are essentially their own standards, as well as a writing collaborative to help teachers improve writing pedagogy. Both the document on reading and writing excellence and the writing collaborative include a variety of instructional suggestions for writing instructors; although DE English teachers are invited and encouraged to engage with these initiatives, they are not specifically directed at them.

ASD instruction for reading excellence and writing (ASPIRE). ASD uses an internal document titled Aspen Schools Providing Instruction for Reading Excellence and Writing (ASPIRE). This document, revised in 2014, is an expansive guide for all literacy teachers in the district. However, its section on writing demonstrates how the school district regards writing, which ASPIRE describes as:

> Inextricably connected to reading. Writing instruction emphasizes the creative nature of expression, the conventions of various types of writing, and the ability to articulate and reflect on one's thinking process. This demands instruction in those features that determine quality composing, written expression, sentence formation, grammar, and usage and mechanics. (p. 7)

It goes on to promote shared writing, interactive writing, writer's workshops, and a variety of other learning activities. This document showcases the emphasis the school district has on writing, and helps guide teachers to best practices regarding writing instruction. In addition to the document, the school district also has an immersive writing PD program.

ASD writing collaborative. ASD created a writing collaborative initiative in 2018 to support writing instructors, which includes 12 teacher-participants. This collaborative is intended to help writing instructors across all content levels and grades in ASD develop their own writing identity and writing pedagogy within a community of teachers. This community of teachers works together for a full academic year, and includes a summer conference, writing demonstrations, and being advocates for writing in their schools. The vision statement for the writing collaborative is: "The Writing Collaborative seeks to build a community of teacher leaders who value writing as a practice but also as a method for students to connect and learn. These teachers will promote the practice of writing in themselves but also in their PLCs, their schools, and their communities" (Aspen School District, 2018). Currently the writing collaborative is voluntary and one DE English

instructor is active. Although there is not direct evidence that shows the effectiveness of this program, it does follow effective tenets of PD. Specifically, it is content focused, incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, uses models and modeling of effective practice, offers opportunities for feedback and refection, and is of sustained duration (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017).

Both the ASPIRE document and writing collaborative point to ASD's desire to help teachers with writing instruction. However, there has not yet been a systematic approach to critically analyze the curriculum support and professional development provided to DE English instructors at the high school level, district level, and by the sponsoring community college or identify what support or PD, beyond what is already provided, that might be helpful to teachers working with writing instruction in a liminal space.

Purpose of the Current Study

This study intends to help one school district critically identify what PD and curriculum support is offered, what is effective, and what may be needed to help DE English instructors positively impact student writing outcomes. This will be done through interviews, observations, and document analysis. To address this purpose I used a theoretical framework focused on Adult Learning Theory.

Theoretical Framework: Adult Learning Theory

Educators continue to refine their practices in a variety of ways, including engaging with professional development opportunities provided by their school, school districts, and, for DE instructors, their sponsoring community college. Not all professional development opportunities, however, have the same impact on student learning. Indeed, effective professional development should incorporate tenets of adult learning theory.

Effective PD focuses on the instruction educators receive, ultimately changing what they know and practice and resulting in positive student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, 2017). ALT is an important lens in which to view professional development because teachers learn as adults when engaging in PD and curriculum support. Thus, to better help students' academic growth, it is essential that teachers are provided effective PD that incorporates instruction aligned with how adults learn. ALT meets this need and is often employed in PD (Alford & Austin, 2013) and its embedded curriculum development (Gilstrap, 2013).

ALT is comprised of andragogy, which is the process of helping adults learn, and self-directed learning, in which adults direct their own learning without the direction of a teacher (Merriam, 2001). It acknowledges that the way in which adults learn depends on the age and stage of each individual, meaning that teachers of different ages and experience will likely need different approaches to professional development (Trotter, 2006). For example, "veteran teachers were more likely than beginning and mid-career teachers to have a commitment to self affirmation rather than to externally generated successes" (Trotter, 2006, p.10) which impacts the way they engage with PD. In addition to having appropriate age and stage PD, ALT provides a foundation for the need for active learning.

Trotter's (2006) review of adult development literature identifies three key themes: that adults use their experiences as resources, that interests and classrooms influence how adults plan their educational trajectory, and that the focus of adult education should be on reflection and inquiry in ways that promote individual development and transformational learning. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) build on Trotter's (2006) work, explaining that based on empirical studies focused on effective discipline-specific PD,

teachers should participate in active learning, which "engages educators using authentic artifacts, interactive activities, and other strategies to provide deeply embedded, highly contextualized professional learning" (p.7). In regard to this study, I will look specifically at how PD, and its embedded curriculum support, is offered to teachers, if it incorporates themes of ALT, and how teachers respond to this.

Consequently, PD should employ tenets of ALT and incorporate active learning. Thus, it is important to examine discipline-specific PD, and its incorporation of curriculum support, provided to DE English teachers by both PCC and ASD to better understand how it supports educators, the efficacy of the support, and the ways that it impacts the teacher's writing pedagogy. This theoretical framework informs the following research questions used for this study:

1) To what degree do professional development and curriculum support opportunities for DE English teachers align with the learning objectives of high schools and sponsoring universities?
    1.1 What professional development opportunities are available for DE English teachers?
    1.2 What curriculum support opportunities are available to DE English teachers?
    1.3 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes in ASD?
    1.4 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes according to PCC?
2) In what ways do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the support given?
    2.1 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the professional development opportunities available to them?

2.2 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the curriculum support opportunities available to them?

2.3 How do DE English teachers view the alignment between the learning objectives for DE English in ASD and PCC's learning objectives for DE English?

3) What professional development and curriculum support opportunities do DE English teachers believe would help them achieve the learning objectives of their high school and sponsoring community college if curriculum support and professional development opportunities are not currently provided?

3.1 What professional development opportunities do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.2 What types of curriculum support do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.3 What might help improve the alignment of learning objectives between ASD and PCC, according to DE English instructors?

Chapter Summary

Writing is indicative of strong thinking. Unfortunately, students entering college are not ready for the writing that is expected of them, and this includes students who participated in courses during high school that awarded them first-year college writing credit. Consequently, students may need a different high school experience regarding college-level writing so that they are prepared for the various writing expectations that will undoubtedly come after high school graduation.

Much of the college-level writing credit students receive in high school is through DE English programs, yet research on this is limited, including the efficacy of the PD and

curriculum support for these teachers. Because of this, it can be challenging to identify ways to help DE English instructors provide effective writing pedagogy to students to help them improve as writers. To better understand discipline-specific PD that supports curriculum available to DE English instructors, the efficacy of what is available, and identify what support may help teachers, it is important to critically engage with these teachers.

Aspen School District mirrors this national issue and is focused on helping students become stronger writers. This local problem of practice may be addressed through stronger DE English instruction. Consequently, this study will look at the discipline-specific PD and embedded curriculum support provided to DE English instructors from high schools, the district, and the sponsoring community college to better understand the support provided, the efficacy of the support, and identify support that may be helpful in the future. By critically looking at the how DE English instructors engage with the support provided to them, and how these supports do or do not employ ALT, it may be possible to identify ways to help DE English teachers with writing pedagogy, ultimately helping students become better writers.

Definition of Terms

Adult Learning Theory (ALT): ALT focuses on the process of how adults learn and direct their own learning (Merriam, 2001), and does so with the understanding that adults learn in unique ways that are impacted by their age and experience (Trotter, 2006).

Aspen Schools Providing Instruction for Reading Excellence and Writing (ASPIRE): ASD's internal literacy guide, which was revised in 2014, elaborates on the district's writing expectations, and helps guide teachers to best practices regarding writing instruction. Specifically, it promotes shared writing, interactive writing, writer's workshops, and a variety of other learning activities.

Composition threshold: The pathway that high school students cross when transitioning from high school writing expectations to college-level writing expectations, which includes different conceptions of, and expectations for, composition instruction between college course instructors and high school instructors (Denecker, 2013).

Curriculum support: How discipline-specific professional development opportunities utilize curriculum materials (Desmione, 2011) and support the enactment of these materials. These materials are used to impact teachers' pedagogy (Ball & Cohen, 1996).

Dual enrollment: Includes college-level courses that high school students enroll in which are not exam-based and focus exclusively on college-level coursework provided at the high school location.

Dual enrollment English: First-year college composition course taught at a high school, by a qualified instructor, as outlined by the sponsoring community college.

Liminal academic space: The space students inhabit when working toward college credit while still attending public high school; within this space they concurrently experience elements of both college and high school (McWain, 2018).

National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP): This organization oversees accreditation for DE partnerships, primarily working with the sponsoring university or community college, and is largely voluntary. The accreditation system's standards focus on five categories: curriculum, faculty, students, assessment, and program evaluation.

Professional development: Effective professional development is defined as "structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes" (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner, 2017) and is discipline-specific (NACEP, 2017).

Sponsoring community college (sponsoring university): Refers to the community college that is engaged in a partnership with a school district, who works to provide high school students college credits while in high school when they, and the instructor of record, meet specific requirements as outlined by the state.

Writing Collaborative: The Writing Collaborative is a professional development program created by ASD in 2018, and is designed to help all teachers of all contents engage in effective writing pedagogy. ASD explains "The Writing Collaborative seeks to build a community of teacher leaders who value writing as a practice but also as a method for students to connect and learn. These teachers will promote the practice of writing in themselves but also in their PLCs, their schools, and their communities" (Aspen School District, 2018).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The previous chapter established that it is essential to be able to write well because it is a result of strong thinking (National Commission on Writing, 2003) and that, unfortunately, students are simply not prepared to write at the college level (Dennihy, 2015; NCES, 2012; National Commission on Writing, 2003). This inability to write at the college level is even more troubling when more and more students are receiving first-year college writing credit while in high school. Thus, one challenge regarding this problem of practice is how to help prepare students to become stronger writers when taking Dual Enrollment (DE) English during high school. This national problem of practice is mirrored within a local problem of practice at Aspen School District (ASD). Teachers who work to improve their craft are adult learners, making Adult Learning Theory (ALT) a relevant and important tool for understanding their experiences. This literature review will consequently seek to address findings from empirical studies regarding writing pedagogy, DE, and discipline-specific PD that supports curriculum, to better describe the national problem of practice and explore ALT in relation to relevant literature. Furthermore, it will also inform the study that will be enacted to address the local problem of practice.

The curation of this literature review was systematic. I engaged with various search engines to identify empirical studies related to writing pedagogy, DE, and PD. These search engines included Google Scholar, APA PsychNET, and EBSCOHost. I focused my search on empirical studies available in peer-reviewed journals that were published within the last ten years (2008-2018), with an added emphasis on scholarship published within the last five years. I read and critiqued the titles and abstracts of each article. In addition to utilizing peer-reviewed empirical studies, I also engaged with books relating to this problem of practice. I

reviewed the content of each book and assessed the text using a method similar to that applied to journal articles. When assessing both journals and books I analyzed the credibility of the text, ensured that the content related well to my research questions and the national and local problem of practice, and checked that each study was conducted in the United States.

This literature review will address the following concepts in relation to writing instruction, DE, and PD: writing knowledge transfer, writing remediation in community colleges, impact of DE on stakeholders, impact of DE English, the efficacy of PD, and the Virginia DE Policy.

Writing Knowledge Transfer

Much of the concern regarding high school students' ability to write at the college level comes from research focused on the perceptions of postsecondary instructors (Allan & Driscoll, 2014; Wardle, 2009). Although their perspective is valuable, the claims that students entering college are not prepared to write at an advanced level may be a result of the complex process of writing knowledge transfer—not merely a writing knowledge deficit. Ultimately, the ability to transfer knowledge is the "long-term aim of all education" (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011, p. 14), and transferring writing knowledge happens when students "reapply or repurpose what they learn in writing courses to subsequent contexts in which writing is called for" (Khost, 2015, p. 134). To understand the process of transferring writing knowledge, researchers have primarily analyzed first year composition (FYC) courses provided at the university and how they relate to other university-level courses and university goals (Allan & Driscoll, 2014; Wardle, 2009). As DE English is often accepted as a FYC

course, the research regarding writing knowledge transfer is pertinent to the problem of practice.

While the process of transferring writing knowledge may seem like a reasonable aim of writing instruction, there is actually great debate about whether writing knowledge can be transferred. Wardle (2009) studied writing knowledge transfer at a Midwestern university for two years, and collected data from 23 teachers who were part-time instructors or graduate students and 462 students. The FYC course focused on academic writing skills, including observation, summary, analysis, and evaluation. Wardle acknowledges that the current research regarding writing knowledge transfer argues "that teaching general academic genres in FYC will not help students later write the genres of the university" (p. 782), yet qualifies this by explaining that FYC courses may promote transfer when they are related to various university genres and include transfer-promoting activities like reflection and mindfulness, among others. These expectations, however, were not found in participants during her study, so it is unclear if engaging in this type of learning actually increases writing knowledge transfer. Moreover, the results of working with part-time instructors and graduate students may vary greatly from DE English instructors who are removed from the academic campus they engage with and instead teach at the high school level.

Allan and Driscoll (2014) reach conclusions similar to Wardle's (2009), finding that reflection helps aid writing knowledge transfer. Specifically, they worked with FYC courses and randomly selected one student from each of the 128 composition sections during the 2010-2011 school year. They examined instructor course materials, research papers, and reflection essays. Analysis of the reflective writing assessment provided evidence of transfer-focused thinking, including students' ability to apply previously learned writing concepts to

new writing contexts. They also found evidence of negative transfer, which is where students struggle to recognize the difference between writing instruction they have received and are receiving.

While this negative transfer may appear to be wholly problematic, researchers explain that "students were making some attempts at transfer-focused thinking and metacognitive awareness, but the fact that less than half of the students, overall, were engaging in transfer-focused thinking suggests that we need to encourage these kinds of behaviors more overtly through scaffold in-class activities and explicit reflective writing prompts" (p. 46). Both positive and negative transfer-focused thinking shows that students are engaging in the process of transferring writing knowledge, but need to be supported in this endeavor. This study, however, looks exclusively at FYC courses for students on campus and works with instructors who are engaged in their campus community, completely ignoring DE.

Writing knowledge transfer is relevant to the problem of practice because students' ability to transfer what they learn regarding writing to new contexts is the primary purpose of teaching writing. However, the research available primarily focuses on the writing transfer of FYC courses to other coursework, and fails to recognize the potential writing knowledge transfer happening in relation to DE English courses, which often meets the demands of FYC requirements. Regardless, the processes that FYC teachers can engage in to promote writing knowledge transfer in these studies may apply to DE English instructors. Furthermore, writing knowledge transfer extends beyond FYC to other coursework on campus, and includes the transfer between high school and community colleges. Students' inability to effectively transfer writing knowledge from high school to a community college may negatively impact their collegiate success, and result in the need for writing remediation.

Writing Remediation in Community Colleges

The problem of practice is focused on how discipline-specific PD, with embedded curriculum support, for DE English instructors may help improve student writing outcomes. Improving these student outcomes may alleviate some of the writing remediation needs currently being addressed by community colleges. In fact, DE English may potentially help limit the writing remediation needs of community colleges. To better understand how DE English might alleviate some of the writing remediation occurring at community colleges, it is important to understand the need for remediation at community colleges and the impact of DE on community college writing remediation.

Students attending community colleges may be unprepared for the academic demands required of them. Notably, Bailey, Jeong, and Cho (2010) analyzed data provided by the Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count initiative. Specifically they looked at students (n=256,672) across 57 colleges who were receiving credit for the first time. They found that about two thirds of students attending community college are academically underprepared for the level of work required. To aid these students, community colleges often provide developmental education, which is coursework focused on helping underprepared students gain the skills needed to be successful at the college level (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010). Furthermore, students consistently cite academic writing as one of the most immediate problems that college students face (Callahan & Chumney, 2009) and this is evidenced in part by the 18% of college students who must take remedial writing courses (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006).

To better understand writing-focused developmental education, Callahan and Chumney (2009) enacted a qualitative comparative case study to examine developmental

writing programs at a research university and community college. The identification processes of each school varied. The community college had students take a remedial composition course if they scored below college level on a placement test, whereas the university used a more complex selection process that included an essay, reading and writing scores from the Descriptive Test of Language Skills, SAT verbal score, and a student's high school rank. The researchers ultimately found that effective remediation is not dependent on the level of institution, but rather that curriculum, pedagogy, and resources most impacted students' learning in remedial courses. As the teacher greatly impacts the curriculum and pedagogy used to help students, these results point to a greater need to support the teachers working in this context. This study, however, only analyzes one university and community college, and, since each system is highly contextualized, its findings may not transfer well to other developmental writing programs.

Xu (2016) studied developmental education within the context of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) when the VCCS required all community colleges to use the COMPAS assessment, which placed students into three writing levels: lower-level developmental, higher-level developmental, and college level. Students could be exempted from the COMPAS test by SAT and AP test scores. Xu analyzed data from approximately 46,000 students from 23 Virginia community colleges. Less than 60% of the students who took the COMPAS test were prepared for college-level writing, and consequently 20% of the students were assigned to lower-level developmental writing and 22% were assigned to higher-level developmental writing. Xu found that:

> The results suggest that developmental courses do differ in their impacts by the level of assignment. Specifically, although the estimated effects are generally small in magnitude and statistically insignificant for students on the margin of needing developmental course work, lower-level and therefore longer developmental

> sequence versus higher level (or shorter sequence) imposes negative impacts on various academic outcomes. (p. 504)

Ultimately Xu recommends that shortening developmental coursework may help student retention, something the VCCS has implemented.

VCCS reformed their developmental education requirements in 2013. This reform shortened the duration of developmental education, combined reading and writing requirements, curated curriculum that aligns with college-level English, and allowed some students to take developmental and college English concurrently (Xu, 2016). In 2014, VCCS released an initial review of these changes, claiming there has been a positive impact regarding the new English developmental education. Specifically, enrollment reduced by half and more students completed English 111 (Virginia Community College).

The community college is impacted by the developmental education it offers. Indeed, developmental education is costly and demands extensive resources (Baily, 2009), which ripples across the community and impacts other areas in need of support. DE, however, may be able to address the need for developmental education. Grubb, Scott, and Good (2017) studied the impact of DE coursework on students who enrolled in a Tennessee community college. They found that community college students who participated in DE were "9% or nearly 3.4 times less likely to take remediation" (p. 79), in addition to completing school in a timely fashion. Ultimately, they claim, DE reduces remediation. Although this is only one study involving one school, it shows the promising impact that DE can have on the need for remediation at the community college level.

Remediating student writing is costly (Baily, 2009) and greatly impacts community colleges nationally (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, & Levey, 2006; Callahan & Chumney, 2009). However, one possible solution to writing remediation at community colleges is a more

robust DE program. To this end, it is important to identify how DE impacts stakeholders to better understand the scope of DE.

Dual Enrollment

The problem of practice is focused on discipline-specific PD, with embedded curriculum support, provided to DE English instructors. To identify discipline-specific PD, which utilizes curriculum support, that may positively impact student writing outcomes, it is important to consider how DE impacts students and faculty members.

Impact of Dual Enrollment on Students

There is ample research regarding how DE impacts students' college attendance and degree attainment. Cowan and Goldhaber (2015) studied Washington State's DE program Running Start, which enrolls about 10% of the junior and senior state population. They found that "students who participate in dual enrollment are more likely to attend any college immediately after high school graduation, but are no more likely to attend college full-time and are less likely to attend a four-year university" (p. 450). Blankenberger, Lichtenberger, and Witt (2017) build on Cowan and Goldhaber's (2015) findings and look specifically at college degree attainment in Illinois. They analyzed student data from 8,096 DE participants compared to the same number of nonparticipants. They used propensity scores, which were calculated by employing a two-level hierarchical generalized linear model. They found that students taking dual credit courses were significantly more likely to graduate with a baccalaureate degree as compared to those who did not enroll in dual credit coursework. This study helps to support the idea that enrolling in dual credit can aid students in obtaining a bachelor degree. In addition to helping students attain a college degree, An (2013) found that DE uniquely benefits low SES students. An (2013) used data from the National Education

Longitudinal Study (N=8,800) to look at how enrollment in DE impacts low-income students. He found that low-income students who engage in DE are more likely to attain a college degree than low-income students who do not engage in DE.

In addition to helping students obtain college degrees, DE is also often heralded as being able to save students money, as the cost of each college course is absorbed by the high school offering it (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015). This claim, however, may not be true. Troutman, Hendrix-Soto, Creusere, and Mayer (2018) studied the impact of dual credit (DC), which they define as "collaborations between high schools and colleges that allow high school students to enroll in college courses and receive simultaneous academic course credit from both college and high school" (p. 4). They looked at how DC impacts student debt, and found that obtaining dual credit in high school only marginally reduces student debt; they explain that:

> Dual credit does not have a large impact on student loan debt (taking into account students' financial aid package: total grants, scholarships, and tuition waivers), unless students enter with at least 60 or more hours. When compared to noncredit bearing students, DC students who have 1-15 hours of dual credit do not save any money on their student debt (actually they have more student debt: $67). (p. 38)

While this study involved a large sampling of Texas students (N=129,661), it is confined within the Texas educational system, and may not be applicable to DC programs in different states. Further, DC can be obtained in a variety of ways, and so it is not clear the financial impact of DE credits compared to other alternatives.

It is understandable that student outcomes are a primary focus of research regarding DE programs, and it is promising that DE has many positive benefits to students, including degree attainment and timely graduation. However, DE is dependent on individuals who

implement the program, such as teachers and administrators, and it is important to understand how DE impacts them.

Teachers and Faculty Perceptions of Dual Enrollment

Hanson, Prusha, and Iverson (2015) studied how principals, teachers, and counselors affiliated with Kirkland Community College viewed DE. The survey used in the study included questions provided by that the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), which accredits Kirkland Community College. 117 teachers, 27 counselors, and 20 principals responded to the survey. Overall, the researchers found teachers, counselors, and principals largely believed that DE was positive for schools and students. Unfortunately, the survey focused on the benefits of DE on schools and students, yet failed to allow these responders an opportunity to explain the impact DE has on their professional positions beyond the survey questions. It would be beneficial to have a better idea of *why* they viewed DE as positive for schools and students.

Howley et al. (2013) performed a qualitative study focused on the perspectives of teachers and administrators in high schools and colleges involved with expanding DE programs in the rural Midwest. Thirty-three individuals were interviewed about their experience with DE. After analyzing the transcripts, researchers identified four themes related to power in regard to organizational dynamics: organizational conditions and motives, border crossers, organizational power dynamics, and personal attitudes regarding early college. They found a variety of mixed opinions about DE, and these attitudes were an impediment for creating consensuses on improving and moving ahead with DE programs. Notably, researchers found a subset of educators who were identified as border crossers. These were proactive individuals who found ways to support the sponsoring institution and

high school. Although the findings are interesting, the study is limited because of its minimal use of theory. Researchers also failed to discuss with the DE high school teachers what PD was available to them at the high school or college level and neglected to look at how PD is, or is not, differentiated in regard to various DE courses (e.g., DE English, DE Government, DE Psychology).

More recently, Troutman, Hendrix-Soto, Creusere, and Mayer (2018) studied Dual Credit (DC) in Texas. They used surveys and faculty focus groups to better understand perceptions of DC, through which they identified four themes regarding DC: course quality, college preparedness, recommendations for possible improvements, and advantages and disadvantages for dual credits. For course quality, faculty members were concerned with the rigor and quality of the courses, available resources, and "that course quality might be limited when it is taught by high school-based instructors who shift between the roles of teacher and college instructor throughout the day and have the flexibility to let students retake tests and extend deadlines" (p. 44). In regard to potential improvements for DC courses, the most common suggestion was an end of course exam in order to receive credit. This study reflects information on DC courses, which include a variety of ways to receive college credit while in high school, including AP, DE, Early College, online, etc. Thus, the perspectives from faculty members include a wide variety of approaches to receiving college-level credit while in high school, and do not clearly describe their perspectives regarding DE programs—which, admittedly, are operationalized in dramatically different ways from AP and Early College. Further, each DE course is unique, and DE English is particularly distinctive because of its focus on composition.

Overall, DE positively impacts students' college attendance and degree attainment, and teachers and faculty largely view DE as a positive program for students and schools, although there is concern about the quality of the courses. This information, however, approaches DE holistically, and in order to better understand the problem of practice, it is necessary to look at the impact of DE English.

Dual Enrollment English

The problem of practice focuses on discipline-specific PD that incorporates curriculum support provided to DE English instruction, so it is necessary to examine the wide-ranging impact of DE English on students and educators. Although there is limited research available regarding DE English (Denecker, 2013; McWain, 2018), existing research highlights the complex ways in which this type of composition instruction impacts students' academic writing in college, as well as the unique challenges teachers face as college level instructors at a high school.

Impact of Dual Enrollment English on Students

Hansen, Jackson, McInelly, and Eggett (2015) studied academic student writing outcomes in a first-year university course focused on American history and politics. The students used in this study participated in DE English across the nation, which is potentially problematic because of the contextualized nature of DE programs (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015). Regardless, students enrolled in the course are categorized in one of five ways: having taken DE, having taken Advanced Placement, having taken the university's FYC course, currently enrolled in the university's FYC course, and planning to take the university's FYC course. They analyzed two groups of essays from the 189-student sample using a 6-point holistic rubric. Individuals tasked with evaluating the essays were trained to increase inter-

rater reliability, which was .4. The researchers explain that this low inter-rater reliability is due to the 6-point holistic grading rubric, and include their informal inter-rater agreement at .85. The essays were each evaluated twice and 15% were evaluated three times.

Hansen, Jackson, McInelly, and Eggett (2015) found no statistical difference in academic writing outcomes between students who received DE credit when compared to the other groups. In addition to looking at student writing, the researchers used surveys and focus groups to better understand student perspectives. They conclude, in agreement with the National Council of Teachers of English, that providing college writing credit to high school students will not help them become stronger writers and learners, and suggest instead several other college-level writing courses. This approach seems to fall in line with the status quo of education 30 years ago, and does not account or address the benefits that DE English provides to students entering community college and the impact that DE has on students with low SES. Furthermore, it fails to fully address instructional changes that could support stronger DE English instruction, which may help to promote strong student writing outcomes.

Teacher Perceptions of Dual Enrollment English

DE English teachers work in a liminal space: they are both a high school instructor and college-level instructor teaching in a high school setting. Denecker (2013) studied this threshold that DE English teachers traverse, specifically looking at the composition threshold unique to writing instruction. This composition threshold is the pathway high school students ultimately cross when moving from high school writing expectations to college-level writing expectations. She identifies a variety of differences between college-level composition instruction and high school instruction, and describes the different systems in which they

exist. Her study, however, fails to employ any discernable theoretical or conceptual framework. Yet based on her descriptions of the different systems these composition instructors reside in, it seems reasonable to view DE English instructors as working not only across a compositional threshold, but also within the context of two academic activity systems which provide various levels of support.

To better understand this threshold, Denecker (2013) worked with three DE settings and 22 DE composition instructors. Some of the instructors taught on the college campus whereas others taught in the high school setting. In addition to surveys, discussions, and grading sessions, she also looked at a minimum of three student papers per year from each instructor. These instructors use the same syllabus provided by the sponsoring university or community college and students were required to submit a final portfolio.

Denecker (2013) notes that her research lead her to the realization that:

> The most powerful element for moving students from point A to B as writers may lie not with the students themselves but with those who plan, oversee, and carry out dual enrollment composition instruction. In other words, transitioning writers across the composition threshold is not so much about what the students do as it is about what the instructors know or understand about composition practices on both sides of the divide. (p. 31)

Thus, the teacher's understandings and pedagogical knowledge becomes the deciding factor when helping students traverse the composition threshold. Additionally, she found the following: there were different expectations between high school and college writing instruction, the argumentative thesis is more prominent in college-level writing, and there were differences in surface writing, deep writing, and the writing process. Based on her findings, she recommends that there needs to be strong dialogue between instructors at the high school and college to help students as they cross the composition threshold.

This study is particularly beneficial to the problem of practice because of the described professional support provided to DE English instructors. They were mentored in a weeklong training course where they worked on writing philosophies and engaged with other instructors and faculty members from the sponsoring university. This support extended throughout the year when they met "to calibrate grading, share pedagogical techniques, contribute to the development of course assignments as well as the portfolio grading rubric, and discuss the challenges of teaching writers from high school to college level writing expectations" (p. 42). This professional support for DE English is uncommon in the literature, but the support is exclusively focused on what was provided by the sponsoring university. DE English instructors might receive additional support from their high school and district.

Unfortunately, the study was vague regarding how the discipline-specific PD supported curriculum provided to DE English teachers, and this is an area that greatly impacts day-to-day instruction. Denecker (2013) concludes her article saying, "What remains to be seen is whether the limited findings indicative of this small-scale study of UF's dual enrolled writing programs hold true at similar universities among like populations" (p. 45). Due to the limited research in this area, more studies on DE English are needed to help support or challenge her conclusions.

In part to better understand the composition threshold and its relationship with the academic freedom of instruction, McWain (2018) conducted a multisite case study of three DE partnerships in the Midwest. She worked with seven high school teachers, five program coordinators, and a high school administrator. She interviewed her participants and analyzed relevant texts (e.g. course syllabi, websites, and handbooks). Based on her research, she

identified four challenges: DE teachers occupy different discourse communities and activity systems, DE teachers are accountable to different curriculum requirements and program standards, DE teachers experience different pressures from educational stakeholders, and DE teachers work under different labor conditions.

The findings of this study are valuable, albeit very expansive, and at times fail to fully describe the nuance occurring when DE English teachers work with both the sponsoring university and high school. Specifically, the study is focused on the academic freedom of DE English instructors, which she explains as "as autonomy in course content and methods, protections offered by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and smaller class caps and teaching loads" (Denecker, 2013, p. 407) and further describes the unique position of high school teachers as individuals who are "surveilled by and made accountable to public stakeholders, including parents, administrators, voters, and legislators, in ways college faculty traditionally are not" (p. 407). She does not discuss the professional development or curriculum support opportunities available from the high school, school district, and sponsoring university or community college.

The impact of DE English on student writing is under-researched, though the studies focused on DE English instructors provide important insight regarding the challenge of teaching across the composition threshold and the academic freedom provided to instructors. These studies, however, fail to fully research the professional development or curriculum support provided to DE English instructors from the high school, district, and sponsoring university or community college. This information is essential to better understanding what support, if any, is available for DE English teachers and their engagement with it.

Efficacy of PD

Effective professional development is defined as "structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes" (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner, 2017). This relates to the problem of practice because DE English instructors are tasked with helping to improve student writing outcomes, and professional learning can impact writing instruction, ultimately helping students become better writers. To this end, it is important to look at what makes PD effective, DE specific PD, and effective PD focused on writing instruction.

Effective Professional Development

There is a significant body of research regarding PD (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001), much of which concludes that effective PD goes beyond traditional training (Evers, vad der Heijden, Kreijns, & Vermeulen, 2016). In an effort to fully understand the reoccurring principles that make for effective PD, and how these may or may not go beyond traditional training, Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) analyzed 35 studies on PD which utilized instructional strategies that significantly impacted student learning. Based on these studies, they conclude that there are seven characteristics that contribute to an effective PD experience: "1. Is content focused. 2. Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory. 3. Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts. 4. Uses models and modeling of effective practice. 5. Provides coaching and expert support. 6. Offers opportunities for feedback and refection. 7. Is of sustained duration" (p. 4). It is notable that effective PD models typically include a combination of these characteristics, and are not isolated to just one characteristic.

The need to incorporate adult learning theory is particularly relevant to the problem of practice, as DE English teachers are receiving PD training as adults. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) address that PD should incorporate a revamped version of ALT, which specifically means it should include active learning. They explain:

> Opportunities for "sense-making" activities are important. Such activities often involve modeling the sought-after practices and constructing opportunities for teachers to analyze, try out, and reflect on the new strategies. Active learning opportunities allow teachers to transform their teaching and not simply layer new strategies on top of the old, a hallmark of adult learning theory. (p. 7)

Thus, when teaching adults it is important that the instruction they receive includes ALT that makes use of active learning opportunities in order for the PD to be effective.

Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) explain the wide range of contexts in which these PD characteristics can be applied, including the school level and larger school district level. Most importantly, they illustrate that PD can impact student outcomes if done effectively. They do not, however, explicitly address how PD can and should be applied to DE programs.

Recommendations for Professional Development Specific to DE

The NACEP makes recommendations regarding the professional development that should be provided to DE instructors, and these recommendations are delineated in their faculty standards (NACEP, 2017). In addition to the standards, they have published a brief on discipline-specific professional development for continuing instructors to help clarify what PD with DE instructors should entail (NACEP, "Concurrent enrollment brief," 2015).

These faculty standards emphasize that the sponsoring university or community college should provide discipline-specific PD that includes curriculum support to DE instructors. Faculty Standard 2 explains that "Faculty liaisons at the college/university

provide all new concurrent enrollment instructors with course-specific training in course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment prior to the instructor teaching the course" (2017). This standard thus places the primary burden of training new DE instructors on the sponsoring university or community college when they are first hired.

However, the sponsoring community college's role in providing discipline-specific PD that includes curriculum support becomes less clear for seasoned DE instructors. Specifically, Faculty Standard 3 states, "The concurrent enrollment partnership (CEP) provides annual discipline-specific professional development activities and ongoing collegial interaction to address course content, course delivery, assessment, evaluation, and/or research and development in the field. The CEP ensures CEP instructor participation" (2017). The phrasing of this standard seems to place discipline-specific PD on the *partnership* between the high school and sponsoring university or community college, and so, unlike with new hires, PD for continuing DE instructors may also be expected to be initiated at the high school level or at least negotiated between the high school and sponsoring university or community college. Although the phrasing of the CEP is unclear regarding who should provide the discipline-specific professional development, the fact that this expectation is a standard points to the support that the NACEP gives to ongoing PD.

In addition to the faculty standards, the NACEP also outlines discipline-specific professional development for continuing instructors. Ultimately, they have six ways that PD can be discipline-specific, including focusing on curriculum. These include a discussion of current research, author visits, on-campus observations, collaborative course content development, online interactive discussion board, and online videos (NACEP, "Concurrent enrollment brief," 2015). Although some of these primary concepts are derived from

research, they appear to be less evidence-based than the characteristics outlined by Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017).

Nevertheless, there is important overlap between the two, including focusing on content and collaboration, which are important aspects of discipline-specific PD that may help DE instructors better serve their students. Because these PD aspects impact student learning, it is essential that DE teachers receive effective PD. Both the research from Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) and NACEP (NACEP, "Concurrent enrollment brief," 2015) describe effective PD, which includes discipline-specific curriculum support, that can be applied to a wide range of teachers but do not look specifically at what may aid DE English instructors working within the composition threshold.

Effective PD for Writing Instruction

There is limited research available on effective PD specific to DE English programs, but what is available can be supplemented by research on effective PD for writing instruction. Both lines of research help to establish that targeted PD on writing instruction can improve student outcomes.

Denecker (2013) studied DE College Writing courses connected to a university. The PD involved in this partnership included DE instructors going to the university campus, calibrating grading, developing course assignments, and discussing pedagogy and instructional challenges. She found that the instructors believed the PD to be transformational, and although the information provided regarding the transformational power of the PD is sparse, it seems largely connected to higher expectations.

Additionally, Indiana University Bloomington's Advance College Project has provided PD to English DE instructors. They provided one-day seminars located on the

college campus, which include a variety of strategies, such as panel and faculty-led discussions. Representatives from Indiana viewed the training to be effective, although their conclusions are not based on an empirical study but came from their own experiences at the seminars (NACEP, "Keeping Concurrent", 2015).

There is research available on effective writing pedagogy PD. The National Writing Project (NWP) is a national network of colleges and universities that work on writing instruction with teachers across all levels. This focus is clearly delineated in their mission statement: "The National Writing Project focuses the knowledge, expertise, and leadership of our nation's educators on sustained efforts to improve writing and learning for all learners" (NWP, 2018). Gallagher, Woodworth, and Arshan (2015) studied the impact of the NWP College-Ready Writer's Program, which focuses on argumentative writing, and analyzed the professional development provided by universities. Their scope was extensive and included 10 states, 22 districts, and 12 Writing Project sites. The professional development provided by the NWP College-Ready Writer's Program emphasized writing specific curriculum support and included lesson demonstrations, coaching, co-designing learning tasks, collaborative planning, and included 90 hours of instruction over the course of two years. They found that students trained by teachers who received PD from the NWP were more skilled at using evidence and reasoning in their writing compared to peers who did not receive the treatment.

The problem of practice is focused on the discipline-specific PD that includes curriculum support provided to DE English instructors and because of this it is essential to understand what makes PD effective, how it impacts student outcomes, and its relationship to DE and writing instruction. Ultimately PD can impact student writing outcomes and teachers

tasked with teaching college level writing can, with the right training, help students become better writers.

Virginia DE Policy

Because of the contextualized nature of DE programs and in order to better understand the relationship between ASD and the sponsoring community college Poplar Community College (PCC), it is important to examine Virginia's unique DE policies. Both legislation and policies directly impact DE in Virginia, including the Code of Virginia, Governing Principles for Dual Enrollment, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Code of Virginia

Virginia Code § 23.1-905.1: Course credit; dual enrollment courses

The *Virginia Code § 23.1-905* is part of Virginia's academic policies and focuses on DE course policy. Specifically, it outlines the conditions in which a public institution of higher education can provide course credit in a DE context. This code mandates that detailed information regarding the transferability of the credit must be readily available, that pathway maps need to be provided, that the non-dual enrollment equivalent course should be identified, and that course credit should be consistent across the state.

Virginia Code § 23.1-2906.1: Dual enrollment; high school equivalency; workforce training

Virginia Code § 23.1-905 speaks to the individualized nature of the relationship between the sponsoring community college and school division. It reads:

> Each comprehensive community college shall enter into agreements with the local school divisions it serves to facilitate dual enrollment of eligible students into a Career Pathways program preparing students to pass a high school equivalency examination offered by the local school division and a postsecondary credential,

> certification, or license attainment program offered by the comprehensive community college.

Essentially, providing college credit to students in high school depends on the agreements between the sponsoring community college and school district, resulting in unique, and highly contextualized, relationships.

Virginia Code § 23.1-907: Articulation, dual admissions, and guaranteed admissions agreements; admission of certain comprehensive community college graduates.

The *Virginia Code § 23.1-907* focuses on the ways in which baccalaureate public institutions must work with associate degree-granting institutions, which are often community colleges. It outlines guaranteed admissions as follows:

> Such guaranteed admissions agreements may provide for the guaranteed admission of a student who earns an associate degree concurrently with a high school diploma through a dual enrollment program, in addition to any guaranteed admission for a student who earns an associate degree post-high school.

This establishes that the credit provided through DE programs are college level credit that can be applied to associate degrees, which, in some circumstances, may result in guaranteed admission to a four-year university.

The Virginia Code provides necessary context regarding ASD because these laws help codify the relationship between sponsoring community colleges and school district. In addition to Virginia Code, there is the Governing Principles for Dual Enrollment, which provides more specific guidelines for DE in the state of Virginia.

Governing Principles for Dual Enrollment

The Governing Principles for Dual Enrollment are intended to provide a statewide framework for how partnerships between community colleges and public schools should be enacted. The principles are aligned with the Code of Virginia, the State Council for Higher

Education for Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. This document, signed by the secretary of education for the commonwealth, the superintendent of public instruction for the Virginia Department of Education, and the chancellor of VCCS, outlines a wide variety of principles regarding DE. What is most directly applicable to the problem of practice is the content regarding the faculty and curriculum.

With regard to the faculty, in order to teach they should "have earned a doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline" and are responsible for the following:

- Prepare and disseminate a college-approved course syllabus that includes all required information for the college course, including the college's grading scale;
- Adhere to the required number of instructional/contact hours for the course;
- Adhere to established college academic/instructional calendars for enrollment and grade submission;
- Use college-approved instructional materials;
- Incorporate all student learning outcomes and assessment of student learning outcomes into instruction;
- Participate in student evaluation of instructional effectiveness;
- Submit final course grades; and
- Participate in required meetings and professional development opportunities. (p. 3)

In addition to these responsibilities, there are guidelines regarding the curriculum standards for DE instructors. Specifically,

> Dual enrollment courses shall be offered for college credit with the same departmental designations, course descriptions, numbers, titles, and credits as those

> listed in the VCCS Master Course File. All dual enrollment courses shall be equivalent to the pedagogical, theoretical, and philosophical orientation of the community college department and contain the same student learning outcomes, components of the syllabi, level and rigor of content, assessment and evaluation of student learning outcomes, and instructional effectiveness. (p. 4)

This regulation makes it clear that college-level courses provided at the high school should mirror the expectations of college-level courses offered from a college or university. The specific standards, however, might come from the sponsoring university or community college syllabus provided to DE instructors, though the standards might be provided in alternative ways. What is not clear, however, is *how* DE instructors are supported as they attempt to make their course, while teaching at a high school, equivalent to the community college courses.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Dual Enrollment Policy Statement

The state of Virginia is accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), which has a specific policy statement regarding DE. The aforementioned documents are aligned with SACSCOC policy regarding DE and the document is largely a repetition for what has already be outlined. It is notable, however, that the SACSCOC policy does not mention discipline-specific professional development or curriculum support for DE instructors and does not distinguish any unique needs for DE instructors who teach English. This may be because SACSCOC views its role as providing oversight needed for awarding credit, whereas the specifics regarding instruction and supports should be up to individual partnerships. Alternatively, it may be because SACSCOC is not prepared to expand upon, and support, such discipline-specific support.

Overall, the code and policies regarding DE in Virginia seem to serve as a guide regarding the partnership between the sponsoring community college and school district, and emphasizes the instructor's role as identical to that of a traditional college-level instructor. They do little to direct teachers who teach college-level courses at a high school regarding what they can do to teach to these expectations while also working within the context of students whose lives are uniquely impacted by the demands of high school, such as changing schedules and different amounts of time in class. Indeed, being a DE teacher who teaches at the high school seems largely irrelevant to the policy. Moreover, they do not detail the types of PD and curriculum supports that should be offered, or how ALT intersects with what is offered, which would aid these types of teachers.

Chapter Summary

This literature review is focused on various factors related to DE English instructors. It addresses the challenges of writing knowledge transfer and that writing knowledge transfer is more likely to occur when students engage in reflection and mindfulness (Allan & Driscoll, 2014; Wardle, 2009). This writing knowledge transfer may impact the writing remediation needs of community colleges, and, while developmental writing programs provided by community colleges are complex (Callahan & Chumney, 2009), DE can help reduce the remedial needs of some students (Grubb, Scott, & Good, 2017). It also addresses the impact of DE programs on students, which are largely positive due to increased college attendance (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015) and degree attainment (Blankenberger, Lichtenberger, & Witt, 2017), as well as how teachers and faculty positively view DE (Hanson, Prusha, & Iverson, 2015), even if there are concerns regarding course quality (Troutman, Hendrix-Soto, Creusere, & Mayer, 2018). More specifically, it recognizes the

limited research on DE English and how instructors are asked to teach across a compositional threshold (Denecker, 2013) and engage with different activity systems (McWain, 2018).

In addition to understanding DE and DE English instructors, the literature review also addresses the efficacy of discipline-specific PD and curriculum support in order to better understand what support might aid student writing outcomes. To this end, the literature review highlights what makes PD effective and how it should incorporate ALT (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). More specifically, it addresses that while the NACEP (2017) does have suggestions for PD related to DE, they are only applicable to the limited schools that are accredited. In addition to the information about effective PD, and PD for DE, it recognizes that there is effective PD that supports writing curriculum, which is a result of working with the sponsoring university (Denecker, 2013) and engaging with the National Writing Project (NWP, 2018).

The above information relates to the national problem of practice regarding the PD and curriculum support provided to DE English teachers nationally. In order to understand the local problem of practice, however, it is important to understand DE policies in Virginia, as they directly impact the relationship between ASD and PCC. To address this, the literature review acknowledges the Virginia Codes pertaining to DE and notes that they are focused on the partnership between the sponsoring community college and district and do not discuss how teachers teaching DE on a high school campus should be supported in curriculum development and PD.

Overall the research reviewed here foregrounds the need for a study examining discipline-specific PD that includes curriculum support provided to DE English instructors

from the sponsoring community college, school district, and high school, and addresses the following preliminary research questions:

1) To what degree do professional development and curriculum support opportunities for DE English teachers align with the learning objectives of high schools and sponsoring universities?
    1.1 What professional development opportunities are available for DE English teachers?
    1.2 What curriculum support opportunities are available to DE English teachers?
    1.3 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes in ASD?
    1.4 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes according to PCC?
2) In what ways do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the support given?
    2.1 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the professional development opportunities available to them?
    2.2 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the curriculum support opportunities available to them?
    2.3 How do DE English teachers view the alignment between the learning objectives for DE English in ASD and PCC's learning objectives for DE English?
3) What professional development and curriculum support opportunities do DE English teachers believe would help them achieve the learning objectives of their high school and sponsoring community college if curriculum support and professional development opportunities are not currently provided?

3.1 What professional development opportunities do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.2 What types of curriculum support do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.3 What might help improve the alignment of learning objectives between ASD and PCC, according to DE English instructors?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter examined areas of research related to a national problem of practice, which is that students are not prepared to write at the college level (Dennihy, 2015; NCES, 2012; National Commission on Writing, 2003), including those taking Dual Enrollment (DE) English. Moreover, it notes how student writing outcomes may improve as a result of effective professional development (PD), which can include discipline-specific curriculum support, provided to DE English teachers (Denecker, 2013; Gallagher, Woodworth, & Arshan, 2015). It specifically addressed how writing knowledge transfers, the overall impact of DE on stakeholders, the impact of DE English, the efficacy of PD, and the Commonwealth of Virginia's DE policy.

The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to address the national problem of practice by enacting a local study focused on similar issues. To this end, this chapter will look at the discipline-specific PD provided to DE English teachers in Aspen School District (ASD) and how it supports curriculum. Specifically, it will examine how DE English instructors perceive the efficacy of support they receive from their school district, high school, and from Poplar Community College (PCC), the sponsoring community college. This chapter will therefore review the purpose of the study and research questions, and then describe my paradigm assumptions, study design, sampling and participants, district and high school contexts, researcher as instrument, role of the researcher, data collection, analytic strategies, credibility, trustworthiness, benefits and implications, and potential limitations.

Purpose and Research Questions

The introduction and literature review have established that critical thinking is reflected in strong writing (National Commission on Writing, 2003), and that students are

largely unprepared for college-level writing (Dennihy, 2015; NCES, 2012; National Commission on Writing, 2003). One way to help students become stronger thinkers and be better prepared to write at the college level is to increase writing outcomes when students obtain first-year writing credit while in high school through DE English. DE English inhabits a liminal space between the sponsoring university and high school (McWain, 2018), which is made more difficult by misaligned expectations (Fanetti, Bushrow, & DeWeese, 2010) and the composition threshold (Denecker, 2013). Regardless of this liminal space, there is strong research regarding the efficacy of PD (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, 2017), as well as PD that includes curriculum support focused on writing instruction (Denecker, 2013; Gallagher, Woodworth, & Arshan, 2015). There is not, however, research available on discipline-specific PD provided to DE English instructors from the high school, school district, and sponsoring university or community college, or on how that PD supports curriculum. It is important to consider the PD and curriculum support provided to DE high school teachers by the high school, school district, and the sponsoring university or community college to fully understand what, if anything, is aiding these teachers. To better understand the efficacy of this support it is necessary to understand DE English teachers' perspectives in regards to it, as they are the ones tasked with helping the students grow as writers and critical thinkers. This study looked specifically at how ASD and PCC support two DE English instructors. The research questions for the study include:

1) To what degree do professional development and curriculum support opportunities for DE English teachers align with the learning objectives of high schools and sponsoring universities?

1.1 What professional development opportunities are available for DE English teachers?

1.2 What curriculum support opportunities are available to DE English teachers?

1.3 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes in ASD?

1.4 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes according to PCC?

2) In what ways do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the support given?

2.1 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the professional development opportunities available to them?

2.2 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the curriculum support opportunities available to them?

2.3 How do DE English teachers view the alignment between the learning objectives for DE English in ASD and PCC's learning objectives for DE English?

3) What professional development and curriculum support opportunities do DE English teachers believe would help them achieve the learning objectives of their high school and sponsoring community college if curriculum support and professional development opportunities are not currently provided?

3.1 What professional development opportunities do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.2 What types of curriculum support do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.3 What might help improve the alignment of learning objectives between ASD and PCC, according to DE English instructors?

Methodology

Paradigm Assumptions

The paradigm assumption I employed regarding this study is an interpretivist paradigm. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2015) define interpretivism as involving "the belief that social reality has no existence apart from the meaning that individuals construct for it" (p. 14). Ultimately the interpretivist paradigm recognizes there are multiple truths, each of which is relative and valid (Hays & Singh, 2011), and that these truths are complex and individualized, making case studies a typical approach to understanding the experiences of individuals (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2015). The problem of practice is focused on how discipline-specific PD that incorporates curriculum support may help DE English instructors improve student writing outcomes, ultimately helping them become critical thinkers. Because the instructors' perceptions of the support provided to them contributes to much of the data collected in this study, it is important to value how they construct their realities and how that impacts their writing instruction.

Descriptive Multiple-Case Study Research Design

Overall, there is limited research available concerning DE English instruction (McWain, 2018; Hansen et al., 2015; Howley et al., 2013). There is, however, significant research available on the efficacy of PD (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, Gardner 2017) as well as promising research centered on how writing-focused PD that includes curriculum support can impact student writing outcomes (Gallagher, Woodworth, & Arshan, 2015), and PD guidelines for DE (NACEP, 2017). Taken together, it seems reasonable that DE English instructors can improve student writing outcomes *if* they are provided with the right type of PD and curriculum support focused on writing instruction. Much of the research, however, is

focused on how the sponsoring university or community college can provide this support (Denecker, 2013, McWain, 2018), yet DE English teachers also receive support from their high school and school district and it is valuable to better understand what, if any, of that support is aiding teachers.

Because of this, I enacted a descriptive multiple-case study designed to better understand the type and level of PD and curriculum support available to DE English instructors within ASD from the sponsoring community college, district, and high schools, in addition to learning about how they perceived this support. This information will be shared with the ASD English Language Arts administrator to determine what, if anything, should be changed at the district and school level regarding the support provided to DE English instructors. Furthermore, I will also discuss my findings with the instructors I interviewed and observed to identify ways that I can help them obtain the resources they might want and need.

A multiple-case study allows for a deeper understanding of "the processes and outcomes of cases" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, p. 30). Additionally, looking at different cases is an attempt at replication (Yin, 2009), which increases confidence in the findings. The cases are not generalizable to a national context (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014), and this is appropriate because they are primarily intended to aid ASD. However, the findings may be transferable to DE English teachers in other contexts.

Specifically, I worked with two DE English instructors in the same school district who were purposefully selected as typical case participants (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2015). Using typical case participants was advantageous because it represented an average, or typical, example of someone within the focus of this study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The

case was bounded by each teacher's experience with discipline-specific PD, which incorporates curriculum support, provided by his or her high school, school district, and sponsoring university.

Sampling and Participants

This study occurred during the fall of 2018 to the spring of 2019 in Aspen School District and I worked primarily with two DE English instructors. It also included supplemental interviews from leaders in the school district and from the sponsoring community college who engage with the PD and curriculum support provided to these DE English instructors.

I worked for three years at Magnolia High School teaching DE English for Aspen School District. Because of this experience, I have preexisting relationships with district-level and school-level individuals. Specifically, I have worked closely with the District English Language Arts administrator as a member of her Content Advisory Team and on the Aspen School District Writing Collaborative. She and I have been working on writing instruction within the school district all through my time as a teacher and doctoral student. While she is aware of my desire to study DE English, and is supportive of addressing this problem of practice with ASD, I was responsible for securing access to DE English instructors and the schools where they teach.

Prior to securing access, I completed Institution Review Board (IRB) applications for the school district and the University of Virginia. Once I received IRB approval, I emailed high school administrators and DE English instructors at the three high schools in ASD that offer DE English: Magnolia High School, Western Apple High School, and Apple High School. Notably, Maple High School does not offer DE English. This email solicited

volunteers for the study. Based on the responses from the DE English instructors, I selected two instructors, giving preference to those who taught at different high schools, in order to compare and contrast their unique experiences. Additionally, I emailed the PCC interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs, PCC English department chair, director of secondary education, lead coach and English coordinator, and English department chair at each high school to solicit their help for this study.

District and High Schools Context

Aspen School District. ASD is a Virginia school district that has approximately 14,000 students from suburban, urban, and rural environments, and spans over 700 square miles. The district demographics include 10% English learners, 20.4% receiving free and reduced meals, 11.9% disabled, and 9.8% gifted. 850 (19.73%) of students were enrolled in DE courses in 2016-2017. Much of the 2017 graduating class expects to attend college, with 58% wanting to attend a four-year college and 22% wanting to attend a two-year college. These graduates represent the entire school district, however, each high school has its own unique and diverse demographics. I have included descriptions of the high schools where the DE English instructors who participated in the study taught.

Magnolia High School. The southern feeder pattern for ASD attends Magnolia High School (MHS). The 2017-2018 school profile indicates that this school serves 1,150 students grades 9-12. The demographics include 12.65% African American, 13.9% Hispanic, 63.8% White, 4.45% limited English proficiency, 34.2% receiving free and reduced lunch, 13.8% disabled, and 15.68% gifted. In 2017, 51% of graduates planned to attend four-year colleges and universities and 25% planned to attend two-year colleges and vocational schools. It offers the following DE courses through PCC: English 111/112, US History 121/122, US

Government 211/212, Psychology 200/230, Pre-Calculus/Applied Calculus 163/271, Principles of Management 200, Culinary Arts, and Architectural Drafting 121. It is unique from the other high schools because of its Health and Medical Sciences Academy and the fact that it directly neighbors the sponsoring community college, PCC.

Apple High School. The northern feeder pattern for ASD attends Apple High School (AHS). As of September 2017 AHS enrolls 1,950 students grades 9-12. The demographics include 14.8% African American, 11.6% Hispanic, 59.8% White, 11% limited English proficiency, 31% receiving free and reduced lunch, 13% disabled, and 14.5% gifted. It offers the following DE courses through PCC: English 111-112, Government, Math 163 Pre-Calculus, Math 271 Applied Calculus, United States History, Medical Terminology, Architectural Drawing, Technical Drawing, Introduction to Engineering, and Engineering Graphics. It is unique from the other high schools because of its Math, Engineering, and Science Academy.

Researcher as Instrument

My interpretivist approach to qualitative research includes a belief in the need for research reflexivity, which is the act of self-reflection by the researcher during the research process (Hays & Singh, 2011). To this end, it is necessary to address how I, the researcher, am the primary instrument used during this descriptive multiple-case study. I received my teaching certificate through a four-year undergraduate program and my Master's in English from a research university. My first year of teaching college-level writing was face-to-face instruction at a research university. Following this, I taught DE for two years at a public school in Utah and then taught DE for three years at a public school in Virginia. In tandem with teaching DE English, I also taught first-year writing courses online as an adjunct

instructor at several institutions of higher education. While teaching DE English, I also taught a variety of other English courses, including 10th grade Honors, 12th grade English, and English Study Skills. At both high schools I was the only DE English teacher, and sometimes felt akin to a sailor stranded on a lonely island: I encountered few PD opportunities for DE instructors at the high school level, and was unable to attend the few PD trainings provided by the sponsoring universities. Because of these experiences, I believe that PD focused on DE is often neglected or provided in a way that is inaccessible to DE instructors teaching at a high school. I believe that PD can help teachers improve their craft, but I did not see opportunities for this in my area of teaching.

Based on my experience as a DE English instructor, I have developed some opinions regarding the PD and curriculum support provided. Specifically, I believe that the task of teaching multiple DE English sections often leads to a significant level of work. For instance, I often taught four sections of DE English, which included over 100 total students, and required 13 essays that year. The average essay length was four-pages, and as a result I assessed well over 5,000 pages of student work. This was labor-intensive and I needed support, yet there was none specifically tailored to my unique position. Discipline-specific PD that included curriculum support could have potentially helped me, or teachers like me, by identifying effective strategies for providing feedback, designing assignments in ways that provide students with the guidance they need but do not demand significant out of class time, or for looking at instruction that improves student writing while resulting in fewer revisions or less individualized feedback.

I was, however, provided strong PD for best educational practices regarding teaching and received some PD on writing instruction. Additionally, I had strong curriculum support

from a sponsoring university and community college regarding textbooks, syllabi, and grading rubrics, but most of the content provided was for all first-year writing instructors and was not specific to DE English.

As a result of these experiences, which happened in two very different states, I am biased in my opinion that DE English teachers are in need of additional support due to the fact that they are teaching college-level writing to high school students in a system which often results in large class sizes and vast instructional needs. Further, after my extensive research in this area, I am now increasingly concerned that the perspectives of DE English teachers are not included in the research on DE, which has made me question the level of interest the academic community seems to have regarding the experiences of DE English instructors. Indeed, most research is focused on student outcomes regarding DE, and how the program helps students matriculate to college (Cowan and Goldhaber, 2015) or to complete college (Blankenberger, Lichtenberger, and Witt, 2017), and although researchers are looking more recently at the impact that DE programs have on teachers (Hanson, Prusha, & Iverson, 2015; Troutman, Hendrix-Soto, Creusere, & Mayer, 2018), there is little research which looks specifically at how DE English teachers navigate teaching first-year college writing in a high school and how they are impacted by the unique demands of teaching composition courses (McWain, 2018).

During this study, I made a concentrated effort to limit the bias of my own experience to promote an accurate analysis of the curriculum support and PD opportunities provided to DE English instructors. To do this, I employed research reflexivity by writing a memo about my own biases prior to starting research and also incorporating researcher reflexivity regularly in my methodology log. By doing this, I realized that my own experience as a DE

English teacher was not the same as those I worked with. For example, the time I spent outside of the classroom providing feedback was challenging for me, whereas the instructors I worked with were able to manage the feedback workload by using holistic grading techniques. Although some of our experiences were indeed different, we had more in common. Specifically, I was in agreement with the instructors regarding the importance of teaching writing and the value of using a writer's workshop model.

Role of the Researcher

As the only researcher working on this study, I was engaged with all the participants. Based on my previous experiences with ASD, I had preexisting relationships with many of the individuals involved. Specifically, I worked closely with the principals of Western Apple High School and Apple High school as a DE English instructor. I also interacted with other DE English instructors throughout my time in the school district as we worked toward improving our classroom instruction. This interaction largely came during the Content Advisory Team meetings. I also had some interaction with the director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs from PCC; however, this was limited to emails about grades, curriculum, and instructor evaluations.

Due to my connections with ASD, it was of the utmost importance that I was clear about the purpose of this study: I was looking to better understand discipline-specific PD, which incorporates curriculum support, provided to DE English instructors from the school, district, and sponsoring university, and was not there to evaluate or judge any individual, department, or school. I also explained that I will be providing the District English Language Arts administrator with a write-up of the current state of DE English in ASD so that she can

use this information to inform PD and curriculum support provided to DE English instructors.

Data Collection

The nature of this study is focused on the experiences of two DE English instructors. Consequently, interviews and observations with these two individuals were the primary sources of data. To supplement what I learned from the teachers, additional interviews were held with the PCC interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs, director of secondary education, lead coach and English coordinator, the English department chair from Magnolia High School.

Interviews. Each DE English instructor was interviewed twice, one on one, for about 45-60 minutes per interview using a pre-determined interview protocol. These interviews were done in order to gain a better understanding of the relationships between the sponsoring community college and public high schools (see Appendix A for semi-structured interview questions). Specifically, the interviews focused on the educative value of available PD opportunities and curriculum support.

High school administrators were interviewed once, for about 45-60 minutes. The primary focus of these interviews was to gain a better understanding of the PD support provided to all teachers at the high school and what support, if any, is specifically provided to DE instructors (see Appendix A for semi-structured interview questions).

Lastly, the interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs liaison from PCC was interviewed once for 45-60 minutes. The primary focus of this interview was on the support PCC provides for DE English instructors and potential barriers for providing support (see Appendix A for semi-structured interview questions).

Observations. To better understand the content of the interviews with the DE English instructors, I observed their classroom instruction twice for a total of three hours. During these observations, I was the formal observer and followed an observational protocol (see Appendix B for observational protocol). The observations were completed after the first interview so that data from the primary interview guided the first observation. Specifically, I looked at how these instructors approached writing instruction and if there was evidence that they incorporated any of the supports provided to them from the school, district, or sponsoring university. Additionally, this exposure to their instruction helped clarify information gained from the interviews, particularly when teachers referred to classroom instruction when discussing PD, curriculum support, or the alignment of learning objectives.

Documentation. I analyzed various documents related to DE English instruction. This included, but is not limited to: high school instructors' syllabi, assignment descriptions, required textbooks, curriculum, district descriptions of English Language Arts, and State Standards. I obtained these documents by requesting pertinent information from interviewees.

Analytic Strategies

The theoretical framework used for this study is focused on Adult Learning Theory (ALT). The problem of practice focuses on the PD and curriculum support provided to DE English instructors, and because they engage with this support as adults, it was imperative to look at the efficacy of support in relation to ALT (Alford & Austin, 2013). This case study was designed around ALT and because of this the data analysis relied on theoretical propositions (Yin, 2018). This theoretical framework impacted my coding because I used deductive codes derived from ALT, specifically related to how ALT intersects with PD. For

example, some of the codes I used that were derived from ALT include: experience, interest, reflection, inquiry, and active learning. Deductive codes derived from research questions were also used.

I also employed inductive codes. Specifically, descriptive codes were used when describing PD opportunities and support given to DE English instructors; in vivo codes were used to privilege the voice of participants concerning how they value curriculum support and PD opportunities; and process coding was used to delineate the interaction between PCC, ASD leadership, and DE English instructors (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Additionally, I drafted analytic memos after interview and observation data was collected. Part of the data analysis also included constructing two context charts (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) to visually display the interrelationships between the three groups involved with DE English curriculum: the instructors, ASD, and PCC. Each chart focused on one DE English instructor and the comparison of these charts revealed similarities and differences concerning the curriculum support and PD opportunities provided to them.

I employed a cross-case synthesis of the two DE English instructors when working with coded data, memos, and context charts. During this synthesis I noted patterns in the data and pattern matching that included matching for processes and outcomes as well as rival explanations. I used research from ALT when identifying patterns, and looked closely at the participants' opportunities and engagement with learning. I then analyzed the patterns to ultimately produce themes.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an important aspect of qualitative research, as it ensures the quality of the research and promotes accurate data collection and analysis (Golafshani, 2003). To

promote trustworthiness I used a critical peer, who was familiar with DE English pedagogy, throughout my research process to review and discuss my approach to this qualitative study to ensure that my process was rigorous and accurate. This critical peer reviewed codes, protocols, the research process, and, ultimately, my findings.

Additionally, I collected data from a variety of sources (e.g., interviews, observations, and document review). Pre-established protocols were used to guide interviews and observations and a clear audit trail of the data including process notes, meeting minutes, and observation notes was kept. Moreover, I recorded all interviews, had them professionally transcribed, and analyzed each transcription. While observing, I took detailed notes, keep an up-to-date methodological log, and wrote analytic memos. In order to protect myself from finding themes or data that reinforced any preconceived beliefs, I engaged in researcher reflexivity when writing my analytic memos and tried to identify potential biases in an effort to consciously be open-minded about what I learned in observations, during interviews, and when analyzing documents.

When analyzing data, I used MAXQDA software, which is specifically designed to aid qualitative researchers with data analysis. During data analysis I engaged with both inductive and dedicative codes that I produced. Once I analyzed the data, I triangulated the various research findings, which helped to corroborate or contradict findings (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Interviewees were invited to member check content to ensure that my interpretation of their comments were accurate and representative of their viewpoints.

When crafting my findings, I purposefully used thick, rich, descriptive detail, as this helps readers engage in "shared experiences" (Creswell, p. 202). To provide this type of detail I incorporated direct quotes and details from analytic memos and observations.

Chapter Summary

This chapter includes detailed information regarding the methodology used in this study. Specifically, it describes the study design, site, sampling and participants, researcher as instrument, my role as the researcher, data collection, analytic strategies and trustworthiness of the study. The data I collected from working with two DE English instructors and from interviews with the PCC interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs, director of secondary education, lead coach and English coordinator, and the English department chair from Magnolia High School were analyzed and the findings are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The previous chapter delineates the need for, and purpose of, this capstone study. Specifically, I provide details about the school district, high schools, participants, data sources, and my data analysis process. Table 1 below includes participant pseudonyms, locations, and roles.

Table 4.1
Participant Information

Participant	Site	Role
Jordan Taylor	Aspen School District	Director of Secondary Education
Jacob Roberts	Poplar Community College	Interim Director of Dual Enrollment and Off-Campus Programs
Megan Jones	Aspen School District	Lead Coach and English Coordinator
Sarah Davis	Magnolia High School	English Department Chair
Karen Anderson	Apple High School	Dual Enrollment English Teacher
Peter Smith	Magnolia High School	Dual Enrollment English Teacher

This study examines possibilities for helping one school district better understand the professional development (PD) and curriculum support offered, its effectiveness, as well as identifying ways to help DE English instructors improve student writing outcomes. Specifically, the following research questions were used to inform and guide data collection:

4) To what degree do professional development and curriculum support opportunities for DE English teachers align with the learning objectives of high schools and sponsoring universities?

    1.5 What professional development opportunities are available for DE English teachers?

    1.6 What curriculum support opportunities are available to DE English teachers?

1.7 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes in ASD?

1.8 What are the learning objectives for DE English classes according to PCC?

5) In what ways do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the support given?

2.1 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the professional development opportunities available to them?

2.3 How do DE English teachers view the quality and educative value of the curriculum support opportunities available to them?

2.3 How do DE English teachers view the alignment between the learning objectives for DE English in ASD and PCC's learning objectives for DE English?

6) What professional development and curriculum support opportunities do DE English teachers believe would help them achieve the learning objectives of their high school and sponsoring community college if curriculum support and professional development opportunities are not currently provided?

3.1 What professional development opportunities do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.3 What types of curriculum support do DE English teachers believe would be valuable?

3.3 What might help improve the alignment of learning objectives between ASD and PCC, according to DE English instructors?

I arrived at these findings by interviewing, observing, and analyzing documents from two DE English instructors, and well as interviewing various other individuals involved with supporting these instructors: these include one high school administrator charged with

providing PD to one of the high school teachers, educators at the district level, and the DE liaison at Poplar Community College. I used deductive codes derived from Adult Learning Theory and inductive codes to inform my first and second round of coding, which was done with MAXQDA. I also used analytic memos after interviews and observations, and engaged in a cross-cases synthesis.

The findings of this study have been categorized into two primary sections: *Dual Enrollment English and The Sponsoring Community College: Alignment and Enactment* and *Writing Instruction in Dual Enrollment English Classrooms and Professional Development that Supports It*. The first section, *Dual Enrollment English and The Sponsoring Community College: Alignment and Enactment*, addresses the first research question with its affiliated subquestions. These findings emerged as I analyzed interview data, classroom observations, documents (e.g., syllabi, writing assignments, essay examples), memos, and state policies regarding DE programs. The second section, *Writing Instruction in Dual Enrollment English Classrooms and Professional Development that Supports It*, addresses the second and third research questions with their affiliated subquestions. These findings emerged using the same data as the first primary section, with a specific emphasis placed on classroom observations that included writing instruction and writing-related assignments.

Dual Enrollment English and The Sponsoring Community College: Alignment and Enactment

Context

In order for a school district and sponsoring community college to work together to provide students the opportunity to enroll in DE courses, there are expectations that must be met. These can be found in the Virginia Code. The relationship between the high school and

sponsoring community college must meet the following standard: "Each comprehensive community college shall enter into agreements with the local school divisions it serves to facilitate dual enrollment of eligible students into a Career Pathways program preparing students to pass a high school equivalency examination offered by the local school division and a postsecondary credential, certification, or license attainment program offered by the comprehensive community college" (*Virginia Code § 23.1-2906.1: Dual enrollment; high school equivalency; workforce training*). In addition to the Virginia Code, the Governing Principles for Dual Enrollment provides a framework that delineates this partnership and is aligned with the State Council for Higher Education for Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

The primary focus of these governing bodies is to address what qualifications instructors are required to have in order to provide dual credit at the high school level. This includes the fact that teachers must have a doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or, alternatively, a master's degree with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline. These teachers are responsible for the following:

- Prepare and disseminate a college-approved course syllabus that includes all required information for the college course, including the college's grading scale;
- Adhere to the required number of instructional/contact hours for the course;
- Adhere to established college academic/instructional calendars for enrollment and grade submission;
- Use college-approved instructional materials;
- Incorporate all student learning outcomes and assessment of student learning outcomes into instruction;

- Participate in student evaluation of instructional effectiveness;
- Submit final course grades; and
- Participate in required meetings and professional development opportunities (p. 3).

In addition to the expectations placed on DE teachers, there are also specific requirements regarding the curriculum that these professionals use. Specifically,

> Dual enrollment courses shall be offered for college credit with the same departmental designations, course descriptions, numbers, titles, and credits as those listed in the VCCS Master Course File. All dual enrollment courses shall be equivalent to the pedagogical, theoretical, and philosophical orientation of the community college department and contain the same student learning outcomes, components of the syllabi, level and rigor of content, assessment and evaluation of student learning outcomes, and instructional effectiveness (p. 4).

Both the hiring requirements and curriculum expectations of DE teachers impact the culture of DE; indeed the sponsoring community college and high school must work together to meet the needs of the teachers and students while also working independently at their own sites. This is specifically true regarding writing instruction for DE English instructors. My work with one school district and its sponsoring community college revealed three findings with regard to the alignment and enactment of DE English. Specifically, they are:

1. DE English learning objectives are aligned with the sponsoring community college requirements, yet are misaligned with 12th grade English state standards.
2. DE English curriculum is largely aligned with the sponsoring community college curriculum, while providing flexibility for instructors regarding implementation.
3. Oversight is exclusively provided by the sponsoring community college and is focused on instructor requirements, not facilitating student learning.

I will elaborate on these findings in the following subsections.

Finding 1: DE English Learning Objectives Are Aligned With the Sponsoring Community College Requirements, Yet Are Misaligned With 12th Grade English State Standards

DE instructors within this study teach college-level English at the high school, and their students are recipients of dual credit, meaning they receive both credit at the high school level as well as college credit that can be transferred to the college they attend after high school graduation. Ultimately each community college or university determines how to apply transfer credits, which for some means the credit is a course-for-course transfer, whereas others accept it as elective credit. The duality of DE courses are unique from other high school courses, and I found that the learning objectives are aligned with the sponsoring community college requirements, yet are misaligned with 12th grade English state standards.

Learning objectives alignment. The Governing Principles of Dual Enrollment dictate that DE programs must "disseminate a college-approved course syllabus that includes all required information for the college course" (p. 3). Indeed, mandating that high school DE English teachers use a college-approved course syllabus helps ensure that all DE English instructors are adhering to the same learning objectives.

The practical implementation of this looks like the following: Poplar Community College (PCC) supplies DE instructors with a syllabus template which DE teachers in ASD are expected to use, disseminate to students, and ultimately provide finalized copies to PCC, which are then used as part of the accreditation process. The teachers are welcome to make some modifications to the syllabus, such as adding additional personal classroom policies or clarification, but are expected to include policies, course goals and objectives, and specific course requirements as provided by PCC. The completed syllabi provided by the participants

in this study shows that there are a variety of learning objectives listed. Specifically, there are five overarching goals: The Process of Writing, Critical Thinking for Writing, Information Literacy and The Process of Research, Collaboration, and Oral communication. Each overarching goal includes goal-specific learning objectives. Below is an excerpt from Anderson's DE English 111 syllabus that includes the learning objectives.

Course Goals and Objectives

GOAL ONE: THE PROCESS OF WRITING
ENG 111 will help students understand that writing is a process that develops through experience and varies among individuals.

OBJECTIVES:
1.1. Students will engage in all phases of the writing process: exploratory writing, planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and reflecting.
1.2. Students will incorporate reading and experience into their writing processes.

GOAL TWO: CRITICAL THINKING FOR WRITING
ENG 111 will develop students' ability to analyze and investigate ideas and to present them in well-structured prose appropriate to the purpose and audience.

OBJECTIVES:
2.1. Students will competently read, summarize, and respond to college-level texts – their own and others' – of varying lengths.
2.2. Students will create unified, coherent, well-developed texts that demonstrate a self-critical awareness of rhetorical elements such as purpose, audience, and organization.
2.3. Students will select and refine appropriate topics for writing.
2.4. Students will articulate and support a position.
2.5. Students will minimize major grammatical errors and learn how to use punctuation, mechanics, and conventions in the preparation of readable manuscripts.
2.6. Students will produce 15-20 pages of finished, graded text, including at least two documented essays.

GOAL THREE: INFORMATION LITERACY AND THE PROCESS OF RESEARCH
ENG 111 will develop students' ability to recognize when information is needed and develop competency in locating, evaluating, and using it effectively.

OBJECTIVES:
3.1. Students will execute steps in the research process and revisit steps as necessary based on search results and new understandings.
3.2. Students will identify and access academic resources that are appropriate for their information needed, using library databases and other credible resources.

3.3. Students will critically evaluate information for authority, currency, relevance, authority, audience, & purpose.
3.4. Students will properly integrate sources into an academic paper through summary, quotation, and paraphrase.
3.5. Students will use and document information ethically and legally, properly citing sources using MLA Style to avoid plagiarism.

GOAL FOUR: COLLABORATION
ENG 111 will develop student's ability to collaborate effectively with others.

OBJECTIVES:
4.1. Students will collaborate with faculty and/or peers
4.2. Students will act responsibly in relation to the writing/reading community
4.3. Students will give and receive constructive responses to writing in progress

GOAL FIVE: ORAL COMMUNICATION
ENG 111 will develop student's oral communication skills.

OBJECTIVES:
5.1. Students will practice speaking with ease and clarity to individuals or groups
5.2. Students will comment orally on works in progress
5.3. Students will understand and communicate with audiences from diverse backgrounds

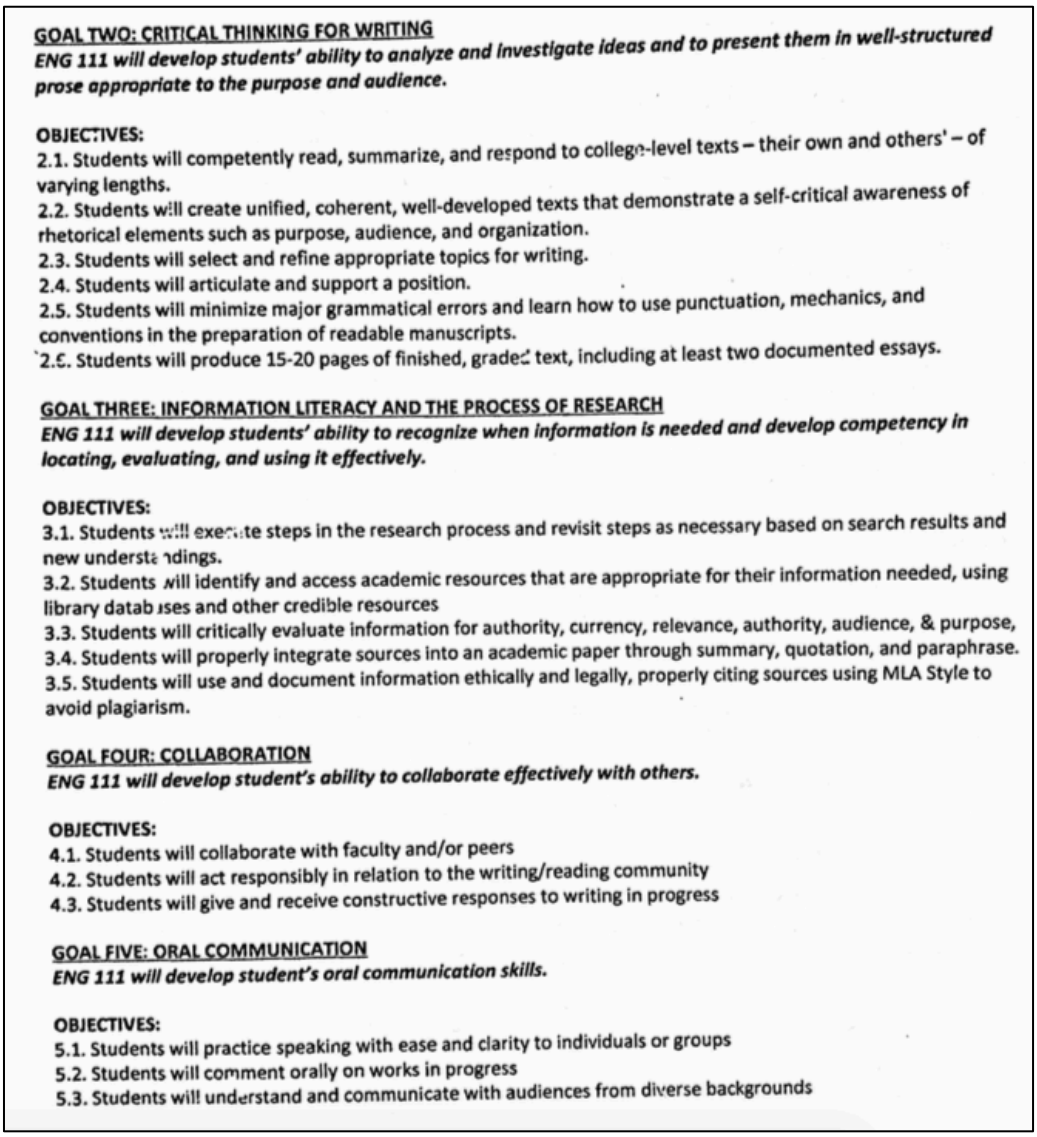
Figure 4.1 Complete list of learning objectives provided in Anderson's DE English 111 syllabus.

These goals and objectives are identical to those found in the DE English 111 syllabus used by Smith, which is provided below:

Course Goals and Objectives

GOAL ONE: THE PROCESS OF WRITING
ENG 111 will help students understand t..at writing is a process that develops through experience and varies among individuals.

OBJECTIVES:
1.1. Students will engage in all phases of the writing process: exploratory writing, planning, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and reflecting.
1.2. Students will incorporate reading and experience into their writing processes.



GOAL TWO: CRITICAL THINKING FOR WRITING

ENG 111 will develop students' ability to analyze and investigate ideas and to present them in well-structured prose appropriate to the purpose and audience.

OBJECTIVES:

2.1. Students will competently read, summarize, and respond to college-level texts – their own and others' – of varying lengths.
2.2. Students will create unified, coherent, well-developed texts that demonstrate a self-critical awareness of rhetorical elements such as purpose, audience, and organization.
2.3. Students will select and refine appropriate topics for writing.
2.4. Students will articulate and support a position.
2.5. Students will minimize major grammatical errors and learn how to use punctuation, mechanics, and conventions in the preparation of readable manuscripts.
2.6. Students will produce 15-20 pages of finished, graded text, including at least two documented essays.

GOAL THREE: INFORMATION LITERACY AND THE PROCESS OF RESEARCH

ENG 111 will develop students' ability to recognize when information is needed and develop competency in locating, evaluating, and using it effectively.

OBJECTIVES:

3.1. Students will execute steps in the research process and revisit steps as necessary based on search results and new understandings.
3.2. Students will identify and access academic resources that are appropriate for their information needed, using library databases and other credible resources
3.3. Students will critically evaluate information for authority, currency, relevance, authority, audience, & purpose,
3.4. Students will properly integrate sources into an academic paper through summary, quotation, and paraphrase.
3.5. Students will use and document information ethically and legally, properly citing sources using MLA Style to avoid plagiarism.

GOAL FOUR: COLLABORATION

ENG 111 will develop student's ability to collaborate effectively with others.

OBJECTIVES:

4.1. Students will collaborate with faculty and/or peers
4.2. Students will act responsibly in relation to the writing/reading community
4.3. Students will give and receive constructive responses to writing in progress

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5.1. Students will practice speaking with ease and clarity to individuals or groups
5.2. Students will comment orally on works in progress
5.3. Students will understand and communicate with audiences from diverse backgrounds

Figure 4.2 Complete list of learning objectives provided in Smith's DE English 111 syllabus.

Having common course goals and learning objectives, and disseminating them through a syllabus, aided these teachers in aligning the learning objectives of their course with those of the sponsoring community college because they are explicitly provided to them. Content provided in the syllabus, however, does not ensure instruction that supports these learning objectives nor are the objectives grounded in what is known about teaching and learning. The teachers in this study provide additional insight regarding how they used the provided learning objectives.

Teacher perceptions on alignment of learning objectives. When asked what the learning objectives are for DE English, both Smith and Anderson were quick to point out that PCC provided them with learning objectives. Anderson explained that "Aspen School District is perfectly willing to go along with Poplar's objectives" (Interview, February 7, 2019), and spoke more broadly of the objectives as being focused on preparing "students to be able to write in whatever discipline they choose" (Interview, February 7, 2019). Smith explained that "I use their syllabus…I don't disagree with any of it" (Interview, February 8, 2019). Neither teacher discussed modifying the objectives, or had obvious concerns in regards to how the objectives were organized or written. Instead, they recognized that they were guides for DE English instruction as per the requirements of PCC and were aware of the objectives.

The learning objectives used by Smith and Anderson were precisely aligned with those of PCC, a key part of the dual credit high school students are receiving. The dual credit, however, also includes meeting the needs and requirements of the high school learning objectives, a standard which the DE instructors do not always meet.

12th grade English state standards. The Virginia Department of Education outlines the state requirements for 12th grade English within the document English Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework 2010. The expectations for senior English are divided into four distinct strands, including Communication: Speaking, listening, media literacy; Reading; Writing; and Research. Each section includes specific standards and information regarding understanding the standard, essential understandings, essential knowledge, skills, and processes (Virginia Department of Education). There is notable overlap in the Virginia State Standards for 12th grade English and PCC's overarching goals and learning objectives,

particularly regarding writing instruction, research, and communication. Some sections, however, are limited in PCC's syllabus, including reading. The table below provides more information regarding how the goals of PCC align, and are not aligned with, the English Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework 2010 for 12th grade English.

Table 4.2

State and sponsoring community college standards

English Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework 2010 Sections			
Communication: Speaking, listening, media literacy "At the twelfth-grade level, students will use organizational skills, audience awareness, appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and verbal and nonverbal presentation skills to plan and deliver an effective formal oral presentation. Students will use a variety of listening skills to evaluate oral presentations. In addition, students will examine media messages for their objectivity, subjectivity, and effects on the audience" (p. 1).	Reading "At the twelfth-grade level, students will apply knowledge of word origins, derivations, and figurative language to extend vocabulary development in authentic texts. They will analyze British literature and literature of other cultures with emphasis on the many classic works that may be studied. In addition, students will read nonfiction and technical texts and continue to develop their own reading-process skills. Students will apply these reading skills in other content areas, including history and social science, science, and mathematics. When selecting texts, teachers will	Writing "At the twelfth-grade level, students will produce expository, informational, analytic, and persuasive/argumentative papers that are logically organized and contain clear and accurate ideas. Students will clarify and defend a position using precise and relevant evidence. In addition, students will revise writing for clarity of content and depth of information" (p. 12).	Research "At the twelfth-grade level, students will produce well-documented research papers, using a standard method of documentation, such as MLA or APA. Students will critically evaluate the accuracy, quality, and validity of all information and follow ethical and legal guidelines for using and gathering Information" (p. 17).

	consider appropriateness of subject and theme as well as text complexity" (p. 5).		
Alignment with Poplar Community College Syllabus Goals See table 4.1 and 4.2 for complete list.			
• Goal Five: Oral Communication (objectives 5.1-5.3)	Goal One: The Process of Writing (objective 1.2) *Students will incorporate reading and experience into their writing process.* Goal Two: Critical Thinking for Writing (objective 2.1) *Students will competently read, summarize, and respond to college-level texts—their own and others' of varying lengths.*	• Goal One: The Process of Writing (objectives 1.1 & 1.2) • Goal Two: Critical Thinking for Writing (objectives 2.1-2.6)	• Goal Three: Information Literacy and the Process of Research (objectives 3.1-3.5)
Goal Four: Collaboration (objectives 4.1-4.3) is largely specific to PCC and has little overlap with state standards.			

This table highlights that there is expansive overlap between the outlined expectations from the state of Virginia and the expectation of PCC. Specifically, the state's requirement for Communication: Speaking, listening, media literacy incorporates all of PCC goals for Collaboration and Oral Communication; the state requirements for Writing include all of PCC's goals for The Process of Writing and Critical Thinking for Writing; and the state requirements for Research include all of PCC's goals for Information Literacy and the Process of Research. However, the overlap is not aligned with the state Reading expectations, as PCC's only has two objectives that overlap with the state goals, and entirely neglects the

focus on British literature. Leaders from PCC, ASD, and teachers all spoke about this misalignment, which is discussed below.

Sponsoring community college leaders. Roberts is the Interim Director of Dual Enrollment and Off-Campus Programs at PCC, and as such oversees the hiring and placement of DE English instructors. When asked about the expectation of DE teachers adhering to the state standards he responded:

> We honestly mostly care about the Poplar Community College curriculum. I think we expect that the high school then holds them [DE instructors] to meeting that sort of end of it. English 111 and 112 counts as English 12 in high school—senior English. So, I think the goal is that we are kind of working in conjunction; as long as they're adhering to our standards, we are hoping that the high school is also holding them responsible for meeting the high school standards (Interview, January 9, 2019).

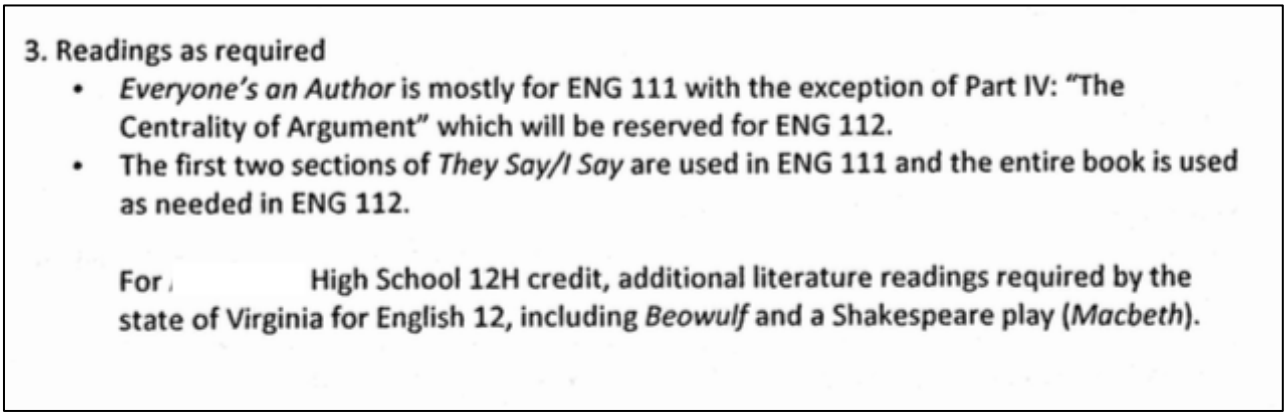
Thus, PCC is primarily concerned with their course requirements, which are provided to instructors through a pre-drafted syllabus, and while there is an expectation that teachers adhere to the high school standards, it is up to the school district to oversee how that is monitored or enforced.

District leaders. Taylor is the Director of Secondary Education for ASD, and in this capacity he oversees and supports all courses at the middle schools and high schools. He explains the expectations of DE English teachers teaching the state standards, saying, "that's non-negotiable. The state standards are the state standards. We're expected to teach those, so that's non-negotiable" (Interview, January 8, 2019). This response was without hesitation, and he continued to explain that this is a reasonable expectation due to the increased time students spend with teachers, an important concept that will be addressed in a later section. The clarity he has regarding the expectation for teachers to teach the DE curriculum and state standards was not shared by others. For example, Jones serves as a Lead Coach and English Coordinator for ASD and when asked about the District's expectation for DE, she explained:

"I feel like Aspen School District's expectations for dual enrollment are Poplar Community College's expectations for dual enrollment, right?" (Interview, December 6, 2018). She quickly followed up this comment by directing me to contact Taylor as he oversees DE to get a more direct answer. The English Coordinator's lack of clarity regarding the expectations for DE English teachers is consistent with DE English teachers in the district.

Dual enrollment English teachers. The views of DE English teachers who participated in this study are not aligned regarding the expectation to meet state standards. Specifically, Anderson attempts to meet the requirements of the state and sponsoring community college, whereas Smith's understanding of the course is that he is expected to only meet the needs of PCC. It is notable that there is not additional support for DE teachers who are working to meet both the state and community college standards.

Anderson regularly attempts to meet the state standards for reading, including placing the following note in her syllabus:


3. Readings as required

- *Everyone's an Author* is mostly for ENG 111 with the exception of Part IV: "The Centrality of Argument" which will be reserved for ENG 112.
- The first two sections of *They Say/I Say* are used in ENG 111 and the entire book is used as needed in ENG 112.

For High School 12H credit, additional literature readings required by the state of Virginia for English 12, including *Beowulf* and a Shakespeare play (*Macbeth*).

Figure 4.3 Excerpt from Anderson's syllabus that explicitly references the additional need for content that meets the state reading standards for 12th grade English.

Here she explicitly reminds students that they will be reading British literature as required by the state of Virginia. Furthermore, Anderson acknowledges the difference between her classroom experiences and those of her colleagues at PCC, explaining "my kids

are actually doing way more than the students at Poplar Community College, which could be their brothers and sisters and mothers (Interview, November 9, 2018). She continues "for high school they are getting 12 honors credit and…I'm sure that I could get away with doing no literature if I wanted to but…the state of Virginia requires, supposedly, *Beowulf* and *Macbeth* and a research paper for 12th grade" (Interview, November 9, 2018). Ultimately her students are doing more work because they are engaging with specific literature, as expected by the state, as well as the advanced writing expectations required by the sponsoring community college. She is aware of the expectation to meet the requirements from both the sponsoring community college and the high school. Although there is this expectation, she also recognizes that this requirement is not necessarily enforced, explaining that she could easily get away without incorporating literature within her daily instruction.

Unlike Anderson, Smith's DE English instruction is focused exclusively on mirroring a freshman composition course. When asked about his approach to reading instruction, he explained:

> It's a freshman composition class. They're taking freshman comp. If they're taking freshman comp, we do reading[s] that I give them. We read poems and stories and whatnot, but it's a freshman comp class…I've got to shortchange something… if I teach it as a literature and composition class, I think that's going to be a tall order. They'll be doing crazy amounts of homework trying (Interview, November 19, 2018).

In this exchange, Smith is clear about his alignment with the sponsoring community college expectations, while also making the choice to dedicate all classroom time toward this goal, and not intentionally aligning his instruction with the state requirements. While he does indeed have students read, the readings are embedded within the context of writing tasks. The following vignette shows that he assigns This I Believe essays to his students and discusses them as a whole-class activity:

> Today we are going to look at some This I Believe [examples] and talk about that and look at some strategies of what you think about it"… Smith passes out a student example titled "Tomorrow Will be a Better Day" and reads the essay aloud to the class and after a brief exchange with students explains that the author "didn't say everything they have seen. He talked about specific things: the polio vaccine. He went deeper, he kept digging: polio, civil rights. That's the trick. He didn't stop at the first layer, he kept going down. He had kind of a hook…What's this guys hook? (Observation Field Notes, January 24, 2019).

While Smith is engaging students with readings, it is not done with the explicit desire to meet the needs of the state standards. Instead, they are provided within the context of supporting the writing instruction occurring in the class.

The different approaches to the state standards, specifically the state reading standard, between these two instructors might be due to the diverse backgrounds of the instructors. Anderson's educational background follows a somewhat traditional route to becoming a teacher: she received a bachelor degree in literature from a four-year university, took additional coursework to become certified to teach English, has taught in a variety of places, and is in her sixth year of teaching DE English. Alternatively, Smith's educational background could be considered to include a nontraditional route to becoming a teacher. His teaching tenure has primarily been at the college-level: this includes teaching at a community college while working on his Ph.D. and eventually becoming a professor at a four-year institution, where he primarily taught fiction writing. He moved to where he now teaches high school because of his wife's job, and is currently in his second year of teaching high school. He describes his licensing status in the following way: "I am unlicensed. I am currently provisional. So I have to take like five classes at some point" (Interview, November 19, 2018).

Smith's career as a college-level writing instructor may impact the way he views DE English courses, shifting his focus toward writing and not the state reading standards.

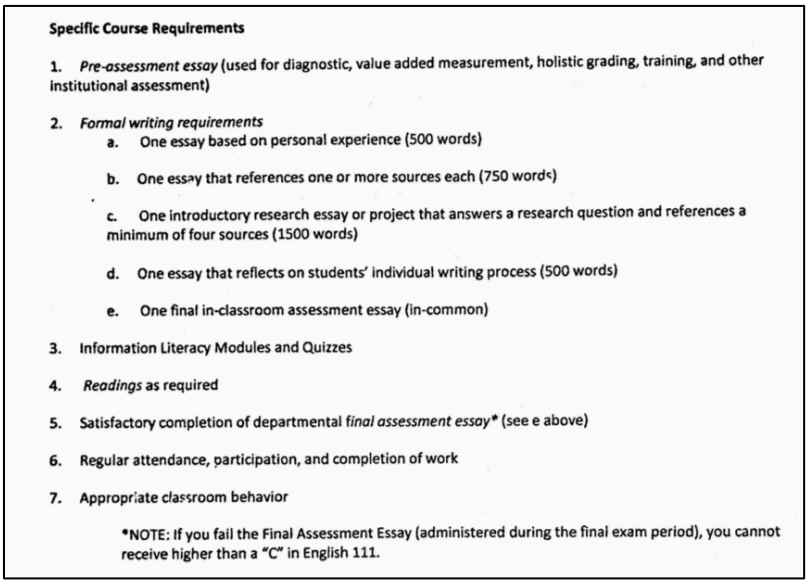
Alternatively, Anderson's experience of obtaining a teaching license, and simply having a long career as a high school teacher may mean she has had more exposure to, and a better understanding of, the state reading standards. Regardless of *why* the instructors are or are not aligned with the state reading standards, it is clear that there are inconsistent approaches to instruction in DE English courses within the same district.

Finding 2: DE English Curriculum Is Largely Aligned with the Sponsoring Community College Curriculum, While Providing Flexibility for Instructors Regarding Implementation

The syllabus provided to DE English instructors in Aspen School District does more than merely outline the learning objectives of the course, but instead acts as a type of curriculum guide to teachers by providing details about the assignments, as well as listing textbooks that students are required to purchase. Participants in this study largely aligned their curriculum with the sponsoring community college's curriculum and were provided flexibility regarding implementation. This finding will be analyzed in three parts: fidelity to curriculum materials, differing responses to the curriculum, and excess seat time.

Fidelity to curriculum materials. The syllabi used by both participants in this study provides the overall course expectations from PCC, including the required writing assignments. Smith explains this process, saying "they [Poplar Community College] give a model syllabus, which I fill in and use as the basis of my syllabus" (Interview, November 19, 2018). Anderson also uses this model syllabus and explains that that there "are the specific course requirements, like one essay based on your personal experience… all of my stuff fits into that" (Interview, November 9, 2018). Both participants in this study used the model syllabus, and personalized the specific course requirements either in the syllabus or in the

classroom. Below is an excerpt from Smith's DE English 111 syllabus that outlines the specific course requirements, which include the assignment requirements:



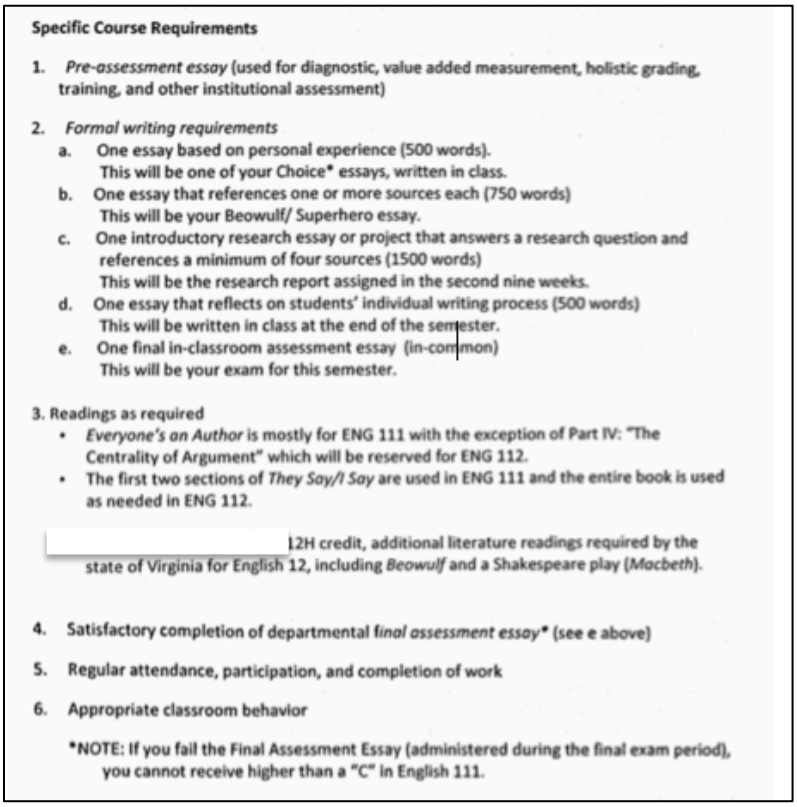
Specific Course Requirements

1. *Pre-assessment essay* (used for diagnostic, value added measurement, holistic grading, training, and other institutional assessment)
2. *Formal writing requirements*
   a. One essay based on personal experience (500 words)
   b. One essay that references one or more sources each (750 words)
   c. One introductory research essay or project that answers a research question and references a minimum of four sources (1500 words)
   d. One essay that reflects on students' individual writing process (500 words)
   e. One final in-classroom assessment essay (in-common)
3. Information Literacy Modules and Quizzes
4. *Readings* as required
5. Satisfactory completion of departmental *final assessment essay** (see e above)
6. Regular attendance, participation, and completion of work
7. Appropriate classroom behavior

*NOTE: If you fail the Final Assessment Essay (administered during the final exam period), you cannot receive higher than a "C" in English 111.

Figure 4.4 Excerpt from Smith's syllabus that delineates the specific course requirements for English 111.

These specific course requirements are nearly identical to those provided by Anderson, as evidenced below:



Specific Course Requirements

1. *Pre-assessment essay* (used for diagnostic, value added measurement, holistic grading, training, and other institutional assessment)

2. *Formal writing requirements*
   a. One essay based on personal experience (500 words).
      This will be one of your Choice* essays, written in class.
   b. One essay that references one or more sources each (750 words)
      This will be your Beowulf/ Superhero essay.
   c. One introductory research essay or project that answers a research question and references a minimum of four sources (1500 words)
      This will be the research report assigned in the second nine weeks.
   d. One essay that reflects on students' individual writing process (500 words)
      This will be written in class at the end of the semester.
   e. One final in-classroom assessment essay (in-common)
      This will be your exam for this semester.

3. Readings as required
   - *Everyone's an Author* is mostly for ENG 111 with the exception of Part IV: "The Centrality of Argument" which will be reserved for ENG 112.
   - The first two sections of *They Say/I Say* are used in ENG 111 and the entire book is used as needed in ENG 112.

   12H credit, additional literature readings required by the state of Virginia for English 12, including *Beowulf* and a Shakespeare play (*Macbeth*).

4. Satisfactory completion of departmental *final assessment essay** (see e above)

5. Regular attendance, participation, and completion of work

6. Appropriate classroom behavior

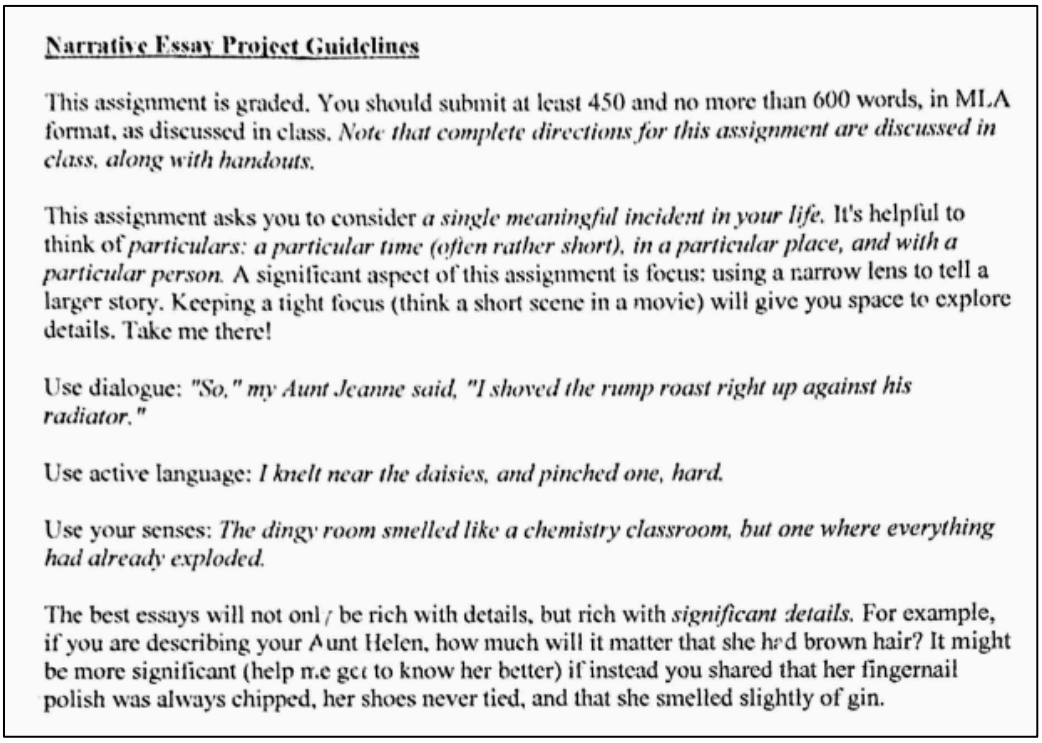
*NOTE: If you fail the Final Assessment Essay (administered during the final exam period), you cannot receive higher than a "C" in English 111.

Figure 4.5 Excerpt from Anderson's syllabus that delineates the specific course requirements for English 111.

Students are provided with the specific course requirements in both syllabi. The pre-assessment essay and final assessment essay are common essays provided by PCC, whereas the other formal writing assignments, including an essay based on personal experiences, an essay referencing one or more resources, an introduction research essay or project, and an essay reflecting students' individual writing process are included with some terse expectations—like how many sources to use and word count, but do not include the assignment description with important information like the essay focus or purpose.

Comparing these two sections of these syllabi shows how instructors are able to individualize the formal writing assignments. For example, Anderson notes that her essay, which requires one or more sources, will be on a Beowulf/Superhero essay, something that was not predetermined by PCC. Another example of instructor flexibility is the way Smith

decided to craft the assignment description for a personal experience. Below is a portion of the assignment description he provided to students.



Narrative Essay Project Guidelines

This assignment is graded. You should submit at least 450 and no more than 600 words, in MLA format, as discussed in class. *Note that complete directions for this assignment are discussed in class, along with handouts.*

This assignment asks you to consider *a single meaningful incident in your life.* It's helpful to think of *particulars: a particular time (often rather short), in a particular place, and with a particular person.* A significant aspect of this assignment is focus: using a narrow lens to tell a larger story. Keeping a tight focus (think a short scene in a movie) will give you space to explore details. Take me there!

Use dialogue: *"So," my Aunt Jeanne said, "I shoved the rump roast right up against his radiator."*

Use active language: *I knelt near the daisies, and pinched one, hard.*

Use your senses: *The dingy room smelled like a chemistry classroom, but one where everything had already exploded.*

The best essays will not only be rich with details, but rich with *significant details.* For example, if you are describing your Aunt Helen, how much will it matter that she had brown hair? It might be more significant (help me get to know her better) if instead you shared that her fingernail polish was always chipped, her shoes never tied, and that she smelled slightly of gin.

Figure 4.6 Smith's Narrative essay assignment description provided to students.

In this assignment description, Smith focused on having students write about a single meaningful incident and focus on significant details. These choices that he made regarding the parameters of this assignment were his own, and were not dictated by PCC.

In addition to implementing the syllabus and formal writing assignments from Poplar Community College, both instructors utilized the textbooks required by the sponsoring community college. Poplar Community College requires students taking English 111, DE or otherwise, to purchase and engage with *They Say I Say with Readings* (Graff, Birkenstein, & Durst, 2015) as well as *Everyone's An Author with Readings, 2nd Edition* (Lunsford et al., 2016). It is important to note that Anderson required the 4th edition of *They Say I Say with Readings*, whereas Smith required the 3rd edition.

Both instructors used these textbooks in class. For example, I observed Smith assigning students to read portions of the required text, saying "Next Friday is the big reading, pages 1-144 out of this book (points to *They Say I Say*). Check blackboard, you need to take some notes" (Observation Field Notes, January 24, 2019). This assignment was also provided to students on a classroom blackboard. Smith describes his use of the required texts saying:

> I don't use it in class…some teachers teach from the text and I do not. We don't review chapters in class or anything like that… they do it, they write notes, they write them up, it's a check mark. I don't grade their notes. Either they did it or they don't. If I have questions if they read something I will talk to them (Interview, November 19, 2018).

Anderson also incorporated the required textbooks into her class by providing students with a daily schedule at the beginning of the semester that includes readings from the required text. A portion of this daily schedule is provided below:

Most reading assignments are to be done outside of class – bring book to class if specified or if you want to annotate. **EAA:** *Everyone's an Author with Readings* (2nd edition with 2016 MLA). **TSIS:** *"They Say / I Say": The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing, with Readings* (4th edition).

FIRST NINE WEEKS

	What we're doing this class, homework for next time
8/22-23 r - b	Get your computer and Blackboard account working! Think about getting books! Be sure to bring computer and charger for diagnostic essay next class. Discuss using Blackboard and calendar. Homework: Acknowledge syllabus on Blackboard by midnight 8/29.
8/24 r	Cold prompt - diagnostic essay. Turn in on Blackboard. Due at the end of the period. No homework, but get books by 9/4.
8/27 b	As above for blue day
8/28-29 r - b	Review this calendar. Discuss genres & types of essays. (*EAA* Genres 105-115). Discuss Fish essay; new voc words, Discussion Board Assignment 1 (DB#1). Homework: Study for voc quiz (with apostrophes) next week. Discussion Board Post #1 (DB#1) due by midnight 9/3.
8/30-8/31 r - b	Grammar Review: apostrophes. Discuss college application process and common application, college essay assignment. Homework: Study for voc quiz (with apostrophes) next class. **College essay due on midnight on 9/23** (for both red and blue days)
9/03	Labor Day - *no school!*
9/4-9/5 r - b	voc quiz (with apostrophes). Read "Does anyone read all those college applications?" Homework: bring *TSIS* to class on Thurs/Fri.
9/6-9/7 r - b	Diag Essay Rubric and Scoring; return Diagnostic Essay; grading and the Wow factor. Discuss using templates in *TSIS* to revise. Self-assessment of diagnostic essay & sign up for an individual conference by 9/21. Homework: Read in *EAA* Meeting the Demands of Academic Writing 40-52, Managing the Writing Process 79-89. Possible reading quiz next time. **Diagnostic Rewrite for all due 9/30 by midnight.**
9/10-9/11 r - b	Read "Sh*tty First Drafts." Writing Lab Choice **1** – process essay. Homework: In **EAA,** look over Chapter 31 "How to Write Good Sentences," 641-651 on style and skim 668-686. Research & brainstorm college essay. Bring *TSIS* to next class.

Figure 4.7 Anderson's daily schedule that she provides to students at the beginning of the year.

This schedule demonstrates that Anderson is frequently using the required texts, and like Smith, assigns the reading outside of class. In addition to using the texts, Anderson explained that:

> It would certainly be helpful if we had better textbooks…the two textbooks that Poplar Community College is using right now are not particularly helpful at all...They both take this very conversational tone and it's really, really, really, more casual than I would like…We're trying to find an academic tone and get there (Interview, November 9, 2019).

Although Anderson would prefer different textbooks, she still uses the texts expected by PCC, showing her fidelity to the curriculum.

There was one notable moment, however, where an instructor did not adhere to the provided curriculum. In this instance, Smith elected to not use the English 111 in-common final in-class essay. Instead, he assigned the essay titled This I Believe as an hour-long in-class essay, a decision Smith made because of a change in schedule due to district-wide snow days. The students received a pass/fail for completing the essay in class, but were to receive actual points later on when the essay had been edited and turned in. When speaking with the students about the This I Believe essay, he said: "You guys took the essay exam and you wrote a draft of this. For most of us, that was some of the best writing you have done all year…Everybody passed" (Observation, January 24, 2019). This is a clear shift away from the curriculum he was expected to enact, but it was the only instance where I saw him diverge completely from what was expected, and that could simply be due to the last minute schedule change. While both instructors largely adhere to the curriculum, their response regarding the curriculum varies.

Instructor's response to DE English curriculum varies. PCC's expectations for DE English are the same expectations for all English 111 and 112 courses, which includes

fulltime teachers on campus, adjunct instructors, and those teaching the course at a high school. Instructors teaching within these different contexts are working with different groups of students, all of whom have unique needs. Regardless of the differences in students, the overarching curriculum expectations are identical. Participants in the study had differing reactions to this.

When asked if the curriculum for DE English should be designed with high school students in mind, Anderson responded:

> I'm unsure about that…I think more than half of the students that enroll in English 111 are dual enrollment students. So if that's true, then it seems like the curriculum should be-- at least it should have options for high school students or something like that. But I can see a lot of "buts" there, so I guess I'm not sure (Interview, February 7, 2019).

When asked to explain what a specific curriculum for DE English might look like, she explained that: "Well, it would be the literature that the state of Virginia says you should do: Beowulf and a Shakespeare play. So I would think it would include those kinds of options" (Interview, February 7, 2019). In addition to modifying the content, Anderson went on to explain how sometimes the final semester essay prompts focus on students who are having a traditional college experience, and does not apply to her DE students. She explains, "If they ever give me one like that, I don't use it. I use the previous year's one because they're just—I mean, they'll write about it but they'll just be speculating. It's useless" (Interview, February 7, 2019). This example shows how the requirements for DE English are not always aligned with the life experiences or needs of high school students, although Anderson has found ways to work around these issues.

Smith, alternatively, believes strongly that the curriculum should remain the same as what is provided at PCC. When asked if the curriculum should be specific to DE students, Smith said:

> No, I think it should be the way it is…I would argue against designing a separate curriculum for dual enrollment students, whether that's learning objectives, assignments, or anything else…Because I think when someone has said they have taken college composition, they should've taken college composition…I think that's my goal…I think if we're going to call it a college class, it should look like a college class (Interview, February 8, 2019).

Smith routinely addressed his desire to have his course mirror that of a college composition course in almost every discussion I had with him. This overarching premise is much of the reason why he disagrees with a new or modified curriculum designed for DE students.

The curriculum provided to DE English instructors is the same as what is provided to all instructors who teach English 111 and 112 at PCC. Although this can result in tasks that are challenging to high school students, such as inapplicable prompts, the desire for a unique curriculum for DE English instructors is weak, with one teacher hesitantly seeing how it might be beneficial and the other being strongly opposed.

Excess seat time. Students who are enrolled in DE spend significantly more time with instructors than their equals taking the same class on campus or online. Indeed seat time was a reoccurring concept during interviews. This extra time provides instructors with greater flexibility regarding how they approach the required curriculum from the sponsoring community college and state. Representatives from the sponsoring community college, district, and high school address what the extra seat time means for instruction.

Sponsoring community college. Roberts speaks to the point that seat time is a logical result of working with the traditional high school schedule. He says,

> I think it has to really happen that way because just logistically trying to schedule at a high school becomes so difficult. It has to fit into a high school student's schedule. I think it's a good thing in terms of when students have to miss classes, we don't necessarily hold the instructors responsible for following our - which is kind of vague anyways - our attendance policies because they have so much more seat time. They

> have a little bit more flexibility for things like that. It allows certain classes at certain schools…to do English 111 and 112 in a single semester. So they do it all in the fall and then offered [it] again in the spring. And they do that for all their classes - History 120 and 122…That wouldn't be possible otherwise (Interview, January 9, 2019).

Here Roberts does little to talk about how the extra time impacts instruction specifically, but instead focuses on how the extra seat time allows students the opportunity to take more courses at the high school as well as have more flexibility when they miss school. The leaders in the district, alternatively, speak more about how there needs to be additional conversations about the extra time high school students spend with their instructors as compared to other students receiving college credits.

Poplar School District. When asked about the extra seat time high school students have compared to their peers at the community college, Taylor said:

> I'll just say I think there's a lot of room for conversations…And I think my, probably, safe answer for you is to be able to say there's a lot of area for conversation within that group and I think we need to go back and explore when you've satisfied both your high school credit and the PCC credit (Interview, January 8, 2019).

This call for additional conversation is mirrored with Jones's perspective on seat time. She explained:

> So that's been a conversation more about time. That the time seems excessive and compared to what PCC requires…It's more about—the discussion, I think. At the center of it is more about seat time and the excessive seat time, in general, for high school students. And how does Aspen District respond to what the states require, what the state generally requires even though maybe the instructional philosophy doesn't align with what the state requires, especially moving into more interdisciplinary studies (Interview, December 6, 2018).

Here Jones recognizes that there might be a misalignment between the district's instructional philosophy and state requirements, and believes the solution to this is an increase in conversations about the issue at hand. Both district representatives recognize a need for a conversation about the extra seat time, but are vague about what this discussion

can, or should, include. Anderson, however, speaks more about what this extra time means for instruction.

DE English instructors. Anderson directly speaks to the additional time her students have in class compared to those at the community college, saying, "the high school students are in the classroom, in a seat, for way more minutes than the students at PCC" (Interview, February 7, 2019). This point was brought up while speaking about teaching British literature, and Anderson recognized that the additional time with students means that she can meet the state reading requirements in addition to the requirements of the sponsoring community college. Thus, the extra time allows her to expand her curriculum and teach her students additional content.

This section demonstrated how the English curriculum used by the DE instructors was largely aligned with the expectations from the sponsoring community college. This included materials like the syllabus and textbook. Instructors also had flexibility with the design and implementation of the writing assignments. Additionally, the instructors had differing responses regarding the idea of having a curriculum designed with DE students in mind—ranging from not wanting a unique curriculum to seeing some value in a more tailored curriculum. Lastly, this section reviewed the call for more discussions regarding the additional seat time that DE students have with their teachers as compared to their peers at the community college.

Finding 3: Oversight Is Exclusively Provided by the Sponsoring Community College and Is Focused on Instructor Requirements, Not Facilitating Student Learning

In order for DE instructors to be able to teach courses to high school students that allow for dual credit they must meet specific standards, as established by the Virginia

Department of Education. Although the sponsoring community college provides oversight regarding teacher qualifications and other instructor requirements, this oversight does not facilitate student learning. This section focuses on two primary findings: how the oversight by the sponsoring community college focuses on alignment with the state requirements to teach a college level class (e.g. certification, syllabi) and that the oversight does not aim to help teachers facilitate student learning.

Oversight by the sponsoring community college focuses on alignment with the state requirements to teach a college level class (e.g. certification, syllabi).

PCC's relationship with DE instructors in ASD is largely focused on ensuring that DE instructors are qualified, per the state requirements, to teach their classes. This primary focus was mentioned explicitly by Roberts, the Interim Director of Dual Enrollment and Off-Campus Programs, as well as leaders within the school district.

Sponsoring community college. Roberts described the process of ensuring that DE instructors are qualified to teach dual credit courses:

> The school will identify instructors that they think would qualify to be eligible to teach dual enrollment classes. They then typically will send me their credentials, their résumé transcripts. They complete the state application. I give that to the academic deans. They are then approved. From that point on, I'm really the one who's contacting the dual enrollment instructors if it's something that is related to class rosters, expectations adhering to specific policies like drop and withdrawal of students, things like that (Interview, January 9, 2019).

Thus, the primary role of the interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs is clerical in nature: making sure that that the teachers have the necessary credentials and are using the provided syllabus. In addition to making sure that the instructors are qualified, he does a brief training session with new hires saying, "I'll have contact with the new dual enrollment instructors to kind of go over a little bit of sort of a small training presentation"

(Interview, January 9, 2019). This training presentation is not focused on professional development, as described by Taylor: “Mr. Roberts comes over at the beginning of the year and just says, hey guys, what do you need, I'm here to support you, yadda, yadda, yadda. And that's really it. That's the only meeting I've ever known that has been separate. But that's not professional development, that's I think just kind of touching base” (Interview, January 8, 2019). This effort to touch base is only extended to new DE instructors, whereas instructors who have been teaching for more than one year have a different level of interaction with Roberts. Roberts explains that “The other instructors that have been doing it, I typically don't contact them unless there's some sort of an issue, whether it be their class rosters are incorrect, the grade rosters have not been posted, something like that. If there's problems with the syllabi, more or less they usually contact me. So they initiate that contact” (Interview, January 9, 2019). So while Roberts does reach out to instructors to make sure that he has the information the state requires, if there are more content-related issues, like the syllabus, the teachers contact him.

District leaders. Taylor, Director of Secondary Education, explains his perspective of the oversight provided by PCC. He says:

> Our current agreement with PCC is that we reach out to PCC and whatever area we want to offer a class. We send over a teacher's transcripts, and they verify that teacher has met the SACS accreditation requirements for the local community colleges in order to be able to teach a dual enrollment class which means they would be eligible to give credit, and that would be a transcript class for PCC. So we have to go through that requirement… So PCC has their requirements, that they'll meet with their teachers and make sure they do, and how they're inputting things, and what grades may or may not look like, and expectations, and then the teachers have a lot of freedoms within that to work with us in the schools to make sure that they're doing what's best for kids (Interview, January 8, 2019).

This description of the oversight provided by PCC is consistent with the description regarding oversight provided by Roberts. Effectively, ASD identifies a DE course they want

to offer, identifies a teacher who is qualified to teach that course, reaches out to PCC about the course and instructor, provides the instructor qualifications, and PCC makes sure that the instructor and course meet the state requirements. This oversight makes sure that the sponsoring community college DE offerings are aligned with state requirements; however, it does not focus on helping teachers to facilitate student learning.

Oversight by the sponsoring community college does not aim to help teachers facilitate student learning.

In this study, the oversight provided by the sponsoring community college is primarily focused on ensuring that state requirements for DE instructors are met. It does not provide teachers with support to help facilitate student learning. Representatives of the sponsoring community college, district, and DE English instructors discuss this lack of support.

Sponsoring community college. If teachers in ASD have questions regarding the content of the course they are teaching, or how to better help their students understand course materials, "that comes directly from the academic dean's office" (Roberts, Interview, January 9 2019). Although I tried to contact the academic dean to better understand this process, my calls and emails were not returned. Roberts explained in detail the relationship academic deans can have with DE instructors. The academic deans can choose to be involved with DE instructors and engage with them, or not. One issue that has been problematic is that at times academic deans will try to contact DE instructors using the email address provided by the sponsoring community college, an address that many DE teachers do not check. This is just one way that DE instructors lack communication with academic deans.

Regardless, Roberts recognizes the need to help teachers facilitate student learning, explaining that:

> I think there needs to be enhanced training, for sure. Ideally, I would like someone to be able to go out to these high schools and maybe even have meetings multiple times throughout a semester to address any issues. I think it would be better that way. I think a lot of things would come up that maybe DE instructors don't take time to actually email about, but they have concerns (Interview, January 9, 2019).

This desire to have a greater presence with DE instructors is something that Roberts is currently working on, specifically with formal observations. He explains:

> I will tell you previously there's been no formal mechanism for Dual Enrollment instructor observations to happen. We sort of let the high schools do that. Which is great, it's fine, but if the high schools do that, they're not evaluating them based on what our expectations are for PCC dual enrollment classes. That is something that has changed this year, this spring is the first time we're actually going out and doing DE observations of every single class… I think the goal is to have the academic deans go to their particular instructors or at least send people representative[s] from that discipline. So I think maybe have some of the chairpersons go into the observations in the future. But I'm not exactly sure because this is so new (Interview, January 9, 2019).

This goal of greater outreach to DE instructors could, potentially, help teachers facilitate student learning. The task of providing instructional assistance is daunting, considering the resources provided to those at PCC who oversee DE. Roberts explains this in detail, saying:

> The problem is… as dual enrollment continues to grow at PCC--and it grows every year, fewer resources are dedicated towards dual enrollment. So the office went from…three to two and now I'm literally the only person in dual enrollment. So it's just like-- it's a bit frustrating because I can see the things that probably should get done. And there's just time constraints and money constraints. (Interview, January 9, 2019).

Thus, the outreach to DE instructors at this time is primarily up to Roberts, who does not feel like he alone can get everything done, which means he cannot meet the diverse needs of the instructors. When I asked him what he would do if he had an unlimited budget, his response was:

> I would want it to go specifically to someone that could then go out to the high schools and be more of a presence rather than someone who's at the other end of a computer or phone. We just don't have that presence in high schools…So I would like to have someone that could go out there regularly throughout the semester…There should be meetings set up where it's [a] PCC representative, a representative from the high school, and the instructor. So they know, straight up, this is what's expected of you. I think those things would be ideal but until we have more time and more personnel I don't see it happening (Interview, January 9, 2019).

What this hypothetical situation shows is that Roberts understands that there is a need for additional support for DE instructors, including helping to facilitate student learning, but he is highly limited by time and resources.

District leaders. Although Taylor does not directly address the lack of support provided by the sponsoring community college regarding facilitating student learning as directly as Roberts, he does explain that there are two primary groups of support for DE instructors. He said:

> A dual enrollment teacher would have two groups of support. They would have their PCC family and colleagues over there that they could always reach out to for advice. But honestly, they probably reach out to our current teachers as much if not more for advice when it comes to things (Interview, January 8, 2019).

The two groups of support that Taylor addresses are the educators at the sponsoring community college and district colleagues. He acknowledges that the DE instructors likely reach out to teachers in the school district for advice without providing specific reasons as to why this is the case. Roberts' information may shed light on this: DE instructors may reach out to their colleagues at the high school because there is such limited support from the sponsoring community college. In addition to Taylor's perspective regarding the oversight provided by PCC, Anderson and Smith both provide clarity regarding how they perceive the oversight provided to them.

Dual enrollment English instructors. Part of helping to facilitate student learning is making sure that students are meeting the learning objectives established by the sponsoring community college. I asked both DE English instructors if additional oversight for learning objectives would help them when teaching. Smith explained what he thinks about additional oversight from PCC in this interview excerpt:

> Smith: I don't see conflict and certainly don't see oversight as something I would want more of.
>
> Interviewer: That's not the answer.
>
> Smith: Okay. If you're teaching freshmen composition, I think people have a right to assume that something's happened in that classroom that relates to freshman composition.
>
> Interviewer: Sure. They can't just go and read books the whole time in a freshman comp class.
>
> Smith: Yeah, that's right. That's right. I think that's fair.
>
> Interviewer: Okay.
>
> Smith: But that's done, rather than through learning objectives, I think through prescribed assignments.
>
> Interviewer: Oh, which is what is already happening on some level.
>
> Smith: Yeah. Well, they tell us. Yeah. I mean, [crosstalk] want a research paper…They want this, they want that. So I followed those to make sure we do the assignments that they want us to do (Interview, February 8, 2019).

Effectively, Smith does not see value in increased oversight regarding learning objectives, either from the district or the sponsoring community college. Smith believes that prescribed assignments help to promote learning objectives, though he does not address the potential for teachers to simply ignore prescribed assignments.

Anderson, however, has a desire for increased oversight regarding learning

objectives, as demonstrated in the following interview excerpt:

> Interviewer: Do you think that there should be additional oversight for the alignment between expectations with PCC and Aspen School District? Or do you feel like the relationship right now in terms of how learning objectives are outlined is a strong enough relationship?
>
> Anderson: So right now, it's not a strong relationship, and I do think it would be, it should be aligned, I mean, not just for dual enrollment English, but for all of the dual enrollment classes, because none of the dual enrollment teachers - the history teacher, the computer programming teacher, all the people that are teaching dual enrollment classes - as far as I know, they don't get a lot of oversight from PCC. In fact, it seems to me that the people at PCC that are in charge of this are really overworked and they can just barely manage to hang on let alone do any oversight. That being said, Jacob Roberts did come and observe my class the other day. He actually did, although I asked him what he was looking for and he didn't tell me. I asked him if he had a checklist and he said, "Yes," and he didn't show me the checklist…he told me that this was really a dry run for next year, so I totally get—I think he's just too overwhelmed.
>
> Interviewer: Do you think that oversight should be coming from the community college or do you think it should be coming from the district?
>
> Anderson: I actually think it should be coming from the community college because the kids are getting college credits for it and there are colleges that are not taking it as an English credit, they're taking it as an elective credit because they're not comfortable with what's being required. So I think if they really want it to be English 111, then PCC should take over (Interview, February 7, 2019).

Anderson expresses a desire for additional oversight from PCC for all DE instructors to ensure that the experiences students are receiving are equivalent to the expectations of the sponsoring community college. She does explain that the lack of oversight is due to the lack of resources devoted to helping DE at PCC and as a result many individuals are simply overworked there. Roberts, however, was able to go to Anderson's class to do a classroom observation and this is consistent with what he explained earlier about wanting to be a stronger presence in DE classrooms. What is unclear, however, is the purpose of the observations or how it may impact instruction and student learning.

Summary of Dual Enrollment English and the Sponsoring Community College: Alignment and Enactment. Overall, the course learning objectives and curriculum used by the DE English instructors were aligned with the expectations of the sponsoring community college, although there was a notable lack of alignment with regard to 12th grade English state standards. Furthermore, the oversight provided by the sponsoring community college was predominantly focused on meeting state guidelines for DE and was not focused on helping to facilitate student learning.

Writing Instruction in Dual Enrollment English Classrooms and Professional Development that Supports It

Context

DE English at the high school level includes English 111: College Composition I and English 112: College Composition II. Much of the research for this study was focused on the first semester of work, English 111, though individuals frequently referenced both course expectations. The general description of English 111 is provided on each instructor's syllabus and includes the following:

> ENG 111 will prepare students for expected college writing and for writing in the workplace through developing an understanding of the writing process and the fundamentals of academic writing. It involves frequent practice and guidance to write, reread, rewrite, edit, and proofread, with the goal of independence and success as a college writer. English 111 requires students to develop as speakers and listeners; to inquire systematically and intuitively; to use the library, the Internet, and other resources; to read critically; to make notes effectively; to determine appropriate approaches for a variety of contexts, audiences, and purposes; to work constructively in a peer group; and to compose pieces which are worthwhile in content, focused, and organized, well documented, and interesting to read.

This general description delineates the focus of the course: writing. It is also specific about the practice and guidance students will receive as they write and refine their writing to be at the college level. Part of this study was to better understand the writing instruction occurring

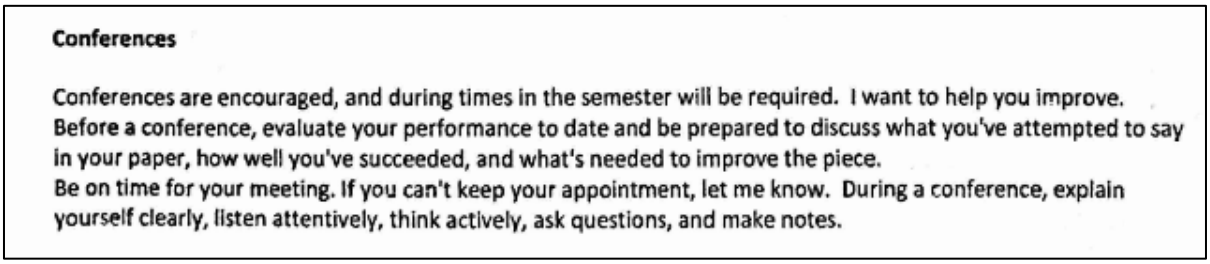
in DE English classrooms and what additional support and professional development might help these instructors improve their writing pedagogy. My interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis of the writing instruction in DE English classrooms revealed two findings:

4. Writing instruction includes class-specific assignments, mini-lessons, conferencing, and holistic assessments.
5. Instructors have a desire for professional development that supports collaboration.

I will elaborate on these findings in the following subsections.

Finding 4: Writing Instruction Includes Class-Specific Assignments, Mini-Lessons, Conferencing, and Holistic Assessments

As part of this study, I observed twice each DE English teacher teaching writing, analyzed documents, and interviewed them on their writing practices to better understand the writing instruction students are receiving. The syllabus used by DE English teachers addresses the learning objectives for the course, but does little to describe expectations for effective writing instruction. It does, however, describe expectations for student conferences, as per the examples below.


Conferences

Conferences are encouraged, and during times in the semester will be required. I want to help you improve. Before a conference, evaluate your performance to date and be prepared to discuss what you've attempted to say in your paper, how well you've succeeded, and what's needed to improve the piece.
Be on time for your meeting. If you can't keep your appointment, let me know. During a conference, explain yourself clearly, listen attentively, think actively, ask questions, and make notes.

Figure 4.8 Excerpt about student-teacher conferences in Smith's syllabus.

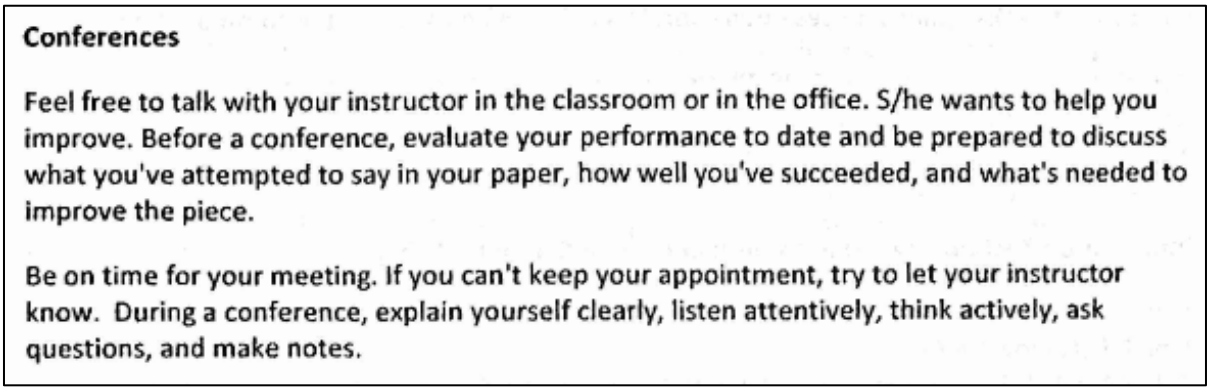


Figure 4.9 Excerpt about student-teacher conferences in Anderson's syllabus.

These excerpts are similar and delineate what a student-teacher conference should include: a discussion about writing, including addressing a student's strengths and weaknesses. While student-teacher conferences are part of what makes for effective writing instruction, the syllabus does not address skill development, and instead merely provides assignments. Specifically, it does not include details about writing assignment expectations or lessons.

To better understand the writing instruction occurring in DE English courses, I analyzed the classroom observations and assignment descriptions and created the following table to describe what was occurring in these classrooms when I was observing.

Table 4.3
Writing instruction during classroom observations

Writing Instruction During Classroom Observations

	12.4. PS Observation 1		1.24 PS Observation 2		1.3 KA Observation 1		1.24 KA Observation 2	
Lesson Topic	Research Project: Students used instructor provided resources and their own research to write about one of three instructor provided topics.		This I Believe Essay: Students produced their own This I Believe essay modeled after the NPR program.		111 Final Prep: Students looked at examples of 111 finals and evaluated them using the sponsoring community college rubric.		Summary-Response Activity: Students practiced summarizing	
Alignment with Sponsoring Community College Syllabus	Aligned		This essay is partially aligned as an assignment in 111 and misaligned as a 111 assessment.		Aligned		Aligned (regarding skills, though it is not aligned with formal essay expectations) Quote: "So the summary part is part of what PCC wants you to be doing in 112"	
Direct Instruction	X	Uses a baseball analogy (with props) to show that when individuals write they should not try to think about every movement but instead rely on reflexes.	X	PowerPoint presentation about This I Believe assignment. *Example content:* Find the most significant details, examples, and honesty Find where your writing is the strongest Find the fluff: How much is okay?	X	Discussed as a class the rubric and each student example.	X	Discussed summary and watched and discussed Youtube videos on summary.
Models		Not provided.	X	This I Believe student examples (audio and hard copy)	X	Provided multiple student examples	X	Not provided.
Conferencing	X	Works one-on-one with students who self-select to get help from him.	X	Works one-on-one with students who self-select to get help from him.	X	Students work in pairs to evaluate the models and the instructor	X	Students worked in groups to practice summarizing and the

						conferences with some groups.		instructor talked with each group.
Independent Writing	X	Provides student with significant time to write in class.	X	Provides student with significant time to write in class.		Not provided.		Not provided.
Assessing	X	Students are told they can resubmit redrafted work for a higher grade.	X	Everyone passed the 111 final, which was a draft of the This I Believe essay. Students are redrafting this final for a numerical grade.	X	Discussed ramifications of not passing the 111 final. Students practiced with the rubric they were to be evaluated by. Reiterates her use of holistic grading for essays—returns student research papers with a grade and checklist. Reminds students they can turn in redrafts of assignments for a higher grade.	X	Instructor explained that students were grade for this activity.

The teachers in this study incorporated a variety of writing instruction strategies. Each of the lessons referenced a writing assignment that was designed specifically with that class in mind. Additionally, each class also included direct instruction with some sort of mini-lesson focused on a writing principle as determined by the instructor, as well as some type of conferencing between the teacher and students (small group or one-on-one). In addition to this writing instruction, there was a universal approach to holistic grading.

Holistic grading. PCC provides instructors with an analytic rubric to assess student writing. Both DE English instructors in this study explicitly tell students in their English 111 syllabi that the writing in this class will be assessed using this rubric, as evidenced by the syllabi excerpts included below:

Grading and Evaluation

Each assignment will be assessed a total number of possible points. The percentage grade will be determined by dividing the number of points earned through the semester by the total number of possible points.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:
A=Excellent [100% to 90%]
B=Good [89% to 80%]
C=Average [79% to 70%]
D=Below Average [69% to 60%[
F=Failing [Below 60%]

Essays will be assessed using the PCC Writing Rubric.

Figure 4.10 Excerpt about grading and evaluation in Anderson's syllabus.

Essays will be assessed using the PCC **Writing Rubric.**

A note on grading: college courses have different expectations and legal protections concerning parent involvement in accessing grades. Your instructor will provide guidance as needed concerning parental involvement in college-level coursework.

In general, an A is for work of extraordinary quality and includes assessment of talent, dedication, hard work, critical thinking, and willingness to take risks. It will always involve hard work, but earning an A also means the student has developed extraordinary writing skills, creativity, critical thinking, and ability to collaborate.

In general, a B is for work of above average quality and includes assessment of talent, dedication, hard work, critical thinking, and willingness to take risks. It will always involve hard work, but earning a B also means the student has developed above average writing skills, creativity, critical thinking, and ability to collaborate.

In general, a C is for work of average quality and includes assessment of talent, dedication, hard work, critical thinking, and willingness to take risks. It shows a minimum of a satisfactory commitment to work, but earning a C also means the student has developed satisfactory writing skills, creativity, critical thinking, and ability to collaborate to succeed in college.

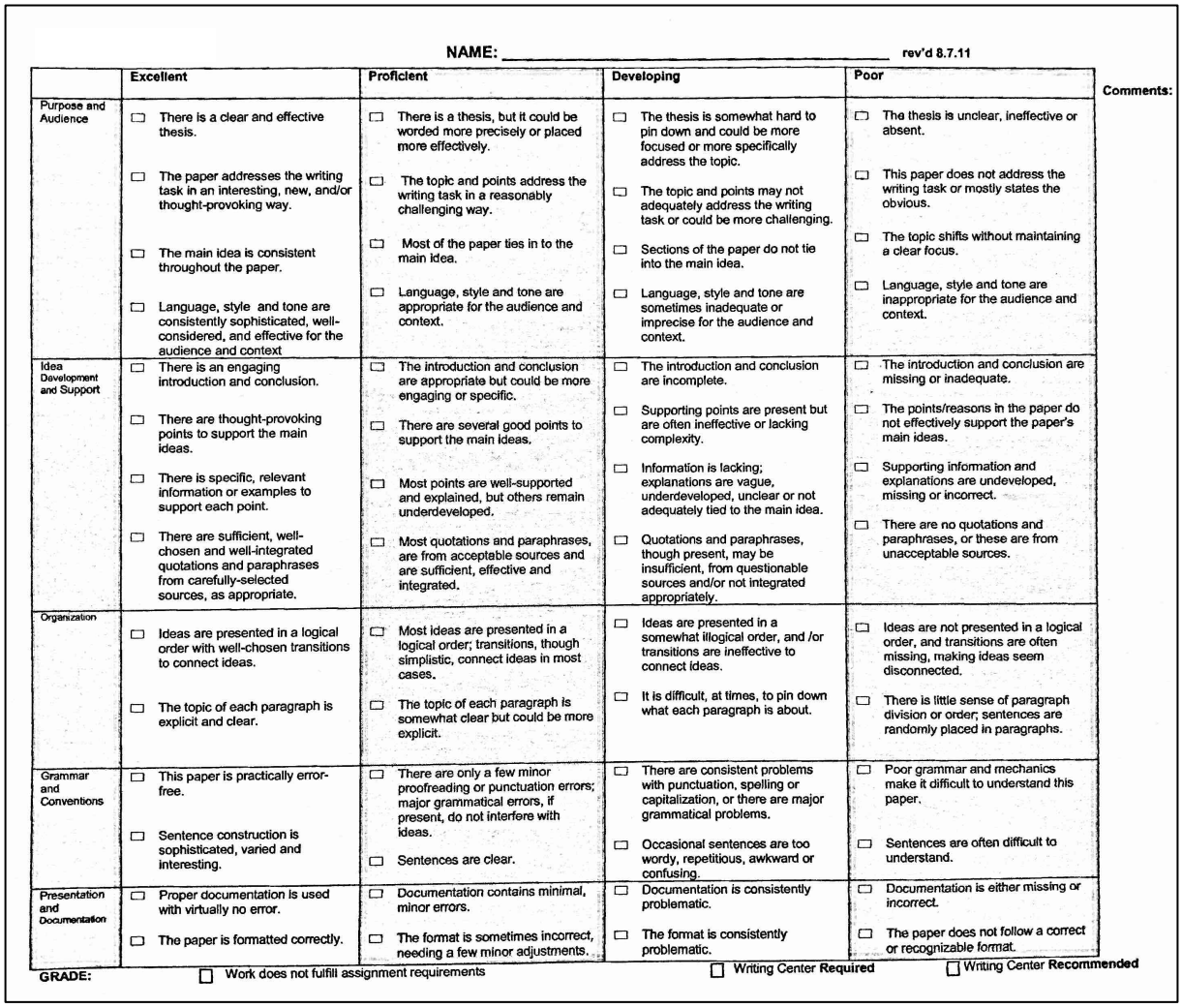
In general, a D is for work of below average quality and includes assessment of talent, dedication, hard work, critical thinking, collaboration, and willingness to take risks. I rarely award this grade unless a student refuses to do assigned work.

In general, an F is for work which indicates the student is not at this time prepared to succeed at writing at a college level. This grade generally means that a student has either refused to do assigned work, or will require significant remediation in writing skills, ability to think critically or creatively, or to collaborate.

Students who fall behind in readings, writing assignments, attendance, or who are otherwise in jeopardy of a failing grade will be assigned to Mustang Morning Study Halls or coaching.

Figure 4.11 Excerpt about grading and evaluation in Smith's syllabus.

Although these excerpts contain different information regarding grading, both are consistent in explaining that they will use the PCC rubric to assess student writing. The rubric is an analytic rubric which describes what is required to achieve an excellent, proficient, developing, or poor assessment score regarding the following elements of writing: purpose and audience, idea development and support, organization, grammar and conventions, and presentation and documentation. The rubric is provided below:



NAME: _____ rev'd 8.7.11

	Excellent	Proficient	Developing	Poor	Comments:
Purpose and Audience	☐ There is a clear and effective thesis. ☐ The paper addresses the writing task in an interesting, new, and/or thought-provoking way. ☐ The main idea is consistent throughout the paper. ☐ Language, style and tone are consistently sophisticated, well-considered, and effective for the audience and context	☐ There is a thesis, but it could be worded more precisely or placed more effectively. ☐ The topic and points address the writing task in a reasonably challenging way. ☐ Most of the paper ties in to the main idea. ☐ Language, style and tone are appropriate for the audience and context.	☐ The thesis is somewhat hard to pin down and could be more focused or more specifically address the topic. ☐ The topic and points may not adequately address the writing task or could be more challenging. ☐ Sections of the paper do not tie into the main idea. ☐ Language, style and tone are sometimes inadequate or imprecise for the audience and context.	☐ The thesis is unclear, ineffective or absent. ☐ This paper does not address the writing task or mostly states the obvious. ☐ The topic shifts without maintaining a clear focus. ☐ Language, style and tone are inappropriate for the audience and context.	
Idea Development and Support	☐ There is an engaging introduction and conclusion. ☐ There are thought-provoking points to support the main ideas. ☐ There is specific, relevant information or examples to support each point. ☐ There are sufficient, well-chosen and well-integrated quotations and paraphrases from carefully-selected sources, as appropriate.	☐ The introduction and conclusion are appropriate but could be more engaging or specific. ☐ There are several good points to support the main ideas. ☐ Most points are well-supported and explained, but others remain underdeveloped. ☐ Most quotations and paraphrases, are from acceptable sources and are sufficient, effective and integrated.	☐ The introduction and conclusion are incomplete. ☐ Supporting points are present but are often ineffective or lacking complexity. ☐ Information is lacking; explanations are vague, underdeveloped, unclear or not adequately tied to the main idea. ☐ Quotations and paraphrases, though present, may be insufficient, from questionable sources and/or not integrated appropriately.	☐ The introduction and conclusion are missing or inadequate. ☐ The points/reasons in the paper do not effectively support the paper's main ideas. ☐ Supporting information and explanations are undeveloped, missing or incorrect. ☐ There are no quotations and paraphrases, or these are from unacceptable sources.	
Organization	☐ Ideas are presented in a logical order with well-chosen transitions to connect ideas. ☐ The topic of each paragraph is explicit and clear.	☐ Most ideas are presented in a logical order; transitions, though simplistic, connect ideas in most cases. ☐ The topic of each paragraph is somewhat clear but could be more explicit.	☐ Ideas are presented in a somewhat illogical order, and /or transitions are ineffective to connect ideas. ☐ It is difficult, at times, to pin down what each paragraph is about.	☐ Ideas are not presented in a logical order, and transitions are often missing, making ideas seem disconnected. ☐ There is little sense of paragraph division or order; sentences are randomly placed in paragraphs.	
Grammar and Conventions	☐ This paper is practically error-free. ☐ Sentence construction is sophisticated, varied and interesting.	☐ There are only a few minor proofreading or punctuation errors; major grammatical errors, if present, do not interfere with ideas. ☐ Sentences are clear.	☐ There are consistent problems with punctuation, spelling or capitalization, or there are major grammatical problems. ☐ Occasional sentences are too wordy, repetitious, awkward or confusing.	☐ Poor grammar and mechanics make it difficult to understand this paper. ☐ Sentences are often difficult to understand.	
Presentation and Documentation	☐ Proper documentation is used with virtually no error. ☐ The paper is formatted correctly.	☐ Documentation contains minimal, minor errors. ☐ The format is sometimes incorrect, needing a few minor adjustments.	☐ Documentation is consistently problematic. ☐ The format is consistently problematic.	☐ Documentation is either missing or incorrect. ☐ The paper does not follow a correct or recognizable format.	

GRADE: ☐ Work does not fulfill assignment requirements ☐ Writing Center **Required** ☐ Writing Center **Recommended**

Figure 4.12 Poplar Community College's common rubric for English 111 and 112.

However, the use of this rubric is highly variable. Smith explains his desire to use holistic grading explaining that

> I think part of it—there's a culture of—this idea of data and writing does not go well. You can have data for other things. But not everything that's data-driven is good at times but if you try to produce data from writing, it's going to be a failure. You simply can't give numerical values that are meaningful other than grading a whole thing. You know? (Interview, February 8, 2019).

Here, Smith shows a desire to go against a trend in education to use data-informed instruction and instead chooses to look at the product as a whole. In addition to this, he also explains his use of the rubric by saying:

> I don't know anybody in college who grades on a rubric, who grades on a point rubric. Like you get two points for your title and three points for this or four for that… I do give them the PCC rubric. I have them first check off were they think they are. And then I give it back to them with where I think they are (Interview, November 19, 2018).

Here Smith uses the PCC rubric as a guide, but does not use it with complete fidelity. Anderson follows a similar pattern. She explained that she shows her students the rubric and said "I tell my kids that like these are the things we're looking for but… that doesn't apply to every assignment… this is more of a guideline" (Interview, November 19, 2018).

Anderson chooses to use the rubric as a guideline for her students, in part, because not all of the rubric elements apply to every assignment. Smith speaks to this issue, explaining "some of it we have to say well this doesn't really apply" (Interview, November 19, 2018). The fact that the rubric is the same for all types of writing, research, narrative, etc., makes it so that instructors modify their use of the tool to provide students with helpful feedback. Although the rubric provides instructors and students with an idea of what makes for excellent, proficient, developing, or poor writing, it is not specifically tailored to the unique assignments students are working with.

Beyond using the rubric, both instructors describe their grading practices as holistic. Smith describes his grading process by saying, "I do holistic grading, and I give pretty extensive direction on what that is… I give them example essays to look at. This is what an A would look like if you did it this way and I give them other options too" (Interview, November 19, 2018). This same grading practice is mirrored by Anderson who

enthusiastically said, “I'm all about the holistic grading” (Interview, November 9, 2018). Beyond describing her practice of holistic grading, she also helps her students practice in order to better understand what this grading process entails. Below is an excerpt of a classroom observation where Anderson is having her students practice assessing essay models using the PCC rubric:

> Anderson: Did you find that the average of your check marks ended up with the grade you originally thought of?... So in holistic grading we are not supposed to, so this is supposed to give us an idea, but somethings will override. So if we are given an essay in class I will forgive more about the indentation and stuff because we’re doing it in class. But like on your research paper I did not expect any spelling mistakes, and so for that it would hurt you harder.
>
> Observer: Anderson continues to circle the classroom and ask students if their checkmarks are close to the grade.
>
> Anderson: Okay it seems like most people are finished and are sort of in the neighborhood of a 1+ or 2-.
>
> Observer: Students dispute the grades a little.
>
> Anderson: When we grade our papers, and I do know some instructors who check in the boxes, but still, there is like holistic, which means you look at the paper as a whole, considering that this was done in class in two hours I can kind of forgive some things. I can forgive the margins right here…But then there are other things that I cannot forgive like having a thesis, because clearly you need some kind of a thesis (Observation, January 3, 2019).

This observation shows the extent to which Anderson values holistic grading, so much so that she trains her students to understand how they will be evaluated. The approach to assessment that both teachers are taking is not true holistic grading, because there is the informal use of the PCC rubric. However, it appears that the rubric is of limited value when actually assigning students grades. Beyond having a better understanding of the writing instruction happening in DE English classrooms, it is also important to know how this instruction is supported through professional development.

Finding 5: Instructors Have a Desire for Professional Development That Supports Collaboration

Professional development opportunities focused on writing pedagogy, provided to DE English instructors, varies across levels and schools. There are limited opportunities at the sponsoring community college level, diverse opportunities at the district level, and few writing-focused opportunities at the high school level. When discussing professional development opportunities, educators often expressed the desire for increased collaboration with peers who teach similar subjects. This section will address this call for increased collaboration by looking at the professional development opportunities currently provided at the high schools, district, and sponsoring community college.

Desire for increased collaboration. Both DE English instructors in this study emphasized their desire to have greater collaboration with their colleagues who teach similar subjects.

Smith explained that he would like more collaboration with his colleagues at PCC, saying "I would like probably to feel more connected. So I think that would be a good thing" (Interview, November 19, 2018). He expressed the desire to work with other DE teachers at the district-level later in the interview when he was asked what he would do if he were in charge of PD. He said "I would love to sit down with other DE English teachers or DE and AP…we get no opportunity for that" (Interview, November 19, 2018). Minutes later he again expressed this desire to work with individuals teaching DE saying "I think it would be very useful to, instead of what the district's doing with that, to break people into smaller working groups, depending on what it is that they're wanting to work on so more 6- to 8-person groups" (Interview, November 19, 2018). In one interview, Smith expressed the

desire to work with others who teach similar subjects three different times. His colleague, Anderson, also expressed a desire for increased collaboration.

Anderson has taught DE in the district for six years, and mentioned how there used to be greater communication in years passed compared to this year. She said:

> I feel like I really have had a really good relationship with my colleagues at PCC. Wonderful. But now I'm really wondering what's going on because I know they must have had a fall meeting and I wasn't invited. And Jen's not answering my emails about like, hey I need a copy of the new book because I still have [the] MLA 7 book and I need [the] MLA 8 book… And she's just not answering and I hate to go through this (Interview, November 9, 2018).

Anderson describes the current lack of communication, and how that impacts her directly, including that fact that she does not have a current textbook for the class. She does, however, see potential for increased communication, as illustrated in the following interview excerpt:

> Interviewer: Can you envision a way where there is a system where there is that kind of support that you really value from PCC where all the dual enrollment teachers could attend or something like that?
>
> Anderson: I do and like the district could do it. The district could, we could, at Making Connections I suppose we could have, or the PD that goes on over the summer… so it could be just Aspen School District but actually it could be it could be Aspen and Evergreen and surrounding counties like Redwood and Sycamore and Mulberry or whatever. I'm pretty sure they all have DE so you know maybe there's some way to do that (Interview, November 9, 2018).

In this excerpt, Anderson recognizes that there are potential ways for teachers to have increased collaboration and it can happen at the district-level. Regardless of how collaboration is increased, the desire for additional professional support is consistent with the two DE English teachers. To better understand the support currently provided to teachers it is important to look at the PD offered at the high schools.

Professional development at the high schools. Jones described the new structure for professional development in the school district, which started in the fall of 2018. She explains:

> What teachers want the most is to get together and have time, uninterrupted time, to talk to other teachers. With that request, or because of that request and others, this year Aspen School District built in professional learning days. But they're not district-planned. There's four school-based professional learning days in the school year calendar that have not existed before, but that's for schools to make the decision. A lot of principals have established little committees to say, "What should be the focus?" So I think that secondary—all teachers can have a voice in, who do you want to come to our school? Or, what do you want to talk about? Or, what do you want to focus on for those four days that are new to the calendar? (Interview, December 6, 2018).

The desire for uninterrupted time to work and talk with other teachers indicates a desire for increased collaboration with other instructors, instead of a more traditional professional development workshop at the high school. Davis, the English department chair at Magnolia High School also discussed the district's new professional learning days. She describes what is happening at her school in the following interview excerpt:

> Interviewer: Can you explain the professional development opportunities provided by the high school? So what do you guys provide at the high school level to help dual enrollment writing instructors or even any teacher trying to work on writing instruction?
>
> Davis: So I was looking at our website that's given by the district. But of course, that would be present in the PD options at our high school because our high school, while we have two PD days a year that are driven by the high school itself, most of it is informed by the district.
>
> Interviewer: So would you say that there's any PD at the high school level that's autonomous from the district?
>
> Davis: There are opportunities for it. I think that in those days, those professional division days, the school does push out its individual goals. I have yet to see a professional learning goal at the school level that is instructionally based.
>
> Interviewer: Okay.
>
> Davis: I believe those goals are usually culturally based in some way. So our PD is

> something like that. I mean, I can give the two examples from this year and last year that comprise 100% of the PD that I participated in at the high school. Last year, it was trauma-informed teaching. And so anytime we had PD, I was in a room learning about how to meet students who had gone through some trauma. This year it is culturally responsive teaching. Our PD day coming up on January 2nd will be a whole day of meeting in our culturally responsive teams and talking about student needs and avoiding implicit biases. Not to say these things don't have instructional ramifications. They do. But it would be a stretch to say they were linked to writing instruction.
>
> Interviewer: I'm truly trying to tease out if there's any professional development at the high school that's associated with writing instruction that's different in the district. It kind of sounds like there's not a lot at the site-based, but maybe there is more at the district.
>
> Davis: Yeah. I mean, I can say there is none that come to mind from the site (Interview, December 21, 2018).

While professional development in ASD is now more school-specific, it is not focused on instructional practices. Furthermore, DE English instructors are in a unique position. If they wanted uninterrupted time to talk with other teachers of the same subject site-based PD may not meet this need as many of the high schools only have one or two DE English instructors. However, the department chairs at both high schools are attempting to help provide some support to teachers regarding writing instruction. Anderson explained the attempts being made by her department chair:

> Honestly nobody's looking over our shoulders, it's anybody's curriculum. So God knows what anybody is doing really. Now it may get better…He [the department chair] asked us all "could you give me a copy of your curriculum, whatever it is." I think he thinks he's going to bring that together in some way but that's you know. Basically that's a labor of Hercules (Interview, November 9, 2018).

Anderson recognizes the challenge of helping to improve the writing curriculum at her high school by comparing that job to one Hercules' legendarily difficult labors. Davis expressed similar thoughts about the challenge of helping her English department with writing instruction.

> I can't think of a time at Magnolia where my high school took it upon itself to lead a

> PD around writing. That would fall to the department chair, to me. But department chairs really aren't given any sort of jurisdiction over professional learning… it is hard because you just have to come up with your own initiatives and implement them independently, autonomously, without really even telling the leadership that you are doing these things because there's a reason that they can get involved and kill the thing and they would and they might actually say no and it's better to just leave them out of it. But then, of course there's a question of time. If you're doing your own department initiative, where do you find the time for that? Because we are being asked as department chairs to do things with that time…. So we find it's best to move in these small teams, kind of like product teams (Interview, December 21, 2018).

Here Davis shows the tension that exists when she provides her own type of professional development on writing to instructors because of possible ramifications from the school leadership and the overall lack of time. Regardless, both she and the other department chair are attempting to look at the curriculum of the English teachers in their department to see what can be done at the site to help improve this. In addition to these site-based professional development programs, there are additional opportunities provided by the district.

Professional development in Aspen School District. The writing professional development opportunities provided to DE English instructors are the same as those provided to all teachers. Taylor explains this by saying that the professional development provided to DE English instructors is:

> No different than any teacher. I mean so if you talk to Megan I think she'd say one of the most important things is the writer's workshop that they do. And that's everybody from a dual enrollment, to an AP, to an English 11 teacher. And everybody in between. So they would go through that. And then the professional developments that are both offered district-wide and school-based are open to all of our teachers. So there would never ever be an instant where we run any kind of professional development where we'd say, "Oh, no sorry, dual enrollment teachers you can't come to this." And vice versely [sic]. There's no training that I've ever been a part of, as far as professional learning and professional development that we've done for dual enrollment teachers solely. The practices they use with dual enrollment are the same great practices we use in our classroom in and out every day. So we haven't separated the two (Interview, January 8, 2019).

Thus, all teachers in the school district are provided with the same opportunities to improve writing instruction and the director of secondary education does not support a system where DE English instructors are being provided with tailored professional development. While Taylor provides the big picture of how support is provided to teachers, Jones is able to give specific details about writing-focused professional development opportunities. She explained the process for identifying what PD opportunities to offer saying, "lead coaches, office of community engagement, everybody would sort of get together and say, 'based on what conversations you're having at schools, what are teachers and principals wanting around curriculum instruction and assessment?' And we'll often send a survey, just to get a pulse on what do we want" (Interview, December 6, 2018). Once the leaders at the district have identified what PD they are going to offer, then "opportunities for professional learning are put out there in a big opportunities calendar and teachers sign up for them as they want to" (Interview, December 6, 2018). This process of self-selecting into district-level professional development seemed typical. More specifically, Jones explained that:

> We just started last year [a program] called the Aspen District Writing Collaborative that teachers self-select into. They do get a stipend for participating for a full year. It's a small stipend. And it has three phases to it, Summer Institute that lasts for a week, where different writing teachers in the division… put on a summer institute for teachers to learn about writing, teachers as writers, and then teachers as teachers of writing in that summer institute. The second phase of that is instructional rounds. So the members of that cohort just recently, last month traveled to each other's schools to watch them teach writing and before the observation, we said, "What specifically would you like feedback on or what do you want us to look for?" So the writing teacher provided sort of a scaffold for the observation and teachers, I mean, I think teachers even found—the feedback I got from the collab or the instructional rounds was even more powerful than the summer institute. They really liked that. And I think, in the future, we might…think about how to make that more robust, the instructional rounds. And then the last phase is, for lack of a better term, a contribution to the writing community or the teachers of writing. And that is going to be determined by the participants themselves (Interview, December 6, 2018).

This writing collaborative fits many of the tenets of effective adult learning theory, including

active learning, reflection and inquiry, interests and experience, and experiences as resources (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, 2017). Jones also described how she helped to implement a Writer's Workshop summer program, which about 70 teachers attended. In addition to the PD opportunities at the school district, the sponsoring community college has, at times, provided opportunities for teachers to collaborate.

Professional development provided by Poplar Community College. The PD opportunities provided to DE English teachers at the sponsoring community college are inconsistent and this is an area of concern for the leadership. Roberts addressed this concern in the following interview excerpt:

> Interviewer: Are there any expectations from your end that they [Poplar Community College] provide any professional development support to these teachers?
>
> Roberts: I mean that is the goal. I think that's the overall goal for all adjunct instructors, which the dual enrollment instructors are included in that. I think that's probably a weak spot for us and I think that's true for all the schools.
>
> Interviewer: Sure.
>
> Roberts: And I know that that is now priority. I was in a recent dual enrollment coordinators meeting and they were prioritizing making sure that there's enough professional development opportunities, and that the dual enrollment instructors were aware of these opportunities and things like that. Unfortunately, as it stands now, they don't really even get to the main campus very often.
>
> Interviewer: Sure.
>
> Roberts: So yeah, these are things that we're definitely working on…So I think that's definitely a priority is that we're trying to make sure that dual enrollment instructors are more included in anything, any information that's disseminated through the instructors on campus, that it's also getting to the dual enrollment instructors.
>
> Interviewer: Sure. And as that becomes one of your goals for the future, do you have an idea of what that could look like or what that might look like?
>
> Roberts: I mean I really don't. I would like, when dual enrollment instructors or any adjuncts are hired, that there would be some sort of substantial onboarding process that I don't think exists now. It seems more or less that they're sort of on their own.

> And the onus is on them to reach out to the academic deans and try to get help with things. I would like to see that switched so that we're proactive about it and we're helping train everyone properly before they start the semester. If we wait until the fall semester starts, it's too late. So I think it's something that should happen over the summer, maybe late summer. But I think that should include all adjunct instructors, not just dual enrollment instructors. I would like there to be some specific breakout sessions for dual enrollment instructors because it's certainly different than other adjuncts. A lot of the policies they're following are the high school policies so they need to know how that relationship is defined between the college and the high school, and what the expectations are from each (Interview, January 9, 2019).

In this interview Roberts recognizes not only the need for additional professional development, but acknowledges that DE instructors have different needs from other instructors and providing specific opportunities for this unique subset of teachers would be valuable.

Both teacher participants in this study have interacted with professional development opportunities provided by the English department at Poplar Community College, although it is notable that there have not been any offered during the 2018-2019 school year. Regardless, the opportunities in the past have been beneficial. When I asked Anderson how she came to better understand the course expectations, she explained that:

> I think it was going. There really are two main meetings at PCC that I was going to every year and they're on Saturdays. Although they do have good food. There's one in the fall and there is often one in the spring and so that's when we were really talking about curriculum and you know doing trade and grade and that kind of thing and I think that's where I really understood the curriculum" (Interview, November 9, 2018).

Anderson found that it was helpful to be with peers at PCC and engage in grading to better understand the curriculum. Smith shares this view, and explained that the community college has "done some things that are helpful. They have had a workshop last year I went to and another workshop over the summer that I went to" (Interview, November 19, 2018). Thus, both participants in this study found collaboration with members from the sponsoring

community college valuable and desired more.

Summary Writing Instruction in Dual Enrollment English Classrooms and Professional Development That Supports It. This section addressed the writing instruction occurring in DE English classrooms, which includes direct instruction with mini-lessons, conferencing, and holistic grading. Beyond describing the writing instruction occurring in classrooms, I also presented what professional development opportunities are provided to teachers by the sponsoring community college, district, and high schools and acknowledged that there is a desire for greater collaboration between teachers who teach college-level English.

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on two primary sections: *Dual Enrollment English and the Sponsoring Community College: Alignment and Enactment* and *Writing Instruction in Dual Enrollment English Classrooms and Professional Development That Supports It*. It detailed the experiences of two DE English instructors and provided further information from educators affiliated with the sponsoring community college, school district, and one English department chair. The next chapter will utilize the findings within this chapter to better address the macro problem of practice involving writing instruction with DE English programs and the micro problem of practice regarding how to help Aspen School District better support their DE English instructors.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS, DISCUSSION, AND LIMITATIONS

The purpose of this capstone is to better understand the landscape in which Dual Enrollment (DE) English teachers work, and the professional development (PD) and curriculum support provided to them from their high school, school district, and sponsoring community college. Specifically, the micro problem of practice is to better understand the experience of DE English teachers in Aspen School District (ASD) so that I might assist leaders from Poplar Community College (PCC), the district, and individual high schools to better understand the unique position DE English teachers find themselves in and how to help them. The previous chapter addressed the alignment and enactment of DE English within ASD as well as writing instruction in DE English classrooms and the professional development that supports it. In this chapter I will provide recommendations regarding DE English in ASD, which are informed by my literature review and research. This chapter will conclude with a discussion regarding how these recommendations relate to the larger problem of practice of writing instruction and DE English, address areas of future research, and review the limitations of this study

Recommendations

Students are ill prepared for the writing expectations required of them after high school (Dennihy, 2015; NCES, 2012; National Commission on Writing, 2003). Simultaneously, DE programs continue to grow (Taylor & Pretlow, 2015). DE English provides a unique opportunity for high schools and community colleges to create a more equitable education for students and to help students become stronger writers who are prepared for the writing expectations they will face in the future. ASD and PCC can help their students become stronger writers by making changes to how PD and curriculum support

is provided to DE English instructors. Unfortunately, a lack of adequate resources often limit what supports can be made available to DE educators (Karp, Bailey, Hughes, & Fermin, 2004), a reality that Roberts, the interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs at PCC, specifically addressed. Regardless, my extensive work with two DE English instructors in ASD, district leaders, the interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs, and my research in the field, has resulted in a variety of findings which have informed the recommendations put forth in this chapter, many of which can be achieved in spite of limited resources.

Recommendation 1: The School District and Sponsoring Community College Need to Provide DE English Teachers with Professional Development Opportunities That Promote Transformative Learning and Foster Authentic Collaboration

When considering how to help DE English educators with their instructional practices, it is helpful to look at what motivates them to learn. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2012) explain that motivation is a core adult learning principle, and that adults are motivated to learn through intrinsic value and personal payoff. O'Toole and Essex (2012) build off this notable work regarding the adult learner as a neglected species, and explain that adults are extrinsically motived by things such as their career, qualifications, and direct knowledge needed to do a job. DE English instructors work with two distinct groups: the high school and the sponsoring community college, and it is possible that their motivation to learn varies between these groups. Understanding what motivates adults to learn may allow for targeted PD that provides teachers with opportunities for growth that they view as valuable. PD, unfortunately, is often viewed as unhelpful, and this may be due to the fact that PD opportunities often fail to incorporate what we know about how adults learn, or adult

learning theory (ALT) (Cranton & King, 2003). However, there are ways to increase the effectiveness of PD *if* ALT is used as a guide prior to implementation. More specifically, leaders in the district and from the sponsoring community college may help teachers become more effective instructors by providing PD opportunities, grounded in ALT, that support transformative learning and foster authentic collaboration.

Transformative learning. Transformative learning is an aspect of ALT (Taylor, 2008), which "produces more far-reaching changes in the learners than does learning in general, and that these changes have a significant impact on the learner's subsequent experiences" (Clark, 1993, p. 47). Cranton and King (2003) ultimately argue that this transformative learning must be a goal of PD, explaining that "If we do not consciously think about and reflect on our practice, we become nothing more than automatons following a dubious set of rules or principles—rules or principles that are unlikely to be relevant in the ever-changing, complex context of teaching and learning" (p. 32). Thus, providing PD that incorporates aspects of transformative learning may help teachers change and develop in significant ways. Moreover, this type of change may motivate teachers, as it can tap into their intrinsic desire to improve their instruction. Specifically, PD that supports transformative learning must include individual agency and critical reflection on teaching.

Individual agency. Mezirow (1995) explains that "Transformative learning involves movement from alienation to agency" (p. 48). Thus, the idea of agency is central to transformative learning and it is critical for adults to be able to "explore and make connections outside the group experience" (Taylor, 2000, p. 12). Adult learners need to be provided the opportunity to take what they have learned in PD settings and engage with it independently.

Critical reflection on teaching. Critical reflection is an essential characteristic of transformative learning (Merriam, 2008). Critical reflection includes various types of reflection, however, premise reflection is a specific type of reflection that is focused on questioning assumptions, including why we teach instead of what we teach (Taylor, 2008), and it is this type of reflection that results in the "transformation of our meaning perspectives" (Cranton & King, 2003, p. 35). In order to help DE English instructors engage in transformative learning, they must critically reflect on their pre-conceived premises about instruction. This type of critical reflection can be done in a variety of ways, but a reoccurring suggestion is the use of reflective journals coupled with critical questioning (Brown, 2004; Taylor, 2008).

Application. ASD and PCC can support DE English instructors by providing PD that supports individual agency and reflective journals. Currently, the Aspen Writing Collaborative instructs volunteer participants on writing pedagogy and supports them as they apply it in their classrooms. This structure naturally provides for individual agency because teachers decide how they want to incorporate what they learned from the PD into their classroom and then they report back when the collaborative meets in the spring. The collaborative could also incorporate reflective journals, an activity that dovetails well with the writing-centered focus of the DE English curriculum. ASD could provide teachers with premise reflecting questions (e.g., why do I feel responsible to teach all types of writing? or does it really matter that students learn APA?) and have instructors grapple with their preconceived premises about instruction through journaling and regularly meet together face-to-face or in an online format to share and challenge each other's thinking. For DE English instructors who choose to not engage with the collaborative, ASD and PCC could still engage

them with reflective journals done in an online forum. Providing these opportunities to teachers does not require additional resources from ASD, and PCC would need to contribute relatively few resources as they can use their learning management system and have the interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs moderate regular discussions. Furthermore, these meetings start to address the need for more authentic collaboration.

Authentic Collaboration. Collaboration structured in work-related contexts is a key tenet of effective professional development (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner, 2017). Collaboration relates to ALT, as Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2012) describe collaboration as a characteristic of "an atmosphere of adultness" (p. 121) and although Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2012) do not explicitly connect collaboration to motivation, research suggests that collaboration may increase motivation (Lai, 2011). Thus, PD provided to DE English instructors that supports collaboration may increase their motivation to learn and improve instruction. Most participants in this study expressed a desire for increased collaboration between and among high school instructors teaching first-year composition as well as between and among the DE English instructors and their colleagues at the sponsoring community college. This desire for increased collaboration may be due to the relative isolation that DE English instructors currently navigate because there are few teachers at each high school teaching these courses.

Collaboration between and among high school instructors teaching first year composition. The school district and individual high schools can allow for greater collaboration between and among first-year composition (FYC) instructors. FYC instructors include AP, IB, Early College, and DE and these instructors are all positioned to provide students with first year composition credit, though the ways in which this credit is provided

varies (Hansen, 2010). Regardless, many of the instructional strategies and writing expectations are similar and teachers may improve their instruction through increased collaboration. For example, it is common for FYC courses to include advanced evidence-based writing and personal narratives. Thus, FYC educators can work together on similar topics by identifying ways to help students become more effective researchers and storytellers, even though the specific assignments may be course-related.

Application. This type of collaboration is feasible if FYC instructors are supported with time to collaborate within the context of the typical workday. Practically speaking, there are two groups of FYC instructors who can collaborate: instructors at each high school and all DE English teachers within the district. School-specific FYC instructors can collaborate through professional learning communities or during days slated for school-specific professional development. Due to the limited number of DE English instructors at each school, it may be impractical to have DE English instructors collaborate together at the school level. Instead, DE English teachers from all schools can exclusively collaborate during the district-wide professional development days. There would be very few resources required in order to implement this change, as the PD days are already provided.

Increased collaboration between and among first year composition instructors may increase opportunities to discuss instructional strategies, curriculum, and student needs. Moreover, it provides a space for teachers to engage in tenets of ALT, including engaging in topics of interest, reflecting on teaching practices, and inquiring about their future work (Trotter, 2006).

Collaboration between and among DE English instructors and instructors at the sponsoring community college. This study established that there have historically been

limited and unpredictable levels of collaboration between DE English instructors and their counterparts at PCC. Regardless, DE English teachers view the collaboration that has happened as effective. Ultimately, the relationship between the sponsoring community college and DE English instructors would be strengthened with reoccurring professional development opportunities that support collaboration.

Specifically, professional development opportunities that support collaboration between DE English instructors and the sponsoring community college can be more specific to course requirements, as compared to the collaboration that happens with FYC instructors at the high school, and should adhere to the principals of effective professional development as outlined by Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017):

> 1. Is content focused. 2. Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory. 3. Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts. 4. Uses models and modeling of effective practice. 5. Provides coaching and expert support. 6. Offers opportunities for feedback and refection. 7. Is of sustained duration. (p. 4)

Application. Practically speaking, regular professional development opportunities throughout the school year should be provided to DE English instructors and FYC instructors from the sponsoring community college. It is important to note that "research has not yet identified a clear threshold for the duration of effective PD models, it does indicate that meaningful professional learning that translates to changes in practice cannot be accomplished in short, one-off workshops" (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner, 2017, p. 15). However, what is currently happening on Saturdays can be considered one-off workshops, which beyond having questionable efficacy are also problematic because of teacher schedules. In order for this partnership to be strong, instructors must be provided reoccurring opportunities to meet during regular work hours. These collaborative-focused

meetings should be centered on the common curriculum—including rubrics—incorporate models, and provide opportunities for feedback and reflection.

Reoccurring collaborative-focused PD between FYC instructors at the sponsoring community college and DE instructors may improve student-writing outcomes as teachers discuss FYC-specific instructional strategies, curriculum, student needs, and provide teachers with a network of support to engage with throughout the year.

Recommendation 2: The School District and Sponsoring Community College Need to Provide Increased Clarity Regarding Curriculum Expectations to DE English Instructors

As discussed in the previous chapter, the curriculum expectations for DE English instructors are provided to these instructors in a variety of ways. For instance, the sponsoring community college provides curriculum expectations through the syllabus that includes required assignments and texts, whereas the school district curriculum expectations are outlined by the Virginia Department of Education standards and are reinforced through a variety of professional development opportunities. DE English teachers are expected to adhere to the expectations of both the sponsoring community college and state standards. In order for teachers to be able to meet these standards, there needs to be increased clarity from both entities regarding the curriculum expectations required of DE English instructors. This can be done through mandatory meetings prior to the semester where leaders from both the school district and sponsoring community college provide teachers with clear expectations for DE and allow for questions from DE English instructors. This outreach can and should align with ALT if participants are provided opportunities to reflect on their teaching practices and inquire about their future work (Trotter, 2006).

Role of the school district. The school district needs to provide greater clarity regarding the requirement of meeting state standards when teaching DE English courses.

Application. This should be done within the context of a meeting that should occur prior to teachers working with students. Leaders from the school district should supply DE English instructors with the state standards that align with his or her course content and examine how content overlaps and diverges from the expectations provided by the sponsoring community college. Specifically, when working with DE English instructors, school district leaders should point out the need to teach British literature along with other reading standards. This is important because of the overall lack of understanding of reading expectations found in the study. As teachers gain a clear understanding of how the curriculum expectations between the two governing bodies are similar and dissimilar, school leaders should provide support to teachers to meet both of these requirements.

Supporting teachers as they work towards meeting both of these requirements can be done in a variety of ways. First, there must be a discussion recognizing how seat time impacts instruction. Because high school students spend more time with DE instructors as compared to their counterparts taking the same course at the sponsoring community college, it is reasonable that DE instructors can provide more content to students beyond what is expected from the sponsoring community college. Second, school leaders should provide exemplar lesson plans that demonstrate how DE teachers can meet the demands of the sponsoring community college and high school by engaging in effective lesson planning. These exemplar lesson plans should align with the course content that DE teachers are teaching so that instructors can use these lessons as mentor texts when designing their own lessons. Lastly, school leaders must provide DE instructors with the opportunity to ask

questions regarding the expectation to meet the curriculum demands of both governing entities so that instructors understand *how* and *why* they are required to teach in this way.

Based on my research, the school district has an opportunity to do more to inform DE English instructors of course expectations. Because of this I believe that a meeting between school district leaders and DE English instructors focused on addressing the obligation to meet the requirements as delineated by the state and sponsoring community college is essential. This meeting should include a discussion on seat time, provides exemplar lesson plans, and allow for questions so that DE English teachers can better align their instruction with curriculum expectations. This meeting could occur during the district-wide PD days prior to the start of fall semester and could be done face-to-face or in a collaborative online space. In addition to having district leaders provide more clarity to DE English instructors, it is essential that leaders from the sponsoring community college do the same.

Role of the sponsoring community college. The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) expects a liaison from the sponsoring university to provide training regarding course-specific curriculum (2017). This study supports the need for this recommendation. Currently, the sponsoring community college in this study is primarily focused on meeting accreditation demands. However, if leaders from the sponsoring community college are to continue to stay actively engaged with instructors at the high school level, it is incumbent upon them to support the curriculum expectations from both the sponsoring community college as well as the state standards for high school English. To this end, they need to be informed of the dual purpose of these courses and directly inform DE English instructors of this expectation. Similar to the role of district leaders, this can be done with a meeting prior to start of the semester.

Application. Sponsoring community college leaders can provide increased clarity regarding curriculum expectations at a meeting with DE instructors by doing the following. First, they should review the curriculum expectations for the course as outlined in the syllabus and describe modifications that can be made to help instructors meet state requirements not provided for in the syllabus. This step goes beyond merely providing the syllabus and instead allows leaders the opportunity to expand upon the expectations in the syllabus. Second, community college leaders need to change their approach to writing assessment and explain assessment expectations to teachers. Instead of using a common rubric for all writing assignments, there should be a specific rubric designed for each required writing assignment. The recommendation for assignment-specific rubrics is a response to the misunderstandings centered on the current research-focused rubric used by PCC. The misunderstandings occur, largely, when instructors use the current rubric with assignments that do not have a research component. Third, they should provide exemplar lesson plans focused on assignment requirements, writing instruction, and assessment. These exemplar lesson plans should be provided so teachers can use them as mentor texts when creating their own lesson plans. Lastly, leaders need to allow DE English instructors to ask questions regarding the curriculum to ensure that instructors are aware of the expectations placed on them. Like the meeting with the school district, this meeting could also occur during the district-wide PD days prior to the start of fall semester and could be done face-to-face or in a collaborative online space.

If leaders from both the school district and sponsoring community college work to provide clarity regarding curriculum expectations—either through a pre-semester meeting or in some other way—it is possible that DE English teachers will better understand what is

expected of them, which may influence their instruction and ultimately impact student learning.

Recommendation 3: The Sponsoring Community College Needs to Provide More Robust Support to DE English Instructors Aimed at Facilitating Student Learning

This study revealed that the current oversight provided by the sponsoring community college is focused almost exclusively on instructor requirements, and is not focused on facilitating student learning. This is troubling, as the primary purpose of education is to help students learn, and in the case of DE English, learn how to write. The oversight by the sponsoring community college needs to dramatically expand to also include ways to help DE English instructors facilitate student learning. This can be done with instructional outreach and a greater focus on writing pedagogy centered on student outcomes.

Instructional outreach. One implication for practice set forth by Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner, 2017 is that "State and district administrators could identify and develop expert teachers as mentors and coaches to support learning in their particular area(s) of expertise for other educators" (vii). This recommendation for coaches aligns with Cox's (2015) work, which recognizes that adult learning theory, specifically andragogy and transformative learning, support the need for coaches when working with adult learners. Cox (2015) describes coaching as a "constructivist intervention through which adults can gain support for their self-directed learning, their transformational learning, and achievement of their individual goals but how in all instances coaching by the facilitator needs to be driven by the learner's individual agenda" (p. 37). Thus, this type of intervention can help instructors because they drive the agenda by dictating what they need help with.

Application. Within the scope of this study, the sponsoring community college would identify, pay, and support, coaches focused on helping DE English instructors design and implement curriculum and meeting the unique needs of students in high school who are taking a college-level composition course. This support is different than collaborative-focused professional development because the coaches would work one-on-one with DE English instructors with specific needs. Indeed, it would be essential that the sponsoring community college creates protocols for how these coaches interact with DE English instructors so that the interactions build on what is known about ALT, thus ensuring that the support is effective and positively fosters both the growth of the students and the teacher.

Writing pedagogy centered on student outcomes. DE English is focused primarily on writing pedagogy, however, the sponsoring community college does little to support this instruction. NACEP (2017) recommends that instructors should be taught pedagogy prior to teaching students. While this is valuable, ongoing support regarding writing pedagogy is essential when tied to student outcomes. If students are to improve as writers, DE English instructors need to accurately evaluate student writing and adjust writing instruction accordingly.

Application. The sponsoring community college needs to devise a way to help instructors evaluate student outcomes and respond effectively. In order to do this, the sponsoring community college can create student outcome protocols where teachers evaluate students on common assessments, using assessment-specific rubrics, and analyze the data to understand students' understanding of content. For students who fall below mastery, teachers should engage in a remediation plan that includes scaffolded writing instruction. The

sponsoring community college can articulate what this support can and should look like, and provide materials to teachers to help their students improve as writers.

If a sponsoring community college is willing to expand oversight to include instructional outreach and writing pedagogy support centered on student outcomes, then DE English instructors may be more likely to improve student writing outcomes, which will better prepare students for the writing needs they will face after high school graduation.

Writing instruction in DE English classrooms can improve if the school district and sponsoring community college provide PD opportunities that support transformative learning and foster authentic collaboration, provide more clarity regarding curriculum expectations, and if the oversight provided by the sponsoring community college works toward facilitating student learning. Table 5.1 depicts how the recommendations delineated in this chapter align with the study's research questions and findings.

Table 5. 1

Recommendations and Corresponding Findings

Recommendation	Research Question 1	Research Questions 2 & 3
1. The School District and Sponsoring Community College Need to Provide DE English Teachers with Professional Development Opportunities that Promote Transformative Learning and Foster Authentic Collaboration	• Finding 2: DE English curriculum is largely aligned with the sponsoring community college curriculum, while providing flexibility for instructors regarding implementation.	• Finding 3: Oversight Is Exclusively Provided by the Sponsoring Community College and is Focused on Instructor Requirements, Not Facilitating Student Learning • Finding 4: Writing instruction includes class-specific assignments, mini-lessons, conferencing, and holistic assessments. • Finding 5: Instructors have a desire for professional development that supports collaboration.

2. The School District and Sponsoring Community College Need to Provide Increased Clarity Regarding Curriculum Expectations to DE English Instructors	• Finding 1: DE English learning objectives are aligned with the sponsoring community college requirements, yet are misaligned with 12th grade English state standards. • Finding 2: DE English curriculum is largely aligned with the sponsoring community college curriculum, while providing flexibility for instructors regarding implementation.	• Finding 4: Writing instruction includes class-specific assignments, mini-lessons, conferencing, and holistic assessments.
3. The Sponsoring Community College Needs to Provide More Robust Support to DE English Instructors Aimed at Facilitating Student Learning	• Finding 2: DE English curriculum is largely aligned with the sponsoring community college curriculum, while providing flexibility for instructors regarding implementation.	• Finding 3: Oversight Is Exclusively Provided by the Sponsoring Community College and is Focused on Instructor Requirements, Not Facilitating Student Learning • Finding 4: Writing instruction includes class-specific assignments, mini-lessons, conferencing, and holistic assessments. • Finding 5: Instructors have a desire for professional development that supports collaboration.

*Note: Some findings correspond to more than one recommendation

Discussion

The recommendations outlined in this study are specific to the findings related to the state of DE English in ASD. If taken, these recommendations provide additional support for

DE English instructors and may result in improved student writing outcomes. The challenges that ASD face with DE English instruction are not unique, however, and instead reflects a national problem of practice, which is that students are not prepared for college-level writing, even if they have taken DE English. This section will address how the recommendations for ASD, along with research in the field, may be beneficial to DE programs across the nation. Specifically, it will address the need for state policies focused on facilitating student learning, a call for increased resources, and directions for future research.

State Policies Focused on Facilitating Student Learning

The partnership between the sponsoring community college and high school is unique to specific groups, and this contextualized relationship is dictated by state policies (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015, p. 9). Ultimately, then, program changes that might help DE English teachers improve writing instruction must be supported by state policies. It is incumbent on states to make policies that require school districts and sponsoring community colleges to work together to support and facilitate student learning through stronger PD with a focus on writing pedagogy. DE English teachers should not be expected to work in silos: different from their high school and community college counterparts.

One way to do this is to require all sponsoring community colleges to be accredited through NACEP (2017). NACEP provides structure and accountability for how sponsoring community colleges can and should engage with DE instructors. Specifically, "NACEP's members include some of the nation's oldest and most prominent concurrent enrollment partnerships, who share a common belief that institutions of higher education should follow certain best practices to ensure the quality of college classes taught by high school teachers" (NACEP, 2019). The policies provided by NACEP represent best practices for professional

development and writing instruction and may help strengthen the partnerships. To be accredited, schools must meet standards relating to partnership, faculty, assessment, curriculum, students, and program evaluation. In order to become accredited, sponsoring community colleges have to engage in a five step process, which include a self study program, attending an accreditation institute within a year of submitting a pre-application packet, filing a pre-application packet and engaging in a candidacy review, submitting a completed accreditation application, and engaging in a peer review (NACEP, 2019).

Although it may seem daunting to require sponsoring community colleges to work with another accreditation agency beyond what is required by the state, it is possible to require this accreditation. For example, Iowa mandates that schools be accredited through NACEP (Iowa, 2016). State policies have the potential to change the way sponsoring community colleges interact with DE programs, however, for the policies to be successful there needs to be additional resources available.

Increased Resources

State policies that support student learning through collaborative-based professional development opportunities and instructional outreach that includes a focus on writing pedagogy requires a high level of interaction between leaders at the sponsoring community college and DE instructors. Indeed, any sort of outreach means that there needs to be personnel who have the time and skills necessary to engage with DE English instructors in ways that support instruction. This relationship must go beyond clerical work to meet accreditation standards, which likely means that additional fulltime employees need to be hired. In order to do this, there must be funding. This funding could come from the state or by having students enrolled in DE courses pay dues; regardless the current system simply

does not provide enough funding to have adequate personnel who can be dedicated to helping DE English instructors.

Further Research

There is limited available research regarding the experiences of DE instructors, including those engaged with writing instruction, and so states should engage in research similar to what Troutman, Hendrix-Soto, Creusere, and Mayer (2018) conducted in Texas in order to understand the landscape of DE in each state and make policies based on those findings. Furthermore, policy makers should consider the research about effective professional development in non-writing specific courses to see what, if anything, applies to how they can further help support DE English instructors.

If state leaders want to help students improve as writers through DE English, then there need to be updated state policies, additional resources available to these teachers, and more research on DE programs.

Limitations

As the exclusive researcher for this study, I attempted to design and implement the study in a way that would help strengthen its trustworthiness. However, the study does have limitations.

First, this study only represents two high school DE English instructors: Karen Anderson from Apple High School and Peter Smith from Magnolia High School. These two instructors teach in ASD, and although my findings are focused on their experiences in the classroom and the perspectives of a variety of leaders from the high school, school district, and sponsoring community college, their perspectives represent individual experiences

within one school district. It is possible that my findings are not representative of other DE English teachers within, and outside of, ASD.

Second, I was unable to interview individuals who might have provided valuable insight regarding this study. Specifically, I was only able to interview the English department chair from Magnolia High School and was not able to interview the English department chair from Apple High School. Additionally, the English department chair at Poplar Community College was not interviewed for this study and she could have provided insight for how she does or does not support DE English instructors. I attempted to contact both individuals, but my messages were not returned.

Third, I was limited by the time I was able to spend in the field researching DE English. I only conducted two classroom observations for each instructor, and more time in the classroom may have provided greater insight regarding writing instruction and DE English in general. Furthermore, I was not able to observe outreach by the interim director of dual enrollment and off-campus programs, including his work with new DE English teachers and his new initiative involving classroom observations. Observing his work with instructors might have provided context for the challenges he faces when working with DE instructors as well as lend insight regarding what instructional outreach might be helpful.

Regardless of these limitations, the results and recommendations arrived at from this study build on the anemic research available on DE English and provides ASD with a descriptive study of its DE English program and the perspectives of two DE English teachers regarding professional development, curriculum support, and writing instruction in addition to insight from leaders at the high school, district, and sponsoring community college.

Reflection

My six years of teaching DE English allowed me to intimately experience teaching college courses within a high school context, and, in doing so, I learned about the unique challenges that this arrangement places on teachers. Immersing myself in this study, however, has provided me with a better understanding of the expectations on DE English teachers from each high school, school district, and sponsoring community college. Specifically, I learned how effective professional development and curriculum support in a collaborative setting is something most educators desire, and these wants align with the research on effective professional development and on how adults learn. Additionally, this support can be targeted to help improve writing instruction and ultimately prepare students to better meet the writing needs they will face after high school graduation. Armed with this clarity regarding how to better support DE English instructors, I hope to return to the public sphere and ultimately work with local leadership to strengthen the relationships between educators at the sponsoring community college, high school, and school district to better meet the needs of teachers working with students on writing instruction, with the goal of helping students improve as writers.

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Appendix A

Interviewee: _____
Date:_____
Time:_____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for DE English Instructors

Consent

- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview and my research project on professional development and curriculum support for DE English instructors. This is the first of two interviews I will be doing, and my second interview will be after I observe you teaching in the classroom. My goals of this interview are to better understand your experience regarding the professional development and curriculum support you receive as a teacher who teaches college level writing instruction at a high school
- Before we begin, I would like to remind you that you can stop this interview at any point. Additionally, if you would like to skip a question or talk with me with the recording device off, please let me know.
- I will be digitally audio-recording this interview and having it transcribed by a digital transcription service. I will delete this audio-recording when I have obtained the transcripts.
- This interview will last between 45-60 minutes. If you need me to stop or pause at any point please let me know and I will happily do so. Will you be please verbally give your consent for this interview?

1. Please describe your educational background and teaching experience.

2. Could you describe the culture of DE at your high school?

3. Explain your relationship with the DE liaison at your high school.

4. Could you describe the DE English curriculum you are responsible to teach?

5. How have you learned about the required DE English curriculum (i.e., the assignments and grading policies) that you are expected to teach?

6. Does your sponsoring university or community college help you learn about the required curriculum? If so, how?

7. Does your sponsoring university or community college help you develop DE English curriculum? If so, how?

8. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the high school for DE English instructors.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

9. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the school district for DE English instructors.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

10. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the sponsoring university or community college for DE English teachers.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

11. What kinds of additional PD opportunities could the high school, school district, or sponsoring university provide to further support DE English teachers?

Interview Guide

Interviewee: _____
Date:_____
Time:_____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Administrators who Provide Support to DE English Instructors

Consent

- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview and my research project on professional development and curriculum support for DE English instructors. My goals of this interview are to better understand your experience regarding the professional development and curriculum support provided to DE English teachers at the high school level.
- Before we begin, I would like to remind you that you can stop this interview at any point. Additionally, if you would like to skip a question or talk with me with the recording device off, please let me know.
- I will be digitally audio-recording this interview and having it transcribed by a digital transcription service. I will delete this audio-recording when I have obtained the transcripts.
- This interview will last between 45-60 minutes. If you need me to stop or pause at any point please let me know and I will happily do so. Will you be please verbally give your consent for this interview?

1. Please describe your administrative role.

2. Could you describe the culture of DE at your high school?

3. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the high school for DE English instructors.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

4. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the school district for DE English instructors.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

5. Explain your relationship with the DE liaison from the sponsoring university.

6. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the sponsoring university or community college for DE English teachers.

Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

7. What kinds of additional PD opportunities could the high school, school district, or sponsoring university provide to further support DE English teachers?
8. In your experience, has a DE English instructor expressed a desire for additional support? If yes, please explain.
9. Do you have any additional thoughts concerning DE English courses, curriculum support, and/or PD opportunities?

Interview Guide

Interviewee: _____
Date:_____
Time:_____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for PCC's DE Liaison

Consent

- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview and my research project on professional development and curriculum support for DE English instructors. My goals of this interview are to better understand your experience regarding the professional development and curriculum support provided to DE English teachers from the sponsoring community college.
- Before we begin, I would like to remind you that you can stop this interview at any point. Additionally, if you would like to skip a question or talk with me with the recording device off, please let me know.
- I will be digitally audio-recording this interview and having it transcribed by a digital transcription service. I will delete this audio-recording when I have obtained the transcripts.
- This interview will last between 45-60 minutes. If you need me to stop or pause at any point please let me know and I will happily do so. Will you be please verbally give your consent for this interview?

1. Please describe your administrative role.

2. Could you describe PCC's expectations for DE English programs?

3. Explain your relationship with the DE liaisons at the high school level.

4. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the high school for DE English instructors.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

5. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the school district for DE English instructors.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

6. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the sponsoring university or community college for DE English teachers.

    Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

7. What kinds of additional PD opportunities could the high school, school district, or sponsoring university provide to further support DE English teachers?
8. In your experience, has a DE English instructor expressed a desire for additional support? If yes, please explain.
9. Do you have any additional thoughts concerning DE English courses, curriculum support, and/or PD opportunities?

Interview Guide

Interviewee: _____
Date:_____
Time:_____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for ASD Language Arts Coach

Consent

- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview and my research project on professional development and curriculum support for DE English instructors. My goals of this interview are to better understand your experience regarding the professional development and curriculum support provided to DE English teachers from the district.
- Before we begin, I would like to remind you that you can stop this interview at any point. Additionally, if you would like to skip a question or talk with me with the recording device off, please let me know.
- I will be digitally audio-recording this interview and having it transcribed by a digital transcription service. I will delete this audio-recording when I have obtained the transcripts.
- This interview will last between 45-60 minutes. If you need me to stop or pause at any point please let me know and I will happily do so. Will you be please verbally give your consent for this interview?

1. Please describe your administrative role.

2. Can you describe how ASD helps teachers improve their writing pedagogy?

    a. Is this a focus for the district?

3. Could you describe ASD's expectations for DE English programs?

4. Explain your relationship with the DE instructors at the high school level.

5. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the high school for DE English instructors.

    a. Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

6. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the school district for DE English instructors.

    a. Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

7. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the sponsoring university or community college for DE English teachers.
    a. Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?
8. What kinds of additional PD opportunities could the high school, school district, or sponsoring university provide to further support DE English teachers?
9. In your experience, has a DE English instructor expressed a desire for additional support? If yes, please explain.
10. Do you have any suggestions for what might improve the DE English program in ASD, specifically regarding writing instruction?
11. Do you have any additional thoughts concerning DE English courses, curriculum support, and/or PD opportunities?

Interview Guide

Interviewee: _____
Date:_____
Time:_____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Director of Secondary Education

Consent

- Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview and my research project on professional development and curriculum support for DE English instructors. My goals of this interview are to better understand your experience regarding the professional development and curriculum support provided to DE English teachers from the district.
- Before we begin, I would like to remind you that you can stop this interview at any point. Additionally, if you would like to skip a question or talk with me with the recording device off, please let me know.
- I will be digitally audio-recording this interview and having it transcribed by a digital transcription service. I will delete this audio-recording when I have obtained the transcripts.
- This interview will last between 45-60 minutes. If you need me to stop or pause at any point please let me know and I will happily do so. Will you be please verbally give your consent for this interview?

1. Please describe your administrative role.

2. Can you describe the purpose or goals of DE for ASD?

3. Can you describe the culture of DE at ASD?

4. Can you describe the relationship between ASD and the sponsoring university?

5. Can you describe what ASD does to support DE instructors specifically?

6. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the sponsoring university or community college for DE English teachers.

    a. Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

7. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the school district for DE English instructors.

    a. Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?

8. Explain the professional development opportunities provided by the high school for DE English instructors.
    a. Probe: Can you explain if, or how, this support is helpful?
9. What kinds of additional PD opportunities could the high school, school district, or sponsoring university provide to further support DE English teachers?
10. In your experience, has DE instructors expressed a desire for additional support? If yes, please explain.
11. Do you have any suggestions for what might improve the DE English program in ASD, specifically regarding writing instruction?
12. Do you have any additional thoughts concerning DE English courses, curriculum support, and/or PD opportunities?

Alternative Direction:

13. Can you describe how ASD helps teachers improve their writing pedagogy?
    a. Is this a focus for the district?

Appendix B

Classroom Observation Protocol

Observer:
School/Teacher:
Date & Time:
Lesson:
Context description:

Field Notes	Observer Notes
Observer Reflection:	