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Journaling on the Transition to College: Foucauldian Approaches in the First-Year Writing Classroom

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Journaling on the Transition to College:

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

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First-year college writing instructors have the potential to design structured, scaffolded journaling components to develop agency in emerging academic writers while also confronting students' transition to college. Utilizing the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and technology of the self, this qualitative action research study explored the ways power dynamics inherent in higher education are recognized and resisted as first-year students journal on the transition to college (JTC). The study sought to understand how college is a feature of governmentality and how students make sense of their experience, how writing instructors' actions interrupt or reinforce college as governmentality, and if journaling on the transition to college acts as a technology of the self in light of how college governs us. A journaling intervention was implemented in a first-year writing course in a suburban community college in eastern Pennsylvania during the Spring 2020 semester. Prompts provided students opportunities to critically reflect on the institution of college and their experience entering this new space. Foucauldian concepts were not taught, but they informed the journal design. 17 students participated and data collected included journal entries, instructor feedback, interviews, and teaching reflections. In addition to Foucauldian social theories, data analysis was informed by
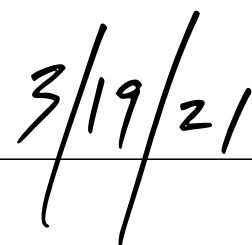
Black feminist theory to address factors of students' intersectional social identities, including race and socioeconomic status, emergent in JTC. Findings indicated students confront institutional power structures such as economic power, grades, policies, and institutional White supremacy, which all affect the role professors play as authority figures. Though they inevitably reinforce college as governmentality, writing instructors' implementation of JTC allows them to disrupt governmentality and provide students a technology of the self through which they develop agency. The COVID-19 outbreak provided unexpected opportunities to apply Foucauldian concepts to teaching and learning in higher education during emergency remote instruction.

Keywords: higher education, first-year writing, first-year experience, journaling, Foucault, governmentality, technologies of the self, Black feminist theory, COVID-19, remote learning

Signature of Investigator _____ Date 3/19/21

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my first two teachers, my parents, Janice and Bill.

Your love is steadfast and inspiring.

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My family, Mom, Dad, Barbara, Abbey, Eric, Shawn, Ben, Lucas, Gavin, Ruby, and Dean – you are the reason I am here. Thanks for your love and laughter.

The Wolfpack, Heather, Samantha, and Nicole – I am grateful to have learned with and leaned on you throughout this journey. Your selfless dedication to your students and families is inspiring. Thank you for pushing me to think differently and to be better.

Cohort 2 – What a ride this has been. I am blessed to know each of you, and to have learned from your experience, research, care, and character. I cannot fathom all good work we will continue to do.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Introduction

Utilizing Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and technology of the self in a first-year college writing course, this study explored the ways that power dynamics inherent in higher education can be recognized and resisted as students journal on the transition to college (JTC). The qualitative action research study explored how college operates as a feature of governmentality, how students make sense of their experiences, and what capacity pedagogical and curricular choices have to increase students' awareness of and resistance to the ways in which college governs them. An intervention was delivered in the form of a journaling component in a gateway college writing course in a suburban community college in the Spring 2020 semester. While Foucauldian concepts were not taught to students, the journal prompts and course texts were selected to provide students opportunities to critically reflect on their experiences within power relationships in college. The journal component was designed to elicit responses conducive to analysis centered on how college is a feature of governmentality, how the writing instructor acts to interrupt or reinforce governmentality, and how journaling on the transition to college may serve as a technology of the self in light of the ways college governs students. Data collected includes journal entries, instructor feedback, semi-structured interviews with student participants, and teaching reflections from the practitioner-researcher. Conceptually, JTC provides students opportunities to "write back" to their potential subjugation as they develop agency and resistance to power dynamics as a way of caring for the self. The study interrogated what critical approaches to journaling on the transition to college reveal about first-year student experiences, what these experiences say about the institution of college, and how first-year writing instructors can develop effective, high-impact practices to better support first-year students.

This dissertation is constructed in five chapters, aligning with the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) components for the Dissertation in Practice (DiP) (Buss, 2018): (a) situation of the puzzle of practice, (b) perspectives on the puzzle of practice, (c) design of the contextualized investigation, (d) results of the investigation, and (e) discussion of the results. Chapter I describes the puzzle of practice, including how I came to understand the puzzle and my positionality to the research context. In Chapter II, perspectives on the puzzle are presented. These perspectives are grounded in the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and technology of the self as applied to the field of education. I discuss ways in which students may be made subject to power dynamics in the institution of higher education, while writing in the college classroom, and within instructor-student relationships. Perspectives on the puzzle also include theoretical and practical approaches to journal-keeping, followed by a literature review on recent studies focusing on journaling with first-year college students. Chapter III details the contextualized design and provides a description of the qualitative action research methodology that frames this study. This chapter includes a description of the research setting, participant selection, the JTC intervention, and methods of data collection and analysis. Chapter IV provides a description of the data collection, including minor shifts from the initial research design, as the semester during which data collection occurred was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data analysis methods are presented in detail, including coding methods. A narrative of the results of the investigation is provided with a detailed presentation of the themes and categories that serve to inform each of the study's three research questions. Chapter V discusses the results, focusing on the study's implications on theory, practice, and policy, and concludes with suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER I: THE PUZZLE OF PRACTICE

College writing instructors have the potential to design structured, scaffolded journaling activities to enhance self-efficacy in emerging academic writers while also confronting students' transition to college. A puzzle of practice emerges when reflective writing prompts are disjointed or impromptu, when instructors do not incorporate intentional thematic structure in their reflective writing assignments, or when writing instructors do not ask students to engage in self-reflection in any capacity. In my experience as an early-career educator, this puzzle emerged when I changed professional contexts from a federally grant-funded college preparatory program working with vulnerable student populations to an adjunct English instructor in a community college. Preparing to teach first-year writing courses in this new position led me to reflect on my work with 9-12th grade students, approaches to supporting students' transition into college as a writing instructor, and my own undergraduate experience as a nontraditional college student. While reflecting on my own journaling in writing courses as I began college, I developed a line of inquiry to explore how reframing journaling in the college writing classroom might provide opportunities to support students' self-agency when transitioning to college.

Through discussions on various aspects of this research study, my relationship to the research, and the puzzle's significance, this initial chapter defines and situates the puzzle of practice and my development as an early-career educator and practitioner-researcher. To begin, I present my positionality to the action research. Next, I discuss the research site, student population, and sample participants. I then preview the puzzle of practice within the theoretical framework of poststructuralist Foucauldian theory and Black feminist theory. Lastly, I discuss the significance of the puzzle, how this research sought to find new approaches to students'

journal-keeping practice as they transition to college, and the potential for broader applications of these practices in higher education.

Researcher Positionality

A discussion of my positionality as a researcher begins with the acknowledgement of the social privilege embedded in my social identities. I am a White, cisgender male in my mid-thirties who was raised in a middle-class household in a rural mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Both of my parents earned bachelor's degrees, and one earned a master's degree. These layers of privilege align me with the dominant group currently and historically comprising institutions of higher education in the U.S. (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). These aspects of my positionality are paramount to my intervention design and when considering my relationship to the multitude of lived experiences my students bring to our classroom community. Often, my students' social identities are not similar to my own; their racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic identities, as well as varying degrees of familial knowledge of higher education, impact my pedagogy and this research. The writing classroom provides rich opportunities for discussion, writing, and critical engagement on the divergent and intersecting identities in the classroom. I anticipated journal entries to speak to a number of the aforementioned factors, which I expand upon in Chapter II. To strive for a transparent acknowledgement of bias at each stage of the research process, I continue to grapple with my social positioning in relation to my students' social positioning throughout this study and in my teaching practice.

As an early-career educator engaging in action research, a discussion of my positionality provides transparency, and also acknowledges and seeks to mitigate bias during the research process. My limited professional experience, newness to my professional institution, and my position of power relative to my students' significantly shaped my approach to this research. My

current position as an adjunct community college English instructor is my first professional

teaching appointment in higher education. My training and experience teaching college writing is

rooted in my two-year Master of Arts (MA) program, in which I tutored first-year writing

students and taught writing intensive sophomore-level literature courses. The teaching

experience I obtained during this program was essential preparation for my current position,

specifically in understanding the importance of collaborative planning and sharing among

colleagues, as my peers and I frequently collaborated with one another, drawing upon our

respective classroom experiences. Regarding my positionality to the research context, my limited

level of experience in the college writing classroom and having been in my first year at the

institution positioned me as an outsider to the research context at the outset of the study.

However, an action researcher's positionality to their context is not static but exists

"multilayered and fluid" on a shifting continuum (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 37) and my

increasing familiarity within the institution continued to position me as an insider. As a new

adjunct, I have been supported by college administration and faculty colleagues regarding course

planning, curricular design, professional development opportunities, and the current research

study. This support extended to my specific action research and implementation of JTC;

colleagues and administrators have encouraged my research, expressing that the implications of

the project will provide opportunities to explore the benefits of journaling in the first-year

writing course curriculum.

I composed journal prompts and selected supplemental texts for the intervention to align

with course objectives and student learning outcomes (SLOs). From conversations with

colleagues in my context, I anticipated that the intervention, a semester-long journaling

component designed within a Foucauldian poststructuralist framework, was not a commonplace

approach to journal-keeping utilized by other English faculty members at the college. My unique approach to journaling in the first-year writing curriculum had the potential to positively influence my colleagues' approaches to supporting first-year students with similar practices and conducting the action research presented several opportunities to discuss the study with other writing instructors.

My role as classroom leader entrenched me in the milieu of the research context, positioning me as an insider to the action research. I had direct access to my students, who were the primary participants in the study. Due to this relationship, I acknowledged my position of power and the potential limitations this presented to the study. My inherent authority in relation to my students' experience is a component of my investigation, addressed in my research questions and acknowledged in my conceptual framework. My students' lived experiences are central to the research; in my dual role as instructor and researcher, I was mindful of acknowledging all participants' voices. My concurrent professional transition to a new institution of higher education paralleled my students' transitional situations. Additionally, my relative closeness in age to my students and that my own transition from high school to college had occurred within recent memory (approximately 15 years prior), allowed another way for me to associate with their experiences. These components indirectly affected my positionality to my students in that we were both experiencing states of transition.

My Transition to College

The puzzle of practice was significantly informed by my own transition to college, which spanned several years and provided a nontraditional perspective to my undergraduate experience. Nontraditional college students are generally categorized as adults who begin or continue

enrollment in higher education at a later age than most undergraduates (Ross-Gordon, 2011)[1]. I did not complete the first semester of the four-year college in which I was enrolled after graduating high school. I withdrew from my courses a few weeks prior to the end of the term. In the spring of the same academic year, I enrolled in and dropped out of a community college at midterm. I was twice a college dropout before enrolling in the institution that granted my bachelor's degree. One of the classes I withdrew from at my first college was a first-year writing course which included a journaling component. I saved my writing from this course and have reread my journal entries as a doctoral student, a decade and a half later, reflecting on my role as an educator and practitioner-researcher. Revisiting these entries assisted in framing my approach for the effects journaling can have on my students' transition to college.

My action research intervention sought to intentionally address how students are thinking about the institution of college and their experience entering this new space. The journal entries from my first experience in college eluded the metacognitive element essential in self-reflection; they list daily activities and musings but are devoid of a discussion of the reasons or results of my actions or thoughts from a perspective beyond their immediate context. Further, my instructor did not provide feedback on the entries. I do not suggest that a different approach to those journaling assignments on my instructor's part would have kept me from dropping out; however, it is interesting to view in these entries the trajectory of thoughts and events that led to my eventual choice to leave the school. Having had this experience as a young adult significantly influenced my stance as a practitioner-researcher and shaped my perspective on the puzzle of practice in the first-year writing classroom. My intervention explored the potential of using

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[1] This is the characteristic of the term that best describes my undergraduate experience, however it is expanded upon in Chapter III to more specifically describe participants in the study who are nontraditional students.

journal design that follows a constructive, scaffolded framework and provides thoughtful instructor feedback to engage students with new perspectives on the way they make meaning.

The Community College Writing Classroom

The sample population of the study were students enrolled at Bellevue Community College[2] (BCC), a two-year community college situated in a suburban area of eastern Pennsylvania. This study considered any student enrolled at the two-year institution as being in transition to college. All participants were students enrolled in a gateway English composition course that I taught. Based upon the college's student demographics, I planned the study anticipating a sample population who included first-generation college students, students of color, students from low-income households, students who were non-native English speakers, and students diagnosed with learning disabilities. Further, unlike traditional community college student populations, participants were a combination of commuters and on-campus residents. The community college offered on-campus housing options for students, a rare feature for two-year institutions; conducting a study on the transition to becoming a community college student is in this sense unique, given a few participants lived in the residence halls.

Students' engagement with their identity during the transition to college was a key component of all aspects of the JTC intervention design, including composing relevant prompts, selecting supplemental texts, and providing feedback. While the journaling component was designed prior to meeting the study participants, I used BCC's student demographics and observations of my class makeup from the previous Fall 2019 semester to anticipate students' social identities. Further information on these demographics are provided in Chapter III. Based upon this data, I anticipated disproportions between my students' social identities, including race,

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[2] Pseudonyms are used for all institutions and cities.

socioeconomic status, and parental education levels, with that of dominant groups within U.S. institutions of higher education. Attention was paid to these factors because belonging to traditionally marginalized groups was relevant to students' responses to governmentality and developing techniques of resistance through journaling. I also sought to measure how reflective journaling in the writing classroom might bring awareness and change within students who are traditionally, and problematically, labeled "at-risk" (Brown, 2016). I address theoretical approaches to these factors of identity in Chapter II.

During the semester I conducted the action research, I taught three sections of English I (ENGL 101), BCC's first-year college writing course. While I used the JTC intervention with the three different sections of students, my study focused on one class and data was collected from consenting participants in this section only. The JTC intervention designed and implemented in this study is also suitable for any number of writing courses and is not exclusive to English I. With adjustments for course objectives and curricular alignment, JTC can be used in developmental writing, advanced composition, literature courses, and other writing or first-year courses. Affording a broad applicability of the intervention is integral to increasing the relevance of JTC. Studying approaches to dynamic reflective writing will lead to findings that are transferable to other gateway courses and will impact a wide student population.

Foucauldian Poststructuralism and JTC

Students new to college are in a transitionary state and benefit from engaging in journaling to increase agency and to foster their emerging identities. Based on the concepts of governmentality (Foucault, 1991) and technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988), my action research design framed a critical approach to employing journaling in the college writing classroom to support students' transition to college. These concepts provided a theoretical

framework for the present research project. Governmentality and technology of the self directly

informed the intervention but the concepts were not a part of the course content and they were

not directly taught to students. Here I provide a brief explanation about how these theories relate

to the puzzle of practice. Foucault's relevant social theories, and Black feminist theory, a relative

postmodernist framework used to analyze students' social identities, are expanded upon in

Chapter II.

Foucault's (1988) concept of technologies of the self suggested that individuals must

actively engage in practices of mind and body to recognize and resist governmentality.

Governmentality is the inevitable situation of compliance populations and individuals must

submit to within any system of power (Foucault, 1991). One of four systems of techniques or

"technologies" that human beings engage in to better understand themselves, technologies of the

self allow individuals to practice behaviors and ways of thinking that transform themselves as to

not be beaten down by oppressive power systems (Foucault, 1988, p. 18). When viewed as a

system of power, higher education exerts control on the populations and individuals therein;

college may therefore be considered a feature of governmentality. Viewing the transition to

college from a Foucauldian lens allows educators to recognize how governmentality affects

students' experiences. For this study, technology of the self framed a design for student

journaling by presenting approaches to think and write about their transition to college. This

allowed students to speak back, or, more fittingly, "write back" to the power dynamics and

situations they encountered in college. The study saw the act of journaling as a way of caring for

the self. Foucault (1988) stated that each technology requires a mode of training where subjects

attain a set of skills and attitudes in order to modify individual conduct. This requires the writing

instructor to pay attention to "not only skills but also attitudes" (Foucault, 1988, p. 18) when

utilizing journal-keeping as a means for students to write back to college as a feature of governmentality. Applications of technologies of the self informed and engaged students' critical self-reflection, illuminated and fostered identity, and increased their agency in the new space of college.

The practice of journal-keeping builds agency that poises students as subjects informed and aware of their complicity in existing power structures, and, by extension, the construction of power-knowledge. Although Foucault seldom made direct application of governmentality to education, scholars have applied the concept to educational systems and suggest the need for further research (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998). This study relied upon and contributed to Foucauldian educational scholarship by: (a) recognizing that governmentality is a feature to which Western societies, populations, and individuals are subject; (b) viewing, from a student and instructor perspective, college as a feature of governmentality; (c) viewing the act of journaling in the college writing course as engaging in technologies of the self; and (d) employing these concepts as underpinnings for a journaling design in course curriculum.

Research Questions

Using a qualitative action research methodology, the study sought to explore the following lines of inquiry:

1. How is college a feature of governmentality, and how do students make sense of their experience?

2. Can college writing instructors take action to interrupt college as governmentality and or do their actions perpetuate, enable, or reinforce college as governmentality?

3. How, if at all, does journaling on the transition to college in the writing classroom act as a technology of the self, in light of the ways that college governs us?

Significance of the Project

My own transition to college significantly influenced my interest in working with students entering higher education and directed my focus to the puzzle of practice involving journaling in the first-year writing English classroom. Reminding myself how much of an impact writing had and continues to have on my personal, academic, and professional growth guided me in the role of emerging practitioner-researcher. This underscored my passion to engage students with JTC opportunities. Beyond these initiating factors, the project is situated within and is significant to other contexts. The transition to college is of interest to educators developing first-year experience (FYE) programs, which are fertile ground for reflective writing. This study's purpose and line of inquiry relied on a body of scholarship on fostering students' emergent academic and social identities in the college writing classroom. The action research methodology sought to improve both student experience and instructor practice. JTC was an exercise in transformational teaching and learning, providing approaches to curricular design in gateway courses which integrates critical reflection to understand and support student experience.

A majority of U.S. institutions of higher education have established FYE programs, which consist of courses in students' first and or second semester that coincide with programming designed to provide students with targeted skill-development and opportunities for social networking (Hunter, 2006). Some FYE courses utilize journaling to support the transition to college (Everett, 2013). The writing classroom is a conducive space for journal writing, which has been found to increase self-efficacy and writing skills (Bruning & Horn, 2000). However, journal-keeping in U.S. higher education curriculum remains underutilized (O'Connell & Dyment, 2013; Stevens & Cooper, 2009). The current study was informed by perspectives on

FYE and journal-keeping in the college writing classroom. Further perspectives on journal-keeping are presented in Chapter II.

As the practitioner-researcher, action research allowed me to gain an understanding of students' experience and my practice by enacting the JTC intervention in my classroom. I used methods of qualitative data analysis to determine and discuss the effect a focused journaling intervention had on both participants' perspectives and my own practice. Qualitative action research is conducive to studying this puzzle of practice because it allows the practitioner-researcher to measure changes in the way students interact with their journaling throughout the semester. At the onset of the study, benefits for participants were anticipated to be seen in their engagement with journaling and in their exposure to new and diverse perspectives about college. A heightened awareness of my pedagogy while planning for and conducting action research positively affected my teaching practice, curriculum design, and continues to benefit my subsequent teaching choices. Examining my influence in student engagement with JTC illuminated the interrelation between journal-keeping, student identity, and student agency. This first-hand perspective not only informed the immediate context of the study, but it also provides unique insight for others in the field. My data collection timeline was contained within a single semester and operated as one complete cycle of action research.

The pedagogical and research approach to understanding the puzzle of practice was informed by the body of scholarship from various educational fields. Recent practitioner scholarship on journal-keeping in FYE curricula (Everett, 2013) provided models for the intervention design. Existing qualitative research on student self-reflective practices and instructor-designed journaling components in the writing classroom (Yancey, 1998) informed my research methods and provided examples of interdisciplinary approaches to supporting the

transition to college through journaling. Approaches to critical thinking and exploratory writing pedagogy in higher education (Bean, 2011) and research specific to journal-keeping in college curriculum (Stevens & Cooper, 2009) guided my choices while designing the intervention. The journal-keeping intervention further sought to examine students' academic identities. Scholarship on students' identities as writers (Adler-Kassner & Wardle, 2016) assisted in defining and informing analyses on how journaling impacts students' relationship to writing.

As an early-career instructor charged with designing and employing high-impact practices (Kuh, 2008), engaging with students' journal writing was relevant to developing pedagogy and understanding classroom climate. Educators who incorporate journaling practices into their classes are granted a holistic view of their students and a heightened awareness of their students' lived experiences. When designing journal assignments that are scaffolded, thematic, and that provide opportunities for responding with constructive feedback, instructors can promote student agency during the transition to college. This confronts the component of the puzzle of practice in which writing instructors may use disjointed, undeveloped prompts for informal or low stakes writing and underutilize journal-keeping. Through this study, I sought to enact change in the approach to journaling and how to work with first-year students within my local context. This provided a model of practices for others in the field. JTC offers an entry point for interdisciplinary approaches to any instructor of first-year students. My approach to this puzzle is relevant to both novice and veteran educators across disciplines and to FYE program leadership.

Chapter II expands on the perspectives of the puzzle of practice. These perspectives include the theoretical framework of Foucauldian social theories and Black feminist theory, the

application of these concepts to JTC in the college writing course, and a review of relevant

literature on journal-keeping practices in higher education course curricula.

CHAPTER II: PERSPECTIVES ON THE PUZZLE OF PRACTICE

This chapter presents the conceptual framework through which my action research design and analysis operated. The construction of this framework addressed the multifaceted puzzle of practice presented in the previous chapter. The framework was crucial to each thread of inquiry. Foundational social and pedagogical theories informed the study's design and significance. This foundation consisted of two components: (a) the poststructuralist concepts of governmentality and technology of the self, derived from the work of French poststructuralist thinker Michel Foucault as well as relative concepts derived from Black feminist theory and (b) pedagogical approaches to writing instruction and curricula with a focused review of literature on effective journaling practices in college writing courses. The latter provided the context for my choice to construct the intervention as a writing journal.

Poststructuralist social theories undergirded the conceptual framework for approaching the participants and phenomena of the study. This chapter begins with an explanation of pertinent Foucauldian concepts which are vital to understanding this approach. Next, using Foucauldian theories peripheral to these central concepts, including the panopticon and pastoral power, I further explore power relations in college and in college writing classroom discourse. Discussions from Foucauldian scholars provide entry points from where I extended the application of governmentality and technology of the self in education to the study's research context. These two components are reliant upon the other and are intended to frame parameters for the design and analysis of the study. Students' layered and intersectional identities were paramount to the journaling process and the ways they experienced their transition to college. Foucauldian theory cannot adequately address these components of identity. Therefore, an explanation and application of Black feminist theory follows the discussion of Foucauldian

theories and grounds the analysis and discussion of students' self-disclosure of social identities through their journaling. Having presented Foucauldian social theories and Black feminist theory, I apply them within the context of educational systems, college, the writing classroom, and JTC. These discussions are followed by scholarship on journal-keeping practices. The framework also relied on theoretical and practical literature on fostering reflection in writing classrooms. Literature specific to first-year composition and FYE is presented in order to consider the relationship between journaling and the transition to college. Finally, scholarship is presented to contextualize the practice of sustained journal-keeping in college writing courses.

Introducing Foucauldian Social Theories

The postmodern concept of poststructuralism is a response to modernist structuralist philosophy, which finds meaning in the relationships among components of systems, societal rules, and constructs (i.e. language). Structuralists believe that meaning is found in the study of the systems behind practices and not in the study of the individual practices themselves. Poststructuralists view societal constructs as rigid binary systems that result in dominant or oppressed components, offering individuals little opportunity to expose, resist, or change these systems. Exposing the ways in which societal systems keep their members oppressed or in power, poststructuralist philosophers provide a lens through which to view problems of power over the course of human history and apply them in immediate, contemporary contexts (Aylesworth, 2015; Barry, 2002; Bressler, 2007). Critical poststructuralist educational research generally takes a macro view of the education system, deconstructing institutions as a whole (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998) or critically analyzing education policy (Doherty, 2007). Less attention is paid to classroom discourse. However, there is much to learn about student wellbeing by applying poststructuralist frameworks to the classroom and student learning. By designing

poststructuralist curricular components that strengthen students' capacity for reflection and self-care, instructors can reveal power structures within educational systems and their classrooms (Slattery, 2003). These transformational teaching and learning approaches provide opportunities to build resistance and resilience in students.

The guiding components of the present study and intervention are governmentality and technologies of the self, two concepts theorized by French poststructuralist thinker Michel Foucault in the latter half of the 20th Century. Both concepts rely on an understanding of the breadth of Foucault's work on how populations are controlled and eventually control themselves. However, for the purposes of this study, a brief synopsis of how Foucault came to define the role of governmentality and technology of the self provide adequate background.

Foucault spent much of his career tracing a genealogy to reveal how mechanisms such as surveillance and discipline operate to control subjects and populations into submission and servitude of sovereign power. In his late work, Foucault (1988, 1991) shifted focus to the means by which individuals can care for themselves within systems that, from as far back as the 16th Century, made them subjects to the state's power through an instilled means of self-regulation. Power is an essential component of Foucauldian social theory. According to Foucault (1978), power is fluid:

> Power's condition of possibility . . . must not be sought in the primary existence of a central point, in a unique source of sovereignty from which secondary and descendant forms would emanate; it is the moving substrate of force relations which, by virtue of their inequality, constantly engender states of power, but the latter are always local and unstable. (p. 93)

The omnipresent flow of power can be identified and resisted; however, one can never be outside of power (Foucault, 1978). Power relationships are the means by which power is exercised. Distinguishing them from violence, or primitive displays of power, Foucault (1982) defined power relationships as modes of action that indirectly act upon others' behaviors. For the expanse of his career, Foucault applied these social theories to institutions such as the healthcare and penal systems. Foucault's (1977, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1991) lifelong work centers on relationships between knowledge, power, discipline, and security. He traced a genealogy of these concepts throughout history, leading to his final work, which shifted focus to how individuals care for themselves in light of the unavoidable power relationships to which they are made subject (Foucault, 1988).

Governmentality

Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality, or the art of government, was foundational to this study. The concept of governmentality emerged during the 16th Century transition from feudal to sovereign rule and considered the ways in which sovereign power was maintained over large populations (Foucault, 1991). Essentially, Foucault (1991) posited, the art of government lies in maintaining control over individuals by instilling in them the rationality to regulate their thoughts and behaviors in ways that will keep order and benefit the state. The concept of governmentality was introduced in his late work, but it stood on the foundation of career-long efforts to historicize relationships of power, knowledge, discipline, punishment, and, in light of these controlling factors, the care of the self (Foucault, 1977, 1978, 1986). These concepts are all at play in the schemes and structures that can be seen in the art of government and the way they influence the conduct of others (Doherty, 2007). Sites of governmentality include, but are

certainly not limited to, the family, the penal system, the workplace, healthcare systems, and the

education system.

Foucault's (1991) attention was on recognizing the evolution of governmentality,

examining the "conduct of conduct" (as cited in Gordon, 1991, p. 48) within populations and

individuals, and working on mechanisms through which those made subject by

governmentality—arguably anyone in the Western world—could speak back to the ways they are

governed. In other words, while it is inevitable to be subjected to governmentality in nearly all

modes of social systems or power structures, it is possible to understand why we conduct

ourselves a certain way in light of that power and to know that we are capable, to some extent, of

resisting. According to Doherty (2007):

> Governmentality is a prism that illuminates a particular stratum of enquiry, a perspective
>
> that examines, with a historical gaze, governing, as a deliberate, purposeful, technicised
>
> activity, directed at the subject, the society, or some consciously categorized subdivision
>
> of the social body. (p. 196)

Bringing to light the existence of the intricacies of government in controlling populations and

subjects is at the heart of Foucault's later work. This aim is taken up by the scholarship his work

influenced. Applying the concepts to other social bodies leads to substantial and meaningful

progress in problematizing power dynamics and examining ways in which populations are

controlled and subjects are oppressed. Doherty (2007) suggested benefits exist in examining the

further subdivisions of the social body that governmentality affects through this Foucauldian

lens, namely the education system.

Governmentality in Education Research

Foucauldian scholars have extended the concepts of governmentality into education systems. The majority of this scholarship trends toward macro views of educational institutions such as administration (Gorman, 2012) and education policy (Doherty, 2007). When they are applied to classroom discourse, there is a significant focus on K-12 settings (Schaafsma, 1998). While not specific to the context of my research in the college writing classroom, these perspectives offer insight to applying governmentality to student experience in higher education. A discussion of this scholarship serves to further build the framework for my approach. Popkewitz and Brennan (1998) stated:

> education, both schooling and university sectors, has become so central in the development of new forms of governmentality, exemplifying new strategies, tactics, and techniques of power to furnish what had become the major form of power relations defining institutions and individuals in Western society. (p. 22).

Fendler (1998) chronicled the way governmentality in modern education systems, prior to the 1900s, was apparent and debatable until it "crossed an epistemological threshold from a disputable issue to become a tacit assumption" at the turn of the 20th Century (p. 53). From this point—that governmentality in education has been taken for granted for the better part of a century—the call to understand the ways in which education operates as a feature of governmentality becomes quite clear. Fendler (1998), whose work focuses on the student as subjected to power dynamics, stated, "it is only when research makes the constitution of the subject theoretically problematic that power, in its current forms of governmentality, can be critically analyzed" (p. 60). Fendler's (1998) concern pointed to the emancipatory role of researchers' critical focus on how the self is created as a subject of power in educational systems. This was a core element of the present study and a result which implementing JTC in first-year

writing course curriculum sought to achieve. Highlighting governmentality in the transition to college is beneficial in that "governmentality provides a way to make visible the heterogeneous forces and knowledge practices that are subtly shaping conduct—action at a distance—and affecting beliefs, choices, and actions, both resistant and compliant" (Gorman, 2012, p. 56). According to Gorman (2012), raising awareness of the features of governmentality which otherwise may not be addressed during the transition to college, "encourages an examination that challenges or 'destabilizes' organizational practices which are taken for granted" (p. 63). This sentiment was not meant to fundamentally change the power dynamic; instead, it suggests researchers consider how students are unknowingly subjected to power so that educators might teach them ways to think and behave that do not forfeit their agency. Further, this enables instructors to realize the ways in which they hold and exert power in their classrooms and curricula so they may encourage the development of student agency despite the role they themselves play as features of governmentality.

Applications of governmentality in education research serve to illustrate the parallels between governmentality and components of higher education. Gorman (2012) identified features of governmentality in college such as spaces of security and normalization (i.e. classrooms, labs, offices), problematizing how discipline separates individuals in order to modify and normalize their conduct. Spaces of security cannot be understood without examining them in light of how they can be manipulated to preserve power. For instance, one might consider how bodies in a classroom or lecture hall are arranged to establish power structures. In the case of higher education, Gorman (2012) claimed, normalization is based on population statistics and managing the norm. This is most evident when "powerful tools of assessment position population statistics as the critical measure for admissions policies, faculty evaluations, and

overall institutional performance" (p. 50-51). Gorman's (2012) applications and theoretical framework served to bridge critical analyses of power to studying JTC. Perhaps the most accessible application in this case is the role assessment plays in how individuals conduct themselves. For instance, students transitioning to college take placement tests and begin to maintain a grade point average; both of which serve to categorize and normalize their behavior. Guided by similar correlations, my intervention and research design sought to problematize these power structures.

Technologies of the Self

Foucault's later work provided a sense of meaning for individuals who are made subjects by governmentality. Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality argued that no individual or population in the Western world is immune to power relations. However, this does not mean subjects are stripped of agency. According to Doherty (2007), "governmentality is as much about what subjects do to themselves as what is done to them" (p. 197). In understanding what happens when subjects are aware of the role they play in light of governmentality, and when they practice behaviors of mind and body to resist power, Foucault's (1988) concept of technologies of the self emerges.

When an individual is made aware of the way power is enacted upon them, they may engage in practices of mind and body to resist and subvert their being governed. Technologies of power, one of four "technologies," or the means by which systems operate, are comprised of technologies of the self and technologies of the market (Foucault, 1988, p.18). While necessary in understanding his larger oeuvre, for the purpose of this study, technology of the self is examined in isolation from the other technologies. Technologies of the self "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their

own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and a way of being, so as to transform themselves in

order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (Foucault,

1988, p. 18). It is through the concept of technology of the self, Foucault (1988) claimed, that

individuals are able to speak back to the power structures to and by which they are subjected.

Therefore, technology of the self is relative to the effect of governmentality on the population

and the individual; it is a method of building resistance and agency in light of the ways

individuals are governed.

Technologies of the Self in Education Research

As is the case with governmentality, some Foucauldian scholars have insisted upon a

place for technologies of the self within education research. The scholarship on this concept

focuses on micro, individual effects within educational discourse, offering a perspective that

frames this study's focus. Popkewitz and Brennan (1998) posited that study of student

populations must include both of these Foucauldian concepts:

> In developing the technologies appropriate to population, governmentality then must
>
> include a focus on the technologies of the self as well as the institutional technologies
>
> that perpetrate the art of government in ways that make it acceptable to the populace. (p.
>
> 21)

In order to understand the concept of technology of the self within the writing classroom,

focused examination on the individual as subject must first be understood. Fendler (1998) stated,

"to be subjected to education has meant to become disciplined according to a regimen of

remembering and forgetting, of assuming identities normalized through discursive practices, and

of a history of unpredictable diversions" (p. 61). With this comes the notion that students

navigate educational spaces by adopting identities which are a result of inconsistent, external

positions of power. Though it is uncertain whether or not consistency is possible, what was clear

to Fendler (1998) is that becoming an educated subject truly is a disruptive a process. JTC, which

draws on students' individual experiences entering college, directly confronts this disruption,

positing that student reflection will build resistance and aid in navigating the demands of the

college environment.

Schaafsma's (1998) research informed the ways in which student writing can be viewed

as a technology of the self. His study of a 13-year-old student's autobiographical writing had as

its primary goal an argument for analyzing student writing using a Foucauldian lens and, as a

secondary goal, an analysis of inquiry-based writing curricula (Schaafsma, 1998). In the

discussion, Schaafsma (1998) stated:

> Technologies of power and self should be seen as in relation, in dialogue, in struggle with
>
> each other, which reconfigures power as more than simply a tool for domination and/or
>
> reproduction. In addition to the cracks, ruptures, and failures in every system, the process
>
> of becoming 'one's own subject' also involves strategies that are possible within existing
>
> power relations. (p. 257)

This claim further substantiates the conceptual approach to examining the nature of institutional

power in the transition to college. This literature models applications of Foucault's (1988, 1991)

concepts within the formation, implementation, and analysis of the JTC intervention. The present

study is informed by these conceptual applications, the result of which is generative action

research that benefits student agency and development of the writing instructor's practice.

JTC as a Technology of the Self

Constituting the self is a core tenet of education. In addition to applying the concept of

governmentality to college, a correlation between technology of the self and journaling emerged

as a result of the Foucauldian theoretical framework. When designed to consider the existence of governmentality in college, journaling builds agency in students to resist and understand how to care for themselves, making the act of journaling a technology of the self.

Transformational pedagogy is rooted in teaching acts aimed to incite change in learners (Rosebrough & Leverett, 2011). Therefore, asking incoming college students to consider the ways in which they are governed in these new spaces is not enough. Transformational educators must introduce approaches to how students might build resistance to this governance; providing targeted feedback on journal entries is a potential site for building this resistance. While students are not explicitly taught about governmentality in this study, the intervention exposes them to how the concept might function within their experiences or within the institution of higher education. Similarly, technology of the self was not a topic of course content, but the concept supports journal prompt design and the inquiry into how JTC affects students and the writing instructor.

Existing studies of technology of the self in education focused on composition consider the act of reflection, writing, and the instructor-student relationship. Fendler (1998) identified technology of the self in action when a student can master knowledgeable self-control, or the ability to "reflect objectively" (p. 40). Many JTC prompts were constructed to elicit reflective writing on students' lived experiences, encouraging engagement with objective reflection. According to Schaafsma (1998), the causal relationship between improving the self and society by means of reflecting and writing must be recognized and understood. In a writing course, "student text-making is seen as an important self-constructing activity, a way of making sense of the world" (Schaafsma, 1998, p. 262). Instructors can witness and encourage students to see "writing as self-construction that is not merely representational, but performative, and not merely

performative of social expectations, but performing in certain places a disruption of those expectations" (Schaafsma, 1998, p. 266). In those moments of disruption, journaling becomes a form of resistance to governmentality and method of developing agency. It is the responsibility of the instructor, through feedback, to provide indications where these moments occur in students' writing.

The Panopticon and Pastoral Power in JTC

Concepts from Foucault's earlier work were integral to the theoretical framework of this action research study. The concept of the panopticon and the nature of pastoral power, as applied to student journaling, extends and focuses the aforementioned theoretical discussion. My study was interested in how, as the instructor designs, assigns, and assesses the JTC project, their own position of authority influences how and what students write. Exploring the role of the instructor-student relationship necessitated an understanding of the panopticon, pastoral power, and confession.

Inspired by the panopticon prison designed by Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th Century, Foucault (1977) applied the concept of the panopticon to several other disciplinary institutions. In material terms, the panopticon is a centrally located guard tower among a circular layout of prison cells where all doors face the center. From this vantage point, a guard has a direct line of sight to each prisoner. Prisoners are constantly under surveillance or perceived they are, and therefore regulate their behavior to be model prisoners for fear of being disciplined if they act out. The tower itself is enclosed, so even if there is no guard in the tower the prisoners have no way of knowing, and, unsure if they are being surveilled, self-regulate their behavior. This was the basis for population control and a foundational concept to which Foucault (1977) and those he influenced would build upon to explain the sustainability of power structures in society and

institutions. The concept was critical to my study. JTC or any journaling read by a respondent inherently includes a level of surveillance. Students understand from the onset that the instructor will read and provide feedback on their writing. Additionally, while the entries are graded for completion, there is a tacit knowledge that the activity is going to be assessed and a numerical point value assigned to the product. It should be assumed that students perceive this surveillance and, because of it, that the content of their writing will be affected. Popkewitz and Brennan (1998) posited, in reference to the modern invention of grading, that "the new panoptical gaze of surveillance-plus-judgement is the result of the new powers of writing-plus-examination" (p.22). To this point, the monitoring power of the panopticon is then internalized by the student writer, influencing what or how the student shares in their journaling. If we think of governmentality's effect on the subject as an internalizing of the panopticon and the instructor's eventual gaze on their words, we may anticipate a conscious self-regulation of what they write.

Comparatively, the concept of pastoral power and confession provides an explanation on how students might not censor their journal writing (Fenwick, 2001). Pastoral power, as explained by Foucault (2009), is derived from the power the Christian Church held over its members, regulating their behavior with the promise of salvation. Confession is the vehicle through which pastoral power is mobilized; it allows subjects to disclose their misdeeds to those in power and receive assurance that their souls will be saved. Situated in the secular educational context, the concept of pastoral power and confession has direct implications on JTC. Drawing from the same instructor-student relationship as described with the panopticon, if the student perceives pastoral power, they may be less likely to censor themselves, sharing more content than they might in typical student-instructor contexts. Foucault (1978) stated that confession "unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual

presence) of . . . the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, forgive, console, and reconcile" (p. 61-62). This parallel has implications for the writing instructor. In some ways, it enhances the potential for honest and substantial content, providing a greater benefit to the student. Interestingly, the language in the above passage shares a direct correlation with my action research study. As the "authority who requires" the journaling, I "intervene" to "judge" (assess) and "reconcile" (provide feedback for improvement) while the student engages with the "obstacles and resistances" in their transition to college in order to arrive at a "truth," or a way of thinking that yields positive experience. Besley (2007) offered a perspective on student reflective writing that considers both surveillance and pastoral power:

> [Foucault] discusses 'self-writing' as a means of counteracting the dangers of solitude and of exposing our deeds to the gaze and at the same time because it works on thoughts as well as actions, it becomes a form of confession. (p. 66)

Fenwick (2001) described the power relationship journaling creates between student writer and instructor respondent. The framework of a journal creates a power dynamic where the writer will choose to reflect in specific ways because they know it will be read by a respondent (Fenwick, 2001). Drawing from Foucauldian terminology, Fenwick (2001) posited that instructors benefit from "understanding the oppressive potential of response when it seeks to normalize, confine, or disempower writers rather than develop relationships of respect" (p. 42). The applications of these concepts proved to be insightful when considering the impact of my feedback on student journal entries and during data analysis.

Foucault's (1982) commentary on the power relationships at play in educational institutions, a system he seldom studied directly, provided profound insight:

The activity which ensures apprenticeship and the acquisition of aptitudes or types of

behavior is developed [in educational spaces] by means of a whole ensemble of regulated

communications (lessons, questions and answers, orders, exhortations, coded signs of

obedience, differentiation marks of the 'value' of each person and of the levels of

knowledge) and by the means of a whole series of power processes (enclosure,

surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy). (p. 218-219)

This discussion on educational systems is illustrative of how power regulates behavior and

thought, specifically between teacher and student. The regulatory practices at play in the

classroom had paramount relevance to my line of inquiry. Considering JTC from a critical

Foucauldian lens, the incorporation of a structured, methodical, assigned writing task may be

viewed as a feature of governmentality in itself. Interrogating the paradoxical nature of requiring

students to journal while encouraging resistance in light of their subjectivation presented fertile

ground for exploring power relationships. As the instructor negotiates this paradox, they are

provided new perspectives on their role in the classroom. Instructors' reflection on their

experience within the power dynamics of the institution and the classroom is intended to lead to

generative pedagogical shifts and expansions which will benefit students and improve

pedagogical practice.

hooks and Crenshaw's Black Feminism

While they served as the principal theoretical framework for this study, the Foucauldian

theories of governmentality and technologies of the self do not account for how, on an individual

level, social identities affect one's experience with institutional power. For example, Foucauldian

treatment of race is limited and does not describe interpersonal or psychological relations

between social groups, instead it considers how racial populations are governed in order to

benefit the state (Binkley, 2016; Sylvia, 2020). To address this oversight, I needed a supplemental theory to work with how students' layered social identities affected their experience with power in college. Given the diverse racial makeup of BCC's student population in relation to dominant White culture in higher education, a theory to support interpretations of racial experiences was necessary. Theoretical support of socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, and other social identify factors was also necessary. While I considered using critical race theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), I found greater benefit in selecting a more advanced theory which encompassed a multitude of social identity factors. Therefore, I added Black feminist theory (Crenshaw, 1991; hooks, 1990) to supplement the Foucauldian framework.

Black feminist theory, or Black feminism, provided a theoretical lens for understanding the ways in which students' intersectional identities affected their transition to college. Anticipated disproportions between students' racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic identities and those of dominant groups in U.S. higher education further informed this need. Approaching student journaling from the lens of Black feminist theory provided a critical framework through which to interrogate these layers of identity and their relationship to students' experiences within dominant and oppressive power structures in college. During data analysis, there are specific moments when I use Black feminism to interpret when and how participants react in certain ways based on their social identities. Black feminism provided an entry point through which to make sense of or complicate the role of students' identities within the institution of higher education. The theory also provided a framework to grapple with my social positioning in relation to my students'.

Sensoy and DiAngelo (2107) explained that our ideas about people's race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and ability develop from collective messages we receive from our

culture. The frameworks we use to understand these categories are often invisible. Our understanding of the relationships within and between these social categories are typically informed by macro levels of societal groupings into binary oppositions (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Recognizing these binary oppositions and the resulting dominant/oppressed relationship created or reinforced as a result of their construction is the goal of the poststructuralist concept of deconstruction (Aylesworth, 2015; Bressler, 2007; Derrida, 1976). Deconstructing binary oppositions among the multiple social identities of marginalized groups is central to Black feminism, and the philosophy relates to these poststructural concepts.

Black feminist theory problematizes the notion that there is a singular female experience, calling for the interrogation of how social identity factors such as race and class add to the experiences of women that are overlooked by feminism. hooks (1990), a foundational Black feminist, stated that the theory:

> calls attention to those shared sensibilities which cross the boundaries of class, gender, race, etc., that could be fertile ground for the construction of empathy—ties that would promote recognition of common commitments, and serve as a base for solidarity and coalition. (p. 628)

Building resilience and community across the boundaries of social groups who are oppressed and would otherwise remain isolated in their oppression is a core tenet of Black feminist theory. Crenshaw (1991) coined this concept intersectionality. The concept of intersectionality suggests that identities are multifaceted, fluid, and subjective; they are based upon a number of factors, including race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, ability, nationality, and citizenship, to name a few (Crenshaw, 1991; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). To advance equity and social justice, Black feminism suggests that not only must the binary oppositions existing among these social factors

be identified and deconstructed, but the layered identities of individuals must also be acknowledged to resist their oppression and undo dominant narratives. Interrogating the interdependence of our social identities dispels the traditional, structuralist concept that identities operate on a singular axis and instead call for the poststructuralist conception that experience is subjective (Crenshaw, 1991; McAfee, 2018; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Black feminists have applied these theories to educational institutions (hooks, 1994; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). The theory adds to the theoretical framework an entry point to recognize students' intersectional social identities as shared in their journaling. The solicitation of participant identity factors was not a component of the research design, but I anticipated these to emerge from students' personal reflections. In this study, Black feminist theory served to inform ways to engage with participants' identities relevant to their past and to their experiences in college. It also informed my approach to crafting journal prompts, selecting supplemental texts and instructional materials, and my analysis of the data.

I anticipated that the design of many JTC prompts would elicit discussion about students' social identities and their perception of how they viewed these identities in light of or in contrast to what they experienced entering college. For instance, prompts and supplemental texts that focus on the cost of college, how race impacts their transition to college, and examples of how housing insecurities affect college students would likely spark discussion in their journals about how they personally related to these topics. Black feminist theory not only informed and supported the incorporation of these topics, but it also provided a framework that, in relation to Foucauldian approaches, offered a lens through which to analyze how students discussed and made sense of their experiences. The application of this theory allowed further opportunities to consider how students make sense of power in college in what they disclosed of their subjective

experiences with race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, ability, nationality, citizenship, and other components of their identities, such as being the first in their family to attend college. These concepts provided me with a framework for learning and understanding more about my students' identities and to grapple with my positionality in relation to their experiences, in both my teaching and when responding to journal entries.

hooks (1994) contextualized the tenets of Black feminist theory in higher education by calling for educators to foster feminist classrooms that serve to de-center power from the professor and provide space and time for students' voices and stories to be told. The feminist classroom resists the traditionally White patriarchal establishment in higher education. Building community among students and between students and professors shifts power dynamics. One way this is accomplished is by encouraging discussion that confronts how race, class, gender, and other social factors that exist in a dominant/oppressed binary in society impact students' lived experiences and perspectives (hooks, 1994). Acknowledging the ways that power impacts students and instructors across these strata, hooks (1994) argued that "the classroom should be a space where we're all in power in different ways" (p. 152). When applied to pedagogy, Black feminist theory calls for open dialogue in the classroom about how social identities impact experiences and how acknowledging them fosters community-building. By being encouraged to engage with texts and prompts that ask students to discuss personal experiences in relation to power structures in college, JTC aligns with the tenets of Black feminism. Incorporating these concepts with Foucauldian theories of governmentality and technology of the self allowed for more specific engagement with components of student identity, such as race and class, with which each student has a subjective frame of reference. Black feminist theory provides necessary perspective on social identity and power dynamics.

Relevant Pedagogical Perspectives

In addition to the theoretical framework outlined above, perspectives on the puzzle of practice also includes a review of relevant literature on the transition to college and journaling practices with students new to higher education. The review of these pedagogical perspectives begins with background on FYE in higher education, followed by a discussion of the relevance of addressing the transition to college in college writing classes. Theoretical and practical approaches to journal-keeping are presented to define the design of the intervention and analysis. The review then offers perspectives on how instructors approach journaling in curriculum, concluding with a discussion of recent research studies which used student journaling to gain insight on the transition to college.

First-Year Experience

Research on the transition to college is often framed within discussions on lowering attrition rates to increase student retention (Hunter, 2006; Kelly et al., 2007; Reid, 2013; VanOra, 2019). Hunter (2006) called for administration, faculty, and staff to put forth a collective, proactive, interdisciplinary effort in fostering students' wellbeing during this crucial time in the undergraduate experience. An institution of higher education begins to convey messages to students much earlier than the first week of classes; prospective student tours, registration, and other events are moments when students begin to receive messages from the institution (Reid, 2013). These precollege events are aspects to consider from a Foucauldian lens and will be in students' recent memory as they journal on the transition to college.

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), FYE courses and programs benefit from high-impact practices. High-impact practices engage students in critical inquiry, ask they write frequently, develop information literacy, and target skills to

expand their intellectual and practical capacities (Kuh, 2008). These practices for new students can be implemented not only in FYE-specific programming, but also within general education courses. Students' first year of college should be a balanced combination of interdisciplinary and inquiry-based learning (Lyons & Voges, 2018). In recent years, educators who work with first-year students more frequently utilize reflective learning methods (Everett, 2013; Lyons & Voges, 2018). Incorporation of critical reflection in first-year curricula allows students to discover their values and motivations, "manifest[ing] meaning in the interconnected cosmopolitan world" (Lyons & Voges, 2018, p. 20). Guiding students in their reflective learning allows educators to take focus on the various power structures that students may take for granted, allowing them to identify these through the practice of reflection.

Students may perceive a transition, like that of entering college, as a singular, short-term event; however, dealing with the transition to college should be approached as a process that extends over a duration of time by those working with the student (Anderson et al., 2012). Sustained attention to the transition provides students with a greater sense of belonging as well as confidence in their new environment (Anderson et al., 2012). The new environment—college—is addressed in some literature on FYE as being particularly foreign to students. On the early transition phase, Goodchild (2017) noted, "this period can be overwhelming for students as they negotiate new systems, processes and structures" (p. 777). Goodchild (2017) pointed to "the prevailing institutional habitus" being "an alien culture" to first-year students, which is a factor of the transition overshadowed in the literature by greater attention to care for social networking and students' adjusting into new interpersonal relationships (p. 784).

Fostering social connections among new students, while important to FYE programs, is only one component of support. Often, transitioning students are looking for validation that they

are *unique* from their peers; they also seek "connection, interest, a recognition of their individuality (as distinct from the mass) and an answer that scaffolds their learning journey and identity" (Merrill et al., 2010, p. 127). Fostering academic and intrapersonal communication is a critical component of FYE programming (Hunter, 2006). Lyons and Voges (2018) stated, "it can be difficult to navigate newly found agency as a student if a learner has never been challenged to actively drive his or her own learning" (p. 25). These aspects of approaching the transition to college render a crucial task for faculty who teach first-year students and emphasize considerations of students' previous educational settings.

Transition in the College Writing Classroom

The transition to college is a period of identity forming and shifting. The college writing classroom naturally facilitates engagement with student identities—from history to politics—to finding one's place in the classroom and the greater campus community. Scholarship on the first-year writing classroom further emphasizes these points. Writing asks students to engage with their relation to power structures, their forming or changing identities, and negotiating or contesting belief systems (Scott, 2016). In denying an essentialist identity politics, student writers must be aware of the influence of power dynamics on their identities and ideologies because they will constantly be represented in their writing (Villanueva, 2016). Engagement with these layers of identity may be foreign to students entering the college writing classroom.

To be effective educators, instructors must differentiate their approach to teaching writing. A universal approach to academic literacy or first-year writing courses is counterproductive (Scott, 2016; Yancey, 2016). Historically, students entering college have been expected to learn from a singular discourse (Scott, 2016). In order to better engage students in instruction and find entry points for their learning, writing instructors must learn student writers'

histories and literacies (Yancey, 2016). Requiring students to journal on lived experiences

provides the instructor a holistic view of the student, granting them insight to these components.

The writing classroom provides a rich backdrop for understanding the experiences of

students new to college. This can be achieved when educators design inclusive, postmodern

curricula intended to build community (Slattery, 2003). As writers, students construct identity

and perform their roles in these new spaces and communities; by doing so they become more

comfortable with the language, privileged texts, and the rhetorical moves of the group (Roozen,

2016). Tobin (2004) suggested that a writing classroom should be read as a text; learning from

the layered interpersonal relationships between and among students, teachers, and the writing

classroom community drastically shapes the academic work that occurs in this space. Calling on

writing instructors to critically read their classrooms, specifically in moments of tension, Tobin

(2004) asked them to see how "*every* text—just like every student and every teacher—is

culturally and politically situated and that any particular assignment may, in fact, privilege some

students over others" (p. 135). By calling on the instructor to consider notions of privilege and

power between instructor, student, and assignment, Tobin (2004) articulated a poststructuralist

reading of the classroom. Therefore, instructors must be mindful of privilege in the classroom, in

students' lived experiences, in student journaling, and in themselves. This perspective informed a

crux of this study.

College writing classrooms are diverse, communal, and individuated. JTC asked students

to share personal experiences and reflect on their significance. Asset-oriented approaches to

students who have difficulties with writing in a new community (i.e. college) give instructors

insight to where and how students feel they belong in the new space. The concept supports a

focused intervention of sustained, thematic journaling such as JTC to address students' transition

to college and develop an awareness of being and a sense of belonging in the writing classroom, among the campus community, and within the institution of college.

Journal-Keeping: Theoretical & Practical Approaches

The current study relied on theory and practice in higher education and composition pedagogy to inform approaches to student writing. The practice of journal-keeping (Stevens & Cooper, 2009), in addition to perspectives on reflective and low stakes writing (Boud, 2001; Elbow, 1998; Fenwick, 2001; O'Connell & Dyment, 2013), informed the approach to designing the journaling intervention. Stevens and Cooper (2009) used an "intentionally-flexible, but also at times arbitrarily restrictive" definition of a journal, noting that fundamentally a journal is a "sequential, dated chronicle of events and ideas, which include the personal responses and reflections of the writer" (p. 5). A journal is further defined as being "written, dated, informal, flexible, private, and archival" (Stevens & Cooper, 2009, p. 5). Stevens and Cooper (2009) emphasized the need to integrate journal-keeping into college courses, introducing them at the beginning of the semester, and adding them to the course syllabus. This integration provides structure for a journaling component, giving students clear expectations and encouraging instructors to plan and scaffold journal writing in their courses (O'Connell & Dyment, 2013; Spaulding & Wilson, 2002; Stevens & Cooper, 2009). Implementing sustainable journal-keeping practice throughout a full semester is encouraged to increase students' capacity for critical thinking and idea generation (Stevens & Cooper, 2009). Journal-keeping can also result in shifts in thinking about writing: "Through intentional practice in the journal, students begin to change their methods of producing writing and can experience that writing *is* thinking, not something that is done after thinking" (Stevens & Cooper, 2009, p. 50). Journaling is conducive to enacting transformation within student thought, perspective, and skill.

In many college writing classrooms, there has been a tradition of assigning journals to engage students in self-reflective thinking. The literature provides practical considerations on incorporating journaling in the classroom with careful attention paid to the fact that students enter higher education with varying experiences with freewriting and journaling. Research shows that teachers must scaffold and model self-reflective writing, as students typically do not enter higher education knowing how to critically reflect, or consider topics and experiences from multiple perspectives rather than passive, surface-level engagement (Everett, 2013; Granville & Dison, 2005; Mills, 2008; Solbrekke & Helstad, 2016; Spalding & Wilson, 2002). Some students view journal assignments as busy work, leading to minimal engagement with practice and achieving little benefit to developing critical thinking skills (Mills, 2008). One must not assume that students have the skills to think reflectively or are motivated to do so; in fact, teachers must model positive beliefs to increase motivation and improve writing skills (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Everett, 2013; Mills, 2008). Fostering a level of personal communication and practical engagement with content matter should allow students to see reflective journaling as more than mere busy work (Mills, 2008). Providing frequent, substantive feedback on student journal entries is essential in fostering critical self-reflection (Everett, 2013; Mills, 2008; Solbrekke & Helstad, 2016; Spalding, 2002). Setting specific expectations, modeling journal-keeping entries and practices, and providing feedback are successful strategies for instructors to use to increase student engagement (Mills, 2008; Stevens & Cooper, 2009). Stevens and Cooper (2009) also emphasized the importance of instructors openly discussing the benefits of journal-keeping with their students.

Further considerations for JTC include how the writing is framed, how journals are assessed, and how feedback is provided. A JTC entry is produced as a freewriting response to

either a standalone prompt, or a prompt accompanied by a short text, video, or other instructional material. Elbow (1998) advised writers to practice freewriting exercises—nonstop, unfiltered word generation for anywhere from five to 20 minutes—frequently in order to improve their writing. Freewriting is widely considered one of the chief techniques for teaching students to start the writing process, whether to prime thinking prior to class discussion, brainstorm for a formal essay, or as a means for reflective writing in-or-outside of the classroom (Bean, 2011). Journals are most frequently a collection of freewriting and students asked to keep journals must be given clear direction about the practice (Stevens & Cooper, 2009). JTC entries were assigned as freewrites and as both in-class and out-of-class writing. I drew from the concept of low stakes writing (Elbow & Sorcinelli, 2005) in how I approached journaling assignments with my students. According to Elbow and Sorcinelli (2005):

> Low stakes writing is for exploration and learning: there is no concern about quality or correctness. It helps students explore and figure out new ideas, connect personally with them using their own language, become more active learners, and become fluent and comfortable in writing before they have to write high stakes essays that determine their course grade. (p. 211)

Due to course objectives and assessment requirements, the JTC assignment was assessed for completion and comprised 10% of the overall course grade. Though Elbow and Sorcinelli (2005) suggested low stakes writing not count for a grade, it is not atypical for instructors to assess student journals; 10-20% of the course grade is consistent with recommendations from the literature (Stevens & Cooper, 2009). With the exception of its being assessed, Elbow and Sorcinelli's (2005) principles of low stakes writing were applied to JTC in that the journal was a personal space for students to reflect on their experiences.

Though it cannot be separated from the power relationships it perpetuates, formal assessment of the journal was of lesser importance to the study than the exchange of ideas between student journal entries and instructor feedback. Stevens and Cooper (2009) stated that feedback "can be seen as another form of instruction" (p. 112). Literature on methods of providing feedback on student journals is extensive; the consensus is that students expect and crave responses from instructors, and that modes of feedback greatly impact student perception of journaling and their levels of reflection (Everett, 2013; Fenwick, 2001; Mills, 2008; O'Connell & Dyment, 2013; Stevens & Cooper, 2009). While I expected my strategies to evolve over the course of the semester, I anticipated mixing feedback from Elbow's (1997) six levels of responses to writing, ranging from "zero response (lowest stakes)" to "critical response, diagnosis, advice (highest stakes)" (p. 9-10). Elbow (1997) suggested it is natural to provide a mix of feedback from these levels when responding to student writing. I recognized that "responsive relationships build over time" and, that the "responder must respect the writing and endeavor to understand, engage, and finally express helpful response in ways that are minimally invasive" (Fenwick, 2001, p. 40).

Studies on Journaling the Transition to College

Reflective journaling has a rich history in the college writing classroom (Yancey, 1998) and is encouraged, with other forms of writing, to be incorporated across higher education curricula (Bean, 2011). Beyond the composition classroom, journal writing has been used and studied by other disciplines, including in sociology pedagogy to measure shifts in student awareness of race, socioeconomic class, and gender (Picca et al., 2013). A significant amount of existing literature on journaling in higher education centers on reflective journals kept by preservice teacher candidates (Solbrekke & Helstad, 2016; Spaulding & Wilson, 2002). With an

increased focus on FYE, researchers have studied the transition to college using journaling

assignments and analysis of instructor feedback, assessment, and the content of student writing.

My research methodology relied on that of education researchers within the fields of

composition and FYE who have qualitatively measured reflection and perceptions by analyzing

student journal writing. For example, focusing on components of the transition, Ishler (2004)

used interactive journals in a qualitative study on "friendsickness" as experienced by incoming

college students. Findings suggest that faculty are among those who must be cognizant and

proactive in the support of first-year students' transition to college, noting the opportunity they

have to heighten student awareness of their new environments (Ishler, 2004).

Everett (2013) conducted a study that focuses on FYE students by collecting data from

weekly journal assignments over the span of a semester. Journal entries were written outside of

the classroom and submitted electronically. In addition to student writing, Everett (2013)

included her reflective teaching journal as data for an open coding analysis. This provided

insight on instructor reflections on pedagogy, assessment, and giving students feedback on their

journaling. Everett (2013) added a nuanced study on reflective journaling in higher education to

the field. As a practitioner-researcher, she presented a narrative analysis of weekly first-year

college student journal entries juxtaposed with entries from her own teaching journal. Her

findings showed how scaffolding self-reflection increases institutional support for the

undergraduate student experience and reveals benefits for teachers to engage in the practice.

According to Everett (2013), first-year college student success can be positively impacted if

teachers center on transitions in their students' daily lives and adjustments in their identities.

Reflective thinking can be an important strategy for student engagement and the use of journals

has been shown to benefit first-year students (Everett, 2013). Consistent with VanOra's (2012,

2019) call for increased teaching practices on identity-awareness in community college writing students, Everett (2013) found benefits for student journaling to include wellbeing, self-discovery, and social engagement. Further, the institution's goals are met by assigning reflective journals because it identifies individual student needs, provides opportunities for students and instructors to communicate, and provides social and academic support (Everett, 2013).

New Approaches to Foucauldian Education Research

In many respects, this action research study on JTC is novel; in other ways it can be viewed as reiterations of past studies. The study rests upon a foundation of social theory, much of which has been explored within educational systems. The novelty of my approach is seen in the application of Foucauldian concepts to higher education and to the experience of transitioning to college and as the guiding theme of the journal-keeping intervention. Proposing action research that seeks to connect student awareness of higher education as serving a feature of governmentality and using journal writing as a means of technology of the self will be, by my estimation and scrutiny of the field, a new addition to the literature.

Chapter III explains the use of a qualitative action research methodology for the study and details the components of the research design.

CHAPTER III: DESIGN OF THE CONTEXTUALIZED INVESTIGATION

The situated puzzle of practice emerged in relation to my positionality to the context and student population, and to my own experiences transitioning to college. It was also informed by literature on the transition to college from FYE and in connection with the writing classroom. The experiential nature of my inquiry required a qualitative action research methodology, as it suited the population and context of my study. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the philosophical assumptions of action research and to provide justifications for using the methodology. Description of my research methods is presented, and include, population and context, the practitioner-researcher's role, the intervention, data collection and analysis procedures, considerations of validity, assumptions, limitations, ethical assurances, and the research timeline.

Action Research Design

The current study was conducted as qualitative action research. Mills (2007) defined action research in education as research conducted by the educator within their immediate professional context. The purpose of action research is to improve a problem of practice the researcher has identified in their teaching and learning experiences and in the related literature (Mills, 2007). Action research traditionally extends through cycles of research to inform the researcher of the root problem and identify an appropriate intervention (Herr & Anderson, 2015; Mills, 2007). Due to my limited experience teaching with this student population and time constraints to conduct the research, I did not have the opportunity for extended research cycles. To compensate for these limitations, I constructed a conceptual framework and conducted a thorough review of literature, which resulted in a critical Foucauldian approach to JTC. I designed this thematic journaling component to be the intervention used to conduct action

research, exploring the questions of how the transition to college functions as a feature of governmentality and how journaling functions as a technology of the self.

The study also considered the role of the instructor in affecting what students disclosed in their journaling. JTC sought to explore the influence instructors have in designing journal assignments that both expose power dynamics and assist students in building resistance within the power of college. Herr and Anderson (2015) presented the following as traditional goals for action research: "(a) the generation of new knowledge, (b) the achievement of action-oriented outcomes, (c) the education of both researcher and participants, (d) results that are relevant to the local setting, and (e) a sound and appropriate research methodology" (p. 67). These goals of action research support my research goals: (a) aiming to improve students' critical perspectives on their transition to college, (b) designing and implementing an intervention to engage in these perspectives, and (c) instructor reflection on the practice of student journaling and its impact on student experience.

A goal of action research is to identify and attempt to solve problems in a practitioner's local setting (Mills, 2007). For educators, this means improving their students' experiences by planning for, implementing, and studying the effects of a change in curriculum or pedagogical practice in the classroom. According to Herr and Anderson (2015), action researchers intervene in their research settings by studying research cycles intended to make sense of the changes their actions initiate. A cycle of action research contains the following elements and phases: (a) a plan of action, (b) an action to implement this plan, (c) observation of the effects on the plan within the research setting, and (d) reflection on the effects to influence further planning and action (Herr & Anderson, 2015). During the course of my study, I completed one cycle of action research.

The role of reflection in the action research process was conducive to my line of inquiry on the instructor's position of power and influence. Action researchers approach a contextualized problem and intervene with the intent to improve that situation; the results provide a discussion on what does or does not work as a result of the studied intervention (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). Action research was conducive to reflection on the need for change during the course of the semester. Adjustments to the intervention, methods in providing feedback, and other changes I made during the course of the semester are supported by an action research design. According to Herr and Anderson (2015), "the most powerful action research studies are those in which the researchers recount a spiraling change in their own and participants' understandings" (p. 69). I framed my study to anticipate, document, and discuss changes in my students and in myself. The framework for JTC was meant to enact and engage students and the instructor with the sort of change that is inherent in action research philosophy.

Habermas (1971) as cited in Herr and Anderson (2015), suggested that knowledge and interest cannot be separated, making reflection on both crucial for the action researcher. Emancipatory interest, one of the three interests motivating an action researcher, stresses "problem posing rather than problem solving" and "orients the researcher toward the release of human potential and the investigation of ideology and power within the organization and society" (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 35). The content of my research was critical of the inevitable power structures that exist in college and therefore moved to transform students' perspectives of this power and how they behave because of these aspects of the experience. I approached the action research with an emancipatory interest, given the critical approach to how power, including my own, impact student experience.

Research Methods

The following methods of research formed the contextualized investigation of the study.

Population and Context

The research population included students enrolled at the main campus of a two-year community college located in a suburban region of eastern Pennsylvania. The U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard reported the following racial and ethnic data for the 8,952 students enrolled during the 2018-19 academic year: 55% White, 23% Hispanic, 13% Black, 3% two or more races, 2% Asian, 1% nonresident, and 1% unknown. 58% of students received an income-based federal Pell Grant intended for students in low-income households. These demographics are provided to represent that many participants in the sample population were anticipated to belong to marginalized social groups, specifically regarding race and income.

Participants were enrolled in English I (ENGL 101) during the Spring 2020 semester. The sample population was recruited from one section of the course, which enrolled 24 students at the time of recruitment. All students enrolled in the course were considered as transitioning to college, and the majority ranged in age from approximately 18-22 years old, with the exception of a few nontraditional students and two dual enrollment students. For this study, nontraditional student participants are defined as "adults beginning or continuing their enrollment in college at a later-than-typical age," having dependents, or being a single parent (Ross-Gordon, 2011, p. 26). Dual enrollment participants are high school students enrolled in the course to meet high school graduation requirements and earn college credit. Students were pursuing associate's degrees or certifications in a variety of programs of study, and none majored in English. The course was taught by the researcher. No existing relationship was anticipated or existed between participants and the researcher. As the researcher, I was also considered a participant in this study.

I gained access to participants by asking the class for their consent to participate at the start of the Spring 2020 term. The terms of the study were made clear and participation was voluntary. I issued a written consent form (Appendix A), asking all students in the class if they would agree to have their journal writing used in the study. One student was a minor, and I issued them a separate parental consent which was reviewed and signed by their parent or guardian (Appendix B). The student who was a minor signed this same form once their parent signed, and submitted it to me.

Because one source of data (student journal) was a graded component of the course, I made clear to potential participants that the journal component of the course and assessment thereof would be unaffected by the study. I announced that all students who participate in the study would participate in the activities as a normal part of the course proceedings. Instructions for the journal assignment were made clear in the course syllabus (Stevens & Cooper, 2009). Participants were asked to not reveal information they would not want their instructor to know (Picca et al., 2013). During the fourth week of the semester, interviewee participants were randomly selected and asked to volunteer in two semi-structured interviews. It was made clear that participation in interviews would have no impact on interviewee participants' grade or other course proceedings.

Practitioner-Researcher's Role

As practitioner-researcher, I was entrenched in the milieu of the research context. I simultaneously taught and studied the population, designed and implemented the intervention, read and responded to journal entries, and conducted and transcribed qualitative, semi-structured interviews. Five students were selected at random to participate in semi-structured interviews with me at midterm and again in the 15th week. One of the five interviewees was only

interviewed at midterm. Formal analysis of journal entries, interviews, and instructor feedback did not begin until after the term concluded. Data analysis was a solo effort by the researcher and is described in detail in Chapter IV.

Intervention

The JTC intervention was designed prior to the onset of the data collection semester with flexibility to adjust the wording and timing of prompts and to select alternate instructional materials as needed. With the exception of the transition to college theme, I had used a similar framework for journaling activities in previous teaching positions. The journal component was embedded into the course, described in the syllabus with details on procedure and grading (Stevens & Cooper, 2009), and the course schedule indicated in-class journaling dates and when out-of-class journal assignments were to be completed. Each journal entry was initiated by a prompting question or scenario. Prompts coincided with instructional materials (i.e. assigned texts) or they asked students to journal on personal experiences or thought experiments.

The purpose of the JTC intervention was to design a semester-long, thematic journal assignment intended to provide students awareness of the features of governmentality in college and engage in thinking and writing that would assist in developing agency in light of their experiences. Through critical engagement with readings from the required course textbook, supplemental texts, and other instructional materials, students were prompted to consider ways to synthesize their experiences of transitioning to college with curricular content.

To further understand the application of the intervention, it is useful to present preliminary approaches on journal prompts and assignment design. Following the JTC concept influenced by the perspectives discussed in Chapter II, prompts asked students to reflect upon their: (a) transition to college, (b) previous relationship to education and educational contexts, (c)

current role as a college student, and (d) understanding of what "college student" means and what informs this definition. Prompts asked students to engage with: (a) concepts or perspectives relating to ways in which they are being governed in college, (b) what and how the institution of college enacts on them, (c) what role agency and choice play in their experience, and (d) what role metacognitive writing has on their transition to college. Prompts achieved this engagement by asking students to consider: (a) ways in which college is like other institutions that are features of governmentality (i.e. healthcare), (b) how features of college may normalize or regulate behaviors and affect individuals or groups (i.e. grade point averages), and (c) the existence of power relationships in the classroom (i.e. student/writer to instructor/respondent). The above lists provided conceptual approaches to the intervention. To be clear, I did not teach students Foucauldian concepts of power, governmentality, or technologies of the self. These concepts informed the nature of the prompts and texts. Examples of prompts are presented below:

1. Think about your college search, application, and admissions process. What are some barriers you experienced during this time? Who or what helped you? Who or what got in your way? Write about this process, including your level of involvement. What, if anything, did you learn about yourself during the process?

2. Discuss what the college experience would be like without grade point averages (GPAs). What would drive your motivation to perform a certain way in courses? How might the relationship between students and professors look different?

3. Think about the experience of going to the doctor's office or visiting the emergency room. In what ways might these experiences be similar to going to college? In what ways are they different? Discuss a few specific examples.

4. Think about your time in college so far and even ahead to the next year. Start by writing two lists, one titled "Things I Have Control Over" and one titled "Things I Do Not Have Control Over." Add ideas to these lists, then pick two from each list and freewrite about them. Discuss how what you wrote about might affect your progress in college.

Appendix E provides the full list of JTC prompts, instructional materials, and the schedule I used during the Spring 2020 semester.

A crucial aspect of the JTC intervention as it relates to the puzzle of practice was that it was pre-planned and scaffolded. However, I anticipated responsive flexibility with prompts and instructional materials based upon what I learned from students' writing during rounds of journal review and the first round of interviews. Thus, new approaches to journal prompts emerged as the semester unfolded, namely the adaptations to prompts delivered in light of the transition to remote instruction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedure took place over 15 weeks of the instructional semester. Student journal entries, instructor feedback on journals, interview transcripts, and teaching reflections served as data sets. For the first half of the semester, student journals were handwritten and compiled in notebooks; digital journaling became necessary after the switch to remote instruction. Physical journals were collected twice for review and grading during the first half of the semester. During these reviews, pages were electronically scanned and stored as portable data format (PDF) files. Instructor feedback was also electronically scanned prior to distribution to students. During the second half of the semester, digital journal entries and instructor feedback were collected from the learning management system (LMS). The research plan called for 10 semi-structured interviews, five participants interviewed two times, to be

recorded with a digital voice recorder and electronically transcribed. The first round of interviews were held on the college campus and the second round were held remotely using technology. Four of the five interviewees participated in both interviews, so a total of nine were conducted. A detailed narrative of the data collection, specifically in response to disruptions to the research plan caused by COVID-19, is provided in Chapter IV.

Data Analysis Procedures

Saldaña (2016) suggested coding qualitative data for patterns, which are "repetitive, regular, or consistent occurrences of action/data that appear more than twice" (p. 5) before identifying themes that emerge from this coding process. Journal entries, interviews, and instructor feedback were coded for patterns used to identify themes, or "*outcomes* of coding, categorization, or analytic reflection" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 15). Analysis of themes from all data sets were guided by the Foucauldian perspectives presented in Chapter II. For instance, prior to coding I anticipated pastoral power, confession, the panopticon, and surveillance to be relevant concepts that would apply to themes which emerged during analysis and applied coding techniques to identify these theoretical concepts. Categories comprised of the codes informed the themes that served to answer each research question. For example, the aforementioned Foucauldian concepts provided commentary on data relevant to my second research question, which probed the role the writing instructor plays in disrupting or reinforcing governmentality in college. In regard to my third question, if students used reflective writing to self-construct within places of disruption (Fendler, 1998; Schaafsma, 1998), such as when journaling about barriers they faced in their transition to college, they may be said to be engaging in technologies of the self. These examples provided an entry point to the poststructural data analysis that is presented

in Chapter IV, which is preceded by a detailed narrative of the coding methods I employed in the process.

Validity

Creswell (2014) emphasized the need for strategies of validating qualitative data, including triangulating data sources, member-checking, providing thick descriptions when presenting findings, and clarifying researcher bias. Content validity was tested by comparing themes from data analysis against themes from the literature, including findings from Foucauldian educational research studies and qualitative studies with first-year students, specifically those focused on student journaling. Selection of the data sets (journals, instructor feedback, interviews, and teaching reflections) was intentional and provided multiple perspectives to add to the study's validity. This design was intended to approach the research questions from several sources of data and provide triangulation (Creswell, 2014). As a validity measure during the coding process, I used peer intercoder agreement tests to check my coding methods (Saldaña, 2016). This process is detailed in the description of the coding process. I also used rich, thick description of the setting and research context when keeping my teaching reflections and presenting the findings. Throughout data collection and analysis, I continued to reflect on my bias and positionality to the research population and context.

As a validity measure and because I conducted the interviews as both instructor and researcher, a brief, anonymous survey was sent to interviewees following each round of interviews to provide them an opportunity to share any information that they did not wish to disclose during the interview. Seidman (2013) recommended using member-checking to verify interview accuracy and that participants are not made vulnerable by the data transcription and analysis results. Seidman sees member-checking as a measure to not only ensure accuracy of

data and analysis, but as a method to ask participants if they feel they are being misrepresented or put into a vulnerable position. Once the coding process was underway and I was able to provide an initial analysis of general findings from each of the five interviewee participants' journal entry and interview data, I contacted all interviewees and asked them to comment on a sample of transcripts (1-2 pages) and initial analysis (1 page). The analysis summarized initial findings of their insight to aspects of the journal and commented on their characterization of the transition to college. In my communication to interviewee participants, I reiterated their anonymity in the study and requested they let me know if they felt the sample materials made them feel they were being put in a vulnerable position. The member-checking method was explained to participants at the close of their last interview and all understood the process. Participants were contacted via email within three months from their last interview. One of the five participants responded and they agreed with the accuracy of the transcript sample and sample analysis, and they did not feel that they were put in a vulnerable position.

Assumptions

Prior to beginning data collection, the research design plan assumed the following: (a) that the five participants selected as interviewees would remain enrolled in the course for the entire semester and participate in both rounds of interviews, (b) that interviewees would be available and willing to engage in member-checking, and (c) that a small percentage of journal entries would not be completed either due to negligence or absenteeism on in-class journaling days. The research plan assumed the research site would be a physical classroom with class meetings occurring three times a week for a full 15-week semester. A few of these assumptions proved false due to COVID-19. Further detail regarding the outcomes of data collection and the shift to remote instruction is provided in Chapter IV.

Limitations

Limitations of the initial research design plan included: (a) that student awareness of their participation in the study may skew the content of their writing and (b) providing my feedback on student journal entries cognizant that it was going to be used as a data set in the study would unavoidably affect the content. I acknowledged this bias and addressed it as I kept my teaching reflections and during analysis.

The outbreak of COVID-19 resulted in unanticipated changes to the data collection, delivery of the intervention, and other minor adjustments to my research methods. Analysis of the data directly addresses these events, which limited some aspects of the original plan and also presented unique opportunities to the study. Chapter IV begins with alterations to the proposed methods due to COVID-19. An extended discussion of the limitations and challenges resultant of the pandemic is presented at the close of Chapter V.

Ethical Assurances

Measures were taken to insure the privacy and safety of all participants of the study and the research context. Prior to collecting data, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Kutztown University of Pennsylvania and of the institution where the research took place approved all methods. Similarly, any adjustments to data collection due to the pandemic (i.e. conducting online interviews) were approved by Kutztown University's IRB. All participants, institutions, geographic locations, or other identifiers were assigned pseudonyms and their identities remained anonymous. Raw data (journals, instructor feedback, interview recordings, and transcripts) was kept under lock and key and I had the only key. Digital records of data were stored on a single password protected electronic storage device. All physical data will be destroyed and all electronic data erased at the conclusion of the study.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews allow qualitative researchers to frame theory-informed questions, encourage participant narratives to unfold, and provide texturing to the data collection process (Galletta, 2012). A total of 10 semi-structured interviews (five participants interviewed twice) were planned to take place over the course of the study. Nine were completed. Interview participants were selected at random in the first month of the semester. Interviews were approximately 30 minutes in duration. The first round of interviews took place during the sixth and seventh week of the semester. The second round of interviews took place during the 15th week of the semester. Each interview was guided by a protocol of questions I created (Appendices C & D) and I conducted each interview. The protocol questions prompted participant discussion and follow-up questions were asked to further explore participants' answers. I transcribed the interviews within two weeks from the date each was conducted. Themes that emerge from the first round of interviews informed adjustments in the intervention, instructor feedback, and second interview protocol.

Research Timeline

This section provides a synopsis of the research timeline, including alterations due to COVID-19. I introduced the intervention and collected data during the Spring 2020 semester. While the initial plan was to collect students' physical journals during four rounds of review, this instead happened twice. After the BCC closed all on-campus class meetings for the remainder of the semester at the beginning of March, the remaining JTC entries were delivered via the institution's LMS software and entries were reviewed as they were submitted. The first round of interviews was conducted in person and the second round was conducted via video conferencing

technology. Data collection concluded as planned at the close of the Spring 2020 semester. Data analysis occurred during the summer and fall of 2020.

Conclusion

This action research study was conducted with the aim of engaging participants with reflection on power in college and their experience entering this new space, in addition to improving my instructional practices. During the 15-week data collection period, I completed a full action research cycle, with the implementation of the JTC intervention the focal point of the study. Student journal entries, instructor feedback, semi-structured interviews, and teaching reflections served as data sets which, during analysis, revealed emergent themes to inform each research question. The planned collection methods were only slightly altered by the COVID-19 pandemic, though the content of the data was significantly impacted by these events. The following chapter provides a twofold approach to the results of the investigation, beginning with a description of the raw data and coding process. The second part of the chapter details the themes and categories resultant from analysis how they answer each research question.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data collection and analysis process as well as a detailed interpretation of the results. The chapter begins with a discussion of necessary alterations to the study which differ from the planned research context and methodology proposed prior to data collection due to disruptions from the global pandemic of COVID-19. This initial discussion does not speak to all the changes the pandemic caused, but it serves to address the significant adaptations to the envisioned study. Discussions of data collection, analysis, and findings throughout this and the following chapter include mention of the pandemic's effect on student and instructor experience, and specific limitations to the study are addressed in Chapter V. The disruptions of COVID-19 on the Spring 2020 semester brought to light many unexpected moments in the case of student experiences and the benefit of the journaling component during a time when in-person contact was lost; while these disruptions did not become a central focus of the data analysis, they could not be ignored. The Foucauldian theoretical framework proved highly relevant for analysis and explored data that emerged from the study relevant to results of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Following this narrative, I present a summary of the raw data, a description of the participants, the data collection process and a data inventory, and a description of the initial coding process. The coding process is expanded into how initial cycles of coding led to categorization and identifying themes relevant to each of the three research questions. Attention then turns to a presentation of these themes, in which categories and codes are described using data points, and during which I provide interpretations of the results.

Alterations Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Midway through the Spring Break week of the Spring 2020 semester, the college informed students, faculty, and staff that due to public safety orders from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the break would be extended for a second week and that when they resumed, all courses would be held remotely over video conference platforms and Blackboard, the college's LMS. Data collection and the JTC delivery continued in an altered, yet uninterrupted fashion despite the transition to remote instruction, which began in Week 8. All four data sets remained intact, including the second rounds of participant interviews, which were conducted virtually and with IRB approval to utilize video conferencing technology. Data analysis was conducted in accordance with the stated research questions. In light of the drastically different environment of teaching and learning for the latter half of the semester and a shift in journaling modalities, themes emerged from the data that were unanticipated at the outset of the study. Some prompts were altered to shift focus to participants' experiences being college students during the unexpected "transition within a transition," which noticeably shifted the content of their journaling. For this reason, the present and subsequent chapter address some themes and literature not initially included in Chapter II. This choice to not amend the proposed literature review is intentional and serves to portray the events of the Spring 2020 semester and their impact on our learning and journaling chronologically, documenting the action research process during a novel moment in education. As the present and subsequent chapters show, conducting this study amid a global pandemic and the resulting lockdown provided significant and unique insight to student experience and suggest rich opportunities for further research.

Summary of The Raw Data

The collection, preparation, and inventory of the raw data is presented in this section, followed by description of the sample population and the coding process.

Data Collection & Preparation

Raw data collected during the Spring 2020 semester is inventoried and its preparation described in this section. Table 4.1 presents an inventory of the raw data for each of the four data sets. Seventeen students consented to participate in the study, and further detail of the sample population is provided in the following section.

Student Journals

As planned, students began the semester writing journal responses in class and for homework in physical composition books. JTC was comprised of 20 entries spanning the semester. As proposed, I designed the prompts, supplemental instructional materials, and timeline for JTC prior to the onset of the semester, leaving room for modification based upon student feedback and in response to the needs of the class. Appendix E represents the prompts and timeline reflecting adaptations through the completion of the semester. Four of the 20 prompts were changed from the original plan I designed in advance of the semester, mostly due to the pandemic. Students obtained notebooks during Week 1 and kept their entries in these until Spring Break. At the completion of the semester, I transcribed all handwritten journal entries to a digital format in order to assist in coding this body of data.

The subsequent weeks of the semester were conducted remotely and I utilized the Journals tool on Blackboard to deliver journal entry assignments. Due to this alteration, all entries were considered homework[3], detailed instructions were provided for locating the assignments on the platform, and during the course of the second half of the semester, JTC deadlines were relaxed to become "suggested deadlines." All entries were ultimately due during

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[3] While I held virtual class meetings three times a week, student attendance was optional. These meetings were recorded for students who could not attend due to circumstances related to the lockdown to view retroactively. For this reason, I did not choose to have students write journal entries during synchronous meetings.

the final week of the semester. I decided to relax the attendance and JTC deadline obligations due to the challenges of adjusting to living, learning, and working in a lockdown during these initial weeks of the pandemic. Given the digital format, data collection for online entries shifted to compiling the typed content in Microsoft Word documents for each students' journal.

Instructor Feedback

After students completed their first five entries, I collected the physical journals to review and provide feedback. I typed feedback in a summative narrative form, citing specific entries, then printed and attached these in each students' journal. I then scanned each page of participants' journals and began to compile PDFs. This process was repeated during the second journal collection and review, which coincided with Spring Break and the college's campus shutdown. At the onset of the Spring Break week, I wrote, printed and attached the second round of feedback and scanned participants' journals for digital storage. This was done prior to knowing the college would transition to online instruction for the remainder of the semester, and without the knowledge that students would not receive their physical journals back during the semester. Therefore, in addition to archiving the feedback in the PDF scans, I emailed the feedback I had attached in their journals directly to each student.

My feedback method changed due to the transition to the digital journal. I began responding to each entry rather than periodically providing summative feedback as per the planned journal collection rounds. This decision was based on content of the journal entries that I wanted to address immediately (i.e. uncertainty regarding the pandemic) and also because I was now seeing each entry as it was submitted rather than in batches. Like the digital journal entries, I compiled digital instructor feedback in a Word document.

Teaching Reflections

Beginning at the start of the semester, I kept a teaching journal specific to JTC. Entries were composed in both a physical notebook and digitally. The majority of the physical entries were written in-class when students were writing their JTC entries. After the transition to remote instruction, all teaching reflections were composed digitally. The handwritten entries were later transcribed and added to the document with the digital entries for a chronological data set.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The first round of semi-structured student interviews was conducted during the midterm and just prior to the extended Spring Break. I transcribed these five interviews within two weeks of their taking place. The second round of interviews took place during the last week of classes and during the final exam week. One of the five participants did not complete the class or the second interview. Four interviews were conducted over Blackboard Collaborate, the virtual classroom technology that I used to conduct virtual classes when we switched to remote instruction. After gaining IRB approval to conduct and record the interviews using technology and receiving consent from the four remaining interviewee participants, these interviews were conducted. I transcribed the audio within two weeks of the interviews. One participant lost internet connection for a few minutes and a precise duration was not captured, but the interview lasted approximately 37 minutes, which was in line with the average duration of the others.

To ensure validity of the interviews, specifically because they were conducted by me as the researcher and instructor, after each interview participants were emailed a brief, anonymous survey in which they were asked to include any additional information they wished to share in addition to what they discussed with me. Participants completed the survey knowing it was anonymous and that I would not view the results until after the semester was complete. Three of the five interviewees completed the survey after the first round of interviews: one participant had

nothing to add, one shared that they found it difficult to journal in English I because they had previously journaled for therapy, and one shared that the journal made them more candid with themselves and others. Following the second round of interviews, one of the four interviewees completed the anonymous survey in which they briefly shared an experience with journaling they had in a high school English class. Similar information as was shared in the surveys had been discussed during the interviews.

COVID-19 Disruptions Affecting Data Collection

There were a few instances where anticipated data collection procedures did not align with the resulting data collection outcomes. As noted above, one of the five interviewee participants became unresponsive two weeks prior to the end of the term and did not complete the course or the second interview. Of the 17 students who participated in the study, four students withdrew from or did not successfully complete the course. There was an overall decline in the online JTC completion rate as compared to the handwritten entries. Four students finished three or fewer of the nine JTC entries that were delivered online. Two of the students who completed three or fewer online JTC entries were also interviewees, which impacted the amount of discussion on journaling during their interviews. Conversely, a participant who completed only two of the 11 handwritten entries completed all nine online entries and retroactively typed and submitted two of the handwritten entries that were assigned prior to Spring Break.

Raw Data Inventory

The largest data set is the JTC student entries, with a combined total of 242 entries collected. Due to the increased frequency with which I provided feedback once we transitioned to the digital format, 93 digital instructor response entries were collected compared with the 29

collected from the handwritten journals. Table 4.1 catalogues the data for each data set by

participant, dates collected, number of double-spaced pages[4] once digitally transcribed, and

Table 4.1

Data Set Summary

Data set	Participants[5]	Date(s) collected	# Transcribed pages (double-spaced)	Duration/entries
Interview – Round 1	James	2/18/20	18	32 min. 31 sec.
Interview – Round 1	Robbie	2/18/20	20	41 min. 48 sec.
Interview – Round 1	Kayla	2/21/20	20	40 min. 59 sec.
Interview – Round 1	Conor	2/21/20	19	36 min. 38 sec.
Interview – Round 1	Breanne	2/26/20	15	29 min. 14 sec.
Interview – Round 2	James	5/8/20	14	31 min. 7 sec.
Interview – Round 2	Robbie	5/4/20	16	40 min. 13 sec.
Interview – Round 2	Kayla	5/6/20	14	~37 min.[6]
Interview – Round 2	Conor	5/8/20	14	32 min. 46 sec.
JTC entries: handwritten	17 students	1/17/20–3/4/20	55	149 entries
JTC entries: online	15 students	3/23/20–5/6/20	120	93 entries
Instructor Feedback	Instructor	2/7/20–5/6/20	20	29 handwritten; 93 online
Teaching Reflections	Instructor	1/17/20–5/13/20	34	19 entries
Totals			**329 pages**	**383 entries**

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[4] Times New Roman, 12 pt. font
[5] Pseudonyms are used when referring to participants.
[6] The exact duration is unknown due to an internet connectivity interruption.

provides notes on duration of interviews or number of entries for journals and feedback.

Collected and prepared data resulted in a total of 329 pages.

Description of Participants

This section introduces further details about the participants to provide a fuller

description of the demographics of the student data. It is important to note that, other than the

age of the interviewee participants, all demographic or social identity factors were self-reported

either in journal entries or interviews. To respect students' privacy and to allow these factors to

emerge organically in their freewrites, I intentionally did not solicit this information for the

study. I asked the age of three interviewee participants[7] who had not disclosed it in journal

entries because journal content and information shared during interviews indicated that some

interviewees were older than the 18-22 year old demographic I had anticipated. I determined the

ages of the participants were relevant for analysis and asked them to share this information

during the second round of interviews, as long as they felt comfortable disclosing.

The following provides a brief description of self-reported demographic data, in addition

to the ages of the students who were randomly selected and agreed to participate in semi-

structured interviews:

- James self-identified as an African American male, first-generation college

  student. He is 21 years old.

- Robbie self-identified as a White, heterosexual, cisgender male. He is 21 years

  old.

- Kayla self-identified as a White female and a single mother. She is 36 years old.

- Conor self-identified as male. He is 19 years old.

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[7] James disclosed his age in a journal entry prior to any interviews.

- Breanne self-identified as a female, first-generation college student.[8]

The study's 17 participants' ages and social identities aligned with the anticipated demographics as described in Chapter III. Seven of the 17 participants racially self-identified in their journaling. Five of the 17 students who participated in the study self-identified as students of color and two of the 17 self-identified as White. Ten participants did not racially self-identify. In addition to these racial factors, participants discussed gender, socioeconomic status, learning disabilities, and family education level in their journal entries. Further description of these factors is presented in the data analysis for research question 3.

Description of the Coding Process

As the instructor, I read student journal entries during the semester and provided feedback; informal analysis began during this process and when I started coding I had already read all the student entries once. Once I compiled a physical copy of all data sets, I formally began the coding process by reading selections of journal entries and interview transcripts to begin identifying passages and phrases that were broadly related to one of my three research questions. I began a list of descriptive codes that emerged from these initial readings. From this pre-coding technique (Saldaña, 2016), which concluded after having read all the handwritten journal entries, a smaller number of digital journal entries, and a sample of instructor feedback, I created a preliminary list of codes. This process aided in moving into first cycle coding, which coincided with a decision to use computer software to aid in my coding efforts.

Due to the volume of data and to better develop and categorize codes, I used NVivo, a computer-assisted qualitative analysis software (CADQAS) to compile all my data for analysis. This decision brought with it the choice to transcribe all handwritten journal entries, which were

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[8] Breanne participated in the first interview but was not available for the second and she did not complete the course. I did not have the opportunity to ask her age. I deduced from her journaling that it is in the 18-22 year range.

previously stored as scanned PDFs. As I transcribed handwritten student entries, I coded participant names as participant numbers and changed other identifying information on this and all other data sets. Pseudonyms were later ascribed for all participants. The research setting, geographic locations, and other identifying information mentioned in the raw data were anonymized in accordance with ethical considerations. All interview transcripts were reviewed for correctness prior to being imported into NVivo.

Codes to Categories to Themes

The precoding list generated prior to using the CADQAS guided my first cycle coding, which I began in NVivo. First cycle coding is not an independent process from second cycle coding or the initial categorization of codes. In accordance with my proposed methods and to effectively work with the large amount of textual data, I adopted Initial, Provisional, and, with less frequency, In Vivo Coding methods to generate codes. Initial Coding identifies patterns that emerge across data sets and ascribes words and phrases to data points for analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), provisional codes are generated from the theoretical framework (Miles et al., 2014), and in vivo codes are "the terms used by [participants] themselves" (Strauss, 1987, p. 33). Examples of initial codes generated during first cycle coding are *high school teachers vs. college professors*[9] and *meeting new people*. Examples of provisional codes are *confessionary moment* and *socioeconomic status*. Examples of in vivo codes are "*adult*" and "*community*."[10] After coding sample data from each data set, I began second cycle analysis using these first cycle codes to begin forming categories relevant to each research question. I used Axial Coding methods, which work with Initial Coding to reassemble coded data split during Initial Coding (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). With Axial Coding, I sought to identify categories

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[9] Codes mentioned in the text are italicized.
[10] In vivo codes are denoted with quotation marks (Saldaña, 2013).

from the codes and define relationships between the categories I formed with them, identifying the "properties (i.e. characteristics or attributes) and dimensions (the location of a property along a continuum or range)" to inform my analysis (Saldaña, 2016, p. 244). These properties "refer to such components as the contexts, conditions, interactions, and consequences of a process – actions that let the researcher know 'if, when, how, and why' something happens" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 244). This method of developing categories from codes to generate thematic answers to the research questions is frequently used in studies with a variety of data sets, including journal entries, interview transcripts, and field notes (Glaser, 1978; Saldaña, 2016). I wrote descriptive and analytic memos throughout the entire coding process, that provided an "intellectual workplace" (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014, p. 163) which allowed me to reflect on the patterns that emerged from the data and provided opportunities to draw connections between data points, data sets, the conceptual framework, and the identified codes, categories, and themes (Saldaña, 2016).

Performing iterations of first and second cycle processes concurrently, I proceeded to code all of the collected data. During the process, I identified more codes, splitting those I had previously created (Dey, 1993; Saldaña, 2016). For example, having initially coded any reference to emotional responses as *emotion* in first cycle coding, this data was split to codes identifying specific emotions (i.e. *relief* or *fear*) during second cycle coding. Second cycle methods included categorizing codes and using these categories to identify themes relevant to each research question. In many instances, data points fit more than one category or research question. Early in the categorization process, I acknowledged these occurrences and coded data points in multiple ways as necessary for comprehensive analysis. As a final result of this process, 192 codes, 26 categories, and 8 themes were generated. Two to three themes correspond with

each research question and each theme is comprised of two to five categories. Table 4.2

illustrates the hierarchy of themes and categories for each research question.

Appendix F presents a table of the codes, categories, and themes that resulted from this

process, organized by research question. The total frequencies with which each code appeared

across the data, code frequency for each category, and the data sets that correspond to each code

are also represented. On the table, data sets are represented as: journal entry (J), interview (I),

instructor feedback (F), and teaching reflection (R), with the first two being student sources of

data and the last two instructor sources of data. The data sets referenced in each code illuminate

the rigor of the coding process and provide evidence of triangulation. The frequency of codes is

provided because often the most frequent codes in a category gave relevant insight to answering

the research questions. However, the frequency of codes was not always an indication of

significant data. In many instances, codes only appeared once or a few times in the data. They

were included because they are unique and provide valuable insight despite their low frequency.

When discussing methods of quantifying qualitative data, Saldaña (2016) recognizes how codes

that appear just once across the body of data may offer insight during analysis. During second

cycle coding, I lumped or discarded several codes that appeared only once or did not align with

the categories that were created. However, during the lumping process, some unique codes which

appeared with less frequency were kept because they closely aligned with a category and aided

in defining a theme. Given the subjective nature of my participants' experiences transition to

college, as described in their journal and interview data, I felt it was important to be mindful of

these unique codes and retain those which were relevant to the research questions despite their

infrequency across the body of data.

Number of Codes

A large number of codes is the result of decisions I made while coding and unanticipated events that occurred during the study. I soon noticed, during first cycle coding, that attempting to answer the second part of research question 1, which asks "and how do students make sense of their experience," led to including a significant amount of coded data that did not at the time seem to align with the ways in which college functions as a feature of governmentality. The disruption of COVID-19 and the transition to remote instruction also played a role in expanding the number of codes. This disruption took place with 11 of the 20 journal entries written. While I retained many of the planned journal prompts, I changed the first two online journal prompts to allow students to reflect on the immediate situation and the pandemic. The discussion of students' challenges learning remotely and a new-found appreciation for in-person classes, among other topics, drastically increased during the second half of the semester. This led to a broader coding result than anticipated. There is benefit in such a thorough analysis of the raw data, especially given the unique timing of this study and students' first-hand experiences during the onset of a pandemic but given the research questions and theoretical framework of the study, the content of some data collected is on the periphery of the study's critical focus.

Addressing Bias in Coding

Using participant journal entries based on researcher-designed prompts as a primary data set presents a bias. I grappled with this bias from initial design through the coding and analysis process. The prompts I created shaped the landscape of the student journal data and many of the codes that were generated related to concepts I asked students to reflect upon. As a natural result, patterns emerged based on the choices I made in designing the prompts and selecting instructional materials (i.e. reflection on GPA or communication with professors). I highlight these points because they were noticeable during the coding process and required reflection on

my part as to mitigate bias during analysis. The higher frequencies of codes based on journal

prompts provided challenging moments during analysis, both in understanding connections to the

research questions, conceptual framework, and interpreting students' experiences. Coding and

interpreting the data while remaining cognizant of this inevitability was at times puzzling and

constrictive, but ultimately allowed for a deeper understanding of the instructor's role in

designing and implementing a journaling intervention.

Peer Intercoder Agreement

Saldaña (2016) suggests that, when coding solo, qualitative researchers use a group of

investigators to check their interpretive coding process by establishing intercoder agreement. As

a validity measure early in coding, I recruited a group of three critical friends (Handal, 1999) to

use a codebook I created and sample interview data in order to validate my coding process. This

resulted in an 85% match in the same sample data I had coded as compared with that of my peer

intercoder group. This process was repeated with two of these critical friends when I was close to

finishing the coding process. A sample of student journal, interview, and instructor feedback data

was provided with an updated codebook for the second intercoder validity test. This second

check resulted in an average 91% compatibility between my intercoder group and my coding of

the same sample data and confirmed that my interpretations were consistent.

Having described my data collection methods, the sample population, raw data, and the

coding process, attention will now be given to presenting the results of data analysis and

answering the three research questions. The remainder of the chapter is divided into three

sections, one for each research question, which are organized by their respective themes. At the

onset of each section, the research question is restated, followed by a synopsis of the results.

Each theme is then defined and described using the categories and codes that comprise them

Table 4.2

Themes and Categories by Research Question

RQ1 – How is college a feature of governmentality, and how do students make sense of their experience?

Theme 1 – Institutional Power Structures
    Professors as authority figures
    The price tag: economic power of college
    Grades and meritocracy
    Policies and rules
    Institutionalized White supremacy
Theme 2 – Adjusting to College
    Spaces of college
    Emotional reactions
    Schedules and time
    Behavioral changes
Theme 3 – Relational Connections
    Contrasting high school and college
    Family and friends' influence
    Relationship to peers

RQ2 – Can college writing instructors interrupt college as governmentality and or do their actions perpetuate, enable, or reinforce college as governmentality?

Theme 4 – Governmentality in Remote Instruction
    Power shifts: Instructors gain, students lose
    Interrupting governmentality in a time of crisis
Theme 5 – Power Dynamics in JTC
    Feedback de-centering instructor's power
    Confessionary moments and pastoral power
    Governing with JTC

RQ3 – How, if at all, does journaling on the transition to college act as a technology of the self, in light of the ways that college governs us?

Theme 6 – Critical Reflection on Power Structures
    Thought experiments: No price tag, no GPA
    Relationship with professors
    Comparing college to other institutions
Theme 7 – Constituting the Self During the Transition to College
    Relationship between self and college
    Identifying needs and charting improvement
    Identity-affirming opportunities
    Developing agency
Theme 8 – Journaling During a Pandemic
    Reflection on the remote learning environment
    Staying connected during isolation and uncertainty

and data points are provided for further understanding. This presentation and discussion illustrates the connection between raw data and the results of analysis. Additional discussion of the results are presented in Chapter V.

Research Question 1 and Supporting Themes

This section presents and defines the themes that emerged from data analysis for the first research question: How is college a feature of governmentality, and how do students make sense of their experience? The results from the analysis of data relevant to research question 1 show that students encountered a number of power structures during their transition to college, most of which are reliant on the other and all of which relate to the professor's role in governmentality. Students made sense of their experiences with governmentality in college in a number of ways. Results show that becoming familiar with the new spaces of college, first the physical campus and then a virtual learning environment, forced complex adaptations for students. This and other factors, such as negotiating time, were significant to the experience and caused emotional reactions of anxiety. Students further made sense of the transition by contrasting experiences in college with those from high school and by seeking knowledge about higher education from family members and friends.

Themes and categories resultant from analysis are presented below. The three themes include (a) institutional power structures, (b) adjusting to college, and (c) relational connections. Each theme is comprised of three to five categories. Codes and data points are presented to define each category.

Theme 1 – Institutional Power Structures

The first emergent theme is defined by the evidence of power and control that are at play in students' description of various aspects of college. The categories comprising this theme are

foundational to the study's analysis and provide student perceptions of the power structures

inherent in higher education and to which later analysis speaks. This theme is comprised of five

categories: (a) professors as authority figures, (b) the price tag: economic power of college, (c)

grades and meritocracy, (d) policies and rules, and (e) institutionalized White supremacy.

Professors as Authority Figures

A central tenet of this study is the power relationship between professors and students, as

professors are inherently in positions of power. A frequent topic which emerged during the

coding process was the role that professors, whether me or others, played in students'

experiences. Professors' authority was discussed in relation to other power structures that were

identified, and most often in their role in assessing students' coursework and ascribing grades.

Student data describes professors' power as being relevant to policies. In their role enforcing

policies, such as attendance, one student stated that a professor has the power and authority to

"fail the student and kick them out of class if they are late too often or if they miss too many

days" (Denis, JTC)[11]. Professors' inherent authority in relation to power structures is vital to

subsequent data analysis.

Professor's power in classroom discourse emerged as a frequent code and included

discussion of instructors lecturing and administering exams. James, a first-generation college

student, described his experience during the first few weeks of one professor's class:

> She's talking the whole time, you know what I mean? I'm just sitting there. I got to take
>
> notes I got to kind of just sponge up the information. . . . Make sure I'm always paying
>
> attention . . . it's kind of a lot . . . it's like she'll do that for what maybe two or three

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[11] Parenthetical citations are provided to indicate the source of each data point: JTC (student journal entry), Interview (round # indicated), Feedback (student's name indicated), and Teaching Reflection (date indicated).

weeks then we'll have an exam and I gotta go through all these notes reading through

reading through. (Interview 1)

This dynamic sets the professor, dispensing the information through lecture, apart from the

student, who expresses their need to absorb information on which they will be tested. In addition

to discussion of lectures and examinations, a frequent code was the *syllabus as extension of*

power. Data coded as such discussed how the syllabus served to set the professor's expectation,

was often perceived to be the sole reminder for coursework, and explained penalties for late

work or missing class. Discussion of the syllabus was typically framed as a feature of college

that was new when compared with previous educational contexts.

According to some student data, professors hold information necessary to students'

success on assignments, and students sense a power dynamic when they need to communicate

with instructors for clarification or assistance. Regarding an instance where a professor had been

unresponsive to a question, Robbie said:

if you have a question on an assignment, you can't do that assignment until you get that

email. They are preventing you, in a sense, from accomplishing that goal. When they're

the one that gave you that goal to begin with. (Interview 1)

Breanne noted one of her professors was "not on-point with what they want and when they want

it by," which taught her that "[professors] won't say anything if they're too busy. They just keep

going and expect you to know or expect you to ask" (Interview 1). This concept of professors

holding power over a student's ability to complete coursework recurs throughout the data, as

does students' recognition of need to initiate communication with professors when students need

help.

The Price Tag: Economic Power of College

The financial cost of college plays a central role to students, representing and reproducing the capitalist economic system of society in college. Finances, including expenses for tuition, books, food, and public, rideshare, or private transportation, are significant factors of the economic microcosm of college. Codes comprising this category point to students' discussion on these and other related factors such as applying for financial aid, feeling pressure to perform or behave a certain way due to finances, being in debt, and describing college as a business and the relationships therein as transactional.

The following data points expand on frequent codes that comprise this category. Compared with high school, Conor explained, "there's money riding on this now . . . if you fail it's like a harder fail to do and you've lost that money" (Interview 1). Breanne reflected on the financial consequence for not attending class:

> Every time I miss a class I'm taking money out of my wallet and putting it in the garbage disposal. I'm not one to waste money especially if it's my own. It's not even the cost that makes me walk in a straight line. It's that I'm the one paying for it. (JTC)

The economic reproduction from society influences student perception of their college education, and in many ways affects their ability to participate. In an interview, Breanne further explained how she is at times limited by the cost of public transportation, as it impacted her ability to attend classes:

> I struggle with sometimes even coming into class because if I don't have [money] I don't have [bus fare] to get here. That's one of the big things. And it's like really hard for me when I'm trying to do good and trying to be present—like I can't be. (Interview 1)

Economic power creates a cycle that Breanne feels she is unable to interrupt, despite her best efforts. The price tag of college also affects students' attitude and outlook on themselves and their peers. Lana journaled:

> I feel [the cost of college] has made me hard, in a way, when I am trying to study or concentrate in class and people are talking or distracting me it will get me angry, because I paid a lot of money to be here and though it may not be a lot to someone it is a lot to me. (JTC)

Data showed students' motivation for attending college is directly influenced by finding higher-paying jobs and many wrote about the challenges of working full or parttime jobs while in college and how this reduced the time they had for coursework. A majority of participants discussed the process of applying for financial aid. This analysis suggests the undercurrent of economics are felt by most all students as soon as they enter higher education, if not before, affecting their perspective and behavior in a variety of ways.

Grades and Meritocracy

Data analysis suggests a similar connection between economic power and students' relationship to their grade point average (GPA). The deeply embedded grade point system is a recurring concept of this study, which, the data suggests, is engrained in students from previous educational contexts but reinforced as soon as they enter college. Data from all four data sets reference points and grades, and students presented GPA as an embedded power structure that motivates or otherwise conducts their actions. The most frequent codes for this category were *grades as motivators* and *specific GPA or grade referenced*, the latter referring to students naming their course grade percentage, letter grade, or numerical GPA when discussing their classes, indicating its importance to the student.

Data reflects students' thinking and behavior as strongly influenced by the accumulation of points, leading to a high enough grade to either pass a course, maintain a required GPA for their program or to meet a personal goal. Several participants cited GPA as a primary motivator and the focus on accumulating points in a course as a defining factor in their relationship with how they relate to professors and peers. Robbie stated:

Points are a currency and to afford an objective you have to acquire a certain amount of that currency. So you hug the rubrics, you know exactly what you should do to get the exact grade that you want. So it's like strategically losing soldiers. (Interview 2)

Of note here is the correlation to a capitalist economy; to succeed in meeting an objective, the student focuses on accumulating the points or currency necessary in exchange for a desired grade. This creates a structure that feeds power to others, namely professors. For example, points are used by instructors to influence students' actions in the classroom: "there's certain classes where you have to be participating in to get the points" (Conor, Interview 1). Taylor, reflecting on her participation in virtual classes after the transition to remote learning, stated "I participated in pretty much every class session, because our professor gave extra points to whoever attended in a 3 class streak" (JTC). The data from students establishes GPA as a crux for power, and points or grades being a currency that may symbolize the transfer of power between institution, instructors, students, and economics. This category provides another cornerstone feature of governmentality in college which is seen in the data as the reproduction of and reliance upon a meritocracy. The emphasis on grades, as seen in the data, reproduces a meritocracy in that students are rewarded based on their abilities to perform within this capitalistic system, and they are punished if they do not meet instructors' or institutional course requirements. Data indicated this meritocracy, and the accumulation of points or high grades, is emphasized much more

frequently than learning course content or skills acquisition. These concepts are central to the

study and discussion of grades continues throughout analysis.

Policies and Rules

Policies and rules, either established and enforced by the institution or instructors, were

presented in student data as creating power dynamics and governing students' actions. The

policies most discussed were academic honesty policies, namely plagiarism, attendance policies,

and professors' rules for late assignment submissions. Each of these policies are entwined with

consequences that affect grades or the ability to complete a course and are influenced by the

power of grades. Most data points regarding students' feelings about plagiarism were a result of

a journal prompt which paraphrased the consequences of violating BCC's academic honesty

policy, which states that if caught plagiarizing, a student may fail the assignment, fail the course,

or be removed from the college. The prompt asked students to reflect on how these consequences

affect their approach to academic writing. It was delivered early in the course and at the

beginning of a unit where students start integrating sources into their writing. The in-class

journaling led to a discussion on defining and avoiding plagiarism in academic contexts; student

responses were reactions to the college's policy and were based on their prior knowledge or

experiences with plagiarism.

Students felt the consequences for plagiarism in college were "quite strict," "scary," and

for some, brought on feelings of paranoia (JTC). Courtney journaled that "one wrong citation or

forgetting/not knowing how to cite properly can result in some serious consequences!" (JTC) and

Lana wrote "[the policy] makes me extremely cautious, like somehow when I turn in an essay

it's going to be 100% plagiarized without me knowing it" (JTC). Though less frequent, the

notion that the policy is meant to help students was expressed by some participants, such as

Robbie, saying harsh consequences against plagiarism "helps me try and find new perspectives and information" (JTC).

In addition to BCC's academic honesty policy, participants frequently referenced attendance policies and, with less frequency, being required to follow MLA guidelines when formatting their formal essays and citing sources. The data collected and analyzed regarding student perception of these rules and policies did not evidence any student having experienced consequences for violating these policies in their past. However, student perceptions of the policies show how the policies and their consequences serve as a mechanism of governmentality.

Institutionalized White Supremacy

Analysis of data pertaining to race and its treatment in journaling and classroom discourse led to the category of institutionalized White supremacy in higher education. Similar to the above factors of governmentality in college, this is seen as being reproduced from society. These findings result from student data as well as inferences that can be made about what is missing from the data. Disparities in racial experiences among students emerged from a JTC activity discussing White privilege in higher education and prompting students to write about how race affects their transition to college. Students of color and White students had differing reactions, with the former more frequently referencing their racial identities as factors in their experiences. Of the 13 participants who were in attendance and completed the entry, six shared that their race does affect their transition to college, three stated it did not, and four provided objective responses that denounced racism but did not relate their race to their own personal experiences. The activity, which was influenced by hooks' (1994) call for confronting race in the classroom, is described for context.

In class, students read a short article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and summarized it with peer groups. In the article, Fisher (2019) reported on Jeannie Capó Crucet's experience as a Latinx author who was invited to a southern U.S. college campus to speak about her novel, which the university's FYE program had chosen as required freshman reading. During a Q&A, some White students in attendance shared their dissent of Crucet's discussion of White privilege, leading to a debate that ultimately resulted in students burning Crucet's book on campus grounds (Fisher, 2019). After reading and summarizing the article, my students responded to a JTC prompt that asked them to consider the actions of the students in the article and how race impacts their own experiences as college students. The journaling was followed by a class discussion.

In data from JTC entries, opinions emerged that argued either a stance defending Crucet, the need for more information than the article provided, or suggestion that the article itself was problematic and added to the problem of racism. A few students called into question the integrity of the reporting, saying they were not sure how to make up their mind on the event unless they had more information about what was said during the Q&A. One student suggested components of the news article were in fact fueling racism:

I think the issues in this [article] aren't really issues. It sounds crazy but let me explain. First by saying 'white privilege' and then shifting your issues into a context that fits that and then saying it's a white campus is by definition racist. I know racism is still a thing and honestly it's horrible that it is but [articles] like this only fuel it. (Logan, JTC)

Kayla, who self-identified as White, stated, "by no means am I racist, but I do think that there those out there that are racist against white people" (JTC). Both of these examples misinterpret the definition of racism and reflect thinking that aligns with White dominance. Black feminist

theory suggests that the racial identity of these students shapes their interpretation of the reported events and influences the way they deflect from naming the actions of the White students in the article as racist or discriminatory. These views, when shared in either a journal entry or in class discussion, perpetuate the White dominance of both society and higher education, despite the clarity of Fisher's (2019) reporting on these discriminatory actions, and present an opportunity to interrupt the dominant/oppressed binary.

In contrast to the above examples, some students acknowledged and denounced White privilege and racism in their entries. Taylor confronted the issue directly, stating "prominent issues like white supremacy, patriarchy, ethnocentrism, etc. are all examples of white privilege and what Jeannine experienced at that school shows us that white privilege has poisoned people's blood to not see through the privileges they have" (JTC). Breanne shared that "when you are a victim of racism it is hard to know who you are because you are constantly put down and told you are a nobody" (JTC). In what became a touchstone in her journaling, Lana, who identified as Spanish and White, shared a personal moment where she reflected on her race within the new context of college:

> My high school was mostly white and when conversations about privilege arose there was never any mutual respect and being a person of color I was frequently told my experiences or feelings weren't "valid" or "real" because someone else (usually a white person) didn't have those same experiences. College was a big transition for me. I actually found myself sitting in a classroom and counting all the p.o.c. and for the first time in my life white people were the minority. It was absolutely crazy to me. We never talked about race in that class but for some reason I felt like I was being seen. (JTC)

The journal data presented in this category were written during the same time and in the same classroom space. This speaks to how differing and intersectional identities shape students' perspectives on issues of race and it illustrates how varied these perspectives can be. The writing provided me with insight to students' varied experiences about race and college, whether firsthand or in reaction to the events on another college campus. Black feminism sees this as an opportunity to not only acknowledge these differences, but to disrupt the dominant/oppressed binary that is evident in the events reported on in the article and in some of the student responses. During our discussion that day, students shared a similar mix of reactions as presented in the above journal data. While facilitating discussion, I was mindful to confront the issues of racism and White privilege evident in the article, emphasizing the signification of book burning, specifically of White people burning a book written by a Latinx woman, and underscored my conviction that issues of race have a vital role in college classroom discussion. I echoed this in feedback to their journaling as well.

Outside of the "book burning" entry and discussion, race or racial experiences were discussed minimally in the journals. As a supplemental text in a later JTC prompt, I included Langston Hughes's (1949) poem, "Theme for English B," in which the Black speaker addresses how his race, in contrast to his White college instructor's and classmates', impacted his sense of belonging in college, but the prompt did not explicitly ask students to discuss race. Only one student, Lana, wrote about race in this subsequent entry. Lana's above discussion of feeling seen was a theme which she returned to in that subsequent entry which included Hughes's (1949) poem and which is discussed in the analysis of research question 3.

These finding suggests that, had I not included the prompt about Crucet and the college students' White privilege, race would not have been a part of the journaling discourse.

Conversely, had I furthered discussion about race and White dominance in higher education, these topics may have been more frequent in the journals. Therefore, if students only talk about race when their instructor asks them to, institutionalized White supremacy in higher education is evident in its dictating that race is not considered appropriate to discuss. This institutional power exists in the absence of students' discussion of race and suggests its reinforcement or disruption must be exercised by the instructor. This can be seen as an instance where I am reinforcing the social relations of racialized groups from society in college. Black feminism sees moments like these as fertile ground to encourage reflection on the intersectional identities of students and professors in order to share perspectives and disrupt dominant narratives. Further discussion on confronting White supremacy through classroom discourse is presented in Chapter V.

Theme 2 – Adjusting to College

The second theme resultant of analysis of research question 1 addresses the latter part of the question, which asks how students make sense of their experience in college in light of governmentality. While much of their sense-making is evident in the reflective act of journaling itself, analysis on the intervention is presented later in the chapter. This and the subsequent theme focus on the content of those reflections. The theme of adjusting to college is defined as how students behave in, think about, and feel in their new surroundings. Four categories comprise this theme: (a) spaces of college, (b) emotional reactions, (c) schedules and time, and (d) behavioral changes.

Spaces of College

The physical college campus was frequently discussed. In JTC entries about the first few days in college, much student journaling discussed the process of becoming familiar with buildings and classrooms. A progressive acclimation is noticeable from early JTC entries to the

mid-semester interviews, and reflections indicated that a significant amount of attention was given to locating classrooms. Many students discussed the concern for locating classrooms as being motivated by their fear of being penalized by their instructors for arriving to class late. In their journals, students catalogued different buildings they were familiar with, explaining whether they knew where places like the restrooms, cafeteria, or student lounges were located.

Data points for this category reveal the relationship between space and student experience. For instance, Emily "was lost at times and unsure of what to expect . . . spending what felt like hours searching for different classrooms " (JTC). James described a lecture hall as:

> set up . . . kind of like in those movies where it's like these huge classrooms. . . . You walk in its just—just like it's a podium and then I mean this big board, right? Um it's got like maybe just a bunch of rows that just go higher and higher . . . I first walked in and was just like "yo whoa whoa" it's just "this is weird . . . this is insane ." (Interview 1)

The post-COVID-19 transition to remote instruction added a different appreciation to the physical space of the college campus. Students expressed that they missed being able to go to the library or another space on campus to study before or after class and when contrasting these spaces to their bedrooms or other areas in their homes shared how campus spaces positively affected their ability to focus and learn. Navigating the virtual spaces of college, both in online class meetings and the LMS, was described and in a similar way to their first learning how to navigate buildings on campus. This is one feature that arose from analysis that provides insight into students' "transition within a transition" to college during the Spring 2020 semester. Post-COVID-19 student data explored the new environment:

I'm a very like environmental person. Like I do certain things in certain places and school

is where I did my homework. Like I didn't do my homework at home. And now I have to

be like "no, no brain, we're going to change that." (Robbie, Interview 2)

Similar data was shared by James:

 Before everything happened I tried like when I was at school, right? I wouldn't leave

until I had to do whatever I have to do. . . . that's how I try to operate . . . if I'm in school,

if I'm in the setting . . . I can focus better. I know what I need to do. I can get it done like

that. (Interview 2)

The physical and virtual spaces each play a large role in how students adjust to college and the

concern for becoming lost or being late to a class for fear of penalty is a motivating factor. The

absence of a physical college space underscored first-year students' reliance on the campus as a

necessary learning environment.

Emotional Reactions

When given the opportunity for reflective journaling, participants shared a significant

amount of content on their emotional reactions entering and adjusting to college over the course

of the semester. Most data points in this category resulted from JTC entries and interviews pre-

COVID-19, however this also includes emotional reactions concerning their experiences as

college students during the pandemic. The most frequently coded emotions were *anxious or*

nervous, *stress*, *enjoyment or excitement*, and *fear*. Though not as frequent, there were moments

in the data where students expressed feelings of pride, confidence, gratitude, satisfaction, and

happiness. Emotions were typically discussed in relation to a feature of college (i.e. grades,

public speaking), however emotions were shared in a general sense of being in a new space and

included anticipating how they were going to relate to their peers. Some reflection was on emotions students felt prior to starting college.

In an interview, Conor expressed a fear that stemmed from feeling unconfident about his abilities as a college student: "I always had a fear of college. I was like, 'oh, I'm not going to make it in college. I'm not built that way'" (Interview 1). When prompted to write about how he felt during his first few days of college, Conor wrote:

> One word . . . scared. I was scared because it was a start of a new chapter in my life, becoming an adult. There was more than fear, there was confusion, lots of confusion. There was anxiety too, but I was also contempt and excited. (JTC)

Edwin, a nontraditional student, shared a concern about fitting in socially, among other stressors:

> One thing that I knew for sure was that I'd be so much older than everyone in all my classes, so my anxiety was through the roof! Also a lot of panic and stress, stress about time, and just life. (JTC)

The frequent reference to emotion indicates that students are attuned to their feelings and readily share them in journaling. The majority of emotions trended toward unsettled or negative reactions to entering college; worries stemmed from unfamiliar and high-stress environments. This indicates a generally negative emotional response in students entering college, which in many cases is brought on by being unsure what to expect, worry about fitting in socially, receiving a heavy workload, concern about their grades, and the stress of managing their time.

Schedules and Time

Adapting to new schedules and learning how to be constructive with their time is central to how first-year students make sense of their experience navigating the new demands of college. This is something many students are learning, either through their own means of trial and error

and or from the guidance of instructors in mandatory college skills courses. Planning time for

attending classes, jobs, family responsibilities, social life, commuting, and, most frequently cited,

their coursework load, were described by students as the factors driving their need to learn time

management. Many students shared that their main focus when scheduling classes was making

sure they are planning around their work schedules, and Kayla and Edwin, two participants who

were parents, indicated the need to carefully plan their time so they can care for their children.

Data analysis indicated strong correlations between time, behavior, and power. Conor

explained how he imagined college to operate, which was quintessentially Foucauldian: "I

pictured like . . . everything's on time. Everything's punctual like, you know that type of mindset

like how prisons run" (Interview 1). A notable observation is that when discussing their classes

either in JTC entries or in interviews, it was common for participants to not only name their class

and in some cases the section number, but to also list the days they had those classes. Some

participants provided the class meeting times, as well, without being prompted. This was either

indicative of their reinforcing the schedule for their memory, or sharing with me, as an instructor

of one of their classes, the time commitments they had in addition to English I. Regardless of the

reason, this specificity in discussing their prescribed schedules indicates the importance of their

putting them to memory in the early weeks of the semester.

Deadlines for assignments, a frequent code in this category, can be seen as an extension

of power which influences student behavior in relation to time. Illustrating the connection

between professor's power, GPA, and time, Breanne said, "on the syllabus it already says, 'you

get 10 points off every day you're late.' It's like no exception. And like you can't really like

argue with that" (JTC).

Alice explained how missing deadlines early on in the semester can affect the rest of the course:

Even with me trying to get better at turning work on time etc. that is still not my strongest

strength here in college you also don't have much room for mistakes as well cuz getting

back on track is a tough thing to do. (JTC)

Meeting prescribed schedules and deadlines as to avoid receiving low grades means students

must form or adapt their routines and habits.

COVID-19's disruption further illuminated students' relationship to time, schedules, and

routines and how they make sense of the transition to college. Regarding how he experienced

time during remote instruction, Conor wrote:

Mostly the time melds and I don't even know what day it is anymore. Work seems to be

okay except for all of the research papers due around the same time and due dates

definitely come way faster than expected. My schedule is off and so is my sleeping but

having the online classes does form a kind of regular routine. (JTC)

Robbie's entry to the same prompt described his change in routine: "My sleep schedule used to

be consistent. . . . Now in quarantine I don't go to bed at the same time anymore because what's

the point?" (JTC). The switch to remote instruction underscored the significance of schedule and

routine, and students recognized this contrast in their reflections. In this case, a regular schedule

and routine appears to be crucial for students transitioning to college. In both pre-and-post-

COVID-19 data, time management was often discussed as a skill in need of refinement. In

Foucauldian terms, this speaks to the control over the body that college accustoms students to

through its governmentality. The forced adjustment to time is expanded upon with data analysis

on the third research question regarding how students use the journal to identify needs and chart

progress.

Behavioral Changes

The final category comprising students' adjustment to college centers on their behavioral changes. Adaptations to behavior is seen in previous categories, however this category results from data where students reflect on the behavioral changes which are forced in light of being in college, their perceived behavioral expectations of being a college student, and how they think about these changes in behavior.

Relevant to the concept of time and coursework, Logan stated that "college will force you to get up early or stay up late just to get assignments done" and "behave like more of an adult if success is something you want from it" (JTC). These two points, the former concrete and the latter more abstract, summarize the nature of much of the data belonging to this category. When discussing his behavior in the classroom, Conor shared, "I was sometimes lost for what I should say in certain scenarios and how I should act in certain classes" (JTC). In an interview, he explained the reasons for situational changes in behavior, stating, "I guess cuz you act a little differently in every class. Depending on the professors, the people, and if you really like the subject or not" (Conor, Interview 1). Here is an instance where professors and peers may determine how a student behaves, and Conor's explanation about monitoring and changing his behavior depending on the situation is a decisive instance of perceiving and adapting to the bodily control produced by governmentality.

Social factors affected other participants as well, whether it had to do with their level of participation in class, interacting with peers, or their changing mannerisms. Taylor observed a concrete change in her speech patterns as a result of being in college and wanting to adapt to those around her. She wrote:

> My speech drastically changes when I'm at school. I become much more well-mannered
>
> when speaking with my classmates and teachers. This can be because students like

myself want to leave a positive impression on other people in a professional academic

setting. (Taylor, JTC)

Speaking to the ways college forces her to behave, specifically while contrasting her experience

in high school, Lana wrote, "college forces you to behave a certain way by the lack of forcing

you to behave one particular way which ties back to independence and responsibility" (JTC).

This captures students' sense of knowing the expectations of them as a college student and

shows them they must internally motivate to meet those expectations. This concept emerged

across much of the data and is discussed in the forthcoming theme.

Theme 3 – Relational Connections

The theme Relational Connections further speaks to how students make sense of their

transition to college by considering their previous experiences in educational institutions as well

as how they describe the social relationships, both within and outside of college, that shape their

experiences. Three categories comprise the theme: (a) contrasting high school and

college, (b) family and friends' influence, and (c) relationship to peers.

Contrasting High School and College

Reflections on their experiences in high school is one of the most common ways students

made sense of transitioning to college and the institutional power structures in higher education.

While some comparisons are made, students typically pointed to the contrasts between the two

institutions. For example, high school teachers, in contrast with college professors, provided

constant reminders about assignments or exams whereas their professors in college provided

minimal reminders for these and instead used a syllabus to communicate this information.

Frequent discussion in journal and interview data indicated a different sense of responsibility and

a shift to more independence than was felt in high school. Reactions to this independence was

mixed but widely felt by the majority of the participants, including students who were dually

enrolled or had graduated from high school several years prior.

In relation to their high school experiences, students' sense of freedom was amplified in

college. Some data shows that this restriction of autonomy in high school left observable,

lingering effects of the conditioning to their high schools' power structures. One of the codes

describing data in this category is *high school as governmentality* and data coded as such shows

that students felt like they were being governed while in high school, whether by teachers or

policies. From a dress code policy to the way students were dismissed from classes, the absence

of specific governing features they were accustomed to in high school led to a feeling of freedom

once in a new educational setting. Kelly noted that, having been made to wear a uniform

throughout high school, she was pleased to choose her attire now that she was in college.

Observing scheduling and dismissal practices, Lana wrote:

> It's very different than high school, the different class schedules, only having class
>
> certain days a week . . . but the thing that is messing me up the most is the fact that
>
> there's no bell . . . the fact that there is no bell to signal that classes are starting or ending
>
> really trips me out. (JTC)

This observation speaks to the conditioning students are subject to in high school, specifically

around prescribed schedules, and suggests that these factors inform their relationship with how

they experience class schedules and class meetings in college. The subtleness of Lana's

observation that there is no bell to cue the beginning or end of classes suggests that there are

likely other subjective conditionings students bring with them from high school which factor into

their transition to college. The most frequent point raised when students juxtaposed their high

school experiences to their experience entering college was centered on coursework, deadlines, reminders from teachers, and the impact on personal responsibilities. Kayla explained:

> In high school . . . there's a constant reminder of what's due the next day. And you have [class] five days a week. College you may only have the class two, three times a week and you're expected to know what's due those days. And you don't get the reminders. (Interview 1)

Further, Emily noted that in high school, teachers would "spoon feed" students (JTC). Lana identified a contradiction between the two which again captures an evolving sense of self while reflecting on her transition between institutions: "college is somehow more laid back, yet more stressful than high school" (JTC).

The differences between the two institutions and the data from students' reflections reveal how, in high school, students felt like they were constantly being told what to do and that they appreciated the freedom they perceived in college in contrast. This indicates that governmentality is not less prevalent in college but that it is experienced more subtly than in high school. Students' reflections also indicated that while they know what the expectations are to becoming an independent college student, developing that autonomy is at times frustrating and at other times rewarding.

Family and Friends' Influence

Data revealed relationships with family and friends as influencing how students experienced transitioning to college and filtering the way they experienced or adapted to the power structures of the institution. Robbie was encouraged to go to college by a close friend who was already attending BCC. They helped with Robbie's application, financial aid, and orientation processes, providing him with confidence and relieving anxiety during that time

(Interview 1). Denis was given advice from his sister, a BCC graduate, on strategies for navigating not only the campus but also how being a college student differed from being a high school student (JTC).

The education level of the students' families impacted their relationship to the institution of college in varying ways. Data indicated that students whose parents or family members were college graduates felt a greater sense of belonging, preparedness, and support because of these relationships. Robbie, whose father holds a PhD, shared that while in high school he and his father would discuss Robbie's plans for his major and his father would offer advice based on his own experiences and knowledge (JTC). Familial influence was also seen from parents of first-generation college students.[12] For example, James described feeling pressure from his parents during his first few weeks in college:

> They always expect me to "yo study study study study" and they're kind of like just kind of stressing me out. . . . . It's like "yo I'm on top of my work. I'm doing everything. I'm fine." You know what I mean? "I'm okay. I'm good. You guys need to relax" and they would just constantly, constantly like be on my back and it's like I wish I could reassure them in a way. . . . Show them that I'm learning. (Interview 1)

Though it is not delivered to the student directly from college, this pressure from parents is an extension of the institution's power and affects the student's relationship to college and their family. As presented in an earlier data point, James indicated that he would complete his homework on campus, so it was difficult to make visible to his parents when he was studying. He shared he would sometimes save coursework to do at home just to make the act visible to them. The switch to remote instruction and the result of staying at home during the pandemic

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[12] Five participants self-identified as first-generation college students.

changed not only students' ability to be in the physical space of college, but it also impacted their proximity to family members.

Relationship to Peers

Interactions with other college students was a recurring component of journal and interview data. When reflecting on their initial experiences in college, the most frequent codes for this category were *meeting new people* and *compares self to others*. The range of codes also included discussing the diversity of peers, degrees to which they were socially active, and discussion of the sense of community they felt. When peers in college were discussed, there was a distinction between academic performance or behavior in the classroom, and more general points about socialization unrelated to academics.

When comparing themselves to other peers, data points varied. Kayla wrote that "other students seemed to be having no problems whatsoever" while she struggled to keep up with coursework (JTC); Logan wrote "the transition to college for me was a bit easier than most" (JTC); James shared that he is at times lost in class discussions when "everyone in this class I know for a fact they all understand this way better than I do" (Interview 1); and Conor, describing his lack of socialization, speculated on how some students had strong social connections to their peers and that other students "like me who are first timers or who . . . don't really talk to many people outside of class" miss out on those relationships (JTC). In not one of these cases did students reference a specific example that confirmed or denied their perception, which points to the power imagining others' situations has for allowing that perception to define their experience or sense of self.

Discussion of peers in college was frequent and amounted in more data than was anticipated at the onset of the study. Relationships with peers were described in a variety of

ways. For example, Robbie described a division he observed between peer groups when it came to their focus on academics:

> I feel that when in college you are forced to affiliate with 2 "factions" the people who are here to survive, such as will allow cheating of some sort don't strive for "perfect" grades or stretch themselves to grow more than usual. Then there are the ones who are here to thrive, they do all the extra credit, cry over a test score of 98%, and won't share notes if you're absent. (JTC)

This statement again reflects on the power GPA has over students, and moreover, in how Robbie perceived his options for socializing with these two groups. Keith considered the way disruptive behavior might be perceived by his peers, which recalls discussion of economic power in college and how it might influence student relationships:

> Your classmates in college may have an impression on how you are behaving. The rest of the class are taking up their own time and money so they want to focus on class and don't want to be distracted by someone who cannot behave themselves. (JTC)

Echoing a similar sentiment, Lana wrote about what she sees as a significant aspect of social learning and discourse in college courses: "A big part of college is opinion sharing and with that comes having to respect others' opinions, no matter how much I don't like them or want to change them" (JTC).

While these data points illustrate conflict among peers, there were many students who shared feeling a sense of community or who expressed that community was an ideal in college. Examples of journal data points of the in vivo code "*community*" include: "everything is on you . . . but there is always help or a community to assist you" (Conor, JTC); "there is still a sense of community, everyone is there to learn and we are all struggling as college students" (Lana, JTC);

and students and professors can work "as a community . . . pushing past our own worries to

succeed together" (Robbie, JTC). Further, Breanne shared that she was impressed by the amount

of social diversity in the student body at BCC and, while in other areas she noted being an

introvert and naturally hesitant in social situations, she highlighted this feature as broadening

opportunities to make friendships:

> I like the diversity in culture . . . and how easily you can find someone that you connect
>
> with or how easy you can find someone that is so different to you and you have never
>
> seen before outside of Bellevue and you can find right here still in Bellevue. (Interview 1)

The sense of togetherness felt by students in the first half of the semester was brought into

greater focus after the switch to remote instruction, and its absence highlighted the importance of

the connectivity necessary to achieve a sense of community. The lack of peer interaction affected

students in various ways, but most all who discussed remote instruction pointed to their feeling

like they were learning in isolation from their classmates, whom they missed. When reflecting on

his experience after the switch to remote instruction, Conor shared that he had just started

becoming more socially active on campus, having joined a club and recently completing a group

project with a few classmates. After moving online, he began feeling lonely and "miss[ed] that

student-on-student interaction inside the class" (Conor, Interview 2). He also speculated that

classmates who had developed closer friendships early in the semester were staying in contact

about their coursework over social media or texting while he sensed his social disconnection

intensify from what he felt prior to the COVID-19 disruption (Conor, Interview 2). Social

connectivity is a significant feature of students' transition to college and while students reflected

upon it, there were varying degrees to which they emphasized its importance to them personally.

Not only do these social networks allow them to make sense of their transition, they provide

support in light of college as governmentality, such as in building community, and also reinforce power structures such as meritocracy or economic power, when students compare themselves to others or when their social behavior is affected as a result of peers' attitudes toward grades.

Research Question 2 and Supporting Themes

The analysis of data pertaining to the second research question turns the attention to the writing instructor's influence on college as governmentality. The second research question is: Can writing instructors take action to interrupt college as governmentality and or do their actions perpetuate, enable, or reinforce college as governmentality? Data analysis revealed that while instructors have an inevitable role in reinforcing it, by interrogating their power and how students experience it, there are opportunities to de-center power and interrupt college as governmentality. The switch to remote instruction, while an unanticipated component of this study, provided an area to focus analysis for this question. Early in the transition, it became evident that students had to forfeit a significant amount of power. With a small or nonexistent peer network, and by being forced into a new and confusing virtual learning space, students had to solely rely on and communicate with their professors for information about their courses. However, data analysis also revealed that the writing instructor was able to interrupt governmentality during this time by adapting attendance protocols, assignments, and deadlines to support the needs of the students in light of the changes brought on by the pandemic. Further, while JTC in some ways served to perpetuate governmentality (i.e. word count requirements), the journal had a significant role in interrupting college as governmentality. JTC prompted critical reflection on power structures in college and allowed the writing instructor to leverage pastoral power through feedback by positively enforcing critical reflection and acknowledging students' experiences.

The themes and categories relevant to research question 2 are presented below. The following themes were developed during analysis: (a) governmentality in remote instruction and (b) power dynamics in JTC. Each theme is comprised of two to three categories. Codes and data points are presented to further describe each category and theme.

Theme 4 – Governmentality in Remote Instruction

Power dynamics inherent to college were evident in all four data sets. When the college unexpectedly switched to remote instruction,[13] data revealed that power shifted to the institution and instructor and away from students. Analysis shows there are also ways that the writing instructor was able to disrupt this imbalance in power. Two categories assist to define this theme: (a) power shifts: instructor gains, student loses and (b) interrupting governmentality in a time of crisis. The research question speaks about college writing instructors objectively. As the practitioner-researcher and the sole writing instructor in this study, the data pertains to my pedagogical choices and students' perception of these. In order to better understand shifts in power during the transition to remote instruction and juxtapose students' experiences with different courses, student data includes their experiences with instructors in courses other than English I. Those experiences were readily shared.

Power Shifts: Instructors Gain, Students Lose

Findings presented in this category address the general lack of power students felt during the second half of the semester. *Limitations of technology*, *surveillance in remote instruction*, *lack of peer interaction*, and *limited access to instructor* were the most frequent codes for this category. Technology limitations ranged from access to computers or internet to varying levels

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[13] Teaching Reflection data at times referenced this as "emergency" instruction and documented how students and the instructor were not operating within a traditional, planned remote or online course. I most commonly use "remote instruction" when referring to this instructional format with the understanding that delivery was unique to the Spring 2020 semester.

of professors' or students' technology literacy, specifically with the LMS. The first data point

presents the technology access and technology literacy disparity that students were made to

confront with no warning. Having relied on BCC technology resources on campus, James was

forced to purchase a laptop in order to be able to complete courses for the remainder of the

semester. He discussed this, and his unfamiliarity with the technologies that were being utilized

by his instructors:

> I didn't have a laptop at the time and I was kind of like---I need to get one. Like I just I
>
> had to get on Amazon and try and get one as fast as I could. Cuz I know if I didn't---if I
>
> didn't try to get one I wouldn't be able to do anything. . . . And I---I've never had one
>
> before so kind of setting it up and just kind of like it was---it was new for me. I never had
>
> a computer or anything like you know what I mean? So that---that was new. And then I
>
> um I never did online classes either before. So that whole thing---like I never heard of
>
> Zoom . . . that's all new to me you know what I mean? And it's still kind of strange.
>
> (James, Interview 2)

James discussed one class in particular where the instructor's methods and the course material

made it difficult to follow in a virtual environment. As a result of not feeling like he was able to

keep up and receive a passing grade in the new remote setting, James withdrew from the course a

few weeks prior to the end of the semester.

The Foucauldian concept of surveillance had application during online class meetings

because of usage or protocols for cameras during virtual class meetings. BCC did not initiate any

uniform method or protocol for virtual class meetings and left the use of video or audio during

these up to the discretion of each professor. There was also not a standard for when and how

these classes were to be held. Students' experiences with virtual class meetings varied by course,

as did their utilization of the LMS or other means of communication. Discussion of virtual

classes was captured in the data. The sense of being surveilled affected students' behavior and

attitudes during these classes. Of the students who discussed camera use during class meetings,

most explained that they kept cameras turned off, either because they felt "self-conscious"

(Breanne, JTC) or to ensure a faster connection (Conor, Interview 2). Students explained that

most of their classmates kept their cameras off, too, and Kayla said, "if everyone else had theirs

on I probably would have mine on" (Interview 2). Robbie, who had a class where speeches were

presented, said in this case the students who were presenting were the only ones required to have

their cameras on for the duration of the class, which made him feel singled-out (Interview 2).

Discussing one professor's virtual class meetings, Kayla wrote:

> There were times where he did require us to have on the mic and the video because there
>
> were times where we had to do presentations and we had to participate in like a group
>
> type thing. . . . there were times where like the cameras weren't working so for that you
>
> know he did have to unfortunately take off points. (JTC)

Despite the varied experiences student had with camera use in virtual class meetings, Robbie and

Kayla's examples bring to light instances where grades may have been impacted by a students'

choice to not have a camera on, for personal reasons or due to a technological issue. This is

further evidence of how instructors' power, combined with the power of grades, increased while

students' power decreased during remote instruction.

Relevant to students' discussion on building community with peers and professors during

the first half of the semester, the following data points illuminate how limited access to

instructors and less opportunity to socialize with peers in the classroom during remote instruction

ultimately stripped students of agency and inevitably shifted power to the instructor. Students'

social networks greatly changed in the latter half of the semester: "The only people I ever talked to, unless it was on the online classes, were my professors and the people in my home" (Conor, Interview 2). Robbie, when contrasting virtual classes to in-person, illuminated how much of a resource his peers in the classroom had been for him: "You can't like talk to the person next to you about what the professor is talking about because nobody's next to you" (Interview 2). This feeling of isolation was echoed in JTC reflections, such as Lana's, who "hated" the online classes because they "lack the feeling of community" (JTC). The data in this category emphasizes that by disrupting the networks students had formed among their peers in class, power shifted to the instructor and made it more crucial for students to ask questions or otherwise reach out for help:

> It's much easier to ask another student or the professor in person by raise of hand than to send an email and making sure I'm asking my question clearly enough, then waiting for a reply on my email. Depending on when I ask my question the professor might not get back to me a couple hours later when I'm at work. (Denis, JTC)

Asking questions emerged in areas of analysis presented later in the chapter. The effect that transitioning to remote instruction had on methods of communication is notable, in that it delayed or hindered students' ability to request and receive information.

Early in the transition to remote instruction, I speculated on the effects of adapting to the unanticipated circumstances. My increase in communication over email and phone made me feel like I was embodying a different kind of power and involvement in students' lives:

> Even though I am trying my best to support my students during this transition to online instruction, I am constantly wondering if I am asking too much of them. Even with what I feel like is the bare minimum in terms of assignments and online participation I am

enforcing governmentality. I feel that more so now than ever. This is because I now hold

this power in a different way. My institution asked me to call students who were

unresponsive during the first week of online instruction to ask if they will reconnect.

Though motivated by care and executed in a caring manner, this action may be perceived

as intrusive. (Teaching Reflection, 4/9/20)

Although there is a degree of inevitability in this shift of power, the data suggests that there were

specific structures in place that either benefited or disenfranchised students during the

transition[14]. A consideration of the adaptations that I made during the second half of the

semester is the focus of the analysis in the following category.

Interrupting Governmentality in a Time of Crisis

Some of the choices I made regarding virtual class protocols during the second half of the

semester affected student agency either when compared with traditional online courses or in

comparison to their other professors' approaches to the emergency remote instruction. Data

collected toward the end of the semester revealed ways to mitigate the imbalance of power that

occurred in the initial transition and that some pedagogical choices gave students more

autonomy. While several adaptations were made, three emerging in student data were (a) virtual

classes were held at the same date and time as we had met while in-person but these were

optional and they were recorded with the expectation that students would view the recording at a

later time if they could not attend; (b) deadlines for assignments, including JTC entries, were

adapted to suggested deadlines and ultimately made due by the end of the semester, and I did not

penalize for any coursework submitted late; and (c) the final project, originally a six to eight

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[14] Four participants of this study, others from this section who were nonparticipants, and nearly one-third of all my English I students across three sections did not successfully complete the course, the specific reasons for which I never learned.

page analytic research essay, was adapted to a formal proposal for such an essay including an annotated bibliography and a detailed outline. This last change was designed to meet student learning objectives but did not require students to complete the research essay as I had required in previous semesters. These pedagogical adaptations aligned with three of the category's four most frequent codes: *adapted class meeting schedule*, *increased communication*, *adapted assignment*, and *adapted deadlines*.

Data points suggest the changes provided some students with the autonomy they may not have felt had I retained the same or similar expectations for the course as planned from the outset of the semester. Making synchronous class meetings optional provided students with agency during the uncertain circumstances of initial lockdown for the pandemic. For Denis, who worked a fulltime job and frequently journaled about time management and scheduling challenges, this had a positive outcome:

> I didn't attend any live on line meetings, I just watched the recordings. It was way more convenient for me to just watch them at a later time with working full time and trying to keep up with all my assignments. When watching the recordings I was able pause them whenever I had to take care of something and then continue right from where I left off. Yes that means I couldn't ask any questions and get an answer right away but most of the time the question I had got answered in the video. (JTC)

Noteworthy in this data point is the recurrence of the issue Denis previously raised with asking questions, as he noted that in many cases the recordings of class meetings provided the necessary information.

The second significant adaptation regarded assignment deadlines. I made the choice to relax deadlines while revising my course plan during the extended Spring Break (Teaching

Reflection, 4/9/20). Communications from students within the first two weeks of remote instruction not only informed these choices but were revealing to the perceived power relationship that existed between myself and my students. Reflection on this indicated where I was able to interrupt this power:

> The students who have emailed me asking for extensions and leniency on their work have done so in a manner that suggests there is a possibility that I might not be flexible. When I read these requests, my reaction is that there would be no scenario in this moment where I would force a student to submit their work by a specific date, especially if they reached out to me. (Teaching Reflection, 4/9/20)

Data points such as this indicate that I was working to interrupt the power of student perception that a college professor might not accommodate their needs, even in a time of crisis.

My choice to adapt the final project is an example of how I or another college writing instructor might interrupt the planned structure of the course to meet the situation and provide students a different approach to fulfilling course objectives. Robbie discussed this assignment in his second interview. After explaining that he was initially apprehensive about whether or not the proposal assignment was going to be much different than writing a paper, he shared that he ultimately found value in the assignment:

> I thought that was like---way more beneficial for me as an individual rather than the original project. So I think though at first it was a challenge it like ended up being like---super like---it was cool. . . . Like it pulled me out of this like college student bubble of let's see how many big words I can use before like---I hit the word count. (Robbie, Interview 2)

Robbie's comments show that paring the project down to focus on the research process and organization negated the need for using "big words" or writing only to meet a word count, emphasizing critical engagement with his ideas and the integration of sources. His insight further speaks to how first-year writing students make sense of themselves as academic writers, as the adapted assignment provided a space for him to grapple with this identity in the "college student bubble."

In addition to these three adaptations, I significantly increased communication in the latter half of the semester with my use of emailed course announcements. JTC entries, specifically one I adapted to have students discuss their experience with virtual class meetings, provided me with feedback on my methods of pedagogy and communication and how students were making sense of the course redesign. Students often provided examples how their other instructors were communicating or adapting their instructional methods as well, which informed or confirmed my methods, specifically when I worried my increased communication was overbearing: "I have heard encouraging feedback from some students who have given examples where other profs are not as communicative" (Teaching Reflection, 4/19/20).

In light of the disruptive and uncontrollable situation caused by COVID-19, data shows that in moments of uncertainty or crisis writing instructors are able to retain student learning objectives, value student voice, and maintain a course structure that does not force a drastic adaptation for students and rather finds ways to provide them with agency. Despite its many tragic outcomes, COVID-19's disruption revealed structures that have traditionally perpetuated institutional power in college and it has underscored those that must be fostered, such as community-building and students' social networks. It offered ways for instructors to learn how to

interrupt or reframe power relationships between students and the institution to the benefit of

students both in times of crisis and in the future.

Theme 5 – Power Dynamics in JTC

Shifting focus to the intervention of this action research study, this theme considers how

college writing instructors can act to interrupt college as governmentality by incorporating

thematic, reflective journaling on the transition to college. By including a JTC component to

first-year writing curriculum, writing instructors provide students a way to make sense of their

relationship to power in college and, through feedback, balance student-instructor power

relationships. This theme also considers the ways in which journal assignment design inevitably

governs students. Three categories comprise the theme: (a) feedback de-centering instructor's

power, (b) confessionary moments and pastoral power, and (c) governing with JTC.

Feedback De-Centering Instructor's Power

Analysis of instructor feedback suggests that the content and frequency of

communication to students from the instructor plays a significant role in how students respond to

the JTC course component. This category considers my role in not only reading but also

responding to students' thoughts and experiences about entering college and the critical thinking

I asked them to do in the freewrites. With the exception of the code *feedback is a positive*

influence on journaling, which is comprised of student interview and JTC entries, instructor

feedback is the sole data set represented in this category.

The most frequent codes in the category were *positively enforcing critical reflection* and

acknowledgement of personal experience. An example data point for *positively enforcing critical*

reflection can be seen in feedback to Conor on an entry that asked students to discuss who

decides what makes their work "academic": "It is definitely good to know where you feel

comfortable and where you feel you need to improve. I encourage you to continue thinking about concepts (like "who decides what is 'academic'?") as we continue thinking about college" (Feedback to Conor). Feedback that was an *acknowledgement of personal experience* might appear as:

> Congratulations on your job promotion during your first semester of college (#3)[15]! I know that it can be a lot more work depending on the responsibility, which might not have been expected, but the way you describe it sounds like a really positive thing. (Feedback to Edwin)

Other feedback data was coded as *encouragement* and *emphasizing community*. Encouragements were typically in the form of short phrases, for example: "Your determination is inspiring!" (Feedback to Courtney) or "Hang in there, the semester is almost over" (Feedback to Denis). Instructor feedback that emphasized community was mainly a result of post-COVID-19 online journal entries where the instructor was echoing and reinforcing students' experiences of feeling isolated from classmates, friends, and family. For example:

> Despite the high level of uncertainty, I have found some comfort (or something close to comfort) knowing that this is a collective experience. I am glad for you and all my students and I hope that the community we had been building this semester will continue to some degree. (Feedback to Logan)

Acknowledging the collective experience underscores that the instructor values community and reveals to the student a way they, too, are coping with the uncertainty of the situation.

Using feedback to acknowledge race, economic power, and GPA as affecting student experiences is another way to de-center the power relationships between the institution and the

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[15] Feedback on handwritten journals was provided in narrative form with specific entries cited in parentheticals.

student. Examples were seen in the following data acknowledging Taylor's discussion of the

harm of White privilege and racism:

> Your reflection on the other entries, specifically about racism and white privilege (#11),
>
> are again very insightful. Identifying the injustices in social systems is a start in the effort
>
> to move forward toward constructive changes and equity. We can see examples of these
>
> during our time at college and elsewhere in our lives. (Feedback to Taylor)

Twice throughout the semester, Lana journaled about a moment when she was, for the first time

in her educational experience, in a class where the majority of the students were people of color,

like her[16]. My feedback to the second of these entries read:

> The moment you describe here is one that I do hope stays with you. The feeling of being
>
> seen in that classroom, in that realization of who you were with, I hope that stays with
>
> you, too. I hope it guides you to know that you deserve to feel seen, to be heard, and to be
>
> you, despite the constructs and attitudes that others have built around race and identity.
>
> (Feedback to Lana)

An example data point where economic power was addressed appeared as: "Your discussion on

the cost of college, not only financially, but in terms of time (which ties back to financials)

provide great points to consider (#6)" (Feedback to Robbie). Further, a data point acknowledging

reflection on GPA appeared as: "You discuss many valid points that suggest how a less

restrictive system than GPA would potentially impact learning for the better. I hope one day this

will be the case" (Feedback to Taylor).

It is through feedback to students' reflections on power structures where instructors can

interrupt college as governmentality, and because they are a part of the institution, their modeling

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[16] Lana's reflections on this moment are included in analysis of research question 3.

for students that resistance and change is necessary makes the message that much more powerful. Addressing this range of topics, which include many of the aforementioned power structures students encounter in college, allows the instructor to relate to students in a manner that is potentially different than many students describe when reflecting on their relationships with teachers in high school or other professors. Providing encouragements, acknowledgement, or making personal connections to the topics students journal about de-centers the power that both the instructor and the journal itself may be perceived as having. Data from students about feedback, coded as *feedback is a positive influence on journaling*, showed students felt the feedback made the journaling "more personal" (Denis, JTC). Feedback affected the thought they put into their entries:

> I read [your feedback] and I was like wow, I really want to put like a lot of effort into this journal because he cares, like he is reading them and stating his opinion, which I was like really shocked about honestly. (Robbie, Interview 1)

Robbie also noted that the assessment method, where JTC entries were graded for completion and not content, allowed for more "literary freedom," which he liked (Interview 2).

While existing within a system where governmentality is inevitable, the analysis of feedback data shows there are substantial opportunities for writing instructors to de-center their power and substantially interrupt college as governmentality in the methods they use to respond to their students' reflective writing.

Confessionary Moments and Pastoral Power

The confessionary nature of many students' journals was notable and aligned with the Foucauldian concept of pastoral power. Analysis of both confessionary moments and instructor response to these suggest that pastoral power inevitably exists in a journaling assignment where

an instructor reviews and responds to student entries, and also presents examples that inform

further discussion. *Confessionary moment* and *instructor feedback to confessionary moment* were

the two most frequent codes in this category, followed by *apologetic moment*. Confessionary

moments are defined as instances where students revealed information about their personal lives

or relationships that, if JTC was absent from the course, would likely not have otherwise been

shared. To be clear, while the content of confessionary moments were typically a result of

meandering freewriting that veered from the prompt, they were not unprofessional in nature.

Twice throughout the semester, I suggested BCC's Counseling Services to students who shared

that they had a history of depression, including when a student shared feelings of anxiety and

depression due to the pandemic. While this is one example of a confessionary moment, the

majority had to do with sharing both positive and negative moments from students' past or

current situations. At times, students addressed me directly and other times this information was

shared passively. These moments often came from the same students. Despite the premise that

the journal is kept for their critical reflection and graded for completion, many confessionary

moments illuminated an implicit acknowledgement of a power relationship with the instructor,

namely when they revealed concern about not reaching a word count or worrying that a full

credit would not be given on an entry. Response from the instructor allowed for further

examination of JTC as a dialogue and the nature of the writing instructor's pastoral power.

The content of confessionary moments varied. Examples included: "I'm lucky financial

aid paid completely for my first year of college and I got refunds and I'm not dorming. Very

lucky I am. My dad and I are barely living paycheck to paycheck" (Kelly, JTC); "Race has been

something that (I would never publicly say) has affected my transition to college" (Robbie, JTC);

"My ex-husband was mentally abusive with anger issues. I took my son at 3 months old and left

for fear of my child's life" (Kayla, JTC). Religious views that students did not discuss in other components of the course arose at times in their journaling. Claire shared her reflections about the initial weeks of the pandemic:

> The bible says that God is quick to extended his hand and to show compassion. I truly feel like this is an opportunity for redemption. Not just individually, but nationally. Who can understand a heart like his? For we don't love the same way. We think love is a feeling, but the very essence of his being, is love. I have no idea why I just got so deep into that lol. (JTC)

The concept of pastoral power is seen in these entries. Although the journal is a place for students to think while writing, it also became a means of communication to their professor, as they write knowing the entries will be read. This is further emphasized by the feedback provided on confessionary moments. While I did not address all of the above data points in feedback, the following provides an example of a response to a confessionary moment and is in response to Kelly's above entry on her family's financial situation:

> Your entries on the financial aspects of college and the "Homelessness" article are compelling (#6 & 7). While it is not something that is necessarily pleasant, I am glad you connected some of your own experiences in relating to some of the issues the article addressed. It is good to hear that you and your dad are making things work and eventually, I know your hard work will pay off. (Feedback to Kelly)

According to data analysis, more confessionary moments were present than instructor feedback directly addressing these moments. Both confessionary moments and feedback addressing them increased significantly post-COVID-19, namely because the content of the journals shifted to

students describing their experiences being confined to their homes and I provided more frequent feedback.

Apologetic moments appeared when students apologized for the sloppiness of their handwriting, for going off-topic in their entries, for not meeting a word count, or for feeling like they were "not good at journaling" (Kelly, JTC). Examples of these moments include: "I hope I'm on the right track with this" (Kayla, JTC); "I'm kinda over this entry" (Claire, JTC); and "I was sick while writing this" (Logan, JTC). In one entry, Logan confessed to and apologized for his lack of preparation or planning to complete the assignment: "Honestly I forgot to read the assignment and I'm sitting in my car right now before class (March 4th) attempting to wing this one. . . . I'm probably getting a zero for this one" (JTC). Many of these moments point to a worry about how the writing would be judged or graded. In one of her post-COVID-19 entries and just prior to withdrawing from the course, Kelly added the following conclusion to a lengthy reflection on how her first two weeks of the pandemic had been spent:

> Oof I think I have written more than necessary and not on topic at all. I apologize for ranting/venting. I would erase all of this and start over but I'm not sure it would be much different. (JTC)

As an example of how pastoral power might be positively exercised, my response to her entry was:

> Kelly, despite the feelings and the situations that you are expressing, I find this entry to be both touching and enlightening. Reading it helps me understand not only your situation but the situation of so many students and even my own. I appreciate your sharing and I encourage you to rant/vent here! —Prof. Metzger (Feedback to Kelly)

Identifying and analyzing confessionary and apologetic moments revealed where and how students make choices about what they write in the journal, given the premise that journal is read and responded to by their instructor. Moments such as the above exchange with Kelly reveal the crucial role the instructor and their feedback have in addressing the content of students' journaling and establishing a dialogue with students through JTC.

Another code in this category was *instructor's emotional reaction reviewing JTC*. During my initial round of journal review, the nature of student journal entries impacted me in a way I had not expected. In reflections, I described my review of students' journals to be "an emotional time period" from reading "lots of stories from students" (Teaching Reflection, 2/12/20). These reactions continued throughout the semester: "I am reading the first of the JTC entries since we transitioned to an online format. I find myself tearing up at times" (Teaching Reflection, 3/28/20). My role as respondent on students' journals took on a new meaning in light of the pandemic, and the following reflection relates to how I used pastoral power in my feedback to their entries:

> The unexpected transition puts me in the place where I want to say that I am experiencing these same realities as to comfort them in solidarity, share that other students are feeling this way, too, provide them with positive feedback and praise as to encourage them (and to mention that we are almost at the end of the semester), and to have them think about the positives coming in the future. (Teaching Reflection, 4/19/20)

As seen in the data, the nature of pastoral power and confessionary moments allow writing instructors to interrupt college as governmentality, although it also will inevitably affect students' writing and critical reflection.

Governing with JTC

Given their situation within the institution, college writing instructors inevitably perpetuate governmentality through discourse and their design of writing assignments. While features of high stakes assignments were discussed briefly by some participants (i.e. rubrics and MLA style guidelines), this study's focus on journaling elucidated more data on the power dynamics established in this low stakes writing component. To be clear, overall data analysis shows that the power writing instructors have to confront and interrupt power relationships with a journaling intervention is significantly greater than the power a journal has to govern students, however some data did support the latter. Data to illustrate this is presented here.

JTC entries were of my design and included a prompt, allotment of time for in-class writing, minimum length for out-of-class entries (page count in handwritten entries; word count for online), and for many, a supplemental text. This embedded my power within the assignment. My reflections on classroom management during in-class writing, such as watching to see that students were writing for the entire time or asking students to be quiet during journaling, addressing students who did not participate for the allotted writing time, and taking off points when students did not meet the word count, were all factors I grappled with when reflecting on my power and JTC (Teaching Reflection, 1/24/20; 1/29/20).

Student data spoke to the power structure of the journal assignments, specifically in the word count requirement. In some entries, students directly stated that they were unsure how they were going to reach the minimum requirement based on the lack of ideas they initially had about the prompt. Once JTC switched to a digital format, some students periodically announced their word count in their entries, charting their progress and how much more they had to write to fulfill the minimum word count, for example, "Only 88 words?! What the heck" (Claire, JTC). Conor, who often did not meet the minimum count and completed 13 of 20 JTC entries during

the course of the semester, brought the word count up in both his interviews, emphasizing that

there is only so much he is able to say about the topics and explaining that when writing, he

quickly gets to a stopping point where he thinks, "that's the best I can sort of do" (JTC).

Referring to the word count requirement for one of the online entries, Kayla said, "I'm looking at

it going like . . . really? This many [words], professor?" (Interview 2).

Data indicated that in my feedback to students who did not write much in their entries I

suggested they "write more" or "write for the entire time" in an attempt to encourage their

engagement in the freewriting and received full credit for the assignment (Feedback). This data

was coded as "*write more.*"

Two participants shared an annoyance with the journaling, mainly due to the word count

requirement or because they could not think of what to write. Breanne explained that the time to

write in class never felt like enough, noting her perfectionism was a barrier for freewriting which

kept her from beginning each entry until halfway into the journaling time (Interview 1). Data

from her JTC entries showed that it was challenging to write about her own experiences: "The

thing is I don't like talking about myself so it's kinda hard to learn about myself and why I was

put here. College is forcing me to do that especially in my ENGLISH 101 class" (Breanne, JTC).

These data points reveal how the low stakes writing component of JTC enforces a power

dynamic and governmentality in the writing classroom, from protocols of the assignment to

content the prompts ask students reflect upon. As the first two categories comprising this theme

suggest, JTC provides more opportunity to interrupt than reinforce college as governmentality,

however, in the process, JTC inevitably governs students' writing.

Research Question 3 and Supporting Themes

Data analysis of the third research question, which focuses on the JTC intervention, is

presented in this section. The third research question is: How, if at all, does journaling on the

transition to college in the writing classroom act as a technology of the self, in light of the ways

that college governs us? Previous data analysis informs the discussion of this question and in

many instances the analysis of these themes is dependent upon those findings. Results show that

JTC acted as a technology of the self in the ways it allowed students opportunities to write about

the power structures they encounter in college, which led to personal reflection that aided in

constituting the self. The journal also provided a space for students to reflect on their situation

not only transitioning to college but doing so in the midst of great uncertainty and disruption due

to the pandemic. Students frequently engaged with their social identities in journal reflections.

Data showed that their varied, intersectional identities affect how students, specifically those

who are underrepresented, experience power in college. JTC provided rich opportunities for self-

affirmation as participants adopted the new identity of college student. JTC acted as a technology

of the self in that it both helped students learn to succeed within the power of college and

provided opportunities for self-affirmation in spite of this power.

The themes and categories relevant to research question 3 are presented below. Three

themes support the research question: (a) critical reflection on power structures, (b) constituting

the self during the transition to college, and (c) journaling during a pandemic. Each theme is

comprised of two to four categories. Data points are presented to describe frequent codes

comprising each category and assist to further define the themes.

Theme 6 – Critical Reflection on Power Structures

This first theme discusses the opportunities JTC provides for students to critically reflect

on the power structures inherent to college which were presented in the analysis for research

question 1. For JTC to act as a technology of the self, it must provide opportunities for students to reflect on aspects of higher education that govern their behavior so they can increase their autonomy as they transition to college. This theme expands upon students' reflection on these factors, typically as discussed in response to their engagement with instructional texts and thought experiments that comprised JTC assignments. The majority of the data defining this theme is derived from JTC entries, however interview data was also analyzed. The three categories comprising this theme are: (a) thought experiments: no price tag, no GPA, (b) relationship with professors, and (c) comparing college to other institutions.

Thought Experiments: No Price Tag, No GPA

Some JTC prompts presented hypothetical situations to elicit reflection on how students thought about their relationship to power structures in college. Two separate prompts had students approach the economic and GPA power structures using thought experiments which asked that they consider what college would be like in the absence of these features. This category is derived from student JTC entries from these two prompts. Analysis shows that despite the stance they take, if any, in their responses, prompts such as these elicit critical thinking on students' relationships to power structures in college and demonstrates how JTC acts as a technology of the self. A few data points representing the thoughts expressed in their journals are presented.

The most frequent response to the question of what college might look like without a price tag was that the experience would be much less stressful. Kelly wrote, "if college didn't have a price tag I might be more willing to go and have a lot less stress" (JTC). Students explained, without the financial cost of college, they either would not need to work at their jobs as much or they could put the money they earn toward something other than school. Some

students explained that the cost of college is something that motivates them and if the cost was not a factor, it would make them feel less accountable. Courtney equated the cost of college to the purpose of higher education, writing, "if college was free, it would simply not be necessary" (JTC). Lana considered positive and negative effects on college being free, associating the cost of college with status and exclusivity:

> I would do college very differently if it had no price tag. I could go to any school I wanted and more importantly I wouldn't have to worry about paying. Which is a good thing. On the down side I know personally for me I think I would take it for granted. . . . Also the "rank" of said education would decrease. If college was free anyone could go and it wouldn't be as "prestigious." (JTC)

Students' engagement with critical reflection on the economic power of college was similar in their reflection on what college would be like in the absence of the GPA system.

Journal entries asking students to imagine college without the GPA system garnered mixed reactions but overall, data spoke to its power to control student behavior and impact their sense of identity as college students. In his journal, Robbie wrote, "If college didn't have a GPA scale or even letter or percent grades I honestly don't know what I would use to scale my ability to succeed" (JTC). Others echoed this sentiment, stating "Some students thrive on their GPAs" (Claire, JTC) and "if we take away college GPAs then I believe the entire fabric of college as we know it changes" (Lana, JTC). These students' discussion of GPA evidenced the system's longstanding importance and intrinsic connection to their concept of education and being a college student.

A similar number of students offered positive ideas about what college without GPA might look like to them. James wrote:

I think what would happen if there wasn't a GPA is it would help people in a

learning environment. By taking off the stress of getting that A it would focus on

innovation and understanding new knowledge. . . . I think the overall mood of students

will improve too due to the less stress and worry about letter grades. (JTC)

Breanne associated a de-emphasis on GPA with positive results for student motivation,

productivity, and retention: "If there were no GPAs in college you for one would see fewer

dropouts and students more motivated to do their assigned work because they actually want to

learn it" (JTC).

Similar to perspectives shared on imagining college without a price tag, these students

expressed that there would be less stress and more learning opportunities without a GPA system.

The data from these journal entries indicate that despite the nature of the hypothetical scenarios

they presented, all participants examined their present relationship to these power structures.

These prompts also provided opportunities to discuss the relationships among different

institutional power structures, including how students perceive, relate to, and communicate with

their professors, in light of their thoughts on financial costs and grades. This data is discussed in

the following category.

Relationship with Professors

A number of JTC prompts asked students to reflect on the relationship between students

and professors. Students' discussion of these power relationships further suggest ways in which

JTC is a technology of the self. One prompt, which was associated with an instructional text that

raised the question as to whether or not formal communication is important and if professors

asking students to call them by their titles (i.e. Dr., Professor) is a "power move" (Worthen,

2017), generated much of the data which comprises this category. Additionally, early in the

semester, students were asked to freewrite about who decides whether or not their writing is academic. Other prompts, such as the thought experiment about the absence of GPA, asked students to speculate on the nature of student-professor relationships in relation to these power structures. Student reflections from these prompts are also included in this category.

Data points representative of how students critically reflect on their relationships with professors highlight JTC's ability to foster reflection in light of the ways college governs them. When discussing formal communication with professors, all students agreed that it was appropriate to be formal when addressing professors and to use their titles, specifically in emails. Robbie noted that this professionalism is motivated by a desire to have professors think positively of him:

> I have always strived for professionalism when speaking to an educator because it establishes a good image they'll have of me. It helps me practice being professional and motivates professors' attitudes to be more positive towards me. (JTC)

Robbie's perspective points to the nature of the relationship between students and professors and in his case wanting them to have a positive impression of him. In language that recalls the initial analysis of capitalist economics when discussing grades as currency, Lana wrote about professor and student relationships and how these should be navigated:

> College is transactional. The relationship between students and their professors is transactional. Professors are there to teach you and you're there to learn. Students and professors are not supposed to be friends and that doesn't have to be a bad thing. It just means there needs to be boundaries. (JTC)

While this transactional relationship does suggest a capitalistic business relationship, it is notable that Lana pointed to teaching and learning as the respective roles of professor and student and

did not invoke grades as the crux of the relationship, as is the case in most student data on the topic.

Early in the semester and as we were beginning to define academic writing, I asked students to journal about who decides whether or not their writing is academic. This prompt led to an in-class discussion on defining and identifying academic writing intended to teach them that *they* can decide if writing is or is not academic. As evidenced in their journal entries, the majority of students felt their professors made this judgment, while some said they were able to determine if they were producing academic writing. Others noted that any writing done in college is academic based on the setting. When students provided reasons for why they thought professors decided, they explained that professors have the knowledge as to what qualifies as academic writing, they are the ones who assign the work and judge whether it is properly formatted, and they grade the assignments (JTC). Edwin wrote, "I feel that mainly college professors will determine if they will consider your writing academic. I believe they will decide this based off their grading requirements for whichever paper you had to turn in" (JTC). The more that students discussed the purpose of professors in college, the more apparent it became that grades and professors cannot easily be separated, from students' perspectives.

Discussing college without GPA, the following data points indicated the power structures of grades and professors to be entwined. Without GPA, Courtney wrote, "professors would be almost meaningless to students, they would simply be there to teach the material and leave" (JTC). This point calls into question the purpose of a college professor as well as the purpose of assessment. Providing another view, Breanne wrote that the absence of GPA would "help communications with professors. Instead of just saying 'you got a B but I think you could have done better' they would give insight on your flaws and strengths about what you were trying to

learn" (Breanne, JTC). Each perspective provides insight not only to the role of instructors and grades, but to these students' prior experiences with and perspectives about constructive feedback on graded assignments and how this has affected their relationship to learning.

There are varied perspectives on how first-year students view professors' roles, but what is clear is that when students critically reflect on their relationships with professors, some degree of power is involved and in many cases it is discussed in relation to receiving a grade. There were a few points in the data where students discussed the kindness of professors, typically in the context of their willingness to adapt deadlines based on individual need or in providing more detailed instruction on projects. Students rarely referenced specific course content or instruction when reflecting on professors in their journals, though interviewees did provide some specific examples, both in the context of English I and in other courses. The absence of discussion of course content may in part be a result of JTC prompt design, however, it is a notable result of the findings and reinforces the role that grades and other mechanisms of power play in teaching and learning in college.

Comparing College to Other Institutions

In order to support their success within the power of college, two prompts were designed to elicit consideration of students' experiences of governmentality within other institutions. Analysis of these prompts serve to show further ways JTC functions as a technology of the self. The first of the two prompts was assigned early in the semester and centered on the academic honesty policy, namely plagiarism. The second prompt, delivered during the second half of the semester, asked students to compare going to college with going to the doctor's office or emergency room. My choice to design these prompts was intentional and derived from Foucault's archeology of governmentality in a variety of institutions, specifically healthcare,

following the concept that governmentality is inevitable in any institution. Given the

opportunities to critically reflect on these features of college, students drew notable comparisons.

The plagiarism prompt, which has previously been referred to in analysis for research

question 1, was twofold. It first asked students to discuss how the plagiarism policy and

consequences might affect their writing and then asked them to draw comparisons to policies or

rules in other institutions. The most common connection was to the workforce in general, and in

some instances framed within the career field which the writer might enter. The aspect most

frequently discussed was the need to be honest and original in work one produces in their jobs

and the risk of termination that might result if they are not. For example:

> I think in a workplace your boss will start to question not just your integrity but your
>
> ethics. . . . I don't really see someone stealing another person's essay but I can see
>
> someone stealing someone's idea for a project. Also someone might take credit for
>
> something that they didn't do. That can lead to termination in your job depending on how
>
> serious the offense is you might have a hard time finding new employment, it might
>
> follow you around like a stain on your shirt. (Claire, JTC)

Students were able to contextualize potential consequences within familiar frames of reference in

other institutions as well. In addition to the workforce, other institutions that students drew

connections to emerged in coding as the *military*, *music industry*, *business*, *sports*, and *politics*.

While most of these appear in the data with minimal frequency, they illustrate the variety of

institutions that resulted from students' opportunity to critically reflect on this college policy.

Acting as a technology of the self, JTC provides students a way to understand the policies in

college and potential consequences by allowing them to discuss these connections to other

institutions. Speaking as a first-generation college student, Breanne commented on this journal

prompt's effect on understanding and navigating policies:

> I just feel like you just open me up to question things more, just so I know that I'm safe
>
> in my academic pathways in college. . . . the plagiarism one, um it was like me making
>
> sure that as a---I guess first-time college student in the family---that I get to where I'm
>
> trying to get to---smoothly? No bumps on the road? (Interview 1)

As the subsequent themes in this chapter reveal, responses such as Breanne's are at the core of

how critical reflection on power structures such as policies equip students with agency, both

within and beyond the walls of the first-year writing classroom.

The second JTC prompt relevant to this category asked students to compare college with

the healthcare institution. It was framed as a thought experiment asking students to draw

connections between going to college and going to the doctor's office or emergency room.

Students drew many connections between the two. In most entries, students referenced the

similar anxious or fearful emotions they felt when they began college as similar to the emotions

they feel going to the doctor's office. Beyond this emotional reaction, many students discussed

the purpose of going to either place as being to receive something, (i.e. medical treatment or

knowledge), by a specialist (i.e. a doctor or professor). Two data points were particularly striking

and illuminated connections to the power and influence of each institution. Courtney wrote:

> In a doctor's office I know I often times feel like I am being watched over. I do not want
>
> to touch anything I am not supposed to, I just sit in silence and wait until the doctor
>
> comes in to tell me what to do. As odd as it sounds, I can see how the first steps into
>
> college or taking college courses can be the same way. Until you know what you are

doing, you may feel like it is best to wait for somebody else to tell you what to do so that

you don't mess anything up or get lectured. (JTC)

The feeling of being surveilled, which had not been discussed in Courtney's previous entries, is noteworthy for Foucauldian analysis of the student's description of her initial experiences in college courses, and the other points she makes reveal a sense of powerlessness. Claire, in an entry that illustrates how freewriting allows students to arrive at revelatory moments, draws illuminating connections between healthcare and the previously discussed power structures of college, such as economic power:

Ummm, in college students go to be taught by profs and at the doctor's office or the ER

individuals go to seek medical help or advice by doctors. So, both are a place of service.

Ugh, I feel like that's all I can think of when it comes to similarities. At the same time I

feel like I'm missing the big picture. Maybe it'll come to me as I start to state differences

between the two. Okay, so one place you go for education. The other place you go for

healing. OH!! You pay a ton of money for both places! And you apply for assistance to

both of them. Like your medical insurance will help cover the cost of the visit to the

doctor/ER. And financial aid will help cover some of your education, or loan you money

to get it. (JTC)

Courtney and Claire each arrive at insightful connections between the two institutions. While the concept of governmentality was never explicitly taught, it is clear from the data in this category that applying these Foucauldian approaches to JTC design elicited critical reflection for students experiencing governmentality in college. This speaks as an example of how, by designing such a prompt, I was able to interrupt this governmentality. Subsequent themes discuss the way that JTC directly impacted students' sense of self as they journaled in English I.

Theme 7 – Constituting the Self During the Transition to College

The next theme relevant to the third research question speaks to the way that JTC allows students to constitute the self as they transition to college. This theme is central to the concept of technology of the self. Data speaking to how students' reflective journaling increases self-awareness and agency in light of the experience of entering college and its inherent power structures is presented. Of all the themes in this study, this is comprised of the most categories and codes. The four categories that belong to this theme are: (a) relationship between self and college, (b) identifying needs and charting improvement, (c) identity-affirming opportunities, and (d) developing agency.

Relationship Between Self and College

This category is comprised of data showing students' reflection or discussion of how they see themselves in relation to college or other people in college. Several codes relevant to technologies of the self emerged with high frequency, including and not limited to the following, beginning with the most frequent: *perception of college*, *empathizing with peers and other groups*, "*responsibility*," *purpose of college*, *job or work (nonacademic)*, *decision to go to college*, and *independence in college*. The nature of these codes suggests that the content of students' journaling often resulted in personal reflection on the self within the institution and how becoming a part of the institution informed their sense of self. A sample of data points for select codes are presented to further illustrate the outcomes of this reflection.

JTC is a place where students discuss their perception of college, allowing them to write about their relationship to the places, people, and nature of higher education. Students perceived college in a variety of ways and their reflections often resulted in how they defined the purpose of college. Data points illuminated these perceptions: "To me, the 'college experience' is (in a

single phrase) a strategic struggle. It's hard, annoying, frustrating, not to mention expensive"

(Robbie, JTC); "College is weird. That is all my feelings about college summed up" (Lana, JTC);

and "I'm not convinced at the moment that college is preparing me fully in what I'd like to do"

(Kayla, JTC). Data analysis overwhelmingly found college to hold a significant purpose and

direct influence on participants' lives. Breanne wrote, "college is about discovering yourself and

I mean deep meaning of why I was born and what do I bring or take away from the world"

(JTC). Logan reflected that, "to me college is more than just a way to pass time and it's more

than just making my parents happy. To me college is going to be the main brick to the

foundation of my life" (JTC). Data relevant to student perception of college and its purpose

underscores the opportunity JTC provides in personally reflecting upon why students are there. It

also provides insight to importance being in college has to their lives and identities. This concept

appears in other data such as when students discuss their decision to go to college.

Students frequently used the term "responsibility" or "responsibilities" when describing

what being a college student meant to them, how college forces them to behave, and at other

moments throughout their journal entries. They not only identified that their responsibilities

increased, but they also discussed the value in becoming more responsible. For example, Taylor

wrote, "responsibility and timeliness matter and will greatly influence my college career coming

forward" (JTC). In most cases students discussed responsibilities with coursework, though some,

such as Conor, discussed self-reliance in the context of transportation as well. In an interview he

stated, "that adds another layer of self-responsibility and more stress cuz like I've missed the bus

already a few times and I've had to ask my mom to drive me" (Conor, Interview 1).

Similar to their discussion of responsibility was students' naming independence as

something new to them and they often described their response to this independence. Students

noted that college provided a markedly higher sense of independence than they perceived in high school. As in the discussion of responsibility, students both identified the heightened sense of independence, for example, "college forces you to do things on your own" (Alice, JTC), and how it affects them on a personal level. Emily expressed her need to "be more independent and learn to fend for myself" (JTC) and also shared that she was positively adapting to the changes: "this level of independence on having control over what my class schedule will be each semester which once made me fearful now is growing to be calming and exciting" (JTC).

In addition to allowing a space to identify and reflect upon factors such as responsibility and independence, JTC constituted students' sense of self by developing their awareness of others. One JTC assignment corresponded with an article about college students who were homeless (Bader, 2004) and posed questions about who in college might support or advocate for this group of students. Data revealed that students reflected on the issue the text raised in varying degrees, all of which indicated a change in their thinking on college students who are homeless, and some revealed how the reading resonated with them on a more personal level because of their prior experiences with housing insecurity. Some participants shared that they had not previously been aware of the issue of college student homelessness: "I never really thought about homeless students. . . . It never really occurred to me" (Denis, JTC) and "I had no idea this happened" (Robbie, JTC). Kelly, who revealed in this entry her experiences with housing insecurity in the previous three years, wrote not only *about* this marginalized student group, but as a part of it: "Students are shy to speak up about being in a bad situation they don't want to be judged or frowned upon, or even kicked out. We don't even really know who we can talk about this too" (JTC).

In addition to the "Homelessness on Campus" freewrite, students expressed concern for others in various ways throughout their journals. Logan, a veteran member of the armed services, noted that his choice to join the military was based on its financing his college education, acknowledging that many of his college peers did not have a similar option (JTC). Reflecting on their situation in the weeks following the COVID-19 outbreak, participants empathized with groups such as single mothers or students who did not have access to technology or reliable internet.

A notable result of data analysis on constituting the self through reflective journaling was the emergence of student data, both from JTC entries and interviews, where students identified and valued their own critical thinking. This occurred in a number of instances and in each case clearly supports the notion that JTC acted as a technology of the self. James described a benefit of journaling as allowing him to "look at things from maybe different angles, try and see things from different people's perspectives" (Interview 1); Conor said "[JTC] gives your brain the exercise . . . it gives you critical thinking" (Interview 1); and Taylor wrote that JTC "made me think more critically about college" (JTC). Emily shared:

> The journal entries especially have given me thought provoking ideas which I would not have thought about on my own. These ideas were ones that I didn't even know were in myself. They really allow me to think on a deeper level than I normally do and I am extremely grateful for them surprisingly. (JTC)

This data further shows that students not only reflected on the factors that affect their personal growth as college students in their journals, but they also recognized and valued what critical thinking and reflection offers to their transition to college.

Identifying Needs and Charting Improvement

Understanding one's needs and actively working to improve the self within or in spite of governmentality are crucial functions of technologies of the self. JTC became a space for students to identify areas where they felt they needed to improve skills (i.e. organization) and see their progress over time. This category shows how JTC aids in constituting the self by identifying instances in the data where students metacognitively discussed needs and growth and otherwise engaged in a dialogue with themselves in their journaling. Data points presented here provide several examples of how JTC operates as a technology of the self. Frequent codes comprising this category are *motivating self-talk*, *envisioning the future*, *personal improvement*, *lack of motivation*, and *changes over time*.

Motivating self-talk occurred when students framed passages in a way that motivated them to overcome a challenge, affirmed a choice, reframed their thinking, or acknowledged a need for self-motivation. This is a prime example of JTC acting as a technology of the self in that this motivation was actively developed and expressed in the journal entries as a response to challenges against which students felt they had little power. Examples of data points included "the struggle of college is strong but I am stronger" (Emily, JTC) and, in response to being a college student during the changes brought on by the pandemic:

> On a positive note, I am trying my best and doing what I can with the deck hand that I have been dealt. One thing at a time, day at a time, one foot in front of the other. Most things are possible and it could always be worse. (Kayla, JTC)

Motivation also came from envisioning the future. The majority of JTC entry data generated about their futures was in response to one of the last entries, which asked students to picture their college graduation day and reflect on their next transition. Students often expressed that they would feel excited or nervous, listed goals they imagined they would have reached, and

named new goals they would be setting, such as beginning at a four-year college, starting a

career, or moving to a new city. This speculation on the future was also linked to their present

motivations, for example, Courtney wrote, "I will be transitioning into searching for or already

having some employment opportunity in mind. This desire is what fuels my motivation as a

college student to learn more and try harder in order to achieve my goals" (JTC). Denis

concluded his entry, "I look at all my course requirements and can't wait till I can cross the last

one off my list" (JTC). Envisioning the future allowed these students to reflect on their current

place in college, specifically at the end of a semester fraught with challenging transitions.

      Identifying needs also included moments where students noted a lack of motivation. This

typically emerged in reflection on the switch to remote instruction and the disruptions to

students' lives caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The data shows that JTC was a place where

students were able to express these needs as they affected their functionality in courses.

      Findings also show that the journal allowed students to note personal improvements and

other changes over time. For example, Conor wrote, "my organization has improved in the past

two weeks" (JTC). During an interview he echoed this, along with his improved abilities to

communicate, write, and plan his time: "I grew faster than I thought I would, actually" (Conor,

Interview 1). Lana directly associated her personal improvements to college, writing, "I think

college, or at least the little bit that I experienced has made me a better person, taught me to pay

attention to my life and the things around me" (JTC). Kayla discussed the relationship between

her, her journal, and charting progress:

    It's letting me reflect on my progress throughout. You know, it's thinking back on day

        one---my thoughts now back to when I was doing it---I am happy that we did it cuz now

I'm like, "okay, I came so far but let me see how far I came" and I can see my progress

through the writing. (Interview 1)

In addition to charting progress throughout their transition to college from the early weeks in the

semester, data also spoke to students' relationship to and improvement with writing. Lana wrote,

"I'm definitely going to miss these journals they helped me fall back in love with writing" (JTC)

and Taylor noted:

I can tell that there is a significant difference in my writing, both before and after I started

writing the journals. I can also say that the brainstorming process I have for writing

assignments has gotten quicker. I come up with thoughts and ideas a lot faster. (JTC)

This improvement in writing has direct implication on the first-year writing classroom and

provides insight to students' identities not only as college students but as academic writers.

In both JTC entries and interviews, students often identified the need for self-care or used

the journal to document that they were taking measures to look after their own physical and

mental wellbeing. Kayla discussed her need to get a healthy amount of sleep. She journaled

about methods of calming herself down when she gets overwhelmed, writing, "deep breaths

kinda help" (JTC). Emily identified the "journals as a form of self-care" and noted that she

planned to "continue journaling because of how mentally healthy it is" (JTC). The data points

belonging to this category present a strong relationship between students' self-awareness and the

opportunities JTC provides for them to identify needs, motivate themselves, and chart their

progress throughout the semester.

Identity-Affirming Opportunities

As a technology of the self, JTC offered a space for students to affirm a variety of

identities. While never explicitly asking students to share their social identities, students

frequently incorporated them into their reflections. An early JTC prompt asked students to write about the people and places they came from and how these have impacted their transition to college. They wrote this entry in class following a viewing of writer Jacqueline Woodson's 2019 TED Talk about how her upbringing affected her relationship to reading and writing (TED, 2019). This prompted journaling on students' families, where and how they grew up, and their conception of education or the prospect of college. Several other prompts throughout the semester elicited discussion which included students' social identities. For example, the prompts asking how race affects their transition to college, about college without a price tag, and those asking students to share experiences during the pandemic elicited more of these moments.

In the entry that followed the viewing of Woodson's presentation (TED, 2019), two students included their race when telling the story of their past: James, an African American male, and Edwin, a Black and Puerto Rican male. No other participants shared their racial identity in that entry and as previously discussed, the topic of race was not raised in student freewriting with the exception of the entry on how race affects students' transitions to college, and in Lana's journaling in that and a subsequent entry. Beyond race, there were several factors of identity discussed. The list of codes and a few example data points are presented below. To be clear, this category combines data from student journals and interviews, meaning a higher frequency in some codes was a result of interviewee discussion of their identities. To root analysis in JTC, the only identity factors coded in interview data were those which were also referenced in the interviewee's journal.

The following identifiers were shared by participants throughout the course of the semester, listed by most frequent to least: *socioeconomic status*, *"adult,"* *race*, *age*, *being a parent*, *learning disability*, *places lived*, *gender*, *first-generation college student*, *military*

veteran, *dual enrollment student*, *religion*, and *education level*. These codes comprised a range

of identities and descriptors and a few must be defined to clarify their role in analysis. According

to the American Psychological Association (2020), "socioeconomic status encompasses not only

income but also educational attainment, occupational prestige, and subjective perceptions of

social status and social class" (p. 147). This definition was used to inform the *socioeconomic*

status code. Specific income levels were not self-reported, however data pertaining to

participants' income, wealth, government financial assistance, experiences with housing

insecurity, and educational attainment was coded as *socioeconomic status*. Some codes emerged

from the context in which participants described them. For example, *places lived* referenced how

a neighborhood or geographic feature affected their identity, i.e. "growing up I lived in NYC in a

place called River Park Towers. . . . I remember moving to PA early in 2002 to my grandma's

house because we ended up being homeless" (Edwin, JTC). This data point serves as an example

of how intersectional identity factors are represented, and the information Edwin discloses in this

data is also coded as *socioeconomic status*.

Further discussion of identities emergent from journal entries illuminated how students

discussed these factors in relation to their experiences. Four students wrote about one or more

learning disabilities they had been diagnosed with: two named ADHD; one named ADHD and

Asperger's syndrome, and one did not name a specific diagnosis. Two participants, Kayla and

Edwin, frequently wrote about being parents; Kayla often wrote about her role as a single mother

in relation to her being a college student, and they both reflected on their parenting

responsibilities when discussing time management and the effects of the pandemic. The identity

or label of *"adult"* appeared frequently in the data in reference to the identity students felt they

were taking on, or in some cases that was being forced upon them, during their transition to college.

Data coded as *socioeconomic status* was discussed most frequently by the participants; eight students referenced their family's or their own income, wealth, or quality of housing in a variety of ways, namely prompted by the JTC assignments which focused on the cost of college or homelessness in college. Explaining his choice to join the military as partially motivated by the benefits of the G. I. Bill, Logan wrote, "coming from a poor family, college was never an option for me" (JTC). Having discussed in his journal the need to pay for college himself leading to many months of working overtime, Robbie shared, "I don't make a lot of money, so school's a pretty solid investment" (Interview 1). Included in this code is reference to education level attained, which is in reference to Robbie's sharing in JTC entries and interviews his being a "high school drop-out" and reflecting on how this impacts his identity as a college student.

Participants discussed multiple factors of identity. Table 4.3 represents the frequency of distinctive identity factor codes for each of the 15 participants who self-disclosed identity factors in their journaling. Two of the 17 participants did not disclose identity factors. This table was created after the category was finalized and is informed by Black feminist theory and the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991). Visualizing these intersectional frequencies shows that students readily express their identities as they journal and that their identities are layered and multifaceted. Grouping this data shows how JTC offers students a way to share, reflect upon, and connect with these features of their identities without explicitly being prompted to do so, and provides further evidence of how JTC acts as a technology of the self. Analysis of these emergent features of identity illustrates how students (a) share and affirm how they make sense

of themselves within the power of college, (b) make sense of their relationships with their peers

in college, and (c) share with their instructor how their experiences have shaped them.

Nearly every data point in this category is represented in another code and category relevant to a

Table 4.3

Frequency of Distinctive Identity Codes by Participant

Participant	Identity codes	Participant	Identity codes	Participant	Identity codes
Kayla	7	Logan	5	Taylor	3
James	6	Robbie	4	Claire	3
Edwin	6	Breanne	3	Kelly	2
Lana	6	Courtney	3	Denis	1
Emily	5	Conor	3	Keith	1

different research question which shows how the identities students write about are cruxes to

their personal reflection and conception of becoming a college student. Though many did include

discussion of their identities, it is also notable that some students did not and wrote objectively

about many of the JTC topics. Discussion on students' intersectional identities in critical

reflection and the college writing classroom is continued in Chapter V.

To conclude this category, a standout case for identity-affirmation is presented. Lana's

journaling about how race affects her transition to college (presented in part in the category for

"Institutionalized White Supremacy," theme 1, research question 1) was continued in a

subsequent entry, prompted in part by Langston Hughes's (1949) poem "Theme for English B"

and written after we had moved to remote instruction. I included this entry in full, as well as my

feedback to her, to depict the power JTC has in providing students a place to explore their social

identities. Lana concluded the entry with a confessionary direct address to me which is

illustrative of the concepts presented earlier in this chapter. My feedback to her response is also

included, contextualizing its use as a data point previously used in analysis for research question

2. For this entry, students were asked to read the poems "Theme for English B" by Langston Hughes (1949) and "Mid-Term Break" by Seamus Heaney (1966) and they were given the following prompt: "The speaker of each poem has something to say about their transition to college. Write about an event that has happened to you—in or out of school—since you began college. Describe who was involved and how you feel this has impacted your experience in college." Lana wrote:

> No major life change has happened to me since I started college. However, I do feel very impacted by one particular event that took place while I was in college. I've already written in journals about it, but I will write about it again, because it is one of my favorite things that has happened to me. It was the class after English. Having a big racially charged discussion in my English class made me reflect on my life. I went to a mostly white high school, I'm half white myself and I am definitely white passing, plus I speak absolutely no Spanish (and even if I tried my accent is terrible) so I was pretty good at hiding part of myself in front of the other kids, but I always felt just out of place. Too Spanish for the white kids, but too white for the Spanish kids. I felt like I couldn't find a place, a feeling which I'm sure every mixed kid has had at least once. I always felt out of place in my high school, I found myself walking into rooms and seeing only white people. Looking at the packaging of makeup products and seeing only white faces. I knew that when I went to college It would be more culturally diverse (at least I hoped it would be). I noticed more people of color in my classrooms and in the halls, but it never truly registered in my brain. Until one day in the class after English, I looked around the room and as horrible as it sounded I counted every white person (based solely on looks) and for I'm pretty sure the first time in my life the number or people of color outweighed

the number of white people. I felt seen for maybe the first time ever. I know it sounds

silly but in the corner of a classroom after English class I never felt more at peace.

Professor, I just wanted to let you know that I had a lot of fun with the journal

prompt. I used to write a lot of poems in high school but I fell out of love with the

feeling. Reading the poem "Theme for English B" (which is an extremely amazing and

powerful poem) and this JTC prompt made me have the urge to suddenly write again, and

I haven't had that urge in a really long time. So thank you for that. :) (JTC)

I responded:

Hi Lana, The moment you describe here is one that I do hope stays with you. The

feeling of being seen in that classroom, in that realization of who you were with, I hope

that stays with you, too. I hope it guides you to know that you deserve to feel seen, to be

heard, and to be you, despite the constructs and attitudes that others have built around

race and identity. Your entry is powerful and I am encouraged that Hughes's poem and

this prompt sparked inspiration within you. I hope this urge to write stays with you, too.

—Prof. Metzger (Feedback to Lana)

Lana's entry depicts her introspective reflection on a moment after our English class on the day

students initially read the "book burning" article, journaled, and discussed race, and indicates

how the journal provided a space for continued reflection on feeling seen as a student of color

and who had previously felt marginalized in educational contexts. My response was meant to

reaffirm the moments Lana described and to encourage her to follow the passion for writing.

Black feminism encourages educators to be mindful of moments like this so we can acknowledge

and validate underrepresented students' experiences. Learning of this positive student experience

after an intentional discussion about race and college underscores the benefit fostering a feminist

classroom community. This data is the most representative example of how JTC affirmed a

student's sense of racial identity and belonging in college.

Developing Agency

Significant evidence of how JTC served as a technology of the self was seen in its ability

to elicit reflection on self-control and assist students to succeed within the governmentality of

college. The data for this category is derived from all four data sets and evidenced how the JTC

intervention provided a space for students to develop agency and autonomy. Frequent codes

comprising this category are *degrees of control*, *asking questions*, and *JTC as self-reflection*.

Other codes are resultant of data that indicated students' appreciativeness of the journal as a

place to think, references to where they have learned to take initiative in utilizing student support

resources on campus, and as seen in teaching reflections, how students were involved with

discussion of the grading methods and how they influenced prompt design for JTC. All data is

relevant to how students developed the ability to think, behave, and communicate in a way that

shows they are advocating for themselves or to their ability to understand more about their levels

of control during the transition to college.

During the second half of the semester, a JTC prompt asked students to list aspects of

college they can control as well as those which they cannot control and to then freewrite about a

couple of items from each list. This reflection was designed for students to consider where they

had agency or where they might develop more, and to reflect on factors over which they had

little or no control. Students listed a variety of components, and in feedback I commented on the

importance of focusing on the ones over which they have control. Examples of data points on

what students said they can control included: "my grades because I can choose to study

efficiently or put it off altogether in order to pass my classes" (Emily, JTC) and "my attitude and

my actions. . . . if you approach [a situation or assignment] in a manner where you are optimistic then your chances of success and enjoyment are much higher" (Robbie, JTC). Discussion of what students cannot control included others' attitudes and actions and the way courses are taught. James wrote:

> Something I don't have control over is how a teacher or professor teaches their class. It's up the teacher/professor on how the class should run if they are running the class in a way that doesn't support the students it can make the student suffer. (JTC)

In another instance, Emily wrote, "unfortunately I do not have control over my learning disability. If I did I wouldn't have it" (JTC). In the same entry, she also discussed her lack of control over the COVID-19 pandemic. I provided the following feedback:

> Emily, working through the challenges and opportunities that your learning disability brings is definitely something you have control over and something I have witnessed you do this semester. Yes, you're right we can't control the pandemic (except to stay safe and keep others safe) but we can decide to keep going with what we're committing to and focus on what we can control, as you say! (Feedback to Emily)

Although there is variance in the content of the entries, the prompt generated discussion centered on students' autonomy. Feedback to the entries provided a place to reiterate the necessity to focus on what is in our control was intended to reinforce the sense of agency that developed from students' journaling.

Participants drew a direct connection between keeping the journal and asking questions, both of their professors in class and when they needed additional academic support. This correlation between journaling and asking questions was a rare instance where students expressed that keeping the journal had a direct influence on their actions in the classroom.

Robbie discussed that there is a stigma around asking questions and that in the past he had been made to feel like an outsider by peers for asking questions in class (Interview 1). He went on to cite a class discussion of Bader's (2004) "Homelessness in College" essay in our English I class, which students had written a JTC entry on for homework prior to the discussion. Robbie reported feeling comfortable not only asking questions during the discussion but also participating and feeling confident pointing to specific passages in the text to support his ideas. He explained that without the journal:

> I wouldn't want to talk as much in class. Like I wouldn't feel like I could really speak my opinion or like my view. I would try and push to be more textbook accurate. Um I would feel the pressure of saying the right thing at the right time. And I don't feel that. (Robbie, Interview 1)

Breanne expanded upon this comfortability with asking questions. The prompts posed in the journal showed her the importance of critically approaching concepts about college and building agency: "it's not even some questions that you specifically asked, it was just that you were asking them made me want to ask my own" (Breanne, Interview 1). This data indicates a result beyond the journal in that the prompts developed an inquisitiveness that the student might apply in other aspects of their college experience.

Asking questions, of either peers, professors, or staff in the Learning Center or Financial Aid Office, was a significant lesson that other participants discussed as having learned throughout the semester. In a few different journal entries, Logan described his first and subsequent visitations to the BCC Learning Center, discussing how much of a help the academic coaches there were for his organization and time management skills. His discovery of the resource was initiated by asking his College Success professor for help. He wrote:

> I still go to the resource center two to three times a week even though most of the time I
>
> don't need help with any of my assignments, it is great to have a place to do my work and
>
> it's good to know the help's there if it's needed. (Logan, JTC)

Notably, asking questions was something that many students entering college were not willing to do. Early in the semester, Kayla wrote that she was hesitant to seek help at first but she was "learning that it's ok to ask questions" (JTC). In one of her last entries, Emily shared, "you also have to . . . ask people questions for when you are in need of guidance or direction" (JTC). In both identifying the need to ask questions and engaging in the act, JTC served to help students build agency.

I practiced methods in order to involve students in other components of JTC and increase their agency. Prior to collecting their journals for the first round of review, I opened discussion with my students as to how the JTC entries should be graded (Teaching Reflection, 2/12/20). I described the grade for completion method I planned to use and asked for students to think about how they would want to be graded on their entries. When we revisited the topic in a subsequent class meeting, there was no suggestion and I decided to continue with my planned assessment method (Teaching Reflection, 2/16/20). Another example of student involvement with JTC came during an interview when Conor made suggestions about the prompt design and timeline, which I told him I would use. I adjusted some of my planned prompts according to his suggestions (Conor, Interview 1; Teaching Reflection, 3/1/20). I include these examples here to illustrate ways in which students were involved in the JTC course component design. Although there was not input offered for the assessment methods, students were given the opportunity to engage in a conversation about assessment and presented opportunity to further develop agency in light of what is traditionally a power structure. Students' lack of input on the topic of grading is

suggestive of the need to frame the discussion in a different way or revisit the discussion a few more times in the semester, which I did not.

In their final JTC entry, students were asked to read over their previous entries from the semester and freewrite about how, if at all, the journal affected how they think about college or their experience transitioning to college. Data coded as *JTC as self-reflection* was a result of these entries, in addition to interviewee participants' discussion of the journal. This data is evidence that students' thoughts and actions were positively affected by keeping the journal. Claire wrote:

> Having a tool to use to reflect on life and myself has really helped me gain perspective. It helps me to get out of my head and figure out why I feel the way I feel. It helps to pinpoint things within myself that need change or correction and I'm thankful for that. (JTC)

Lana explained that "keeping this journal forced me to slow down and evaluate/reevaluate everything I was doing" (JTC) and Robbie stated that:

> [JTC] pulls me back to like really view my reality and like myself and realize like I undermine myself a lot, but writing in this journal I'm being honest---I've seen that like I've made like tremendous progress. I'm a high-school dropout in college. (Interview 1)

The above analysis presents numerous ways in which JTC acts as a technology of the self for students entering college and experiencing the ways in which college governs us.

Theme 8 – Journaling During a Pandemic

Much analysis in the aforementioned themes spoke to how the "transition within a transition" due to COVID-19 illuminated a variety of the aspects of college and first-year student experiences that emerged in this study. However, the magnitude of this unexpected event was

captured and addressed by the JTC component in ways that required additional space for analysis. This theme reveals how JTC served as a technology of the self by considering the invaluable opportunities journaling in the writing classroom provided for both students and instructor during a time of crisis and uncertainty. This underscores the importance of the support reflective journaling provides for students, the means of communication it presents between instructor and students, and its functionality as a technology of the self. Two categories comprised this theme: (a) reflection on the remote learning environment and (b) staying connected during isolation and uncertainty.

Reflection on the Remote Learning Environment

The frequency with which students journaled and reported about their learning environments during the transition to remote instruction and amidst stay-at-home guidelines was high. While in some areas it overlaps with the discussion on spaces of college pertaining to research question 1, data coded to this theme is distinct in that it presents students' reactions and experiences to attending classes and completing coursework virtually and makes apparent a way the journal served as a technology of the self during this time. Analysis revealed students were forced to reflect on how they learn and what they need from an educational environment, which in some instances forced an adaptation to develop skills or self-reliance they previously did not have and under other circumstances would not have required. The journal was a space to reflect on and explain what was frequently expressed as frustration about the new learning environment. The highest frequency in this category was students' discussion of their struggle adapting to remote learning, followed by an emphasis on the need for a physical campus to learn, and descriptions of virtual class meetings, if their instructors held them.

The struggle to adapt to remote learning was expressed in a number of ways, the most common being the inability to stay on track with and complete coursework by the given deadlines. Students expressed that "it was just hard to keep up and keep focus" (Edwin, JTC) and that "deadlines seem to come faster than anticipated" (Conor, JTC). Others noted the difficulty of getting into the right state of mind to be able to concentrate on their school work. James shared "it's hard to kind of get into like school mode when I'm at home" (Interview 2) and Lana journaled, "I've realized for me personally it is hard for me to get into the headspace of 'ok I am going to sit down and actually do school now'" (JTC).

This discussion of struggling to adapt often segued into participants expressing the need to be on a physical campus in order to get into this proper headspace. In one JTC entry, Denis used the journal to reflect on the purpose of the physical campus and how being there impacted his mindset:

> Being at school makes me concentrate more I think, not just because there are less distractions but because of the setting I think. I'm not sure how to explain it. Maybe like when I go somewhere I go there for a reason, so when I go to school I go there to learn. (JTC)

In this case and others, the journal provided a space to think through the reasons why students were struggling to adapt to their virtual learning environments. In other cases, students shared that the college campus was where they completed much of their coursework because of difficulty to be as productive at home. Robbie wrote:

> I rarely get the amount of schoolwork done a day that I would like to because I can't go anywhere to do it. I usually would go to the library. . . . I don't have an at home life that makes it easy to do homework. (JTC)

Other students reflected on their struggle for engaging with class meetings that were being held online because of their hands-on learning styles and the inability to communicate with professors and classmates as they had been able to earlier in the semester.

Outliers in the data on the remote learning environment were seen from three participants who discussed positive ways that the transition to remote instruction affected their ability to focus on course content and help them improve their grades. Two of these students noted they had been struggling to attend classes and complete coursework in the first half of the semester. Alice felt that having the opportunity to be more self-reliant with online classes gave her "an extra level of assurance" that she was able to complete coursework (JTC). Emily had a positive response to learning from home:

> I feel as though working out of my comfort zone (my room) gives me more of an opportunity to create and be successful in my course work. This feeling really has helped with my ability to focus and create in a space where I feel most myself and has allowed me to think outside the box in a way I usually have not done while in a typical classroom setting such as being in school. (JTC)

Another positive reaction to remote instruction was provided by Taylor, who expressed a gratitude for support from her professors who facilitated virtual class meetings and or made instructional videos, noting that they "are making me understand my assignments and exams better" (JTC). It is noteworthy to include these because although they do not align with other students' reactions, these data points are indicative of what the journal provided students in this context: a place to reflect on the self in relation to space, learning, and control.

Students collegewide experienced a transition to remote instruction and likely had similar experiences. Interpretation of the data in this category reveals that despite the inevitability and

the frustration the participants expressed, JTC, as a technology of the self, allowed the students

in this study a place to reflect on an uncontrollable situation and how it affected their experiences

as learners.

Staying Connected During Isolation and Uncertainty

Adapting the journal to support students during the lockdown provided another entry

point for understanding JTC as a technology of the self. The first post-COVID-19 JTC prompt

asked students to reflect on the events that unfolded in the previous two weeks since we were last

together as a class. There was no expectation to draw connections to college. The prompt was

meant to provide a space for students to use the freewrite as they needed. The subsequent prompt

similarly focused on the effects of the pandemic but asked participants to draw focus on how the

situation was affecting their actions or thinking as a college student. Data from these prompts is

prominent in this category but it also includes data from all data sets, as the results of the

pandemic permeated data for the remainder of the semester.

Journaling about quarantine and *instructor feedback on quarantine experiences* were

frequent codes and these high frequencies necessitated the formation of this category. Data in

this category is intentionally coded broadly. Much data from the *journaling about quarantine*

code overlaps with those represented in previous themes, as these data points were coded

multiple times. This category does not fully relate to college as governmentality, at least not in

the way it was envisioned in the conceptual framework. Students and instructor were

experiencing the pandemic through the context of college, but the content of the journals also

speaks to governmentality resultant of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's stay-at-home orders

to ensure public health and safety. Data points show that the journal was a mechanism students

used to think about the unknowns and uncertainties of the situation while documenting their new

daily experiences. It also allowed me to communicate to students during this uncertain time and again de-center power in expressing my own experiences, thoughts, and advice, serving as a bonding agent between students and me as we navigated the remainder of the semester.

Students' journaling about being in quarantine, which is the term they most frequently used to describe their experience during stay-at-home guidelines, varied in content. Participants journaled about their inability to see friends, whether or not they were able to continue working, how their workplaces had changed, how they were interacting with family members, how they were spending their time, and what they missed. Their emotional reactions to the situation were nervousness or anxiousness. Students shared that "in a matter of 2 weeks, it seems like the world had completely fallen apart" (Logan, JTC) and "everything feels frantic" (Lana, JTC). Students discussed the changing conditions at their jobs, their interactions with coworkers, and the concern that going between work and home raised: "I am worried about my household, I am the only one working so I am putting everyone else in the house at risk, but I try not to think about that" (Lana, JTC). In many instances, students drew connections to how being confined to their living space affected their work ethic and motivation. Conor wrote:

> I do get bursts of motivation and get loads of work down. I was planning on having the best work ethic I could from the spring break . . . but the lockdown happened and threw that out the window (JTC).

Claire described what she missed now that she was confined to her living space, but she also expressed feelings of gratitude:

> I miss long drives with loud music. I miss running around. I'm over being in the same four walls, although I want to be grateful and thankful that I have a roof over my head

with everything I need and some of the most important people I love. Feeling stuck is

overwhelming. (JTC)

Because they used the journal as a space to reflect on their situations, my understanding

of how students were experiencing the pandemic improved markedly, and I was provided a

detailed insight I would not have been afforded without JTC. My feedback to these entries

generated a dialogue with students about their situations and where I was able express my

gratitude to them for sharing their insight. For example:

This reflection offers a lot of insight into how you and potentially other students are

experiencing this transition within a transition. Keep up those good organizational habits

and your hard work and you'll have this semester finished before you know it! (Feedback

to Conor)

While JTC had been established as a space to dialogue with students in the two feedback rounds

prior to the switch to remote instruction, the increased frequency of my feedback for online

entries allowed JTC to become a tool for communication during the weeks we were unable to

meet in a physical space.

When, at the end of the semester, students reflected on the benefits of having the journal

in the course, data revealed an impact on their sense of self while navigating the unknowns of the

pandemic. Lana wrote, "[The journal] gave me something to look forward to and because of the

prompts it helped me reflect on the crazy situation we are in right now in a positive space"

(JTC). Emily wrote:

These journals have been a great help to such a scary time in both my transition to

college and in my transition to online classes with the pandemic. Especially during the

pandemic these journals have been helpful to help myself during the Coronavirus.

> Because of this journal I feel sane and not as crazy as I would have during the
>
> Coronavirus because I have a place to think without having to deal with anyone else.
>
> (JTC)

Having had the JTC component established in the course prior to the shift in course format allowed me to ask students to reflect on the situation without delay and gave me the opportunity to communicate to each student who continued submitting entries. Whether the content of their entries pertained to their experience as a college student during the pandemic or if it otherwise described their thoughts and experiences in quarantine, the journal acted as a technology of the self during this unfamiliar time.

Summary of Results

The results of the data analysis provided comprehensive insight into student experiences with power structures in college, the role of the college writing instructor, and the nature of a thematic journaling intervention in allowing students a place to self-reflect and develop agency during the transition to college. Results of the first research question revealed that professors, GPA, policies such as the academic honesty policy, and institutionalized White supremacy are components of college which serve as power structures and features of governmentality in college. College writing instructors are seen as both reinforcing and interrupting college as governmentality. In the data collected for this study, their reinforcement of governmentality was seen in how power shifted away from students during the switch to remote instruction as well as how, inevitably, the design of assignments forced students to meet requirements such as deadlines. Moments of confession and apology in students' journaling evidences the power relationship between students and instructors that is inherent in JTC, but also revealed that instructors can leverage pastoral power with their feedback to interrupt college governmentality.

Despite these examples, data analysis revealed that writing instructors have significant

opportunities to interrupt college as governmentality, for instance in their adapting to students'

needs during the disruption of COVID-19 by revising assignments, deadlines, and attendance

protocols while transitioning to remote instruction. The design and implementation of the JTC

intervention and the writing instructor's level of engagement with students through feedback is

the most significant way that they can interrupt college as governmentality.

JTC acted as a technology of the self in that prompts allowed students to critically reflect

on power structures in higher education, this personal reflection aided in constituting the self,

and the journal served as a space to discuss and develop agency amid moments of transition,

uncertainty, or disruption. Data analysis showed that in constituting the self, students used their

journals to reflect on their relationship to college, identified needs and charted improvements

during the semester, discussed factors of their social identities, and, by reflecting on the degrees

to which they had control and recognizing the importance of asking questions when they needed

help or clarification, developed agency. JTC further served to allow students to critically reflect

on their experiences being college students during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and

provided high frequencies of communication between students and instructor during this isolated

time.

These results have significant correlations with the study's theoretical and pedagogical

perspectives. As presented throughout this chapter, Foucault's theory that governmentality is an

inevitable feature of Western institutions and applicable to understanding power in higher

education is evident in the analysis of student and instructor data on their experiences in college

and with the journal. Foucault's concept of power as fluid further explains how power structures

such as GPA, economics, and policies are reliant on the other and inseparable from professors'

power. Results indicated that surveillance regulates behavior and affects learning, both in

classroom settings and through reading student writing; Fenwick's (2001) application of

Foucault's conception of the panopticon and pastoral power to the data on instructor feedback

presents rich insight to providing response to student writing, which is further discussed in

Chapter V. Applying hooks and Crenshaw's tenets of Black feminist theory to analyze the

instances where race, socioeconomic status, and other social identity factors emerged in the data

provided interpretations of how students experience power that the Foucauldian theories alone

would not allow. Most notably, as it is one of the five power central institutional power

structures identified, their theories provided a basis for making visible institutional White

supremacy in higher education and suggest approaches to its disruption in classroom discourse

and individually with students through feedback. Many of the pedagogical perspectives from

FYE literature discussed in Chapter II align with the study's results, indicating that writing

prompts focused on transitioning to college support first-year writing students' experiences and

engagement. An absence of these prompts would not have allowed the intervention to act as a

technology of the self to the degree that it did. Participants' readiness to share personal

experiences about their first days or weeks in college and their reflection on how various aspects

of college affected them shows that employing FYE literature to inform writing prompts in the

first-year writing classroom not only supports students' transition to college, but it is also a

touchstone theme with which students willingly engage. Extended discussion of results' ties with

the theoretical framework is provided in Chapter V.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed review of the raw data collected, the coding process,

and the themes, categories, and codes resultant of this analysis. The presentation and discussion

of each theme provided interpretation of the results relevant to each of the study's three research

questions. Chapter V further discusses the findings, beginning with implications for theory,

practice, and policy. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future critical Foucauldian

education research with first-year student populations and in other areas of higher education.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

This study explored, through a thematic journaling intervention, the ways in which college functions as a feature of governmentality, how first-year students experience power structures and relationships, the role of the writing instructor in enforcing or interrupting college as governmentality, and how journaling might serve as a technology of the self during the transition to college. Interpretations of the data provided in Chapter IV evidenced multiple ways that the JTC component allows for this exploration and, despite an atypical semester, provided crucial support for teaching, learning, and supporting students' transition to college in the first-year writing classroom. The present chapter discusses relevant theoretical implications, the study's impact on my teaching practice and on that of others in the field, potential application for JTC in other contexts of higher education, and implications on policy as influenced by the findings. It concludes with suggestions for future research on JTC and Foucauldian approaches to higher education research. The purpose of this discussion is to expand upon how the findings of the study can incite change in higher education and in our support of first-year students.

Implications for Theory

The findings resultant of data analysis closely align with the study's theoretical framework. These correlations are foremostly apparent in the previously-discussed answers to the three research questions, and in this section further discussion is presented in the contexts of Foucauldian education research and exploring student identities in the writing classroom, as informed by Black feminist theory.

Foucauldian Education Research

Implications from the findings of the present study relevant to Foucauldian education research are centered on features of governmentality in college, JTC serving as a technology of

the self, the panopticon and pastoral power as evidenced in the power dynamic of the journal, spaces of security, and surveillance in remote instruction.

Features of Governmentality in College

There are inevitable power structures inherent to higher education which affect students' behavior and thoughts as they transition to college. JTC revealed that college is seen as a feature of governmentality in the ways students are forced to comply with norms that are motivated by the power of economics, grades, and policies. College professors, being in inherent positions of power, specifically in their assigning of grades, and because grades, class materials, and time are economically valuable to students, wield a significant amount of power in the student-professor power relationship. JTC entries and instructor feedback evidenced how Foucauldian approaches to first-year college students' experiences in a journaling intervention provided a space for critical reflection on power in higher education. Similar to Gorman's (2012) study of governmentality in college, which focused on administration and faculty by examining the ways that organizational practices might be destabilized, the results of the present study highlight how college students are made subject to power and findings provide instructors with insight into their own complicity and how their actions may harm students' relationship to learning.

The present study recognizes that the majority of Foucauldian education research is set in K-12 contexts (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998; Schaafsma, 1998) and higher education has rarely been the site of Foucauldian research. Students in the present study reflected on how they were adjusting to higher education based on what they knew of and how they were treated in power structures and relationships in their high schools. For example, the absence of a bell signaling classes starting or ending, the freedom to dress differently if they were previously required to wear uniforms, and less-structured class schedules highlight the rigid features of governmentality

at work in secondary education contexts. However, as governmentality is inevitable and a component of any institution in Western society (Foucault, 1991), what participant discussion of these components highlights is the abrupt adjustment that students experience when entering college and how what they are accustomed to, in terms of being a student, is forced to change. Students named specific features of high school where they felt controlled (i.e. the bell or uniforms), but described college as forcing them to act in specific ways despite feeling more independent or free than they did in high school. In this, college is not seen as governing students less, but as being more subtle at its governmentality than high school. When viewed as a part of the disruptive process of becoming an educated subject (Fendler, 1998), this transition from high school to college forces students to learn to internalize the need to self-govern with what they perceive to be fewer support systems and higher stakes. While they express a new sense of independence, features of governmentality such as grades, policies, and professors as authority figures who administer and enforce these, significantly affect their behavior, emotions, and relationship to learning.

Technology of the Self in Action

JTC succeeds in allowing students to be successful within the power of college, and it also provides a space for them to self-affirm in spite of that power. Due to its ability to confront institutional power structures and build agency within the student, JTC can be designated as a technology of the self (Foucault, 1991). With the onus on students to be autonomous and in control of their actions for time management, meeting deadlines, and other responsibilities participants named, the journal not only provides an interruption to governmentality, through critical reflection and instructor feedback, it develops agency and self-reliance.

JTC assists students in learning to self-govern to meet institutional demands, helping them to thrive within the power of college. This is critical for their success. One striking example of students realizing how journaling was affecting their transition was how the journal helped them ask questions and learn more about the components of college that were unknown or unfamiliar. Breanne pointed to being a first-generation college student and how without some of the prompts, such as the reflection on plagiarism and the academic honesty policy, she would have not known how to navigate these and similar structures that could obstruct her academic pathway. Teaching students about these policies through critical reflection lets them not only understand the power structure but also consider how it affects their behavior as a student. Raising awareness of institutional power structures also allows students to practice ways to be successful within that power. One may view this as the college student internalizing the concept of the panopticon and, as a result of the power structures that influence their thoughts and behavior in the institution of college, discovering ways to self-discipline. JTC provided a mechanism of "reflexive governance" where "the subject disciplines the subject" (Fendler, 1998, p. 53), and functioned to support their transition into these new forms of governmentality in college.

JTC functioned to document students' becoming normalized to a new system of education and allowed them to practice self-affirmation in spite of the power of college. The journal became a reflective space for students to discuss disruptions in their transition to college. These disruptions were both "normal," or what can be considered typical for a student's first or second semester in college, or atypical disruptions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fendler (1998) stated that to become subjected to education is inevitably a process of disruption filled with "unpredictable diversions" (p. 61). Therefore, technology of the self in action is

identifiable when students master knowledgeable self-control (Fendler, 1998) and its design allows them to affirm themselves in spite of institutional power. This is seen in responses to the prompt asking students to reflect on what they can and cannot control and in instructor feedback suggesting they focus on those aspects they can control or that offers encouragement. That some participants discussed the intrinsic benefits of the journal to their personal growth and planned to continue the practice after the semester was over suggests its ability to instill the practice of affirming oneself beyond the first-year writing classroom.

The Panopticon and Pastoral Power

Numerous power structures work to reproduce Foucault's (1977) panopticon wherein students understand they are being monitored and thereby self-regulate to avoid punishment. One example of how multiple power structures manifest as a monitoring agent and serve to conduct student behavior is the student's attendance record. Knowing the consequence for multiple absences is withdrawal from the course, financial loss, and potential drop in grade, and, knowing that the professor keeps a record of attendance, students tend to choose to attend classes or they perceive a negative outcome if they do not attend. White supremacy in higher education creates a panoptical gaze as well, leading students to censor journal content or discussion in the classroom centering on racial experiences and social justice. Findings show that the gaze from the panopticon extended to other components as well. In James's case, his parents held this power in their ability to monitor and control his conduct for altering his study habits to make the act visible to them.

While these are striking examples, more central to this study is the application of the instructor-as-respondent on students' reflective journaling. Fenwick (2001) suggested the panoptical gaze is a crucial paradox of journaling in education settings, specifically when the

entries are being assessed. The most apparent evidence of students' being monitored in their

journaling were those instances of either apology or confession. Moments when students wrote

that they were unsure if their ideas were "on the right track," "what you were looking for," or

when they apologized, signaled that they were seeking the approval of the instructor, and that

they were composing entries as if there was a correct answer to the prompts. This highlights the

perceived power dynamic where the instructor-respondent has power over the student-writer,

despite the premise that the journals were not graded for content and that freewriting encourages

tangential writing. That these moments of apology occurred well into the semester and after I

reiterated this premise shows how pervasive the power of the respondent's gaze is on the writer's

reflections.

How, then, does the instructor's feedback affect student journaling within this power

relationship? Data showed it has the power to increase students' attitude about journaling.

Knowing that his entries were being read and responded to positively affected Robbie's

engagement with the journal, but he only realized this after seeing engaged feedback from the

instructor. Fenwick (2001) suggested the necessity in "understanding the oppressive potential of

response when it seeks to normalize, confine, or disempower writers" (p. 42) and I attempted to

vigilantly heed this warning. In Robbie's case, my feedback caused him to want to take the

writing more seriously; seeing that I cared made him care more than he otherwise may have.

This is an example of how pastoral power can be leveraged to teach the value and practice of

care of the self. As discussed in the analysis of my teaching reflections, JTC began to feel like a

dialogue or means of communication. Instructor-respondents must be aware of the power their

surveilling and feedback has, and to use it to interrupt power dynamics, encourage students, and

guide them in their critical reflection. When students indicated that they were discouraged by

either the required word count or their lack of ideas for a prompt, I leveraged pastoral power and

surveillance to indicate that they should write more, but I also used feedback to encourage

students to embrace freewriting (Elbow, 1998) and to foster critical self-reflection (Everett,

2013; Mills, 2008; Solbrekke & Helstad, 2016; Spalding, 2002).

Spaces of Security

Spaces of security and normalization such as classrooms and labs (Gorman, 2012) appear

in James's description of the lecture hall and his perception of the professor's authority of the

class and course content. James shared in his second interview that he could not keep up with

this course once it was held remotely over Zoom, and as a result he withdrew. Striking

applications to the concept of spaces of security emerge in this and other student discussion of

the virtual classrooms and the LMS. Though the remote learning environments were constructed

in moments of crisis, there are and will continue to be opportunities for power analyses of these

spaces. Students' behavior and conduct was shaped by videoconference class meetings and the

LMS spaces they were forced to navigate, affecting students' relationship to their learning, peers,

or professors. These spaces must be critically examined as spaces of security and normalization

as remote instruction continues to be utilized in post-COVID-19 education. The implications on

Foucauldian theory when considering the remote educational setting are numerous. Perhaps the

most obvious is the use of cameras during synchronous instruction, which opens students' bodies

and living spaces to surveillance, both for instructors and peers in the class.

Surveillance and Remote Instruction

Using a Foucauldian framework, Piro (2008) considered the surveillance of students in

schools after shootings such as those in Columbine High School in 1999 and Virginia Tech in

2007, positing, "the challenge appears to be how to strike a delicate balance between the need to

surveil and the mission to instruct" (p. 43). A similar challenge applies to teaching during a pandemic and in anticipating power relationships and normalization in virtual classrooms in the future. Though outside of the purview of this study at the time it was designed, the switch to and continued use of remote instruction raises questions about safe, realistic, ethical, equitable, and effective communication and instructional practices during virtual class meetings. Striking a balance between the need to see students and to instruct them in these spaces is highly relevant to post-COVID-19 education. Questions of student privacy, equity, and instructional effectiveness have been raised and debated since the pandemic began (Reed, 2020), as have strategies for fostering engaging virtual classrooms (McMurtrie, 2020). Ideally, the cameras used for virtual class meetings aid in the mission to instruct, however it is inevitable that the power of surveillance affects student engagement in class or their choice to be seen in those spaces. Students' intersectional and marginalized identities further influence these decisions. While there was some discussion about this in the present study, it was not a focal point of the post-COVID-19 data. Regardless, applications to Foucauldian analysis in the area of synchronous virtual class meetings and the use of audiovisual technologies are abundant.

Engaging with Student Identity

JTC offered a space for students to reflect on their transition to college, which included their experiences amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. This study's conceptual framework considers students' social identities from the theoretical lens of Black feminist theory while also contextualizing students' academic identities in the college writing classroom. Discussion of these theoretical implications expand on Foucauldian approaches to JTC, suggesting that the journaling intervention provided a rich space for students to explore and share their identities as they transition to college. The journal allows for exploration of how their intersectional social

identities affect how students experience power structures inherent to higher education, specifically White supremacy and economic power. Institutions of higher education are White supremacist, classist, and patriarchal, and the dominant groups in Western society are those which hold dominant positions of power in colleges. Considering intersectionality and confronting White supremacy and class discrimination is central to the discussion on identity presented here. Discussion on students' identities as academic writers was not frequent in the data, due to in part to JTC design and the attention that COVID-19 took in journaling content during the second half of the semester, however there are theoretical implications to focusing on students' growth as academic writers in future research on JTC.

Intersectionality and Transitioning to College

Student reflection on the factors of their social identities, both past and present, is informed by the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991). What emerged from journaling relevant to students' social identities illustrated the layered factors of class, race, family obligation, familial education level, learning disability, and religion, providing insight to the specific ways student identities are fluid and varied. What is perhaps most compelling is the number of different identity factors students discussed in their journaling. Without directly soliciting this information, the journal captured identities that are multifaceted and show their significance for students when reflecting on their experiences in college. What would I have known about my students if not for their journal entries? While I learn about students from literacy narratives and their choices of essay topics throughout the semester, in the absence of JTC I would know much less, specifically in regard to their economic and racial backgrounds.

Crenshaw's (1991) concept of intersectionality allows us to focus on how the layered social identities of students entering college filter power in multifaceted ways, resulting in

unique and subjective experiences. Crafting journal prompts asking students to reflect on the

barriers they have faced in their transition to college exposed the detrimental effects of deeply-

rooted power structures. Because they are White supremacist and rely on an embedded economic

structure that makes it difficult for student from lower classes to access or engage with learning

as compared to students from higher economic classes, institutions of higher education promote a

culture that is more accessible to continuing generation students. Students who belong to

underrepresented groups experience the power structures inherent to college in ways that are

oppressive and exclusionary. Race, socioeconomic status, familial education level, learning

disability diagnosis, and other layered identity factors cause underrepresented first-year students

to experience governmentality in college in ways that require different kinds of support.

Knowledge of these identities should heighten educators' sensitivities to student experiences and

inform our engagement in pedagogies which are not only inclusive of these numerous identities

but also removes barriers for students belonging to underrepresented groups. JTC provides first-

year writing instructors with insight to students we may not otherwise have, and in turn allows us

to use our power within our institutions to support students or introduce them to supportive

faculty, staff, and resources they otherwise may not connect with.

Confronting White Supremacy. Disrupting the White dominant culture of higher

education and addressing its permeance of society in classroom discourse is crucial to this work.

Anticipating a student population who came from underrepresented racial groups and lower

income families informed the design of JTC prompts, the texts I selected, and the topics I chose

to expand into class discussion. Addressing the role of race in the transition to college, after

sharing Jeannie Crucet's experience with acts of White supremacy from students she was invited

to speak with (Fisher, 2019), elicited a variety of responses. Incorporating race and critical

reflection on the realities of such White supremacist actions and providing feedback on journal entries to students that emphasized my opinion that such discussions and reflections are necessary and might serve to interrupt the institutionalized White supremacy inherent in higher education. We must encourage students to draw connections from articles like this to the experiences they have in our institutions. We must confront the silence or deflection when we work to engage students with issues of racial oppression and White privilege, acknowledging that these events do not only happen in certain parts of the country. I recognize that there were more ways I could have addressed the topic of racial oppression in society and higher education or encouraged further reflection of students' racial identities in college. In subsequent iterations of JTC, I have grappled with ways that I, as a White male who is granted power and privilege because my social identities align with the White patriarchal structure of higher education, can confront institutionalized White supremacy and how these efforts are received by my students.

Confronting Class. JTC entries that discussed the cost of college provided moments to confront the impact of class on students' transition. Bader's (2004) article on college student homelessness, which supplemented a JTC prompt and was the topic of an in-class discussion, elicited a dialogue on economic status and housing security. Some students described personal experiences with these topics in their journals. Our group discussion of the text confronted class, allowing students to volunteer their experiences or empathize with the students in the article. This choice of text and prompt was informed by the notion of a feminist classroom (hooks, 1994). hooks (1994) notes that economic class differences are seldom discussed in the classroom, and students belonging to lower classes, who are typically acutely aware of these disparities, are disadvantaged by this erasure. Instructors committed to engaged pedagogy must constructively confront class differences, both in society and in the classroom (hooks, 1994).

Recognition and discussion of the role that class and financial capital play in students' college education, their relationship with grades, peers, instructors, and learning, whether in journaling or class discussion, must be encouraged. JTC allows a space for this, specifically in its ability to confront the economic power of college and openly discuss how students from low economic classes are not provided the same privileges as students who have the financial means to afford access to transportation, technology, food, housing, and other essentials needed to remain enrolled and successful in college.

Constructing Academic Writers' Identities

A core role of the writing instructor is to teach students to write within systems that are often unfamiliar and regimented by conventional rules. This presents an exciting dichotomy for writing instructors seeking ways to identify and interrupt college as governmentality. Teaching students to be successful, inspired academic writers requires instructors to both enforce the rules of a system and show students methods to explore and present ideas therein without forfeiting originality or agency. In this way, the parallels between poststructuralist approaches to transitioning to college and to becoming academic writers are abundant. Barring a few exceptions, in this study academic writing did not emerge as a predominant feature of governmentality or JTC as a tool for enhancing academic writing skills. The JTC student data that did relate to formal writing showed that students who embraced freewriting and extended the practice to brainstorming and drafting essays became more comfortable and confident in their writing. While findings did not directly speak to JTC supporting students' formal writing, instances like the above and others (i.e. reflection on plagiarism) suggest the potential for more focused approaches to academic writing in future iterations of JTC.

As discussed in Chapter II, developing first-year students' identities as academic writers is an essential role of the writing instructor, and critical reflection through low stakes writing provides entry points for this engagement. At the onset of the study and based on the prompts I designed, I anticipated data would reveal more in the way of students' sense of belonging in academic contexts and as writers in college. Early in the semester, I delivered a JTC prompt asking students to reflect on their sense of belonging in academic contexts. The general response to this was that students did not yet know how they felt about their sense of belonging. In subsequent semesters, I have found more robust discussion from this prompt by delivering it later in the semester. In light of the findings, I have also supplemented some prompts to focus on students' becoming academic writers. I have started introducing JTC with a prompt asking students to reflect on their experience with reading and writing in high school or other educational contexts and to anticipate ways, if any, that writing in college might require them to change. The COVID-19 disruption and the shift in focus to remaining connected during the second half of the semester resulted in fewer opportunities to focus on developing students' identities as academic writers. While not fully realized in this study, JTC has the potential to elicit targeted self-reflection on students' formal writing and to inform writing instructors' pedagogy.

Implications for Practice

The findings from this study have implications on the practice of teaching first-year writing and other English courses, and they also extend to FYE programs' support of first-year students. Discussion begins with the implications JTC has had and will continue to have on my own teaching practice, then presents ways gateway college writing instructors in the field might utilize JTC in their curriculum, and finally considers how FYE programs would benefit from

adapting and implementing JTC in college-wide efforts to engage first-year students with journaling.

Impact on My Practice

JTC is symbiotically beneficial to students and instructors. The more I explore its uses, the more value I see in how it informs student-centered instruction for all areas of course curriculum. Designing and implementing JTC in my first-year writing courses during the Spring 2020 semester significantly aided my ability to teach, learn about, and communicate with my students. Being hyper focused on the data collection for this action research study played a pivotal role in realizing its impact, but my continued use of JTC in all subsequent English I courses since that semester has cemented it as a crucial component of my pedagogy. To date, I have used JTC with 11 sections of first-year writing: three in Spring 2020, one in Summer 2020, four in Fall 2020, and currently, three in Spring 2021. With the exception of the first half of the Spring 2020 semester, all of these courses have been taught remotely with one 75-minute synchronous class meeting a week in addition to course delivery on the LMS. I have adapted JTC in a few ways since conducting this study. The most notable is in reducing the number of entries I ask students to write. Where the study's journal was comprised of 20 entries, my current use of JTC for a blended online format consist of 10 entries. Two factors led to this downsizing: (a) the online format provides fewer in-class writing opportunities (one synchronous meeting a week down from three) and (b) with the addition of other low stakes assignments, 20 entries seemed to me an unreasonable amount. I have also supplemented some instructional texts to better align with unit objectives, improved the entry sequencing and timeline, and retained in-class journaling by using synchronous class time for some of the entries. As they would in the physical classroom, students have a devoted amount of journaling time during a Zoom class

meeting and they submit their freewriting on the LMS at the end of that time. This has further aided in generating discussions during virtual class meetings, retaining this familiar and essential practice.

Continuing to use JTC beyond this action research study has been essential to my teaching of first-year writing. The immediate impact I noticed in the utilization of JTC in these blended online classes was the radically different experience my students were having entering college than those from prior semesters. The Summer and Fall 2020 semesters were taught amid global racial movements and protests against grossly unjust acts of police brutality toward African Americans, a divisive political climate and election season, and a pandemic that was claiming hundreds of thousands of lives. While I encouraged discussion about the protests for racial justice and confronting institutional White supremacy in a variety of classroom discourses, students' journal entries became the space where they discussed race most openly, specifically compared with previous semesters. This also allowed me to continue providing, through feedback, my perspectives on the need to advocate for racial justice and the importance of discussing race in college classrooms. It has also challenged me to grapple with responding to students who have varying or counter perspectives on these issues. JTC continues to provide a space for students to reflect upon their social identities both in relation to college and their civic lives.

The summer and fall terms were also the first semesters students and faculty were beginning their courses in new remote formats, forcing students to adapt to a virtual learning environment and adding to existing first-year stressors. What was shared in early-semester entries during the Spring 2020 as descriptions of figuring out how to navigate buildings and find classrooms now appeared as students writing about how their first day of college consisted of

turning on a laptop to join a Zoom class or describing how they were finally understanding where to find everything in the LMS after a week of utter confusion. Many made comments about how they never pictured that this would be how their first days of college would look, that no one they knew had much advice to give because no one they knew who had been to college had experienced this before, and how they hoped that things would be back to normal soon. These are not complicated examples, but they illuminate one way that JTC's focus on personal reflection gets students writing about a readily accessible and relevant topic, shows them I am invested in learning about their perspectives, informs me of their unique situation, and is a high-impact practice (Kuh, 2008) that allows me to respond to them individually. Entries like these have also informed my choices to open class discussion to the topic of adjusting to college more explicitly during Weeks 1 & 2, and for adding it to class conversations periodically throughout the term. Rather than ignoring the opportunity to discuss as a group the challenges of this novel and unanticipated class format because I have little frame of reference, I use entries like these to generally inform in-class discussions where students share their strategies for or frustrations with attending classes in this way. This leads to community-building and sharing tips for creating a distraction-free space in their home, navigating the LMS, or venting about balancing work, family, and school responsibilities. I simply would not have such insight into students' experiences without these intentional JTC entries.

As seen in this study's data analysis, JTC builds a relationship between student and instructor in a way that few other components can. I have continued to use journal feedback as a way to communicate to students, and because the delivery has remained online since the initial switch to remote instruction, I have decided to continue providing feedback on each entry. For some entries, students receive similar feedback as their peers, but in many cases I respond

directly to the content of each entry. I continue to encourage critical reflection, offer assistance

or suggest resources, and provide optimistic and motivational encouragements. As is always an

important aspect for educators, planning time for reviewing and providing feedback on student

journals is a factor with which I have had to reckon. The model I had originally planned,

collecting physical journals four times throughout the semester to read five entries at a time,

would not have been sustainable for the number of students I was teaching. Online journaling

became a necessity that was a move away from the traditional journal-keeping the initial plan

sought to emulate (Stevens & Cooper, 2009). However, reading and commenting on entries as

they are submitted does help to avoid those long, sometimes emotional days of reviewing JTC

entries as I experienced in the early Spring 2020 semester. My future delivery and review

methods will be determined keeping these factors in mind. Despite and in many ways because of

the virtual learning spaces we have adapted to, JTC has been a crucial component of my

pedagogy, and one which I will continue to use, adapt, share with colleagues, and study in the

future.

Beyond JTC, the results of this study have impacted my pedagogy in other areas of

discourse and course design. The heightened awareness and increased reflection of my role as an

inevitable authority figure has led to my actively exploring the means by which I can de-center

my power and emphasize students' needs and choices by more openly discussing how they

experience institutional power. I am seeking ways to make the writing classroom a place that

affords them more choice and input than they may find in other courses or aspects of college. I

now see documents such as my syllabus and assignment sheets through a new lens and it is in my

locus of control to change the language and policies on these to de-center my power or the way

that power is perceived. I am rethinking ways to be more flexible with deadlines and approaches

to assessment, and asking for my students' input on these components more frequently than I have in the past. To address economic power, I am designing future courses to not require a textbook and use open educational resources (OER) for course readings; this also provides opportunities to ask the class to help design the course reading list rather than being the sole entity selecting texts. Reimagining or eliminating word minimums for JTC entries and other assignments homework entries would further de-center my power. Redesigning these aspects of the course does not come without challenges and requires ingenuity. These decisions are something I grapple with, as, when operating within the system, there are rules and policies I must follow; however, there are many ways to ensure students are engaging with critical reflection and meeting measurable course objectives that do not follow traditional models which perpetuate institutional power.

College Writing Instructors

Implications on the field of first-year composition are closely tied to and supported by the discussion of how I have been able to use JTC not only to support my students' transition to college through opportunities for their critical reflection and by providing my feedback, but also in the ways it complements their understanding of academic writing. Writing instructors' use of the journal should lead to their being more focused on the power they hold in classroom discourse and move them to mitigate the negative experiences students have within this power by making changes and or acknowledging this situation with their students. This requires adopting reflective practices focused on how students perceive power in college, how the writing instructors' power is perceived, and what is within their control to change. Similar to my own rethinking and redesign or JTC and course components, by adapting word count requirements, deadlines, assessment structures, and implementing new approaches for providing feedback,

first-year writing instructors can use to their students' reflections on power in college to make

changes that disrupt college as governmentality.

I continue to use JTC as a way to begin discussions about topics like plagiarism, defining

academic writing, and students' sense of belonging and identities as writers in academic

contexts. I inform my decisions for supplemental texts to match the genre of writing we focus on

during each unit. With little adaptation, first-year writing instructors in other institutions can use

the framework I have built for JTC and see benefits similar to those described in this study.

Adaptations would likely include sequencing of prompts and topics, supplementing texts to fit

curricular needs, developing and practicing feedback methods that are beneficial to students, and

other details specific to their pedagogical style and student needs. Retaining the critical focus

that Foucauldian concepts provide is crucial if the purpose of the journal is to provide first-year

students with opportunities to reflect on power structures in college and develop agency in light

of these. As prompts are adapted, instructors should retain topics on power relationships with

professors, economics, grades, White supremacy in higher education, and also explore others.

Feedback strategies and practices are a key component for an instructor's success with

JTC. Fenwick's (2001) applications of the panopticon and pastoral power are crucial conceptual

guides for instructors' practice with providing feedback on JTC entries, and they also extend to

the tone and content for providing feedback on any student writing. The high frequencies of

acknowledgment of students' experiences and encouragement that I provided in feedback, as

well as a high level of personalized engagement, shows that writing instructors play a key role in

affecting student engagement and critical thinking by responding to low stakes reflections. The

nature of these responses can mitigate the negative perception of surveillance and panoptical

gaze, as it allows instructors to use feedback to encourage deeper engagement in future entries.

As Robbie noted, knowing I was reading and responding to his entries with detailed engagement effected the amount of energy he put into his journaling. Analysis of the JTC student and feedback data also suggests that writing instructors should anticipate and plan for their treatment of confessionary moments that will appear in journaling. As seen in data analysis, I did not acknowledge all confessionary or apologetic moments. While some of these moments should be addressed as to acknowledge student experiences, pastoral power can be leveraged as to encourage future entries to reflect on the prompt so long as feedback does not dissaude the student from exploring their ideas tangentially or discourage the tenets of freewriting. Instructors should be open to varying their feedback methods, but they must bear in mind the goal of providing feedback on these entries is to leverage pastoral power to encourage critical reflection, acknowledge student experiences, de-center their power, and build relationships with their students. Above all else, frequent and substantive feedback is necessary for JTC to be effective.

Beyond first-year composition courses, developmental writing students would greatly benefit from a thematic journaling component such as JTC. Studies involving developmental students' increased engagement with reflective writing and identity-awareness have shown not only the impact but the *need* for these practices; critical reflection increases self-efficacy and writing skills, and positively impacts retention of developmental students (Bruning & Horn, 2000; VanOra, 2012, 2019). Including JTC into developmental course curriculum would have many of the same implications it has for first-year writing students. Instructors would be able to further adapt the journal prompts and texts based on skill level and curricular appropriateness. Thematically, little change would be necessary, as developmental writing students are typically in their first year of college. Alignment with course materials and unit objectives would account for the majority of the adaptation. The personal reflection that entries can provide are crucial not

only for their critical engagement with the self and texts, but the fundamental component of sustained journaling that gives them consistent, low stakes practice with writing throughout the semester.

While the results of this study show its appropriateness and applicability for a first-year student population, the theme of "transition to college" can be substituted to align with other English courses, such as literature or advanced composition, or those where the student population is past their first semester or year of college. The intervention is adaptive and the English instructor, regardless of the course, can add, change, or remove prompts and supplemental texts as needed to fit their objectives or align with topics in their curriculum. Ultimately, the framework provided by JTC delivers the consistency of a scaffolded and thematic journal, addressing the puzzle of practice that initiated my investigation into novel approaches to journaling in the college writing classroom.

FYE Programs

As noted above, JTC is most applicable to first-year college students and its framework is receptive to adaptability. While JTC has been proven to serve the writing course objectives well, a significant finding of the study is that the key to its success is the first-year student population, regardless of the course or discipline. FYE programs, their courses, and instructors provide an ideal context for adapting JTC and may allow for wider institutional reach. Scaling up JTC would require fidelity to its purpose of setting students up for success both with the power of the institution and to develop their agency in light of its power. Any adaptation must not allow the institution to further the subjectivation of students. FYE programs and faculty should adapt and employ JTC in a way that forces them to recognize their power and seek to disrupt oppressive institutional power. Transitioning to college can be the theme of a sustained reflective journal

outside of the writing classroom and FYE courses would benefit from implementing JTC. As the

literature shows, personal reflection through journaling has been used in FYE programs and

courses (Everett, 2013) and high-impact practices are a crucial component for instructors of these

courses to employ (Hunter, 2006; Kuh, 2008; Lyons & Voges, 2018).

Adapting JTC to a FYE context would have wide-reaching impact on how incoming

students think about their experiences, features of college, and how they receive support from

their instructors. Adaptations to the current model would need to align with first-year seminar

course curricula and texts. FYE program leadership and instructors might collaborate to focus

journaling activities that they already use in their curriculum or align JTC with FYE books that

are read by all incoming students. There are a number of potential scenarios for how it would be

adapted. Given the scope and findings of this study and subsequent research I plan to do in this

area, I propose designing a guide that provides the developed framework, options for adapting

critical reflection into different disciplines, the theoretical framework and supporting literature,

resources and instructional materials appropriate to use for supplemental texts, and discussion on

the importance of feedback frequency and methods. Such a guide is suggested not to standardize

the practice so much as to provide templates for adapting JTC to other contexts and presentation

of best practices.

As a continuation of my work and to explore other methods for JTC to teach writing and

support first-year students across the curriculum, I plan to develop a repository of prompts and

instructional materials and develop guides such as that described above to assist colleagues, my

own and other departments, and FYE programs' leadership and instructors in implementing JTC.

Implications for Policy

Beyond the implications for practice, the results of this study led to suggestions for policy changes on both micro and macro levels. The JTC study provided insight to first-year student experiences as well as journaling in gateway writing courses, but the implications on policy reach wider than the research context and sample population. They include policies that are intrinsic to or perpetuate the power structures that are hindering student experience, impeding effective teaching and learning, or are counter to equitable practices and retention efforts. Policy implications I discuss here focus on grades and assessment, considering ways English departments or FYE programs might require reflective journaling in course curriculum, and broader issues that the switch to remote instruction brought to light for students' access to technology and resources. Primarily, implications for policy include changes with grading. Literature is presented to suggest how novel assessment practices can de-center power.

Subverting the Power of Grades

There cannot be a single thread of influence linking all the power relationships presented in this study's findings, but it is clear that students' relationship to their grades is paramount. GPA impacts their behavior and emotions, self-perception, and relationships with peers and professors. The high frequency with which they discussed grades, which was disproportionate from discussion about their major of study or what they were learning in their courses, indicates the severe effect of the GPA system and the power it holds over students. This is not a novel finding, but it is does show, when considering an analysis of power in college, the complicity that we as instructors have in reproducing a system in education that falsely and unnecessarily promotes meritocracy over developing skills, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence. Considering that participants of this study were first-year students suggests that the fraught

relationship with grades only increases and its power compounds as students advance into subsequent semesters.

Current research on the history and power of mainstream assessment structures shows that a turn toward *ungrading*, or the undoing of what is considered to be a natural and inevitable part of education—a numbered ranking system—exposes the detriments in traditional grading structures and allows educators to emphasize student agency, learning, and relationships (Blum, 2020). Stommel (2020) defended the practice of ungrading with language familiar to the findings of this study, and in many ways reflective of what is seen in participants' data on the topic:

> Agency, dialogue, self-actualization, and social justice are not possible (or, at least, unlikely) in a hierarchical system that pits teachers against students and encourages competition by ranking students against one another. Grades are a currency for a capitalist system that reduces teaching and learning to a mere transaction. They are an institutional instrument of compliance that works exactly because they have been so effectively naturalized. (p. 27-28)

The parallels to students' experiences and how college functions as a feature of governmentality in its GPA structure's reproduction of the capitalist and meritocratic systems of society are clear, as is the fact that they are detrimental to learning.

Being cognizant of traditional or current grading practices is not enough to interrupt and de-center the power of grades over students' learning experiences. Educators from across numerous disciplines contribute practical applications for reconstructing evaluation that centers on self-assessment and student-focused methods of assignment design and labor-based assessments (Blum, 2020). Blum (2020) catalogued those institutions of higher education who are entirely or optionally grade-free and suggests the time is ripe for more instructors and

institutions to reflect on the transformative possibilities for ungrading. I point to the practice of

ungrading as a suggestion for policy because, particularly in my position as an adjunct faculty

member, I believe administrative support would be necessary for me to engage in these practices.

What, I must ask myself, as an adjunct and early-career educator, are the power structures that

might enable or hinder me from adopting ungrading or alternative assessment in my practice?

How might these practices become institutionalized? JTC succeeds in being a technology of the

self in that it makes students aware of the power GPA has on their actions and relationship to

learning, but there should be more that we can do to disrupt this power structure. This

scholarship and the implications of the current study support the need for policy initiatives within

departments and colleges for practices such as ungrading or other methods of assessment that

subvert the power of grades. Change to assessment practices in higher education must be made a

priority, as it will improve relationships with and among students, and it will truly be an

investment in student success.

Departmental Support for JTC

Implications on policy that the study's findings speak to include a permanent place for

critical journaling such as JTC in English departments' first-year composition and or

developmental writing curricula, or a similar requirement in institutional FYE program curricula.

Again, scaling-up JTC would require careful attention to the goal of interrupting college as

governmentality and preventing students' continued subjectivation by the institution. The

incorporation of critical reflection in first-year curricula provides students opportunities to

discover their motivations and values during a time of intense transition (Lyons & Voges, 2018).

While my own continued practice of JTC and providing critical reflection for first-year writing

students impacts the learning and experiences of my students and betters my pedagogy, the

endorsement or adoption of reflective journaling by English departments would have a wider and more lasting impact on the practice. Writing a journaling component into curriculum and supporting faculty in designing prompts, integrating texts, and providing feedback would allow for collaboration among instructors and significantly impact students' engagement with personal writing throughout the semester, as it often is confined to a personal narrative essay within the first unit of the course. Wider practice of JTC would also require a greater capacity for writing instructors' reflection on their power within the institution and how they can positively leverage pastoral power in feedback.

As seen in this study, supporting the transition to college with specific course components like JTC has a positive and essential impact. Gateway course faculty can begin embedding these components immediately, but they will also need support from their departments. A unifying policy that embeds students' reflection on the transition to college as a student learning objective for all first-year courses would be one way institutions can support this cause. This would further provide opportunities for faculty to gather real time qualitative data and collaborate to find novel ways to support students in that critical first year. Departmental support of JTC and potential collaboration with FYE programs will ensure that these practices are continued and refined, which further assists in institutional goals for supporting student success and retention.

Learning from Disruption

The switch to remote instruction due to COVID-19 brought to light many areas where policy must be created to address inequities among students, specifically in what kind of technology they have access to when they are not on the college grounds. Across the three sections I taught in the Spring 2020 semester, I lost contact with nearly one third of all my

students from the time we transitioned online until the end of the semester. This transition within a transition was not something that all or even most students were able to ride out, even if they remained enrolled in and passed their Spring 2020 courses. This is worth dwelling on.

The COVID-19 disruption was unexpected and the emergency protocols implemented were done so for public wellbeing, but it was clear that students from different socioeconomic statuses were affected by these disruptions very differently. Two cases from the present study come to mind to illustrate this, though I witnessed it widely in the enrollment drop and in journaling from students across my three sections of English I. The first case is Breanne, a first-generation college student who, just prior to the outbreak, discussed the challenge between paying rent and paying for the bus fare to come to campus for her classes. This was a frustrating reality she began struggling with only a few weeks into her first semester of college. Despite her limited contact with me in the weeks after the switch to online instruction, her submission of a few assignments, and her expressed interest in completing the course, Breanne became unresponsive during the last two weeks of the semester and did not complete the course. The second case is James, also a first-generation college student. James did all his work on campus for a variety of reasons, but perhaps namely because he did not have a computer at home. When the college closed, he quickly purchased a laptop in order to finish the semester. BCC established protocols, such as a laptop loan and Wi-Fi hotspots in campus parking lots to support students, but even these were not enough. Communication and clarity around the access to these services was not optimal, particularly in the first few weeks of remote instruction. In James's case, I only learned about his feeling pressured to purchase a laptop when I conducted his second interview during the last week of the semester. Had I known sooner, I might have been able to help him loan a laptop from the college, as I was able to do with a few other students.

We know that students are faced with inequitable access to technology, internet, housing, food, medical treatment, and more, and we must make changes where we can. Education researchers and nonprofit educational organizations have been studying the effects of the pandemic on students, bringing to light ways in which pre-COVID-19 policies and practices are inadequate or inequitable, recommending policy changes, and anticipating which aspects of teaching and learning during the pandemic will become permanent practice (Korkmaz & Toraman, 2020; Montacute, 2020; Montacute & Holt-White, 2020; Robertson, 2020; Tucker & Whittaker, 2020). Outside of the context of education, Sylvia (2020) applies Foucault's concept of biopolitics to governments' use of data surveillance and artificial intelligence for tracking and enforcing social distancing behaviors, suggesting that these surveilling practices will only increase in a post-pandemic world. Personal technology continues to inevitably intersect with education and public health, demanding policies that protect individuals' rights to privacy and personal freedom. As we forge on into the post-COVID-19 era of higher education policy-making, learning more about students' experiences during the pandemic, and remaining acutely aware of what this disruption has done and continues to do for students' identity-forming and perception of college is crucial.

Limitations & Challenges

Many of the limitations due to the COVID-19 disruption have been discussed in Chapter IV. This section discusses a few other limitations of the research design and expands upon unanticipated challenges that affected the study. To begin, the nature of my action research design led me to using a sample convenience, with participants being my own students, and being an insider to the research context also affected the study, though the action research design and my familiarity with the intervention made it necessary for me to conduct the study as a

practitioner-researcher. The specific results cannot be generalized to a larger population or a different context and biases exist as a result of these factors and have previously been discussed. However, as indicated in the discussion of implications above, the intervention is transferable to similar contexts. That said, the study would not have occurred the way it did, and the data collected and analyzed as it was, had I not been the instructor.

A limitation of the study is that the disruptive switch to remote, emergency instruction severely impacted what was anticipated to be an uninterrupted 15-week semester with regular class meetings in person, three times a week. Doing action research data collection during such a moment was both unique and challenging; with rapid, unpredictable change occurring, many more questions arose specific to student experience outside the classroom, equity, and policy. In many ways, the students' and my own attention was pulled away from JTC. Two interviewees did not complete many journal entries after the switch to remote instruction and they had little to discuss regarding journaling or my feedback in their second round interviews. Among all interviewees, there was limited discussion of their reaction to my feedback, which limited analysis in this area. While the COVID-19 disruptions did not impact data collection, the nature of these disruptions were limiting and altered the research context. The components of the planned research design most effected were the opportunities to continue journaling in class, as well as the ability to facilitate live, in-class discussions on topics that derived from JTC prompts. The latter was virtually nonexistent. With the exception of the Heaney and Hughes poems, I did not attempt discussion of JTC prompts or texts in virtual class meetings. This was an intentional choice, mainly due to low attendance in these class meetings and the need for prioritizing high stakes assignments. However, the disruption led to significant opportunities that ultimately

offered broader discussion about JTC and college as governmentality across a variety of contexts and modalities.

Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of the current study provide a foundation for further research on critical reflection with low stakes writing for first-year composition courses, FYE programs, and secondary education contexts. My next step in conducting further iterations of action research on JTC is to design a study similar in design to the present, but with one or two colleagues who are adapting JTC for their first-year writing classes. As the primary researcher and a non-participant, there will be a few interesting factors to juxtapose from the present study: (a) conducting an uninterrupted cycle of action research in a consistent delivery, (b) conducting interviews and analyzing instructor feedback from a non-participant perspective, and (c) analyzing another instructor's adaptation of the intervention (i.e. prompts, instructional materials, timeline). These insights allow collaboration for adding to what JTC might become in other contexts. Further iterations of the research, whether they be formal action research or instructors piloting and discussing in a professional learning community (PLC), would lead to developing the guide for JTC I discussed above. Offering effective models for providing feedback to student JTC entries is another goal of this next step of research. Therefore, collecting more data about feedback would be prioritized. This iteration of action research would progress into similar piloting research cycles in FYE courses.

Further Foucauldian educational research on transitions between educational contexts with different forms of governmentality (i.e. high school to college), and the amalgamation of student populations from a variety of educational contexts into one institution, is another area for future research. I see opportunities for journaling on the transition to college to begin in high

school English or college preparatory courses. Further research and collaboration with high school teachers and students, which may begin to be informed by a closer consideration of dual enrollment students' journaling reflections, might present college-bound high school students' experiences with governmentality, their perceptions of college, and, with a journaling intervention, begin their development of critical self-reflection to foster agency in their transition. This study's findings indicated that students' high school experiences and messages they hear about college shape their understanding and experience while entering higher education. There may be rich opportunities to collaborate between FYE or first-year writing instructors and high school teachers.

While the intent of the present action research was not to explore online teaching formats, it happened that much of the data collected spoke to students' experiences adapting to remote instruction. Since the onset of COVID-19, virtual learning spaces became a necessary topic of interest among educators and scholars, and many of the initial reactions from student data collected in this study invites further qualitative research informed by students' lived experiences. Future studies on JTC in online, blended, or hybrid formats can assist to inform instructors how best to support students and build community in virtual learning spaces, discover engaging methods for critical reflection, and support transitions between virtual and in-person classrooms.

The most exciting recommendation for future education research to arise from this study is the application of its Foucauldian theoretical framework to other areas of higher education. As presented in Chapter II, the concept of college as governmentality has seldom been explored in higher education research. The theoretical framework brought to light numerous findings for continued exploration of institutional power and the first-year experience, but there is much more

that critical researchers can explore in this area. I can imagine several other avenues for applying this Foucauldian theoretical framework to analyze institutions of higher education practices for the ways they govern. Foucauldian theory is not explored enough in the context of college and it is my hope that this research inspires other studies that can use the framework similarly.

Conclusion

Critical action research on effective teaching and learning practices to support first-year college students conducted in what was arguably the most unpredictable semester in recent history resulted in both theoretical and practical applications. The results of this study have significant implications for theory, practice, and policy. Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and technologies of the self, when applied to higher education, allow for critical approaches that inform instructors of student experiences, provide insight for reflection on their own complicity in oppressive power structures, and allow them to provide opportunities to foster agency within students. Students' intersectional identities, as seen through the lens of Black feminist theory, are explored in JTC entries, inform JTC prompt design, and present instructors with insight to support underrepresented students in classroom discourse. JTC's positive influence on my own practice, specifically while teaching during a time of disruption, evidences the value of the intervention. Further, JTC's potential adaptability to other writing courses and FYE program curricula anticipates its benefits beyond the first-year writing classroom.

The study's results also suggest implications to higher education policy. Grades are a significant power structure in students' college experience and they can hinder students' relationships with learning, peers, and instructors. Rethinking grading practices and unembedding the GPA as a power structure would have significant impact on empowering college students. Additionally, policy must be created that addresses the inequities in access to

technology, internet, healthcare, and other essential resources which existed prior to but have

been brought to light by COVID-19. We must be mindful of how these disparities affect

students' experiences and actively confront them in our discourse.

This study affirms that applying Foucauldian social theories to higher education research

results in robust opportunities for critical engagement with institutional power. Understanding

how this power affects students' sense of self and their relationships with peers, professors, and

their own learning allows instructors to better support students' transition to college. Equipped

with these insights, first-year writing instructors can design critical journaling components that

serve as technologies of the self, interrupt governmentality, and increase student agency. This

study's theoretical framework may inspire critical researchers to interrogate power in other facets

of higher education. In my own work as a practitioner-researcher, continuing to study JTC will

enhance my own use of the intervention, lead to collaboration with colleagues and stakeholders,

and increase my first-year students' capacity for critical reflection, academic writing, and

agency.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted through Kutztown University. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before you decide whether or not you want to participate in the study. The University requires that you give your signed agreement if you choose to participate.

This study is being conducted by Daniel J. Metzger.

Title of the Study:

Journaling on the Transition to College (JTC)

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this research study is to understand how using journaling in the college writing class can lead to new understandings and curricular approaches to supporting students' transition to college.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate in this study, I would ask you to: allow for the anonymous use of your course journal writing to be collected, analyzed, and presented in the study; potentially also be interviewed by your instructor twice throughout the semester on the topic of your journaling and your transition to college.

Risks or Discomforts, and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study has no risk involved in participating and requires little more than what you would be doing in the class. Additionally, there are no benefits to participating in the study. Any component of the study is a regular part of the course curriculum and agreeing to participate has no positive or negative impact on the participant's course grade.

Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Records will be kept private and will be handled in a confidential manner. Any digital records will be saved on a password-protected device and the password will only be known to me. All records will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. In any report or presentation, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a research study participant. You will remain anonymous.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your choice to participate or not has no bearing on your grade for this course.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is your course instructor: Daniel J. Metzger, Adjunct English Faculty, ███████████████████████, email: ██████████████████, phone: ███████████. The researcher's advisor is Dr. Mark Wolfmeyer, Secondary Education, email: █████████████████, phone: ██████████.

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later regarding the research study, you may contact the researcher listed above. If you have any questions or concerns about the rights of research participants, please contact the IRB Committee at Kutztown University at 484-646-4167.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the information described above and have received a copy of this information. I have asked questions I had regarding the research study and have received answers to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and voluntarily consent to participate in this study.

_____

Signature of Participant   Date

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Your child (or ward) is invited to participate in a research study being conducted through Kutztown University. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before you decide whether or not you want your child (or ward) to participate in the study. The University requires that you give your signed agreement if you choose to have your child (or ward) participate.

This research study is being conducted by Daniel J. Metzger, Adjunct English Faculty, ▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉ as a part of doctoral study at Kutztown University.

Title of the Study:

Journaling on the Transition to College (JTC)

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this research study is to understand how using journaling in the college writing class can lead to new understandings and curricular approaches to supporting students' transition to college.

Procedures:

If you agree to have your child (or ward) participate in this study, I would ask your child (or ward) to do the following things: allow for the anonymous use of their English I course journal writing to be collected, analyzed, and presented in the study; to also potentially be interviewed by their instructor twice throughout the semester about their journaling and their transition to college.

Risks or Discomforts, and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study has no risk involved in participating. Additionally, there are no benefits to participating in the study. Any component of the study is a regular part of the course curriculum and agreeing to participate has no positive or negative impact on the participant's course grade.

Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Records will be kept private and will be handled in a confidential manner. Any digital records will be saved on a password-protected device and the password will only be known to me. All records will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. In any report or presentation, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a research study participant. Your child (or ward) will remain anonymous.

Voluntary Participation:

Your child's (or ward's) participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue your child's (or ward's) participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled. Your child's (or ward's) choice to participate or not has no bearing on their grade for this course.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is your child's course instructor: Daniel J. Metzger, Adjunct English Faculty, ████████████████████, email: ████████████████, phone: ████████████. The researcher's advisor is Dr. Mark Wolfmeyer, Secondary Education, email: ██████████████████████, phone: ████████████.

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later regarding the research study, you may contact the researcher listed above. If you have any questions or concerns about the rights of research participants, please contact the IRB Committee at Kutztown University at 484-646-4167.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the information described above and have received a copy of this information. I have asked questions I had regarding the research study and have received answers to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and voluntarily consent to allow my child (or ward) to participate in this study.

_____

       Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

_____

Relationship of Parent/Guardian to Participant

Youth Assent

I have read the information described above and I have received permission from my parent(s) to participate in the study. I understand the procedures, what will happen to me in the study and have had my questions answered to my satisfaction. I know that I can quit the study at any time. I agree to participate in the study.

_____

       Signature of Minor for Assent   Date

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX C

JTC Interview Protocol – First Round

Interviewer: Daniel Metzger
Subject: [Participant #]
Date:
Time:

1. Tell me about becoming a college student. What have your experiences applying to and entering college been like? How have you adjusted to these changes?

2. What challenges or barriers have you encountered in college so far? What opportunities have you been presented? How have you approached these?

3. Tell me about your journal writing process. What are your thoughts on the entries you have written about so far?

4. Imagine the journaling assignments were not a part of this course. What, if anything, would be different about how you think about college or yourself as a college student?

5. Thank you for sharing your thoughts. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end?

APPENDIX D

JTC Interview Protocol – Second Round

Interviewer: Daniel Metzger
Subject: [Participant #]
Date:
Time:

1. Tell me about how you have perceived college during this semester. What, if anything, has changed in your experience becoming a college student?

2. Since your last interview, what challenges has college presented to you this semester? What opportunities have you been presented? How have you approached these?

3. Tell me about your journaling process since we last spoke. How has writing these journal entries affected the way you think about your transition to college?

4. What do you think about the feedback you have received on your journal entries? Does it affect the way you think about your journaling? If yes, how?

5. How might being a participant in this study affect your journaling? How might your journaling be different if your professor was not conducting this study?

6. Thank you for sharing your thoughts. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end?

APPENDIX E

JTC Prompts, Instructional Materials, and Timeline – Spring 2020

JTC 1 (C): F 1/17

> **Prompt:** Write about what "college," "college student," and/or "college experience" mean to you. Use your high school or previous educational experiences to inform your ideas.
>
> Freewrite for 10 minutes.

JTC 2 (C): F 1/24

> **Prompt:** Think about your college search, application, and admissions process. What are some barriers you experienced during this time? Who or what helped you? Who or what got in your way? Write about this process, including your level of involvement. What, if anything, did you learn about yourself during the process?
>
> Freewrite for 10 minutes.

JTC 3 (HW): Assn. F 1/24, due 1/27

> **Text:** "To Keep it Holy" (Westover)
>
> **Prompt:** Freewrite in your journal about the things you experienced in your first few days of college that were completely new or confusing to you. How did you feel? What did you do? Include some examples about things you are still learning about college and, if they have, how they have made you change the way you behave or think.
>
> Freewrite for at least two full pages.

JTC 4 (C): W 1/29

> **Text:** Jacqueline Woodson TED Talk (Link)
>
> **Prompt:** We all have a story to tell about who and where we came from. These people and places shape who we are and how we see college. Tell that story, freewriting about how the people and places you come from impact your transition to college.
>
> Freewrite for 10 minutes.

JTC 5 (C): F 2/7

> **Text:** "Writing in Academic Contexts" (*N*: 1-9) & "Introduction to Academic Writing" (video)

Prompt: College courses, including this one, expect you to produce "academic" writing. Who decides if writing is or is not "academic?" What changes in order for you to produce academic writing and why? Discuss your sense of belonging in academic contexts.

Freewrite for 10 minutes.

Round 1: Journals Collected F 2/7; Journals Returned W 2/12

JTC 6 (C): W 2/12

Text: "The Reason College Costs More Than You Think" (Marcus, *N* pp. 143-146)

Prompt: How does the cost of a college education (tuition, fees, books, transportation, housing, etc.) affect your attitude and actions in college? Discuss ways these costs affect you and your relationship to others during your transition to college.

Freewrite for 10 minutes.

JTC 7 (HW): Assn. F 2/14, due M 2/17

Text: "Homelessness on Campus" (Bader, *N* pp. 764-768)

Prompt: The professor at the end of the essay describes how they hid from college administration the fact they were helping two homeless students. What does this essay say about who is or is not allowed to enter or stay in college? What does it say about the information students can or cannot share with others in college? Discuss the relationship between colleges and students, specifically those students who are homeless and/or living in poverty. Discuss your thoughts on these questions and how, if at all, this affects your experience in college.

Freewrite for at least two full pages.

JTC 8 (HW): M 2/17

Topic: Academic Honesty Policy & Plagiarism

Consider: Like most colleges and universities, BCC's Academic Honesty Policy prohibits plagiarism. If a student plagiarizes an assignment, they risk failing the assignment, the course, and/or being removed from the college.

Prompt: How does this rule about plagiarism affect your approach or feeling to writing for college courses? How do the rules like those in the Academic Honesty Policy shape your experience in college? Think about other institutions or situations that may have similar rules and similar consequences. How are these institutions' rules similar or different from college policies? Try to come up with a few specific examples. These do not need to be direct connections!

Freewrite for at least two pages.

JTC 9 (C): F 2/21

> **Prompt:** What are some examples of how college forces you to behave a certain way? Think outside of the box!

> Freewrite for 10 minutes.

JTC 10 (HW): Assn. W 2/26, due M 3/2

> **Text:** "U Can't Talk to Ur Professor Like This" (N: 165-170)

> **Consider:** In this essay about etiquette and professionalism in college, a college student says the formality of calling her professors by their title (i.e. "Dr." or "professor") is a "power move" (Worthen 168).

> **Prompt:** In your journal, respond to the issues the essay brings up about maintaining formal and professional communication between students and professors. Also discuss to what extent, in your experience and opinion, is this an issue about power or authority, as the student suggests? While this is a freewrite, please refer to the essay in addition to your experiences while responding. *Approach this critically—you do not have to agree with the ideas!*

> Freewrite for at least two pages.

JTC 11 (C): W 3/4

> Text: GSU Book Burning Article ([Chronicle of Higher Education](#))

> **Prompt:** Write on the issues this article raises about race, identity, and belonging in college. How does race affect your transition to college? Why?

> Freewrite for 10 minutes.

Round 2 – Journals Collected W 3/4

Transition to Online – Due to coronavirus outbreak, all JTC entries after JTC 11 (C) on W 3/4 are delivered online.

JTC 12 (ONLINE): Week of M 3/23 - due F 3/27 (11:59 p.m.)

> **Prompt:** These are indeed extraordinary times, making for a unique transition to college. Freewrite about your experiences in the past two weeks. This does not need to apply to college - write about whatever you need to.

Time your freewrite for a 10-minute minimum, but you are welcome to write as much as you want.

Note: Like our physical journal notebook, this entry will only be viewed by me.

JTC 13 (ONLINE): Week of M 3/30 - due W 4/1 at 11:59 p.m.

Prompt: With the switch to online instruction, how is your concept of being a college student changing? How and why has this affected your behavior as a student? Reflect on the details of what's happening in your life right now and how it compares to your concept of college prior to the coronavirus outbreak.

Freewrite at least 250 words. There is a word count on the bottom right of the Journal textbox. You are encouraged to write as much as you would like.

JTC 14 (ONLINE)

Prompt: Think about your time in college so far and even ahead to the next year. Start this entry by writing two lists, one titled "Things I Have Control Over" and one titled "Things I Do Not Have Control Over." Add ideas to these lists, then pick two from each list and freewrite about them. Discuss how what you wrote about might affect your progress in college.

Freewrite at least 250 words. There is a word count on the bottom right of the Journal textbox. You are encouraged to write as much as you would like.

Suggested deadline: Monday 4/6

JTC 15 (ONLINE)

View this video on the history of Grade Point Averages (GPAs): GPA video

Prompt: Discuss what college would be like without grade point averages (GPAs). What would drive your motivation to perform a certain way in courses? How might the relationship between students and professors be different?
Freewrite for at least 250 words.

Suggested deadline: Friday 4/10

JTC 16 (ONLINE)

Read the two poems "Theme for English B" by Langston Hughes & "Mid-Term Break" by Seamus Heaney. (Found on Blackboard > Learning Content > Course Readings).

Prompt: The speaker of each poem has something to say about their transition to college.

Write about an event that has happened to you—in or out of school—since you began college. Describe who was involved and how you feel this has impacted your experience in college.

Freewrite for at least 250 words OR write this entry as a free verse poem.

Suggested deadline: Friday 4/17

JTC 17 (ONLINE)

Prompt: Think about the experience of going to the doctor's office or visiting the emergency room. In what ways might these experiences be similar to going to college? In what ways are they different? Discuss a few specific examples.

Freewrite for at least 250 words.

Suggested deadline: Monday 4/20

JTC 18 (ONLINE)

Prompt: Describe your experience attending class meetings virtually (online). Discuss your level of participation (i.e. with video, audio, chat) and why you choose this level of participation. Your discussion should be around any classes that are meeting virtually, not just English I.

Freewrite for at least 250 words.

Suggested deadline: Friday 4/24

JTC 19 (ONLINE)

Read: "The Opposite of Loneliness" by Marina Keegan (on Blackboard > Learning Content > Course Readings).

Prompt: Imagine your college graduation day. Where are you transitioning to next? How do you think you'll feel? What lessons from your transition to college will assist you in where you are going next? As you answer these questions, discuss how the many aspects of college will have shaped you as a person, in both positive and negative ways.

Freewrite for at least 400 words.

Suggested deadline: Friday 5/1

JTC 20 (ONLINE)

> **Read** over your past journal entries and my feedback (that you have access to, and what you remember from before Spring Break).

> **Prompt:** Freewrite about how, if at all, keeping this journal has affected how you think about college, your transition to college, and the unanticipated shift to online instruction. How would this course have been different if you did not keep this journal?

> Freewrite for at least 400 words.

> **Suggested deadline: Monday 5/4**

References for Instructional Materials

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Appendix F

Codes, Categories, and Themes by Research Question

* Journal Entries (J); Interviews (I); Instructor Feedback (F); Teaching Reflection (R)

** Some codes appearing only once or a few times in the data were included because they are unique and provide valuable insight despite their low frequency.

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
RQ 1 - How is college a feature of governmentality, and how do students make sense of their experience?		
Theme 1 - Institutional Power Structures		
Professors as Authority Figures		
professor power in classroom discourse	J, I	12
professor-student power relationship	J, I	10
syllabus as extension of power	J, I	9
professor putting students in groups	J, I	6
expectations of professors	I	4
limited access to professor	I	2
professor as source of information for assignments	I	2
Total frequency of codes		**45**
The Price Tag: Economic Power of College		
financial cost of college	J, I	15
cost affecting responsibility	J	10
financial aid application process	J, I	8
transportation costs	J, I	8
financial pressure or limitations	J, I	6
college as a business	J, I	5
being in debt	J	3
Total frequency of codes		**55**
Grades and Meritocracy		
grades as motivators	J, I	19
specific GPA or grade referenced	J, I	13
GPA as power structure	J	6

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
withdraw due to low grade – post-Covid-19	I	5
classify peers by GPA	J, I	2
GPA in high school	J	2
Total frequency of codes		**47**
Policies and Rules		
plagiarism and academic honesty policies	J, F	20
attendance policy	J	6
MLA formatting	J, I	5
rules	J	2
Total frequency of codes		**33**
Institutionalized White Supremacy		
acknowledging racism or white privilege	J, I	10
student's race does affect transition to college	J	7
deny or downplay racism or white privilege	J	4
positive response to discussion on race in feedback	J, R	4
racial diversity of peers as positive	J	4
objective response to race affecting transition to college	J	4
student of color feeling seen	J, R	3
student's race does not affect transition to college	J	3
Total frequency of codes		**39**
Theme 2 - Adjusting to College		
Spaces of College		
appreciation for physical campus post-Covid-19	J, I	22
virtual spaces	J, I	11
navigating college campus	J, I	11
newness of spaces	J, I	4
living in dorm	J	1
Total frequency of codes		**49**
Emotional Reactions		
anxious or nervous	J, I	30
stress	J, I	17

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
enjoyment or excitement	J, I	14
fear	J, I	13
mixed emotions	J, I	10
unsure of myself or confused	J, I	9
overwhelmed	J	7
glad or grateful	J, I	5
relief	J, I	5
uncomfortable	J, I	4
proud	J	3
depressed	J	1
optimistic	J	1
Total frequency of codes		**119**
Schedules and Time		
schedule	J, I	39
adjusting to workload	J, I	17
time management	J, I	15
deadlines for assignments	J, I	12
lateness to class	J, I	7
time as economically valuable	J	5
commute time	J, I	4
discretionary time	J, I	3
Total frequency of codes		**102**
Behavioral Changes		
forced behavior due to college	J, I	26
behavior or thinking change due to college	J, I	22
forced to behavior due to Covid-19	J, I	12
behaviors expected of student	J, I	7
behaviors learned before college	J, I	5
behavior or thinking change due to JTC	I	2
Total frequency of codes		**74**

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
Theme 3 - Relational Connections		
Contrasting High School and College		
less independence in high school	J, I, R	16
high school teachers vs. college professors	J, I	10
power relationships in high school	J, I, R	8
knowing classmates	J, I	4
class schedule	J	3
grades in high school	J	3
plagiarism in high school	J	2
wearing a uniform	J	2
more work in college	I	1
"deeper" ideas in college	I	1
Total frequency of codes		**50**
Family and Friends' Influence		
friends' influence on transition	J, I	7
parents' college experiences inform transition	J	5
parents' help with application process	J, I	5
siblings' college experiences inform transition	J, I	4
pressure from parents - first generation	I	3
Total frequency of codes		**24**
Relationship to Peers		
meeting new people	J, I	28
compares self to peers	J, I	18
diversity of peers	J, I	10
being socially active	J, I	6
"community"	J	6
competition	J, I	4
Total frequency of codes		**72**

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
RQ 2 - Can college writing instructors interrupt college as governmentality and or do their actions perpetuate, enable, or reinforce college as governmentality?		
Theme 4 – Governmentality in Remote Instruction		
Power Shifts: Instructors Gain, Students Lose		
limitations of technology	J, I, R	10
surveillance in remote instruction	J, I	10
lack of peer interaction	J, I	9
limited access to instructor	J, I, R	8
shifting communication methods	I, R	6
professor's power in remote instruction	J, I	4
Total frequency of codes		**47**
Interrupting Governmentality in a Time of Crisis		
adapted class meeting schedule	J, I	7
increased communication	I, R	5
adapted deadlines	I, R	4
adapted assignment	I, R	4
technology support	R	1
Total frequency of codes		**21**
Theme 5 – Power Dynamics in JTC		
Feedback De-Centering Instructor's Power		
positively enforcing critical reflection	F	88
acknowledgement of personal experience	F	53
encouragement	F	36
emphasizing community	F, R	15
acknowledging GPA affecting transition	F	11
feedback is a positive influence on journaling	J, I	11
acknowledgement of race affecting transition	F	8
relating student experience to instructor's	F, I	8
acknowledge economic power	F	7
acknowledgment of social experiences	F	7
providing optimism	F	7

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
offering clarification or advice	F	6
Total frequency of codes		**257**
Confessionary Moments and Pastoral Power		
confessionary moment	J	35
instructor feedback to confessionary moment	F	18
apologetic moment	J, I	8
instructor offering to help	F	6
instructor's emotional reaction while reviewing JTC	R	4
Total frequency of codes		**71**
Governing with JTC		
word count as negative	J, I	18
"write more" – instructor feedback	F	14
JTC an annoyance	J, I	6
handwritten vs. typed	J, I	4
classroom management	R	3
Total frequency of codes		**45**

RQ 3 – How, if at all, does journaling on the transition to college in the writing classroom act as a technology of the self, in light of the ways college governs us?		
Theme 6 - Critical Reflection on Power Structures		
Thought Experiments: No Price Tag, No GPA		
GPA as necessity	J	12
negatives of GPA	J	10
if college was free	J, I	9
GPA not a concern	J	1
Total frequency of codes		**32**
Relationship with Professors		
formal communication with professors	J, I	16
high school teachers vs. college professors	J, I	10
professor decides what academic writing is	J	8
kindness of professors	J	6
professor's title and power	J	5

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
communicating with professors - post-Covid-19	J	5
purpose of professors	J	5
reflection on syllabus	J	5
respecting professor's status	J	5
importance of communication with professors	J	4
professors are "laid back"	J	4
Total frequency of codes		**73**
Comparing College to Other Institutions		
reactions to plagiarism policy	J	19
healthcare or doctor's office	J, I	14
workforce	J, I	12
military	J	2
music industry	J	1
business	J	1
professional sports	J	1
politics	J	1
navigating policies	I	1
Total frequency of codes		**52**
Theme 7 – Constituting the Self During the Transition to College		
Relationship Between Self and College		
perception of college	J, I	33
empathizing with peers and other groups	J, I	26
"responsibility"	J, I	23
purpose of college	J	22
job or work (nonacademic)	J, I	19
decision to go to college	J, I	17
independence in college	J, I	17
applying to college	J, I	16
sense of belonging	J, I	16
student describes their own critical thinking	J, I	11
learning style	J, I	10

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
opportunities in college	J, I	7
Total frequency of codes		**217**
Identifying Needs and Charting Improvement		
motivating self-talk	J	17
envisioning the future	J	16
personal improvement	J, I	13
self-care	J, I	12
lack of motivation	J	10
changes over time	J, I	9
writing improvement	J, I	9
prioritization	J, I	4
procrastination	J	3
Total frequency of codes		**93**
Identity-Affirming Opportunities		
socioeconomic status	J, I	12
"adult"	J	10
race	J	10
age	J, I	9
being a parent	J	9
learning disability	J, I	8
places lived	J	7
gender	J	6
first-generation college student	J, I	6
military veteran	J	5
dual enrollment student	J	4
religion	J	3
Total frequency of codes		**89**
Developing Agency		
degrees of control	J	21
asking questions	J, I	20
JTC as self-reflection	J, I	19

Theme – *Category* – code	Data sets*	Frequency of codes**
JTC is enjoyable	J, I	18
JTC a place to put thoughts	J, I	13
student support resources	J	13
feedback encouraging agency	F	5
discussion on JTC assessment method	I, R	4
students influencing JTC design	I, R	4
Total frequency of codes		**117**
Theme 8 - Journaling During a Pandemic		
Reflection on the Remote Learning Environment		
struggle adapting to remote learning	J, I	17
need for physical campus	J	9
virtual class meetings	J	9
positive adaptation to remote learning	J	8
time distortion post-Covid-19	J, I	5
Total frequency of codes		**48**
Staying Connected During Isolation and Uncertainty		
journaling about quarantine	J, I	28
instructor feedback on quarantine experiences	F	20
benefit of self-reflection during disruption	J, R	6
Total frequency of codes		**54**

* Journal Entries (J); Interviews (I); Instructor Feedback (F); Teaching Reflection (R)

** Some codes appearing only once or a few times in the data were included because they are unique and provide valuable insight despite their low frequency.