

DISSERTATION

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING LEAP ESSENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES:
A CLASSROOM ETHNOGRAPHY OF AN UNDERGRADUATE SHAKESPEARE
THROUGH PERFORMANCE COURSE

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ABSTRACT

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING LEAP ESSENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES: A CLASSROOM ETHNOGRAPHY OF AN UNDERGRADUATE SHAKESPEARE THROUGH PERFORMANCE COURSE

The purpose of this classroom ethnography was to explore what opportunities for learning, aligning with LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO) categories, could be found in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors at a small, selective, baccalaureate degree granting institution in the Northeastern United States. Using ethnographic data collection methods, the study explored how participation in an upper level theatre course supported or did not support the construction of opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO categories. Findings indicated that opportunities for learning LEAP ELO were supported in three major ways: sense of community, word work, and classroom engagement. Results demonstrated that participation in an upper-level theatre course supported opportunities for learning fourteen of the sixteen LEAP ELO in the course, representing all four LEAP ELO categories: *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, integrative and applied learning, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility.*

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DEDICATION

For my angel-in-heaven Dad, William E. Belcastro, who told me upon earning my master's degree that he believed one day I would earn my doctorate, even though I didn't believe it at the time. For my angel-on-earth Mom, Thelma Kelly, who fostered an early love of reading, and taught me to always try hard and do my best. For my son, Eddie Went, always try hard and do your best. You can do and be whatever you want!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

Arts advocates have argued that theatre is important to society. Despite such arguments, theatres across the globe have been forced to reduce programs or close due to lack of support or funding (Carlson, 2011). This trend has impacted professional theatres in the United States and the United Kingdom in recent years, as well as American K-12 and collegiate theatre departments (Carlson, 2011).

Some theatre programs were forced to make cuts in the wake of the recent U.S. economic recession. In 2010, the State University of New York at Albany threatened to eliminate theatre, classics, and languages because such majors did not demonstrate ample opportunities for employment upon graduation (Carlson, 2011; Feinman, 2010). Unlike preprofessional and career-focused majors, theatre and other liberal arts majors are currently threatened, as they do not assure college students field-specific job prospects after graduation. It is important to note that despite such threats of closure, five years later, at the time of this study, the theatre department still existed at the State University of New York at Albany.

Over the past century there has been a significant increase in involvement in college theatre (Berkeley, 2008). Hobgood (1988) noted that more than 1,000 college theatre arts programs were established in the United States by 1967 (p. 4). Despite students' increase in theatre involvement, the academic discipline of theatre has faced a long-standing problem of demonstrating its merits in higher education (Anton, 2010).

Berkeley (2011) attributed higher education's marginalization of theatre as an academic discipline to three recent trends. The first trend involved U.S. economic crises that began in the late 1970s that redirected colleges toward the private sector for financial support. The second

trend involved the commercialization of higher education due to market demands and opportunities (Bok, 2003). The third involved students' intentions for earning a bachelor's degree, shifting from the desire to develop intellectual knowledge, to a desire to achieve economic security (Koeppel, 2004). These three issues—the U.S. economic crises, market driven education, and a shift in student intentions—provide an outline for demonstrating the value problem for theatre in a contemporary liberal arts education.

U.S. Economic Crisis

At a time when the United States economy is uncertain, post-baccalaureate job placement is of paramount concern for persons pursuing a degree. In an age where career-focused education presents job opportunity and a sense of future security (Lerman, 2007), liberal arts colleges are faced with declining enrollments (Breneman, 1990). In recent years, students have been increasingly steered towards college majors in targeted fields that present job opportunities upon graduation. Morphew and Hartley (2006) found that the pursuit of a liberal arts education is less meaningful than it was in the past. Hartke (1956) wrote, “Is our stress to be on the side of the liberal arts or on the side of vocational training?” This study serves to address this problem.

Market Driven Education

Over the past decade there has been an influx of “for-profit” institutions that entice students with promises of gainful employment upon graduation (Thelin, 2011, pp. 366-367). In an attempt to maintain their competitive edge in a changing market, many liberal arts institutions have adapted their educational models to provide links with career opportunity (Baker, Baldwin & Makker, 2012). The market has also impacted traditional liberal arts colleges' desires to develop accelerated programs (Wlodkowski, 2003) as well as online learning programs or modules to supplement their previous traditional models of learning (Bok, 2003, pp. 92-93).

Accelerated programs. Traditional colleges have begun to offer accelerated associates, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs, designed for working adults, that provide a rapid degree completion alternative to traditional collegiate programs (Wlodkowski, 2003). The value proposition of such programs for students today is that earning a degree through accelerated means saves both time and money and may lead to professional employment (Shellenbarger, 2010). In order to accelerate a program of any kind, those directly involved with program development must determine what courses should remain in the curriculum, what courses should be offered as complementary electives, and what predetermined course syllabi must be developed (Husson & Kennedy, 2003). Due to the preprofessional nature of accelerated programs, students may opt to take a College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) test, administered by the College Board to fulfill nonmajor course requirements (Rood, 2011). Certain majors, including those found in the performing arts and engineering fields, are often excluded due to required time on task for studio and performance demands, and the need for sequential coursework that builds on information from a prior term (Shellenbarger, 2010). Electives in the arts may be offered to nonmajors, but due to the abbreviated timeframe for completion, students often take only the courses necessary to fulfill graduation requirements (Shellenbarger, 2010).

Online learning. Recent studies have demonstrated that online classrooms have replaced and supplemented traditional classroom study. More than 20% of all U.S. higher education students took at least one online course in the fall of 2007 (Allen & Seaman, 2008), and as of 2010, that number increased to more than 25% (Allen & Seaman, 2010). Benefits of online course offerings include flexibility and cost savings for students, and provide cost saving measures for colleges over traditional face-to-face models (Karber, 2003).

Although courses in the performing arts are less likely to be offered online due to the hands-on nature of learning the arts, some exist. For example, a research-driven decision was made to develop asynchronous, online, undergraduate modules for a fine arts course called Understanding Visual and Performing Arts (HUM 2510) at Florida Gulf Coast University. The new course model reduced 25 sections of the traditional face-to-face course into one large online course (Twigg, 2003). Upon completion, the students of the course reportedly preferred the online elements above live course elements (Twigg, 2003). The flexibility of online learning in an asynchronous environment may have contributed to this result.

Career-focused education. Career-focused education, which may be found in vocational schools, community colleges, and for-profit institutions (Lerman, 2007), was designed with the specific goal of providing academically challenged high school students with skill sets designed for targeted careers. For-profit institutions are highly career-focused and often replace arts and humanities offerings with technical courses that complement students' majors (Tierney & Hentschke, 2007, p. 126). Lerman (2007), who believes strongly in career-focused education programs, expressed a concern with academic-based education, noting a possible increase in student attrition when students are forced to take courses unrelated to their major. Thus, career-focused institutions distinctly emphasize job performance skills over the broad-based knowledge acquisition found in liberal arts institutions (Tierney & Hentschke, 2007, p. 126).

Student Intentions

Research performed by Breneman (1990) suggested a decline in liberal arts study in America, and demonstrated the early stages of an ongoing liberal arts educational transformation. A recent follow-up study reinforced this trend by demonstrating a sharp decline in the number of liberal arts institutions over the past twenty years (Baker et al., 2012), as 82 institutions have

changed Carnegie Classification. Some colleges who previously self-identified as liberal arts institutions are no longer classified as such due to the addition of advanced degree programs, such as Goddard College and Mary Baldwin College, two institutions now classified as Master's Universities. A few liberal arts institutions faced with imminent closure were absorbed by larger universities. Barat College, for example, was absorbed by DePaul University and Hawaii Loa College is now part of Hawaii Pacific College. Many of the liberal arts institutions remaining have increased the number of professional degrees awarded (Baker et al., 2012). Some examples include Bucknell University, Drew University, and Lewis and Clark University.

A Need for Educational Reform

Oblinger and Verville (1998) found that 9 out of 10 college graduates believed that their college degree helped them to land a job after graduation, but did not prepare them for the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. Over a 20-year period beginning in the 1990s, the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) sought to discover what skills and competencies employers seek upon hiring new college graduates. Desired outcomes were determined through a research initiative by Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) and were holistic, that is, they were inclusive of study in all areas of what is known to be a well-rounded education. Research findings (Association of American Colleges & Universities [AAC&U], 2007), which are highlighted in depth in the following literature review, suggested that students coming from both liberal arts and career-focused backgrounds should attain 16 competencies by graduation in order to meet the demands of 21st century employers.

Through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of businesses and educators about the aims and best practices for a 21st century education, the AAC&U championed a movement to promote the value of liberal arts in higher education (AAC&U, 2007). They espoused that a

liberal arts education, with a curriculum designed to provide opportunities for learning the 16 LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes may yield desirable, hireable graduates.

A Value Problem for Theatre in the Academy

Academic theatre has faced significant challenges in recent years (e.g. Berkeley, 2011; Carlson, 2011; Feinman, 2010; Kindelan, 2012). The program chair for a theatre program within a highly selective liberal arts institution in the northeast shared with me confidentially that 10 years ago they accepted 150 theatre arts majors into their first year class, but last year they had trouble filling an incoming class of 40 (personal communication, August 3, 2012). Although this information was anecdotal, it is similar to other stories I have heard from chairs of theatre departments across the country. It is difficult to persuade individuals to major in theatre if they are among those who believe that education should be career-focused and should result in related, professional employment upon graduation.

Job Prospects in the Fine and Performing Arts

Statistics demonstrate that most theatre graduates do not obtain a full-time job in their field immediately upon graduation. Unemployment is high in a recession because jobs are hard to find (Hall, 2006, p.101). As noted by the *Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)*, jobs in the theatre and performing arts industries appear to be even more limited.

An organization co-founded by George Kuh, *SNAAP* performs annual surveys on alumni of college arts programs, including graduates of music, art, dance, and theatre programs. The *2013 SNAAP Annual Report* indicated that 60% of respondent graduates of the arts currently work in full or part-time positions in their academic field of study (SNAAP, 2014). This information poses a potential recruitment concern for colleges offering theatre arts programs, as postgraduation job placement in the field may be perceived as relatively low.

Administrative Perception of Theatre

In a study of college administrators, Kindelan (2001) determined the importance to “dispel the myth that theatre programs deliver nothing on campus but *entertainment* and *feel-good, fun courses*” (p.78). As stated by Clark (1971), “theatre is an administrative enigma” (p. 27), as administrators don’t always understand its inherent value in a liberal arts education. Kindelan (2001) noted an apparent dichotomy between what administrative decision makers believe about the study and practice of theatre and what arts advocates and theatre faculty know about theatre.

Unless the value of theatre and other arts programs are presented to those in decision-making positions, colleges may eliminate such programs that can play a vital role in students’ liberal arts and co-curricular education (e.g. Carlson, 2011; Kindelan, 2012). Without such programs in place, college students will not have the opportunity to experience how theatre can enhance the quality of their lives (Kindelan, 2012). Carlson (2011) stated that the best way for educators to further theatre as an academic discipline is through scholarly writing and research. Combs (2001) also stated that it is important to demonstrate evidence of the value of theatre in a liberal arts education through assessment. Higher education administrators often make data-driven decisions, which can be informed through assessment or scholarly, empirical research.

Purpose Statement

Kindelan (1999, 2012) suggested that theatre study presents an optimal learning environment, as it offers opportunities for learning and achieving the desired outcomes of a 21st century liberal arts education (Kindelan, 2012, pp. 87-88). However, there are no national data that examine proficiency in the humanities or the arts (p. 142). Additionally, no empirical

research studies have previously investigated opportunities for learning the 16 LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes through theatre study.

The purpose of this classroom ethnography was to explore what opportunities for learning, aligning with LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories, could be found in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors at a small, selective, baccalaureate degree granting institution in the northeastern United States.

Research Questions

The over-arching research question for this study was: How does participation in an upper level theatre course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories? Research questions were as follows:

How does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning:

1. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world?
2. Intellectual and practical skills?
3. Personal and social responsibility?
4. Integrative and applied learning skills?
5. Other skills or competencies not informed by the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories?

Definitions of Terms

Theatre, as a hobby, profession, or academic discipline, has its own unique culture and therefore its own terminology. As such, theatre has many terms that may be misunderstood or misinterpreted by individuals who exist outside of the culture of the theatre. For this purpose, I

have provided definitions of terms that arise throughout the study. Educational research terms, and LEAP-related terms are defined in Chapter 3.

Blocking (also Staging) – The arrangement of performers on stage, or the act of setting the location and movement of performers on stage.

Dramaturgy – “Dramaturgy is the concern with composition, structure, staging and audience from literary analysis to historiography” (Lessing, trans.1962).

Iambic Pentameter – In poetry, a rhythmic line comprised of five unstressed syllables, each followed by a stressed syllable (Duffell, 2008).

Meter – “...A stressed and unstressed syllabic pattern in a verse or within the lines of a poem. Stressed syllables tend to be longer and unstressed shorter. In simple language, *meter* is a poetic device that serves as a linguistic sound pattern for the verses, as it gives poetry a rhythmical and melodious sound” (Literary Devices, 2015). English poetry employs five basic meters including:

Iamb – Consists of two syllables; the first syllable is not stressed while the second syllable is stressed (Literary Devices, 2015).

Trochee (also Troch) – Opposite of iamb and consists of two syllables; the first syllable is stressed while the second syllable is unstressed (Literary Devices, 2015).

Spondee – Two syllables that are consecutively stressed (Literary Devices, 2015).

Dactyl – Made up of three syllables; the first syllable is stressed and the remaining two syllables are not stressed (Literary Devices, 2015).

Anapest – Opposite of dactyl and made up of three syllables; the first two syllables are unstressed and the third syllable is stressed (Literary Devices, 2015).

Rhythm – Derived from the Greek term, *rhythmos*, meaning, “measured motion”, *rhythm* is a literary device which demonstrates the long and short patterns through stressed and unstressed syllables particularly in verse form (Literary Devices, 2015).

Scansion – “The practice of checking the rhythm of speech written in verse” (Daw, 2015).

Theatre Major – Students whose academic major is theatre.

Theatre Practitioner – The term refers to anyone who studies, has studied, participates in or has participated in, directs, works, or has worked on a theatre production on-campus or off-campus, professionally or non-professionally. The term is inclusive of theatre faculty, theatre staff, theatre students, performers, directors, and technicians.

Theatre Study – The process of learning about theatre by taking academic theatre courses.

Word Work – This phrase refers to a literary analysis homework assignment that was performed five times throughout the semester. The naming configuration of this assignment is unique to this course and professor. The assignment included eight elements: translation, gist translation, scansion and punctuation, rhetorical devices, quarto or folio comparison, quarto or folio retrieval, character analysis, and performance chart. Further details of this assignment may be found in Table 6.

Delimitations

Using the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories as a framework to represent the ideals of a well-rounded liberal arts education, this study explored what learning opportunities, aligning with the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories, could be found in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors. The study was performed at a baccalaureate-degree granting, liberal arts institution in the northeastern United States during the spring 2015

academic term, from January 2015 through May 2015. Data collection was limited to one course term.

Limitations

This study was performed on a Jesuit Catholic college campus in the Northeast. The religiously affiliated campus culture and mission may have limited the study results to that which may be found in a theatre department on a religiously affiliated campus.

Using LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories as a framework, one might expect this study would include an evaluation of learning outcomes using the LEAP Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics. Due to the nature of confounding variables, including students' exposure to three other liberal arts courses taken simultaneously, it would be impossible to attribute students' learning outcomes to this single course, even with a pre- and post-assessment. As a result, this study did not intend to assess acquired learning outcomes.

I chose an institution that did not ascribe to the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, which may be viewed as a limitation of this study. The institution delineated its own internally developed learning outcomes for its students. Upon review of the institution's self-espoused *Academic Goals of a Liberal Arts Education*, it appeared that all elements of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories were included within the institution's academic goals.

A limitation of this study is that all Shakespeare courses are structured differently, and every classroom contains different faculty with differing expertise, and students with differing skill sets, cultural backgrounds, intellectual, and artistic abilities. The professor of this course suggested that if this study were to be duplicated next year on the same campus, the results could

be vastly different, despite being taught by the same faculty member at the same institution, using the same syllabus and the same classroom space.

Another limitation of this study is that it did not produce widely generalizable results, as the sample size for this one course was relatively small, and the study explored a single theatre course on one campus.

Significance of the Study

This study provides information, framed by the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories, that illuminates how theatre as an academic discipline may contribute to opportunities for learning. The study serves to fill a gap in the literature. Through empirical research, this study provides a richness of understanding of an academic theatre course that may influence decision makers to make informed decisions about theatre in higher education. This study might support the implementation of LEAP standards on this college campus, or on other liberal arts college campuses. The results of this study may provide supportive information for individual colleges' development of theatre concentrations, minors, or majors that do not currently exist, or support the hiring of theatre faculty on campuses with no current theatre faculty.

Researcher Perspective

My personal perspective in this dissertation involves my worldview as a mother, higher education administrator, performing artist, and researcher. As the researcher, I served as the instrument of interpretive analysis; I was therefore unable to remove myself from the study and perform my research from a value-neutral standpoint (Phillips & Burbules, 2000, p. 48). While facts about others utilize third person omniscient and academic language, the narrative herein includes use of the first person "I" to illuminate the researcher-as-instrument aspects of this qualitative study.

I am the mother of an elementary school-aged child, and I am troubled by my child's public school administrators' references to art, music, physical education, health, and library skills as "enrichment" courses. Trained as a K-12 music educator, I view such courses as essential elements of a well-rounded K-12 curriculum. I was fortunate to begin formal musical study in the fourth grade, which I believe helped me to better understand mathematics. I view education at all levels as being most beneficial when holistic and integrated. Without persistent and equal exposure to all courses, I believe students may fail to fully understand how everything connects within our world.

As a higher education professional who has worked with college students in a professional capacity for 20 years, I am concerned with college students' perceptions of what is necessary to learn to be a successful member of contemporary society. In my positions as an administrator and faculty member, I have worked with college seniors who have been unable to clearly articulate a critical argument in writing or in speech. I believe that students should not be allowed to graduate without such competencies and see this as a failure of our educational system. I therefore support the work that the AAC&U and LEAP is trying to do to align college student learning outcomes with the competencies desired by 21st century employers.

I would be remiss if I did not disclose that I have a passion for theatre arts. I never studied theatre in college, nor have I ever taught theatre, so my exposure to college theatre pedagogy is limited to what I have read and experienced in this study. Prior to performing research for this study as a participant-observer in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course, my knowledge of Shakespeare was limited to what I learned in my junior high and high school English courses. Most of Shakespeare's literature was new and foreign to me. Despite my lack of formal theatre study, I entered the study with more than 30 years of experience working in

theatre. I have performed in more than 50 plays and musicals, including community theatre, college theatre, summer stock, dinner theatre, and professional regional theatre. I have also directed three plays; two for local community theatres and one for a professional summer stock. I consider myself to be a “theatre practitioner” as previously defined, and therefore, I approached this study with an insider’s view without being an enrolled theatre student or faculty member for the course.

As a researcher, I entered this study with a desire to contribute empirical research to the body of literature that investigates opportunities for learning LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. Based on personal experience and involvement with the arts, I presupposed that I would find opportunities for learning, but I entered the study uncertain about what opportunities for learning would be found in the investigation of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The current body of literature concerning the benefits, merit, worth, and value of theatre arts in higher education is vast, but it is mostly limited to theory, reports, observation, and educated opinion. Quantitative and structured qualitative research studies pertaining to theatre in higher education are sparse. This literature review revealed a gap in empirical research studies involving theatre in higher education. Most published quantitative and qualitative studies of theatre involve research pertaining to K-12 schools. As a result, I have chosen to include K-12 studies in this literature review.

This literature review is segmented into three separate sections: Goals of Contemporary Higher Education, Theatre in Higher Education, and K-12 Theatre. Since this study explores theatre as an academic discipline within a liberal arts setting resulting in students' obtainment of bachelor of arts degrees, this literature review first provides a chronology of reports that outline the goals of contemporary liberal arts study, including teaching and learning models, and literature expressing the desired outcomes of a contemporary undergraduate education. Liberal arts desired outcomes serve to provide an exploratory framework for how theatre as a discipline may present learning opportunities to fulfill such outcomes.

The next section involves theatre in higher education, its relation of pedagogical practices to those promoted within a liberal arts curriculum, and demonstrated benefits of theatre in higher education. Literature promoting the need for empirical research in theatre is also highlighted, justifying the need for the present study.

The final section involves K-12 theatre and highlights qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies that address the benefits of K-12 theatre to life skill development and learning.

Goals of Contemporary Higher Education

For more than 20 years, the AAC&U has worked to develop idyllic goals for American higher education. Starting with the idea that colleges should support and foster students' understanding of a diverse democracy, the AAC&U undertook an initiative entitled, "American Commitments: Diversity, Democracy and Liberal Learning" and published *The Drama of Diversity and Democracy: Higher Education and American Commitments* (Minnich & AAC&U, 1995). This decade long, multifaceted project sought to promote diversity as a resource for higher education learning and spur deeper understanding of inequities and battles for justice. Due to the timeless nature of the need for social justice, a second edition of the publication was developed to include a new forward and updated material (Gutierrez & AAC&U, 2011).

At the turn of this century, the AAC&U realized the near universal demand for higher education, noting that more and more American citizens were obtaining access to higher education. While the new attendance pattern was portrayed as a favorable development, concerns with the quality and value of educational experiences were questioned. This stimulated the need for the AAC&U to develop recommendations for colleges and universities to address the issue of educational value.

The report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (AAC&U, 2002), proposed a learning-focused model of education which sought to: develop empowered, informed, and responsible learners from the K-12 continuum to college; promote cross-disciplinary connections and valid and progressive research practices; recognize diversity; promote collaboration; link critical thinking and problem-solving; and celebrate practical knowledge (AAC&U, 2002, p. 44). The report intended to inspire colleges to develop an environment of intentional learning necessary for students to be successful in the

contemporary, diversified workplace, so they may graduate and contribute to the global economy (AAC&U, 2002).

The follow-up report, *Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree* (AAC&U, 2004), provided a table of desired college learning outcomes. The table was developed based on information gathered from a combination of sources including standards from various accreditation agencies across the country, best practices articulated by educational associations, employer desired employee competencies, and contributions from faculty and administrators at various colleges and universities. The learning outcomes included (AAC&U, 2004, pp. 12-13): communication and inquiry/analytic skills; knowledge of community and citizenship; ethics and values; global and multicultural understanding; personal understanding to assist with group dynamics; broad understanding and hands-on experience with the disciplines that explore the natural, social, and cultural realms; a desire for lifelong learning; and the ability to analyze and synthesize data (AAC&U, 2004).

A 2005 national report, *Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Student Achievement in College*, suggested the following three overarching learning outcomes for today's college students (AAC&U, 2005, p. 6) including: knowledge of human cultures and the natural world through science, social sciences, mathematics, humanities, and the arts; intellectual and practical skills through written and oral communication, inquiry, critical and creative thinking, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork, and integration of learning; individual and social responsibility through civic responsibility and engagement, ethical reasoning, intercultural knowledge and actions; and a propensity for lifelong learning. The report suggested a consensus about the value of these outcomes, and offered supporting evidence from business leaders, government officials, and students themselves for each of the outcomes.

According to this report, however, direct evidence of student progress toward these learning goals appeared to be primarily available for the knowledge outcomes and failed to encompass many of the personal and social dimensions of learning and development (AAC&U, 2005).

Later, the AAC&U further developed their initiative to determine idyllic outcomes for the 21st century through their Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative (AAC&U, 2007). The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes (pp. 3-12), presented in detail in Chapter 3, were designed to provide national benchmarks for a contemporary liberal arts education; they were developed through careful analyses of accreditation requirements by a team of hundreds of educators and business community members, outlining what contemporary college students should know and be able to do by graduation. The LEAP Principles of Excellence (AAC& U, 2007, pp. 25-44) were shared as guideline for educators, and offered pedagogic examples for developing intentional learning experiences. These principles included: aim high and make excellence inclusive; give students a compass; teach the arts of inquiry and innovation; engage the big questions; connect knowledge with choices and action; foster civic, intercultural, and ethical learning; and assess students' abilities to apply learning to complex problems. LEAP also developed a punch list for colleges and universities to assist with their plight to meet societal needs and demands through appropriate educational actions (AAC&U, 2007).

Quality of Higher Education Learning Outcomes

Institutions that have adopted the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes were asked by the AAC&U to document the quality of student learning (Carey, 2011). To assist colleges with determining how well their students may be achieving the 16 LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes (AAC&U, 2014a), the original Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate

Education (VALUE) project was initiated in 2007 involving teams of educators from more than 100 institutions of higher learning (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The team developed VALUE rubrics to serve as a guide for assessment; they have been tested by more than 100 educators, and have been tracked since September 2010 (Rhodes, 2011). The Essential Learning Outcomes include:

- *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* including global learning;
- *intellectual and practical skills* including: inquiry and analysis, critical thinking, creative thinking, written communication, oral communication, reading, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork, and problem solving;
- *personal and social responsibility* outcomes including: civic knowledge and engagement—local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning, and foundations and skills for lifelong learning; and
- *integrative and applied learning* including integrative learning (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012).

The AAC&U published a LEAP report on *High Impact Educational Practices* (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). This publication presents *National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE)* data about educational practices that have had a significant impact on student success. The report addresses why these high impact practices are beneficial to all students, but benefit the underserved population more than their advantaged counterparts. The report demonstrates that underserved students are the least likely to have access to these high impact educational practices, suggesting a need to apply the practices in every college for all students.

Written as a follow-up to the 2005 report, the AAC&U provided an updated outcomes report in 2012 entitled, *Making Progress?: What We Know about the Achievement of Liberal Education Outcomes* (Finley & AAC&U, 2012). This report provided updated national student data from various sources including: *Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)*, *Cooperative Institutional Research Program's (CIRP) College Senior Survey*, *NSSE*, *Personal and Social Responsibility Inventory (PSRI)*, and the *Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education*. The student test results demonstrated only modest improvements in attaining desired student outcomes (Finley & AAC&U, 2012).

The report also provided data about faculty support for the LEAP outcomes taken from the *Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)*. Results demonstrated that approximately half of the faculty surveyed stated that they supported the LEAP outcomes in their classes. The report suggested that faculty need to become champions for the learning outcomes, and institutions need to improve assessment and implement high-impact practices to construct a learning environment conducive to increasing student achievement (Finley & AAC&U, 2012).

The AAC&U VALUE initiative was formed in December of 2013 (AAC&U, 2014b) that includes *General Education Maps and Markers (GEMs)*. This project represents a large-scale, systematic effort to provide a design for contemporary learning and long-term student success. The goal of GEMs is to move from a model of general education based solely on credits earned to a new vision of general education that integrates students' learning experiences over four years, showcases learning proficiencies, and culminates with a portfolio of outcomes and accomplishments (AAC&U, 2014c). Each of the AAC&U reports highlighted initiatives and outcomes that build upon previous work of the organization.

Robles (2012) performed a mixed-methods study with business executives to determine the soft skills desired of college graduates by contemporary employers. Starting with qualitative information gathered in student interviews of business executives, Robles (2012) coded answers for themes and later distributed a Likert-scale survey to employers to determine the top ten soft skills found most desirable by business executives, including (in order of rank): integrity, communication, courtesy, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, flexibility, teamwork, and work ethic. These findings affirm many of the desired outcomes of a liberal education included in the LEAP VALUE rubrics.

Higher Education's Impact on Students

Reviewing the literature concerning how college affects students, Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) book offers a collection of research on the subject. Their first volume, published in 1991, contained more than 2,600 studies regarding the impact of college on students. The current publication serves to review literature published between the early 1990s and the early 2000s, and addresses the same six topics as the first volume: (a) change during college, (b) net effects of college, (c) between-college effects, (d) within-college effects, (e) conditional effects, and (f) long-term effects. When addressing these topics, the authors first synthesized what was learned from the prior literature, and then provided a review of the literature of the past decade. The book contains important implications for policy, practice and research and is organized for use as a reference guide for specific topic areas of research interest.

Arum and Roksa (2011) performed a study to address what undergraduate students actually learn once they get into college. Using the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), more than 2,300 first term first-year students were surveyed at 24 institutions to assess their knowledge. Upon conclusion of the students' second year of study, the survey instrument was

administered again. Analysis revealed that 45% of the students demonstrated no significant skill improvement. This book was written to illuminate the perceived learning problem in colleges and suggest ways to improve student learning gains.

Pedagogy, Student Engagement, & Learning

Determining how to best reach students and get them engaged in the learning process has been a long-standing issue in higher education. Chickering and Gamson (1987) penned ideas to support student engagement in higher education called the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*. These include: (a) encourages contacts between students and faculty, (b) develops reciprocity and cooperation among students, (c) uses active learning techniques, (d) gives prompt feedback, (e) emphasizes time on task, (f) communicates high expectations, and (g) respects diverse talents and ways of learning. These seven principles, rooted in research on college teaching and learning, have served faculty and administrators as a guide to improve teaching and learning across disciplines for nearly 30 years.

Boyer (1990) proposed a model of scholarship for faculty. His work, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, included four components:

1. The scholarship of discovery, “The scholarship of discovery, at its best, contributes not only to the stock of human knowledge but also to the intellectual climate of a college or university. Not just the outcomes, but the process, and especially the passion, give meaning to the effort” (Boyer, 1990, p. 17).
2. The scholarship of teaching and learning, “The work of the professor becomes consequential only as it is understood by others” (Boyer, 1990, p. 23).
3. The scholarship of application, “The application of knowledge, moves toward engagement as the scholar asks, ‘How can knowledge be responsibly applied to

consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions?’

And further, ‘Can social problems themselves define an agenda for scholarly investigation?’” (Boyer, 1990, p. 21).

4. The scholarship of integration, “By integration, we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too” (Boyer, 1990, p. 18).

Boyer’s (1990) model has been refined to satisfy various disciplines, including theatre. Boyer’s model for theatre will be discussed later in this chapter.

Institutional characteristics have proven to play a role in determining student engagement, as does student’s residency status on-campus (Pike & Kuh, 2005). According to Pike and Kuh (2005), participating in learning communities can substantially increase student engagement, retention rates, and self-reported learning gains. Pike and Kuh (2005) stated, “the most important institutional factors are thought to be the policies and practices adopted by institutions to increase student engagement” (p. 5).

Tinto (1993) synthesized research studies on student attrition and provided strategies to promote college student retention on different types of college campuses. Tinto suggested that retention may be enhanced when colleges become student-focused, provide students with a high quality education in the classroom, and provide them with a strong social and intellectual community both inside and outside of the classroom. Tinto’s theory of institutional departure stresses the importance of classroom experiences in student retention.

Kolb’s (1984) theory of experiential learning offered a framework for comprehending “the role of experience in the learning process” (p. 208). Kolb’s four-stage cycle is comprised of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active

experimentation. The theory defined learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). For students with hands-on learning styles, theatre may provide an opportunity for experiential learning, by providing an opportunity to demonstrate and practice their learned knowledge or skills in projects and production experiences.

One study by Kolb and Kolb (2005) explored how artists learn. They administered inventories to college student subjects in their first and third years of study from the Case Weatherhead School of Management, Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA), and the Case Western Reserve. Combining experiential learning theory and a theoretical framework on learning spaces, the purpose of the study was to demonstrate differences between learning spaces of three institutions with different academic foci, showcase how students learn differently within each environment, and reveal a shift in learning styles over time. Specific research questions were not noted.

The study made use of the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) by Kolb (1999), the Adaptive Style Inventory (ASI) by Boyatzis and Kolb (1993), and the Learning Skills Profile by Boyatzis and Kolb (1991). The expanded nine learning style distribution, which outlines specific areas of the brain in learning, provided a visual aid for demonstrating results of the research. Results demonstrated a marked difference between the learning styles of students of the arts and students in the MBA program and liberal arts programs. Artists also exhibited a shift in learning, which differed from their counterparts. Specifically, the CIA art students demonstrated a significant shift in learning style from the reflective, eastern region of the grid in their first year ($p < .01$, $t^a = 2.42$) to the active, western region of the grid in their junior year ($p < .05$, $t^a = -1.95$). Researchers

posited that perhaps students began taking a more active role in their own learning by their junior year as a result of the CIA learning environment.

Measurement reliability and validity were not discussed in the article. The inventories used for this study were previously tested and used over a period of time, which indicates likely instrument reliability, but no discussion was provided about the possibility of pretest or posttest sensitization of the students tested, or any other study limitations. Additionally, the sample population was small; a broader sample should be explored to confirm the broad interpretations of the research.

In summary, the researchers suggested that learning spaces should be shaped to the style of the learner to accommodate for different learning styles of individuals from particular majors, and should accommodate learners to achieve optimal growth. Curricula should be turned into a learning-focused model, with appropriate faculty facilitation.

Theatre in Higher Education

One author and arts advocate has contributed important literature that illuminates the contributions of theatre within higher education. This section of the chapter begins with a summary of these works leading up to the seminal work that inspired this research study, Kindelan's (2012) book, *Artistic Literacy: Theatre Studies and a Contemporary Liberal Education*.

Kindelan (1999) suggested that the arts, particularly theatre arts, can provide a practical and thought-provoking element to the college and university General Education curriculum. Theatre programs taught within a contemporary liberal education complement the General Education curricula because they lend opportunities for learning critical inquiry skills, creative thinking, ethical reasoning and values, literacy, and lifelong learning skills. Due to its nature as

an interdisciplinary field, Kindelan (1999) posited that theatre arts programs could provide a model for interdisciplinary learning. She suggested that theatre provides what the General Education practitioner may view as an “optimal learning environment” (p. 265), based on its pedagogical and production practices.

Kindelan (2001) administered a survey to General Education program administrators. Findings demonstrated that General Education programs often disregard theatre arts course offerings. In this paper, Kindelan postulated that theatre study affords students an opportunity to explore the history of moral and ethical dilemmas, and increases understanding of moral decision-making. Additionally, she proposed that theatre study provides students with connections across the humanities that may be synthesized to promote increased understanding across disciplines. She encouraged theatre faculty to get involved in curriculum reform and make a case for theatre in the curriculum.

Kindelan (2004) asserted that the study and practice of theatre promotes good citizenship, as theatre studies programs address the realities of a complex and pluralistic world. She posits that through script analysis, students are challenged to identify the historical, psychological, literary, cultural, philosophical and social aspects of a play. Students also cultivate library skills and perform research to better understand the contextual underpinnings of the play. Through roundtable discussions about their findings, students may also enhance their interpersonal and critical thinking skills.

In another article, Kindelan (2009a) presented a case study of an interdisciplinary project surrounding the production of the play, *Children of Drancy*, at Northeastern University. The play, written by Inez Hedges, dramatized a concentration camp in Drancy, France, that operated during the German occupation of France in World War II. Kindelan (2009a) shared her own

experience of working with other departments and programs to offer linked courses connected with the play she directed, and how the production activities enhanced students' awareness and understanding of the Holocaust. Kindelan (2009a) concluded that the pedagogy of this learning community pilot project and the performance of the play encouraged faculty/student collaboration in research and enhanced students' intellectual skills through ethical reasoning, understanding of social justice, and emotional awareness.

Another report by Kindelan (2009b) promoted the idea that undergraduate theatre study presents opportunities for contemporary liberal learning through intentional teaching and learning methods. The strategy of faculty and student collaboration on undergraduate research activities for creative discovery and the making of interdisciplinary connections were discussed. Kindelan (2009b) postulated that such engagement can help develop students' ethical reasoning, and understanding of civic responsibility and social justice. She proposed that learning best occurs within a diverse learning community where students analyze a play script to explore pluralistic ideas. Kindelan (2009b) provided examples of how the dramaturgical research of a play can incorporate inquiry-based research methods and foster collaborative information exchanges that culminate in greater understanding.

Kindelan (2010) postulated that the making of theatre as an art inside or outside of the college classroom engages students. She stated such experiences help students develop the critical thinking and leadership skills necessary to build sustainable, successful careers. Her report intended to inform educators outside of the arts about the value of theatre study. She demonstrated how preparation of a theatre student's undergraduate honors thesis on dramaturgy and the play, *The Laramie Project*, stimulated intentional learning by promoting critical and analytical skills, leadership, and social responsibility. Kindelan (2010) suggested that well-

planned experiential activities can also help students become responsible, contributing members of society who are civically engaged and aware of social issues.

Kindelan's (2012) book was written as a manifesto for theatre in a contemporary liberal arts education. Part I highlighted the evolution of liberal arts, and a history of theatre arts in higher education from the past to its present state of affairs. She demonstrated the need for theatre programs to graduate socially conscious, engaged students who have artistic skills and understanding, with broad-based knowledge that will serve them in the global workforce, regardless of job placement. She wrote about the AAC&U LEAP initiatives and focused Part II of the book on how theatre studies can contribute to students' development of critical skills and sensitivities essential to a practical liberal education. Kindelan (2012) linked various theories to theatre study to posit how theatre study may serve to satisfy essential components of a liberal arts education.

Like Kindelan (2012), Gressler (2002) posited that theatre should be an essential part of a college curriculum, and provided evidence that it could be an ideal model for Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, described earlier. Gressler also focused on Gardner's (1985) multiple intelligences theory, which is known as a model for understanding and teaching aspects of intelligence, learning styles, personality types and human behavior for the fields of education and business. Gressler tied emotional intelligence to theatre education, and provided practical guidance to theatre instructors about how to foster students' development. Gressler also provided guidance for developing or re-shaping theatre arts curricula, expressly tying courses to the aims of a liberal arts education.

Polisi (2005) outlined the ways he changed the curriculum and culture of The Juilliard School. As president of The Juilliard School, Polisi (2005) posited that the idea of being

engaged, not only in the classroom, but also with peers outside of the classroom, helps students develop a more universal sense of citizenship and engagement. Like Kindelan (2012) and Gressler (2002), Polisi promoted interdisciplinary discovery among both his faculty and the students themselves. He promoted diversity and inclusion in an institution that was relatively homogenous. He promoted respect amongst students and their peers, to provide a supportive environment and enhance students' quality of life. Since many performing arts students graduate and go into teaching, he required that all performing arts programs at Juilliard offer a course in pedagogy, to ensure that artists graduate with a working knowledge of how to teach their craft. He also ensured that technology was made available to students, since we live in an era that is becoming more and more technological. He demonstrated a commitment to forward thinking by promoting the performance of new works, and this became engrained in the fabric of the Juilliard culture. He developed and taught a course about the role of arts in society to inform students of the ways the arts may have an impact on society and the ways society informs or shapes the arts.

Although criticized by faculty as trying to build “another Yale” (p. 6), Polisi insisted upon strengthening the undergraduate liberal arts core. He stated that the critical role of any performing artist should be to serve as a leader and communicator of human values. He reported that most of what he set out to accomplish during his tenure has been successful. His book highlighted his opinions of the critical issues facing the performing arts industry and the future of students of the arts in this century.

Theatre Pedagogy

The Association for Theatre in Higher Education's (ATHE) applied and assessed Boyer's (1990) model to the discipline of theatre in the white paper *Scholarship for the Discipline of Theatre* (2001). The *scholarship of discovery* was defined in the paper as the generation of new

and unique knowledge. The *scholarship of teaching and learning* was described as a bridge creatively linking the discipline and students' learning and understanding. The *scholarship of engagement* emphasized the use of knowledge in solving societal problems or in developing civically engaged citizens. The *scholarship of integration* was expressed as the way in which cross-disciplinary connections are made (ATHE, 2001). The white paper also outlined examples of theatre pedagogy that can apply to Boyer's categories, which were echoed by Kindelan (1999, 2009b, 2010, 2012). This paper included examples of how play study may contribute to research skill development, how students are free to make educated choices on their own and apply their own interpretations rather than adopting the professor's viewpoint, and how civic dialogue is encouraged to better understand society as a whole and consider diverse issues. These assertions demonstrate ideologies that directly align with some of the AAC&U (2007) LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, including the four categories of *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; intellectual and practical skills; personal and social responsibility; and integrative and applied learning* (AAC&U, 2014a).

Kindelan (1999, 2001, 2004, 2012) related Chickering and Gamson's (1987) *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* to end of term evaluations from a team-taught interdisciplinary general education course (Kindelan 1999; Kindelan 2012). She connected these principles to the process of creating the world of play on stage, demonstrating encouragement of student/faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasis of time on task, setting high expectations, and finally, respect of diverse talents and ways of learning. Kindelan (1999) was able to demonstrate that students were changed based on their exposure to course content in the subject of theatre.

Interdisciplinary Nature of Theatre

As indicated by Kindelan's works, the interconnectedness between theatre and virtually every other subject taught in general education is palpable. Interdisciplinary courses are prevalent in today's curriculum, and theatre is interdisciplinary, just by the nature of the art. As poignantly stated by Chamberlain (2012), theatre is not supposed to be read, but experienced. She applied a team-based learning (TBL) approach in each of her theatre and general education classes, reinventing the curriculum to emphasize peer interactivity in learning. Student learning outcomes were favorable, demonstrating gains in transferable lifelong learning skills.

The arts have also served as complementary additions to traditional Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) curricula. The Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) initiative, started at the Rhode Island School of Design, suggests that art can be integrated with a science, technology, engineering, and math curriculum to enhance 21st century innovation to promote a creative economy (Maeda, 2013). Much of the research literature written about the STEAM initiative involves K-12 arts integration studies and often focuses on visual art.

College Theatre Supports Life Skill Development

As early as the 1950s, and as recently as today, theatre professors have professed that theatre stands on its own merit and should not be solely used for its interdisciplinary properties. Pawley (1957) outlined the hallmarks of what Professor Thomas Smith of Syracuse University called an "educated man," and justified theatre's place in the liberal arts curriculum by discussing the ways that theatre as an academic discipline challenges students to begin to develop the traits of an educated individual. These traits include curiosity, efficiency, imagination, piety, self-sufficiency, and a sense of humor. Although these elements do not

expressly foreshadow the AAC&U's (2007) LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, it is important to note that Pawley (1957) found it important to relate theatre arts study to what was then labeled to be a well-rounded, liberal arts education.

Levy (1997) asserted that theatre studies foster a solid moral foundation and social responsibility. Important to note in the present study, taking place at a Catholic institution steeped in the Jesuit tradition, Levy indicated that the study and performance of plays has been an integral part of Jesuit Catholic tradition since its inception. His article discussed the significance of the theatre in the moral education of children and suggested the possibilities of using theatre to help to develop a moral child. He cited that experience in the theatre could become an additional source of emotional experience for children and could be used as a way of exploring and understanding emotions through play performance.

Written from a similar perspective to Levy (1997), Berkeley (2005) engaged the idea of building morality in students by nurturing ethical thinking. She discussed how theatre studies may provide students with practical wisdom, or *pronesis*, as well as *techne*, a learned technique or skill. She argued that theatre instruction should focus mainly on the practical wisdom offered through the liberal arts, as it allows for a more lasting pedagogical impact and the ongoing development of communicative consciousness. Teaching for mastery of techniques or skills may be learned and forgotten over time, and thus be less impactful.

At the University of South Australia, Banks and Kenner (1997) performed a social skills study on semiprofessional actors, drama students, and non-actors to determine whether actors are more socially skilled than non-actors. They developed a 90-item questionnaire including Riggio's (1989) Social Skills Inventory, which measures six subcategories: emotional expressivity, emotional sensitivity, emotional control, social expressivity, social sensitivity, and

social control. They also used Rosenberg's (1965) Self-esteem Inventory, and the Extraversion/Introversion scale from the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964). Following the questionnaire completion, the same moderator asked each participant a series of questions, and their answers were videotaped. The videotapes were shown to a panel of judges without sound, and the judges rated each participant on attractiveness and social skill. The study concluded that both semi-professional actors and drama students scored higher than their non-actor counterparts on both the Social Skills Inventory and the judged social skills, even when controlling for attractiveness, self-esteem, extraversion, and age. This correlation demonstrates that those who study drama test higher for social skill assessment. Whether this relationship is due to their study of theatre, or due to their attraction to theatre was not proven. The drama students did not score higher in self-esteem than their non-actor counterparts, however, the semiprofessional actors scored slightly higher in self-esteem. This could mean that practicing acting can have a positive effect on self-esteem, but this is an assertion, rather than a finding based on empirical evidence.

Robinson (2010) published a revised version of his book, *Out of our Minds: Learning to be Creative*. This edition asserted that creativity is an essential component of success in modern society. Since we construct the world in which we live, Robinson (2010) preached that creativity is essential to promoting cultural change. He also expounded upon the fact that educational systems must help students find their true passion in order to lead fulfilling lives, and in many cases, education is failing our young people today. Robinson (2010) cited references to studies and works by others to demonstrate that organizations, including educational institutions, have a tendency to stifle imagination, creativity and innovation; values that are key components of students' future success in the global economy.

Leadership lessons can also be learned from the theatre. Dunham and Freeman (2000) asserted that business leaders could learn and apply methods of theatre leadership. The authors used what they called the Principle of Unity and Multiplicity as the foundation to describe best-in-class theatre directors' work with a theatre ensemble. Identified techniques included creating a vision, good casting, taking a collaborative approach to work, embracing complexity, staying in the moment, and managing the tension between learning and creativity. Business leaders are expected to encourage individual development while shaping organizational cohesiveness. They proposed that best-in-class theatre directors could demonstrate how to achieve this difficult task.

Theatre Enriches College Campuses

Availability of theatre and other performing arts programs can impact students' decision to attend and remain at certain institutions. Returning students comprise more than half of a college population (Miller, 1989), so it is important that academic and co-curricular theatre programs address the needs of the returning student body. Strickland (1979) noted the importance of marketing in higher education, as it relates to attracting and retaining students. He noted "the research and analysis components as well as the promotional aspects, provide institutional leaders with guides for planning and developing new services for students, encouraging higher student enrollment rates, and reducing attrition among the existing student population" (p. 6). With appropriate information, Strickland (1979) asserted that institutions could develop theatre and other programs to attract and retain students.

A report by Spitzer and Ogurek (2009) asserted that college and university performing arts centers have the ability to enrich communities both financially and culturally. Performances on campus attract visitors from the outside community, and can therefore stimulate the local economy. They can "prompt the cultural enrichment of a region" (Spitzer & Ogurek, 2009, p.

131) by offering live theatre in an area that may have previously been devoid of such opportunity. A performing arts center can have various functions on campus, acting as an entertainment venue, a meeting space, a resource for working professionals, and a learning hub. In order to contribute to the institution's revenue stream, the facility should be booked as much as possible. Community and institutional revenue aside, performing arts centers provide hands-on learning opportunities for students enrolled in fine arts courses, particularly those involved with the staging of a production. Students gain experience off stage with "catwalks, lighting, sets and audiovisual technology" (Spitzer & Ogurek, 2009, p. 131). Students may also benefit from hearing lectures or watching professional productions that are brought into the facility. Spitzer and Ogurek cautioned institutions considering the creation of such a facility to do demographic research prior to planning construction in order to define and plan for the events that the center should accommodate (2009). They suggested that an aesthetically pleasing design in public areas is desired, but private, back stage areas may be developed with lower-end finishes to save on construction costs.

Importance of Theatre Outcomes in Higher Education

Poynton (2003) provided a history of theatre in American higher education, highlighting academic theatre's struggles and triumphs over time. She demonstrated how theatre has been challenged to prove its worth since its inception, and has earned its place in higher education. She expressed the importance of theatre departments' self-evaluation and assessment and beseeched faculty and theatre administrators to consider oppositional criticism so they may learn from it, address the concerns, and improve theatre arts educational practices.

Etherton and Prentki (2006) exhibited a need for the monitoring and evaluation of applied theatre. The political decision-makers in the education community in the United Kingdom

claimed that the arts can: (a) promote social change, (b) build community, (c) promote healing, (d) be used to promote change, and (e) help strive for social justice. They implored educators to perform research and evaluation to demonstrate these important potential outcomes of theatre in education.

Upon the dismantling and reshaping of Cornell University's theatre program, and the threat of closing another theatre program at the State University of New York at Albany, Carlson (2011) chastised faculty for believing that theatre should rest on its own merit, and for not furthering their field through scholarly writing and research. He proposed that in order to preserve theatre's place in American institutions, it is important to provide evidence of the value of theatre in a liberal arts education.

This sentiment echoes what Combs (2001) learned through his accreditation work with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges; evidence-based assessment is important to each academic department's survival. He stated that although theatre programs often meet or exceed accreditation and institutional requirements, theatre faculty are focused mainly on meeting student needs. His article demonstrated that faculty should take the time to showcase how the educational goals of an institution may be met through theatre study.

K-12 Theatre

In a book targeting those who teach or aspire to teach K-12 theatre, Lazarus (2012) presents information from interviews with 140 drama teachers who provide "voices from the field," analyzing the practice of contemporary drama teaching. She challenged readers to reflect on current pedagogical practices, seeking to enhance the practice of socially responsible theatre teaching. She advocated for educational reform to ensure the future of secondary theatre education in America.

K-12 Theatre Supports Life Skill Development

Beales and Zemel (1990) contended that actor training could improve social skills. Beales and Zemel (1990) performed a study in which they examined the effect of high school theatre participation on the social maturity and self-esteem of 20 high school drama students relative to 20 peers who were not involved in drama. Their findings indicated a significant elevation in the areas of social presence, tolerance, and achievement via independence for drama students over their non-dramatic counterparts. In contrast, the theatre participant cohort did not demonstrate higher levels of self-esteem.

Two studies, performed by Österlind (2011) and McCammon (2009) in Sweden and the U.S. respectively highlighted the benefits of theatre education. In each study, the same questionnaire was administered to senior high school students who participated in three or more years of theatre study. Students were asked questions about how long and why they became involved in theatre, what benefits they believed they gained from theatre, and what outcomes they expected from theatre involvement.

In a qualitative study by McCammon (2009), a high school senior was quoted stating, “Everyone has somewhere they belong and luckily for me I belong in theatre.” McCammon issued a questionnaire to high school seniors involved in theatre classes and after coding for themes, discovered that the emergent themes bore a strong similarity to the what Kellmer Pringle (1986) referred to as four basic needs of youth: the need for love and security, for new experiences, for praise and recognition, and for responsibility (p. 148).

In her paper, McCammon (2009) categorized student responses based on Kellmer Pringle’s hierarchy of needs. In relation to the need for praise and recognition, McCammon demonstrated that the students surveyed loved being on stage. Students were attracted to theatre

because they were in awe of the actor's power to move the audience, they appreciated compliments from the audience or their peers, and they enjoyed winning a role and beating the competition. Demonstrating the need for new experiences, McCammon showed that students chose to take theatre to try something new, to challenge themselves, to master new skills, or to pursue a career in theatre. In relation to the responsibility component of the theory, McCammon's research highlighted students' desire to be depended upon by their peers, their commitment to teamwork, and their time dedicated to rehearsal and performance. Student actors indicated a desire to follow-through with deadlines and a commitment to memorizing lines. For those in leadership roles, such as student directors, stage managers, or assistant teachers, they agreed to take on additional commitments for the sake of experience. In addressing the need for love and security, students indicated that they wanted to be part of something, they wanted a sense of family, and they wanted friends. The shared experience of exploring characters in a safe space with friends, and the shared experience of performing together offers students shared stories, and ultimately, a sense of community. Some students surveyed indicated that theatre promoted personal growth and helped them to come out of their shells. The personal support received by their peers and teachers in theatre was very important as well.

Österlind (2011) reported similar results from her qualitative study of high school theatre students in Sweden. In her study, which mimicked McCammon's (2009) study, the Swedish students responded similarly about their sense of belonging. Österlind (2011) referred to this theme as "Theatre=fellowship" (p. 81). Students responded favorably to their experiences, highlighting their love of theatre and describing the fun aspects of theatre. Most of the students cited the challenge of being in the spotlight, while a few did not believe they faced any challenges at all. The majority of students felt that theatre helped to motivate them to learn in

ways that other courses did not. Having a positive relationship with instructors aided motivation. The one apparent difference between the American and Swedish study was that students in Sweden described their three-year theatre coursework to be a little bit too much of a good thing. This could be due to the fact that theatre courses in Sweden take-up one-third of the students' overall course curriculum, averaging approximately 10 hours per week. In contrast, some of the students desired an opportunity to delve deeper into theatre than the course curricula allowed.

Österlind and McCammon (2011) reflected together upon their separate studies and compared the similarities and differences between the responses of the secondary theatre students in Tucson, Arizona, and those in Stockholm, Sweden. Responses suggested a strong correlation between the two cohorts. Through this comparative study, four themes emerged: theatre creates fellowship and fun, develops individuality, cultivates specific theatre skills, and helps with the development of life competencies. Results also supported other similar studies of student perception of their theatre participation (Österlind & McCammon, 2011).

McCammon, Saldaña, Hines and Omasta (2012) set out to determine the enduring, positive impacts of theatre and speech education among high school graduates of various ages. They e-mailed a three-part survey to participants to determine individuals' demographics, high school participation, and to obtain advice for theatre teachers and administration. The researchers deployed a purposive sampling, but anticipated snowball sampling since e-mail could easily be forwarded to others. Member checking was also an intentional part of the study.

A substantial subset of the population responded, which was significant enough to represent the whole population. Quantitative calculations of descriptive statistics were analyzed, and the qualitative data were coded for patterns. Responses were overwhelmingly favorable

from all age groups. Testimonies from those whose professions were outside of a theatre or communications field were those that the researchers found most compelling.

The majority of those surveyed by McCammon et al. (2012) indicated that they had a favorable experience in high school theatre and/or speech, they overcame challenges through theatre and/or speech education, they had good memories of participation, participation helped to shape their adult life, and they learned something about people who were different from themselves through participation in theatre and/or speech. Advice offered to new and aspiring teachers were to challenge students, be passionate about work, develop relationships with students, be a lifelong learner, and be resilient. Self-proclaimed enduring benefits of involvement included lifelong inquiry skills, teamwork, and work ethic. “More than anything else, respondents noted that they gained confidence through their speech and theatre participation” (McCammon et al., 2012, p. 18).

In Saldaña’s (1989) 7-year longitudinal study at Arizona State University, a quantitative analysis of qualitative data was performed to evaluate students’ depth of responses to questions about a theatre production they viewed. Two groups were analyzed, including a control group (those receiving no drama or theatre training prior to seeing the play), and a treatment group (who had received ongoing drama training and exposure to theatre since kindergarten). Saldaña (1989) quantified answers to a series of qualitative questions, thus producing quantitative data. He used a mixed-methods model for this study, as students were interviewed, and their answers were quantified. The substantive questions were as follows:

1. Will the treatment group, as compared with the control group yield significantly higher proportions or means of high-level responses to selected probing questions after viewing a theatrical production?

2. Will there be any significant difference between boys and girls in their proportions or means of responses to selected probing questions after viewing a theatrical production?

The null hypotheses were outlined as follows:

1. The treatment group does not exhibit significantly higher proportions or means than the control group.
2. There is no significant difference between the proportions and means of boys and girls.

A free-response interview methodology developed by Goldberg (1977) was used to gather data. Probing questions were asked of second and third graders upon seeing the play. Responses were ranked into *low, average, or high*, based on a predetermined set of criteria, and rated on a 3-point scale.

Statistical results were interpreted using the Chi-Square test to determine the co-relationship between treatment and control groups. The *t* test indicated differences between the two groups; the control group and the treatment group, as well as boys and girls. The first substantive question employed a one-tailed test, and the second a two-tailed test.

The treatment group gave substantially higher-level responses than the control group, implying that the group's 3-4 year exposure to theatre study made a difference in how they respond to a theatre experience, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. Depending on grade-level, girls and boys gave noticeably differing responses, but due to the instability of patterns, and some skewing of data, the researcher concluded that there was not a significant difference between boys' and girls' responses, thus confirming the null hypothesis.

Saldaña (1989) provided notes regarding the reliability and validity of the data in this pilot study. He highlighted the disagreement among statisticians over the reliability of a Chi-Square test when an expected frequency $X < 5$ and $df=1$, and recommends interpreting the Chi-Square test in two of the matrices with caution, as these matrices compare the boys' and girls' control groups only. A solo rater converted all qualitative responses into quantifiable results. No tests were discussed confirming intra-rater reliability. The reliability of the instrument in this pilot study was not proven. The researcher suggested applying newer qualitative research methods and revising his three-level classification system for future replications of the study.

Theatre has been used to provide youth with learning opportunities, through use of storytelling and interactive theatre. Mixed-methods studies have been performed to assess the learning outcomes and results indicated an increase in understanding through these lesson delivery methods.

English language learning through theatre. A doctoral dissertation penned by Wang (2007), used interactional ethnography to explore the challenge of access to Shakespearean English in diverse groups of English Language Learners (ELL). The study demonstrated how through diversified pedagogical practices, socially marginalized ELL students were able to access opportunities for learning Shakespeare and knowledge of theatre arts to mount public performances of *The Tempest*.

Civility education through theatre. In the UK, a participatory theatre program called *Tapestry* was implemented in an attempt to educate secondary school children about radicalism and prevent youth from joining political extremist and terrorist groups. The 90-minute audience participation play used humor and strong emotions of three actors: one of whom is a working-class, white male from an extremist group, one of whom is a Nigerian, Muslim male from an

extremist group, and one Muslim young woman. At the end of the play, students were asked to develop favorable solutions for the youth involved in extremist groups.

To assess the effectiveness of the program, Winston and Strand (2013) performed a mixed-methods study. An overarching research question was not specifically stated, however, the analyses sought to explore whether the play had a favorable impact on the students, and whether the interactive play dialogue contributed to understanding of civility, which was the intent of the creation of the play.

Qualitative interviews were conducted with secondary students from a multiracial boys' school, and a British South Asian girls' school with a large demographic of Muslims. A 23-question Likert-type survey was administered to 260 teenage students from 10 other schools.

Survey data were collected post-intervention with no baseline knowledge captured pre-intervention. The quantitative analyses provided descriptive statistics and summarized question responses using percentages. The study failed to provide *p* values or demonstrate statistical significance, but claimed that the results suggested that the play accomplished what it set out to do. Qualitative interviews highlighted quotes from boys and girls and focused on dialogic encounter, civility, identity, sympathy, and identification with characters. The shared quotes indicated that humor and the participatory nature of the play helped students develop empathy for those exposed to radicalism and provoked a desire for civility among differing racial groups.

The survey instrument was developed for the purpose of evaluating the impact of this play, but the researcher did not report on the reliability of the instrument. No statistical analyses were applied to assess significance of the results. Using a post-test only model is not strong; offering a pre-test could have provided a baseline for analysis post-intervention. The researcher did not utilize a control group; a static control group design could have offered comparative data

for analysis, which may have produced more substantive results. Additionally, the studies were performed immediately after the conclusion of the play. A longitudinal study would best serve to demonstrate whether there are any long-term intended benefits of the play.

Winston and Strand's (2013) study of the Theatre in Education (TiE) project, *Tapestry*, suggested favorable results among its youth audience, but further statistical analyses and testing should be performed to determine to what extent the play may have served to fulfill its mission of reducing youth involvement in radical extremist political groups.

Health education through theatre. A controlled study developed by Elliot, Gruer, Farrow, Henderson, and Cowan (1996) compared two separate groups of teenage students participating in different AIDS education interventions. One group attended a standard HIV health seminar, and another group attended an HIV theatre education play. Groups were randomly assigned from 10 youth projects in low socioeconomic areas of Glasgow, Scotland, with five groups receiving the standard seminar and another five attending a theatre production about HIV entitled *How to Die of Embarrassment*.

The study was designed to compare the effects of attending an HIV theatre production on HIV knowledge, attitudes, and risk behaviors of young people, to those attending a standard health seminar that deployed group work techniques. Pre- and post-test questionnaires were administered to audience members of both interventions immediately before and immediately following the event. A third questionnaire was administered to both groups two months later. Chi-Square, McNemar, and *t* tests were performed to determine differences between and within the groups. In addition, five subjects from each audience were randomly selected to participate in focus groups post-event held at the youth projects. Qualitative data collected from

the focus groups were transcribed, coded for themes, and used to support or expand upon quantitative analyses.

A t test was used to evaluate between groups differences, and the mean ages demonstrated a difference between the respondents attending health education seminars and theatre performances ($p < 0.01$). The gender breakdown was similar between groups. The evaluations of correct and incorrect responses on all three tests were the same between groups, averaging nine correct responses each. Additionally, there were no significant changes in student responses from test one to tests two and three. Chi-Square tests were used to identify differences between groups, and displayed no significant differences. McNemar tests determined differences in knowledge within each group between assessments. It was determined that the health education group demonstrated an increase in understanding that people with HIV can appear healthy. No other changes in knowledge were statistically significant for either group. The research team believed that this could be due to a fair amount of exposure to the topic of HIV and AIDS prior to attending the presentation or performance.

The mean attitude score of attending the health education seminar was significantly lower than the theatre performance group score ($p < 0.05$). Paired samples t tests were used to investigate a change in attitudes from the first test to the second and third test, but determined no significant change. There was a significant difference between the playgoers' and the health education groups' attitudes about buying condoms, with the health education group reporting more embarrassment about purchasing condoms ($p < 0.05$). Within groups, a significant change arose with the health education sample, on the question about talking about condoms with a partner, demonstrating a significant decrease in embarrassment (McNemar $p < 0.05$).

Two months following the event, both groups reported that they had changed their behavior as it related to safe sex practices. The playgoers reported a greater change with a significant difference between groups ($\chi^2= 8.1, p<0.01$). The evaluators concluded that risky sexual behavior still existed after the event, but the play led to an adoption of safer sex practices by some youth attendees.

The questionnaire contained questions previously used and tested for the purpose of measuring HIV knowledge, attitudes and behavior. Health promoters reviewed questionnaire content prior to its dissemination; it was presumed a reliable instrument. Elliott et al. (1996) did not discuss test-retest reliability of the data, which would have prudent. The article indicated that Chi-Square tests were used to examine differences in responses between groups (Elliot et Al., 1996, p. 7), but a Chi-Square is normally used to compare data with that which was expected in a hypothesis. Although the study utilized mixed methods, results of the focus group interviews were summarized, and no quotes from students were included, lessening the impact of the students' true words.

Both the play and the health education seminar affected change. The play received a significantly more favorable evaluation than the seminar, but participants in the health seminar demonstrated an increased interest in discussing condoms with a partner, and demonstrated an increase in knowledge that people with HIV can appear healthy. The playgoers adopted safer sex practices after attending the play, but neither group showed significant change in sexual knowledge, attitude, or behavior in this study.

Denman, Pearson, Moody, Davis, and Madely (1995) developed a mixed-methods evaluative study to determine the effectiveness of a play, *Someone Like You*, in educating high

school students about HIV and AIDS. Specific questions were not outlined in the article, but these questions were derived from the objectives listed in the article:

1. Do children's HIV- and AIDS-related knowledge and attitudes change when they see this play about HIV and AIDS?
2. Are the children who see the play more understanding of HIV- and AIDS-related knowledge in their post-test responses than the children who do not see the play?
3. What is the children's level of participation and interest? (Observed by teachers)
4. What are the issues raised in the play and workshops? (Observed by teachers)
5. How relevant and interesting do the children find the play with regard to its content and process? (Interview Questions)
6. How easy was it for the teachers to implement this project with their classes? (Survey administered to teachers)

A mixed-methods study was performed. The article described the pre- and post-test in detail, but limited discussion on the qualitative components. The pre- and post-test addressed the first and second research questions regarding the impact of the play and workshops on children's knowledge and attitudes about HIV and AIDS through Likert Scale statements. High school students at 16 high schools in the UK, all who had received prior HIV and AIDS training in school, were administered a pre- and post-test. Four schools were excluded from the results due to inappropriate administration of the tests. The 12 remaining schools diversely included urban and rural, small and large populations. In addition to the experimental group who received the treatment, a control group was given the same pre- and post-test that did not see the play.

Test scores were compared in two ways; each group's pre-test scores were compared to their own post-test scores to demonstrate significance of change, and the scores of both groups

were compared to each other. Statistical significance was indicated by *p* values. The article does not say which approach was taken to analyze the statistics.

None of the groups at pre-test demonstrated a statistically significant difference in knowledge. Post-test, a higher percentage of those in the experimental group changed their answers compared to their control group counterparts. Specifically, four statements demonstrated a change in attitudes after the treatment: understanding of the transmission routes of AIDS, risk factors for AIDS, safety of kissing, and the receiving and donating of blood. This information, when explored more deeply through the remainder of the study highlights the play's strengths and weaknesses in teaching children about HIV and AIDS.

Denman et al. (1995) appropriately noted similar studies performed in other locations using the same play with similar-aged students that produced dissimilar results. They attributed the differing results to differing ways of debriefing the story with the students. This remark, although valid, did not pose a strong enough case about the differences between studies. Additionally, statistical regression was evident in two of the control group's answers regarding condoms, and in one question about acquiring HIV, posing a threat to the internal validity of the study. The sample size where $n=252$ in the experimental group paired with a control group size where $n=428$ indicates a sizeable difference between groups that should have been similar in size. There was no apparent test-retest reliability; an obtained correlation coefficient could have indicated score stability, but was not provided.

Literature Review Summary

This review addressed the literature surrounding the goals of a contemporary college education. Pedagogical methods and theoretical frameworks for higher education and learning were provided, and issues relating to students' attainment of outcomes were addressed. Arum

and Roksa (2012), whose publication contained analysis of data that demonstrated a lack of learning gains over the first two years of students' college education, provided the most troubling assessment of learning outcomes in recent years. Information on strategies for student engagement and retention were also reviewed.

The seminal work by Kindelan (2012), which laid the groundwork of supportive arguments for the present study, was highlighted in the theatre in higher education section of this literature review. Several publications involving theatre in higher education featured theoretical reports, case studies, and stories of how institutions have addressed and used theatre to help students attain desired contemporary liberal arts outcomes. This review provided information on how theatre lends itself to interdisciplinary study, supports the development of important life skills, and impacts college campuses. Several authors of theatre publications implored college educators to demonstrate value of the arts through empirical research. A very limited number of publications featured quantitative or qualitative research on how theatre affects students in college, providing support for the need for more studies like this one.

Empirical research on the benefits of K-12 theatre were highlighted to provide qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies that address the benefits of K-12 theatre to life skill development and learning. Many of the findings of these studies echoed information shared in the higher education sector with regard to student outcomes and benefits.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of all aspects of the methods and design of the study. It includes an explanation of ethnographic research methods, describes multiple data collection techniques, and procedures used in data analysis. Definitions of LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories and the accompanying a priori codes are provided.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of this classroom ethnography was to explore what opportunities for learning, aligning with LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories, could be found in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors at a small, selective, baccalaureate degree granting institution in the Northeastern United States. Specifically, I collected data through participant observation of a *Shakespeare through Performance* course.

Research Questions

How does participation in an upper level theatre course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories?

Research questions are as follows:

How does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning:

1. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world?
2. Intellectual and practical skills?
3. Personal and social responsibility?
4. Integrative and applied learning skills?
5. Other skills or competencies not informed by the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories?

Conceptual Framework

The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes were developed by hundreds of educators through review and careful analysis of college accreditation requirements, combined with desirable employee competencies reported by business community members (AAC&U, 2007; AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes have been proposed as comprehensive outcomes for a twenty-first century education (AAC&U, 2007). No other model of liberal arts education outcomes reviewed provided a more holistic model of a contemporary liberal arts education. Therefore, the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories served as the conceptual framework for analysis in this classroom ethnography of an upper-level theatre course.

Designed by educators, and tested by hundreds of schools, LEAP VALUE rubrics were designed to assist college faculty with evaluating student learning outcomes (AAC&U, 2007). There are 16 LEAP VALUE rubrics, and the AAC&U (2007) presented them within four separate Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO) categories. Outcomes include: (a) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* including global learning; (b) *intellectual and practical skills* including inquiry and analysis, critical thinking, creative thinking, written communication, oral communication, reading, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork, and problem solving; (c) *personal and social responsibility* outcomes including civic knowledge and engagement—local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning, and foundations and skills for lifelong learning; and (d) *integrative and applied learning* including integrative learning. The VALUE rubrics were not used in this study, but the VALUE definitions of each LEAP Essential Learning Outcome were used to interpret study

findings. This study did not explore learning outcomes; it examined opportunities for learning that fell within the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories.

Opportunities for Learning

Tuyay, Jennings, and Dixon (1995) described opportunities for learning as, “an interactional phenomenon, which extends beyond a unidirectional presentation of information” (p. 76). This suggests that student learning extends beyond the teacher-student hierarchical model; opportunities for learning come from different sources and interactions. Opportunities for learning may come from teacher to student, student to student, student to teacher, or other sources (i.e. presentations or lectures, books, videos, classroom interaction, dialogue, and observation of others). Tuyay et al. (1995) suggested that although information may be presented to a student in many different forms, the student must make sense of the information that is presented in order to learn (p. 76). An opportunity to learn provides a student with the prospect of interacting with information to make sense of it. The proposed study utilized this definition for analysis.

A Qualitative Research Approach

There are three approaches to educational research that may be used within higher education research studies including *qualitative*, *quantitative*, and *mixed-methods* research (Creswell, 2014, p. 3). The present study used a *qualitative* approach. As stated by Hunt (2003), “There is no universal definition of qualitative research” (p. 1). For the purpose of this study, qualitative research refers to an approach within education or social science that seeks to explore and understand a human problem or experience through descriptive, interpretive data analysis (Creswell, 2014, pp. 3-4). The nature of this study was that information was recorded over a period of time about a small group of individuals, and is not considered generalizable.

Qualitative research does not intend to produce generalizable results (Huberman & Miles, 2002, p. 173).

Research Method

Qualitative research studies may include, but are not limited to ethnography, interview, case study, historiography, participatory, and emancipatory research (Willis, 2007, pp. 260-261). This particular study used a research method of ethnography, rooted in anthropology, and was described by Spradley (1980) as “the work of describing culture” (p. 3). To explain how one might accomplish this, Fetterman (2010) stated, “The ethnographer’s task is not only to collect information from the emic or insider’s perspective, but also to make sense of all the data from an etic or external social scientific perspective” (p. 11). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) indicated that reflexivity is the guiding principle of ethnographic research. Reflexivity refers to the commonality between the social actors and the researcher who makes sense of their actions. One who interprets an ethnographic study should be fully engaged in the phenomena being studied while interpreting it. For this study, I participated in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course while observing the actions of the other participants in the course.

Constructivist Paradigm

Ethnographic studies, including the present study, are often written with a constructivist lens. Constructivism is a philosophical paradigm that may be defined by the ontological viewpoint that there are multiple realities, and reality is socially constructed (e.g. Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37; Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 193). The epistemological viewpoint of constructivism is that researchers and participants interact and create knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 193). The axiological implication of constructivism is that no one can be

completely value-neutral; therefore interpretation is shaped by the researcher's experiences and backgrounds (e.g. Creswell, 2014, p. 9; Crotty, 1998, p. 58).

The faculty member and students of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course constructed a learning experience in their classroom, which I interpreted through my own lens as a theatre practitioner, as previously defined in Chapter 1.

Design Choice

Ethnographic studies provide a thick, rich description of events in context of a specific culture over an extended period of time. Fetterman (2010) stated, "Ethnography is about telling a credible, rigorous, and authentic story" (p. 1). Ethnographic data collection offers a multi-dimensional approach, involving participant-observation, interviews, focus groups, and review of artifacts. In this study, I sought to determine what opportunities for learning were created by a theatre classroom culture, through participant-observation, students' self-reported opportunities for learning in a classroom setting through other qualitative means, including the administration of interviews and a focus group. Collected alone, such information would be incomplete and based on each student's interpretation of the contextual framework of the study. Ethnography utilizes multiple forms of data collection, and triangulates interview data with that which is observed by a fieldworker and reflected upon over time, and that which was discovered through thoughtful review of artifacts. Ethnography is therefore a "holistic depiction of uncontrived group interaction over a period of time, faithfully representing participant views and meanings" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 51).

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) stated that the term *ethnography* has multiple meanings; it is not utilized in a standard fashion (p. 1). Wolcott (1999) explained that it is important for researchers to identify and state the differences between ethnography as a *process*,

or a *product* (pp. 41-42). Wolcott referred to the *process* of ethnography as the methodology of deployed research techniques that follow ethnographic practices (p. 42). The *product* refers to how the ethnographic data collection is presented in writing (p. 41). He postulated that the distinction is important because qualitative researchers often borrow ethnographic techniques in a decidedly non-ethnographic study. This study utilized the *process* of ethnographic data collection, as well as the *product* of a written ethnographic research study.

Ethnographic research in educational settings began in the 1950's (Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2001; Spindler & Spindler, 1982). This study, which used ethnographic research methodology to explore opportunities for learning in an upper-level theatre course, may be categorized as a classroom ethnography, as defined in an abstract by Watson-Gegeo (1997):

In contrast to quantitative approaches to classroom research, classroom ethnography emphasizes the sociocultural nature of teaching and learning processes, incorporates participants' perspectives on their own behavior, and offers a holistic analysis sensitive to levels of context in which interactions and classrooms are situated. (p. 135)

In parallel to this definition, I explored opportunities for learning found in an upper-level theatre course, contextualized within the setting, incorporating participants' perspectives in the analysis including my own perspective as a participant observer.

Strengths of ethnography. LeCompte and Schensul (2010) indicated, "One of the strengths of ethnography is that the methods used can produce a picture of cultures and social groups from the perspectives of its members" (p. 33). Ethnography does not "require the construction of a single story that represents the only 'truth.' Rather the story becomes a presentation of multiple voices..." (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010, p. 33). Participant observation, a technique used for performing ethnographic research, has been characterized as the most authentic and reliable ethnographic method because it provides access to naturally unfolding events and informs volunteer member interpretations (Becker, 1958).

A multilayered approach to data collection can provide the researcher with a rich dataset to examine from different standpoints. Only an ethnographic approach allows the researcher access to this many layers and perspectives.

Participants and Setting

Sampling and Selection

Sampling techniques in qualitative research are most often considered purposeful (Morse, 1991; Patton, 1990). Patton (1990) stated, “qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected purposefully” (p. 169). This differs from quantitative studies that utilize a larger sample in search of statistical significance (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Morse (1991) stated “when obtaining a purposeful (or theoretical) sample, the researcher selects a participant according to the needs of the study” (p. 129).

The present study utilized purposeful sampling as it relied upon students enrolled at a liberal arts college who are registered for the upper-level theatre course. I wrote a letter to the college’s chief academic officer (see Appendix A) requesting that she contact students via e-mail prior to the first day of class to notify them of the study (see Appendix B). The e-mail included an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix C). This form outlined the terms of the participant agreement. Students had the opportunity to ask me questions about the study and opt out of the entire study or any portion of the study at any time during the semester. All students and the faculty for the course agreed to participate in the study and signed the consent form. The sample included all students enrolled in the course, the course professor, and me as a participant-observer.

Institution

I chose to perform my study at this particular institution for its status as a selective, undergraduate institution with a strong academic reputation for liberal arts. The institution retains regional accreditation, and the theatre program has earned accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). The institution's theatre department appears to be well supported in terms of staffing and financial backing. The institution is located in the Northeastern United States, which offers practical convenience, while fulfilling the requirements of my study as an institution that offers a Bachelor of Arts degree with a theatre major.

According 2012-2013 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data, the institution reported accepting 34% of all applicants, which makes them, by IPEDS standards, a "more selective" institution (IPEDS, 2014). In a review of multi-year reported data from IPEDS, institutional full time enrollment is close to 3,000 students per year. Retention and graduation rates are high, as 99% of all students enrolled in 2004 graduated within 8 years of enrollment (IPEDS, 2014). Tuition, room, and board at this institution is slightly lower than tuition at the IPEDS-identified comparative group of colleges in the Northeast, costing close to \$60,000 per academic year (IPEDS, 2014).

The institution is rooted in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition. Its mission, therefore, focuses upon the Jesuit core value of educating men and women to serve others, especially those from less fortunate backgrounds (Ewelt, 2012). It is possible that the Jesuit mission of the institution impacted the classroom and campus culture. Some may consider this to be a limitation of the study.

Course

Since theatre as an academic discipline is threatened (Carlson, 2011), I decided that it was important to explore a required course for theatre majors, as opposed to choosing a theatre course found within the general education curriculum. In a discussion with the theatre department chair, he recommended that I use the *Shakespeare through Performance* course for my study, as it was an upper-level theatre course taught with a dual lens of literary study and performance. I chose this course because it enabled me to observe students learning acting, as the third and final required acting course in the theatre curriculum. This course appealed to me because it offered opportunities for learning in class, and also outside of the classroom through assignments and private coaching with the professor.

Participant Demographics

This study involved participant observation of an upper-level theatre class designed for theatre majors at a Jesuit, Catholic institution. One male, Jewish faculty member with an earned Ph.D. in theatre taught the course. The course enrolled 10 theatre students. IPEDS reported that 50% of all students enrolled at this college received some form of financial aid in the form of scholarships, grants, and loans. Based on 2014 reported IPEDs data, the *Shakespeare through Performance* class appeared to be a fairly representative subset of the college's population (see Table 1). Of the 10 students in the course, the percentage of students who identified as white or Caucasian, 70%, closely represented that of the institution at 68%. A larger percentage of students of mixed race, 20%, or Black identity, 10%, participated in the study than was represented at the college. The male to female ratio was a close representation of the data reported to IPEDs by the college, with slightly more males than females participating in the study.

Table 1*Demographics of Student Participants*

| Identification | Number of Students | Class Percentage | IPEDS data |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Mixed Race | 2 | 20% | 3% |
| Black or African American | 1 | 10% | 4% |
| White or Caucasian | 7 | 70% | 68% |
| Catholic | 5 | 50% | N.A. |
| Other Christian | 2 | 20% | N.A. |
| Did not identify | 3 | 30% | N.A. |
| Men | 6 | 60% | 51% |
| Women | 4 | 40% | 49% |

Data Collection Procedures

Ethnographic data collection occurs through four primary methods: (a) participant observation; (b) interviews; (c) artifact review; and (d) researcher reflection (Eisenhart, 1988). The present study involved participant observation of classroom lessons, occasional private lessons or rehearsals, and in-class performances. Semi-structured and informal interviews occurred with theatre faculty and students throughout the term, culminating with a final focus group after the course ended. Documents were also reviewed, including a review of the syllabus, course catalog, campus website, and observation and review of other course and performance artifacts. These combined data served to inform the results of this study.

Ethnographers have a duty to protect the privacy of participants (Fetterman, 2010). As a result, when writing about the participants, I disguised individuals' true identities through the use of pseudonyms. I also refer to the institution by a fictitious name.

Participant Observation

Spradley (1980) described ethnographic fieldwork as involving "the disciplined study of what the world is like to people who have learned to see, hear, speak, think and act in ways that

are different. Rather than *studying people*, ethnography is *learning from people*” (p. 3). The ethnographer performing fieldwork is a participant observer. “A participant observer comes to a social situation with two purposes: (1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and (2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation. The ordinary participant comes to that same situation with only one purpose: to engage in the appropriate activities” (Spradley, 1980, p. 54). It is therefore important to not only observe, but to engage in the activities of the people under study.

Spradley (1980) discussed the insider/outsider experience of a participant observer. An ordinary participant experiences social situations in a subjective manner, and is what Spradley (1980) referred to as an *insider*. Someone whose role is strictly observational and not engaged in a social situation would be an *outsider*. “A participant observer, on the other hand, will experience being both insider and outsider simultaneously” (Spradley, 1980, p. 57). This can transpire when the ethnographer can examine all participants, including himself, from an etic, neutral perspective.

Spradley (1980) suggested that there is a continuum of participant observation among ethnographic researchers ranging from *nonparticipation* to *complete participation* (p. 58). The *nonparticipant* acts strictly as an observer without engaging with the people or the activity being studied. Dewalt and Dewalt (2011) suggested that contemporary nonparticipant research may be performed through exploration of media, including analysis of websites or social media (p. 22). The *passive participant* is physically present at the scene of the action, but interaction with participants from within the culture is limited (Spradley, 1980, p. 59). This type of observation is common in research of public places. *Moderate participation* happens when a researcher strikes a balance between being an insider and an outsider (Spradley, 1980, p. 60). *Active*

participation occurs when a researcher seeks to do what others are doing, not merely to gain acceptance, but to fully understand the cultural expectations of the individuals and the setting (Spradley, 1980, p. 60). *Complete participation* occurs when an insider performs ethnographic research (Spradley, 1980, p. 61).

In my role as a participant observer in the present study, I was not a *complete participant*, as defined by Spradley (1980), as I was not a traditional-aged college student, and I was not enrolled at the institution. The institution prides itself on having professor-led courses, and does not offer teaching fellowships or graduate assistantships, so I was unable to fulfill a graduate assistant role. I did not fulfill any traditional role in the course. After discussions with the chief academic officer and with the course professor, my role in the class was that of a researcher, mostly engaging as a *moderate participant*, attempting to find an even balance between observer and participant, insider and outsider. The professor of the course requested that I come to class in casual attire rather than business attire in order to blend in with the class and classroom culture. Due to the personal nature of classroom discussion and the breaking down of artistic barriers, the professor also requested that I be prepared to disclose personal information with the class early in the term to prevent others from feeling inhibited by my presence in any way. I therefore, at times, *actively participated* in the course as a student. At other times, however, since I was not enrolled in the course, I strictly observed as a *passive participant* or engaged minimally in the action in favor of note-taking and strict observation.

Fetterman (2010) explained that to facilitate the capturing of data, some researchers may choose to develop a fieldwork observation form (p. 55). Fetterman (2010) designed such a form for use by a team of fieldworkers to facilitate data collection in a classroom study. The form was open-ended, simple to use, and included spaces for event details on the top of the page, with

the remaining portion of the page sectioned into the three desired categories of observation. This can be helpful in guiding fieldwork aims for a team of researchers and lead to inter-rater reliability. In the case of a single researcher, a standardized form may aid in uniformity of data collection. I developed a fieldwork observation form (see Appendix D) that I brought to classes, coaching sessions, and performances to uniformly organize my field notes in a succinct, methodical way, while allowing plenty of space for documenting the unexpected, as situations arose.

Interviews

As stated by Fetterman (2010), “The interview is the ethnographer’s most important data-gathering technique. Interviews explain and put into a larger context what the ethnographer sees and experiences” (p. 40). A good interview is one where an informant is “encouraged to speak more than the interviewer” (Brenner, 2006, p. 363).

Interviews with students and faculty illuminated an understanding of emerging questions throughout the term. I held informal and semi-structured interviews with student participants and the professor of the course throughout the term, in order to ensure my understanding of the students’ roles, relationships, and dialogue, and to clarify my understanding of the professor’s intentions. Although intentional, these interviews were not previously scheduled; they occurred as natural conversation. I did not construct pre-determined interview questions.

Focus Group

For the purpose of member checking, I requested that students attend a focus group for one hour at the end of the term to hear about my findings and give their perspectives on my interpretations. Focus group questions may be found in Appendix E. In exchange for their

participation in the focus group, I provided students with an on-campus meal prior to the start of the focus group.

Review of Artifacts and Documents

Wolcott (2005) discussed that fieldworkers are accustomed to thinking creatively about finding sources of information that are not typically considered data (pp. 122-123). Fieldworkers collect artifacts of differing types that present an understanding of an individual or group or social situation (p. 122). Textual documents, crafts, photos, and video and audio recordings, are examples of artifacts that provide depth of understanding of a social situation.

In this study, I reviewed textual documents that related to the course and its people including the college website, course catalog, course texts and reading assignments.

Researcher Reflection

To aid in the introspective nature of the research, in addition to taking field notes about fieldwork experiences, ethnographers keep a personal journal to keep “a record of experiences, ideas, fears, mistakes, confusions, breakthroughs, and problems that arise during field work” (Spradley, 1980, p. 71).

The most effective way to observe opportunities for learning in this academic course was to closely observe participant interactions in their classroom and rehearsal settings, and interpret the dialogue, interaction, and culture surrounding the world of theatre students and theatre faculty within these settings. As noted in Lincoln and Guba (1985) as suggested by Guba (1981), I retained a reflexive journal throughout the term. When I took an *active participant* role in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, I wrote journal entries about my personal experiences and my thoughts on learning from a student perspective. When I was a *moderate participant* or *passive participant* observer, I focused my journal entries on what I thought about

the experiences of others around me. The journaling helped to shape my interpretation of the study findings, and aided in the confirmability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 327).

Tools for Data Collection

The college theatre department owned a Sony HXR-MC50U video camera that I was permitted to use to videotape each class session. When I missed two classes, I requested that a student from the course set-up the video camera on my behalf so I could review the classes on video. The student was able to do this for me on one of the two days that I missed. I also audio recorded class sessions and interviews using a TASCAM iM2 condenser microphone attached to an iPhone 4S. The audio recorder was on the opposite side of the class from the video camera. Audio recordings provided back up for the video when the audio quality on the video was not clear, and helped to authenticate dialogue and provide direct quotes that I transcribed for analysis. Referring back to the videos assisted me with writing the vignettes in Chapter 4.

Data Storage

I stored all personally collected data on my personal computer, including audio recordings, transcripts, field notes, and my researcher's journal. Audio recordings were deleted off of my personal audio device once transferred onto my personal computer to prevent access to the files should the device reach unintended hands. Video collected using the college theatre department camera was stored on my personal computer, and will be removed one year after the completion of the course.

As data were collected through field notes and recordings, they were transcribed into separate Microsoft Word files on my personal computer. Once transcribed in this format, I imported all written Microsoft Word data files into *Nvivo 10* computer-aided analysis software. Information imported into the software included field notes taken during each class and rehearsal

attended, fieldwork memos, some interview transcripts, and quick links to all video and audio recordings. Documents such as the course catalog, course syllabus, campus website, and other campus, course, and performance artifacts were also imported into *Nvivo 10* in the form of .PDF files or links.

Data Analysis

Ethnographic research is “an open-ended emergent learning process, and not a rigid investigator controlled experience” (Whitehead, 2005, p. 4). It utilizes multiple data collection and analysis strategies. For this study, I applied the process of template analysis to analyze most new data. Analysis of secondary or pre-existing data was approached differently; I applied ethnographic content analysis (ECA) to interpret these data. Descriptions of both data analysis processes are described below.

Template Analysis

Rooted in Boyatzis’ (1998) thematic coding techniques, template analysis is an approach to qualitative research analysis involving coding through use of themes. Template analysis is a hybrid approach, deductively coding predetermined a priori codes, and inductively coding themes that emerge that were previously unexpected (King, 1998). The existing LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and the LEAP VALUE Rubric definitions provided a list of a priori codes. In this study, template analysis provided the over-arching analytical framework for coding and interpretation of new data, such as field notes, transcripts from interviews and focus groups.

Using King’s (1998) template analysis as a guide, I approached the analysis of new data using the following steps:

1. Defined a priori codes to be used for deductive coding, taken directly from the LEAP VALUE Rubrics and Essential Learning Outcomes.

2. Transcribed and read new data as it was collected, and code segments of text exemplifying the a priori codes, which were generated based on opportunities for learning the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, and research questions, which were based on the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories.
3. Searched for patterns, relationships, and themes.
4. Searched data for non-examples or contradictions of patterns previously indexed.
5. Re-read the text, and inductively coded segments of text using new codes.
6. Searched for patterns, relationships, and themes to develop a conceptual framework for the new codes.
7. Selected data excerpts that demonstrated findings within the conceptual framework.
8. Presented material based on research questions and included examples of opportunities for learning using direct quotes, vignettes, tables, and figures.

Each imported textual Microsoft Word document entered in *Nvivo 10* was reviewed through the aforementioned template analysis. I imported additional collected artifacts, such as PDFs, into *Nvivo 10*, and wrote memos about each document using the memoing feature of the software.

Ethnographic Content Analysis

Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) is used for document analysis to make meaning of communication and substantiate theoretical relationships (Altheide, 1987). Pre-existing data, also known as secondary data, were analyzed using ECA. These secondary data under analysis included: assigned class article readings, college website text and images, and content found in the course catalog and student handbook. These data were examined using ECA methods. Altheide (1987) described ECA in the following manner:

ECA consists of reflexive movement between concept development, sampling, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation. The aim is to be systematic and analytic, but not rigid. Although categories and “variables” initially guide the study, others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. (p. 68)

Using Altheide’s (1987) guidelines, I approached ethnographic content analysis of secondary data using the following steps, adapted from Altheide (2014):

1. Determined a purpose for analysis. In this case the purpose was to fulfill explore multiple sources of data for potential triangulation of findings.
2. Became familiar with the data sources available. I determined that course assignments, the college course catalog and the college website were the important sources for analysis.
3. Became familiar with several relevant documents, noting the format and unit of analysis. I determined that most of these relevant documents were course and campus related, and consisted of course assignments and websites.
4. Listed several items or categories to guide data collection and drafted a data collection sheet. I used the codebook I developed for the template analysis.
5. Tested the protocol by collecting data from several documents, as available.
6. Revised the protocol and selected several additional cases to refine the protocol. This revision continued throughout the writing of my Chapter 4, as the process of writing illuminated meaning for me.

A Priori Codes

For this study, I used the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes as a conceptual framework, thus it made sense to enter the study with a list of a priori, or previously decided, codes that came from the framework. The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes provided the initial categories for analysis, and thus were used for deductive coding. Each LEAP Essential Learning Outcome

category is explained below. To provide a visual overview of the a priori codes, a template of the LEAP VALUE Rubric codes adjacent to their corresponding LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories may be found in Table 2.

Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world. Upon completion of a comprehensive, undergraduate, liberal arts education, all students should have gained *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* “focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4).

Integrative and applied learning. By the completion of their studies, students should be able to demonstrate *integrative and applied learning skills*, “demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4).

Intellectual and practical skills. Upon graduation, all students should have developed *intellectual and practical skills* that are “practiced extensively across the curriculum in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4).

Personal and social responsibility. By graduation, all students should have developed an understanding of *social and personal responsibility*, “anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4).

Table 2

Template for LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes Categories and VALUE Rubric Codes

| LEAP Learning Outcome Category | VALUE Rubric Codes |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Integrative & Applied Learning | Integrative Learning |

| | |
|--|--|
| Intellectual & Practical Skills | Creative Thinking Critical Thinking Information Literacy Inquiry & Analysis Oral Communication Problem Solving Quantitative Literacy Reading Teamwork Written Communication |
| Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural World | Global Learning |
| Personal & Social Responsibility | Civic Engagement Ethical Reasoning Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning Intercultural Knowledge & Competence |

Coding Consistency

To aid in consistency of coding the opportunities for learning, I referred to the definitions of each code name, as presented in the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories and the LEAP VALUE Rubrics. See Table 3 for a list of the a priori codes and their definitions, taken from the LEAP VALUE Rubrics.

Table 3

A Priori Codes and Definitions

| Code Name | Definition |
|------------------|---|
| Civic Engagement | “Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.” (Ehrlich, 2000, p. vi). In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Creative Thinking | * Both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking. |
| Critical Thinking | * A habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. |
| Ethical Reasoning | * Reasoning about right and wrong human conduct. It requires students to be able to assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Students' ethical self-identity evolves as they practice ethical decision-making skills and learn how to describe and analyze positions on ethical issues. |
| Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning | "All purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence" (Commission of the European Communities [CEC], 2000, p. 3). |
| Global Learning | * Critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability. Through global learning, students should (a) become informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences, (b) seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities, and (c) address the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably. |
| Information Literacy | * The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand. - Adopted from the National Forum on Information Literacy |
| Inquiry & Analysis | * Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Integrative Learning | * An understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus. |
| Intercultural Knowledge & Competence | “A set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2008, p. 97). |
| Oral Communication | * A prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners’ attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. |
| Problem Solving | * Problem solving is the process of designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal. |
| Quantitative Literacy, also Numeracy or Quantitative Reasoning | * A “habit of mind,” competency, and comfort in working with numerical data. Individuals with strong QL skills possess the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations. They understand and can create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence and they can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate). |
| Reading | “The process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (Snow, 2002, p.11). |
| Teamwork | * Teamwork is behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions.) |
| Written Communication | * The development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum. |

Note. All definitions were taken from LEAP VALUE Rubrics. Those marked with (*) were defined by individuals who developed the LEAP VALUE Rubrics; others were expressly cited.

Limitations of Template Analysis

A limitation of template analysis involves the potential tendency to rely upon a priori codes instead of being open to other data (King, 1998, p. 133). To avoid this problem, I did not approach inductive coding by simply reviewing non-coded sections; I reviewed all of the textual documents thoroughly several times to code both deductively and inductively. In many cases, new inductive codes were constructed as a sub-code of a priori codes.

Limitations of Ethnographic Content Analysis

While content analysis is an unobtrusive technique, as no one is aware of the analysis while it is taking place, it is a technique that does have some limitations (Krippendorff, 2013). A researcher may misapply analysis techniques unknowingly, due to a lack of understanding or knowledge of other possible analysis techniques (p. 45). Data are collected through multiple sources (p. 46) so it is important to consider how data relate to one another when performing an analysis, in order to accurately interpret the findings. I attempted to approach the analysis of the written, secondary data with the same lens as the new data I encountered, and made connections between the sources when appropriate.

Other Limitations to Consider

Use of technology for analysis. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggested that the use of technology, such as *Nvivo 10* software or audio and video recording devices, can dramatically enhance the capabilities of the ethnographer to record and analyze events and people. A limitation is that such technology “has the potential to privilege what is captured on the record at the expense of the lived experience as the ethnographer has personally known it” (p. 178). I was acutely aware of this possibility, and was certain not to objectify my experiences through reliance upon technological advances. While the concern of this potential limitation was

justifiable, my reflexive journal and discussion of my findings with two dissertation committee members helped to deflect from this constraint.

Trustworthiness and Authenticity

To gain respect of the research community, assessing and ensuring the quality of one's scholarship is important. Lincoln and Guba (1985) determined measures that qualitative research scholars might employ to ensure the rigor of qualitative research. Much of the research community has embraced Lincoln and Guba's (1985) terminology for determination of validity and reliability that is separate from quantitative, post-positivist research. Guba and Lincoln (1989) determined ideals of constructivist inquiry that provide guidelines for authenticating outcomes of research.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness demonstrates the worth of a qualitative research study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 289). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there are four issues of trustworthiness that qualitative research studies should address: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* (p. 189). These trustworthiness criteria aid in ensuring the study's quality and acceptance among members of the research community.

Credibility. Credibility essentially addresses the internal validity of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296). Lincoln and Guba (1985) cited seven techniques for establishing credibility including: *prolonged engagement*, *persistent observation*, *triangulation*, *peer debriefing*, *negative case analysis*, *referential adequacy*, and *member checks*. This study addressed the criteria of credibility through *prolonged engagement* and *persistent observation* of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. I participated in the course throughout its duration, including 48 hours of *moderate* to *active* participant observation in class and four hours of

passive participant observation of private instruction or rehearsal. Data were collected through multiple means, thus *triangulated* through interpretation of participant-observer reflections, as written in my journal, informal interviews with students, informal and semi-structured interviews with the professor, document analysis, and examination of other artifacts. *Member checking*, as defined by LeCompte and Schensul (2010), “involves corroborating information elicited from one research participant with information from other members of the same group” (p. 62). *Member checks* occurred in a focus group after the class ended. This focus group included an opportunity for students to hear a presentation of my findings, and provide feedback on my interpretation of the findings. Their responses were incorporated into my analysis.

Transferability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) addressed the issue that external validity and *transferability*, in the conventional sense of research, cannot be specified in qualitative research (p. 316). Only when a reader is presented with a thick, rich description of a study can he or she determine whether the study can be replicated. Using a detailed analysis of my data, and through the use of vignettes and quotes, I provided as much description as possible to make “transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316).

Dependability and confirmability. *Dependability* is effectively what conventional researchers refer to as the reliability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Objectively examining the interpretations of data to confirm the findings is one way of demonstrating *confirmability* of a study (p. 318). One way to determine dependability and confirmability is through an inquiry audit (p. 317). Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated, “...a single audit, properly managed, can be used to determine dependability and confirmability simultaneously” (p. 318). An inquiry audit consists of three components: process—examining the way the research was

performed, dependability—referring to the reliability of the methods used, and product—examining the interpretations and making a determination of the coherence of the outcomes, which contributes to confirmability (p. 318). The four experienced educators on my doctoral dissertation committee performed an audit of my research. They reviewed my work and asked questions to ensure that my process of data collection and analysis were suitable, and my interpretations of results appeared appropriate.

Two other methods of confirmability are present in this study, including triangulation and maintaining a reflexive journal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Guba, 1981). I kept a reflexive journal throughout the entirety of the course. Triangulation was also present in this study, as I interpreted the findings through use of multiple data sources and of data collection described earlier.

Authenticity

Guba and Lincoln (1989) penned benchmarks for determining the *authenticity* of qualitative, constructivist research. The criteria include fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity (pp. 245-251).

Fairness. All voices should carry equal weight in a study. The omission of certain voices contributes to a study's bias (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011, p. 122). In this classroom ethnography, some research participants were more vocal, and contributed to the construction of other students' opportunities for learning. I attempted to not focus too much on one individual's experience in order to offer a balanced view of the classroom experience.

Ontological and educative authenticities. Ontological authenticity refers to the heightened self-awareness of participants, and educative authenticity refers to the heightened awareness of others that participants encounter for a social or organizational purpose (Lincoln et

al., 2011, p. 122). This awareness may occur through reflection. Throughout the study, I took field notes and wrote journal entries to enhance my consciousness. As a classroom participant observer, I became aware of the students' experiences in the class, which enhanced my sense of empathy for their individual situations. I also informally interviewed students and the faculty of the course, and the guiding questions I asked may have made the individuals become more reflective about their experiences. These data helped inform the outcomes of the study.

Catalytic and tactical authenticities. Catalytic authenticity is demonstrated by action taken on the part of research participants (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 122). Tactical authenticity is a product of the researcher training research participants to take action for change (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 122). I do not believe that this study served as a catalyst for change among research participants, as this was not intended to be a transformative study. For this study I wanted to explore the teaching and learning experience in an upper-level theatre course; I did not wish to promote action or transform the setting where the research took place.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes conceptual framework and a priori codes used in the analysis of the data. Definitions were provided. Participants and setting and data collection techniques were described. I also offered a road map for the analysis, focusing on template and ethnographic content analysis processes.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this classroom ethnography was to explore what opportunities for learning, aligning with LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories, could be found in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors at a small, selective, baccalaureate degree granting institution in the Northeastern United States.

Specifically, this study examined how participation in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors supported or did not support the construction of opportunities for learning the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. Research questions were as follows:

How does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning:

1. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world?
2. Intellectual and practical skills?
3. Personal and social responsibility?
4. Integrative and applied learning skills?
5. Other skills or competencies not informed by the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories?

This chapter presents the essential themes that were co-constructed from the data to explain how participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported or did not support opportunities for learning the four LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories. Data were collected through participant observation of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, observation and participation in course-related coaching sessions, a focus group, and review of campus and course artifacts. Data are presented from field notes, transcripts, and artifacts including: homework assignments, college website text, data found on the IPEDS website, and

content found in the college course catalog and student handbook. Field notes and transcripts were analyzed using a template analysis method, and artifacts were analyzed through ethnographic content analysis (ECA).

Participants

Student and faculty participant data were collected through personal observation and individual interviews occurring either before or after class. Data were presented back to the participants for respondent validation prior to presenting their biographical information in this chapter.

Students were asked to create a pseudonym for the college. Based on the college's Jesuit Catholic heritage, they chose the name [Pope Francis College], as Pope Francis was named the first Jesuit Pope in the history of the Church. Students were also given the opportunity to select a personal pseudonym for the purpose of this study. The students could choose any name they wanted, but the professor suggested, "Choose your stripper name." I gave an example at the first class that my stripper name would be Candy Hutton, using the name of my first dog (Candy) followed by the name of the street I grew up on (Hutton Street). Some students did this, while others chose names on their own. The names, along with brief bios of the participants, are listed in the order of their year in school.

Meet the Cast: Biographical Data

Harry Gibson. At the time of the study, Harry was an athletic, 19-year-old male, Caucasian, sophomore theatre major. Prior to attending college, Harry had a great deal of experience performing as a ballet dancer. He believed that as an actor it would be helpful to know Shakespeare, and to know how to do it well. In the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, Harry learned how to analyze Shakespeare through lessons of scansion, iambic

pentameter, and word work. He also stated that he learned differences between modern and classical theatre that he didn't know before. He found Shakespeare interesting and said that maybe someday he'll be able to perform Shakespeare professionally. Initially, after graduation, Harry would like to try film acting and voiceovers, but eventually return to his roots in live theatre.

Shaquille O'Mai. At the time of the study, Shaquille was a 20-year-old male, Caucasian junior in college who identified as Catholic. He, like many of the other students in the class, was raised in New England. He was a theatre major enrolled in the college's pre-med curriculum. He decided to take the *Shakespeare through Performance* course because it was a requirement of the major and also because he was considering going to graduate school for theatre. He has performed in college productions in leading and principle roles. Prior to taking this course, Shaquille had never studied Shakespearean acting so he thought taking this class would be beneficial for his future. Mid-way through the term, Shaquille shared with me that the course had given him a better understanding of how to prepare tough material written in difficult, Shakespearean language. He believed he had been able to take the techniques he learned from earlier acting classes and apply them to the delivery of Shakespearean text, all while expanding his knowledge of acting.

Merriam Webster. At the time of the study, Merriam was a 21-year-old bi-racial woman who identified as a black-and-white, African/Caucasian, nondenominational Christian in her junior year of college. Born and raised as a New Englander, Merriam spent her summers working at the local Six Flags amusement park as a games supervisor. Merriam had a leading role in one of the college's main stage productions during the same term as this study. As a theatre major, she believed that this course provided her with a new way of working with

Shakespeare, as her prior experience with Shakespearean theatre was more presentational.

Merriam aspires to work in professional theatre and plans to pursue acting opportunities upon graduation. Merriam demonstrated the ability to quickly learn and retain Shakespeare in this course.

Count Dooku. At the time of the study, Count was a 22-year-old Caucasian male theatre major in his junior year. He was athletic and enjoyed boxing. He did not identify with any one faith in particular, but said he takes something from all religions. Count wishes to pursue an acting career in film or television. He took the *Shakespeare through Performance* course for a few reasons: (a) because it was required for his major, (b) because he liked the professor, and (c) he felt like learning Shakespeare was, “A great way to expand one’s acting prowess.” He shared that he got to practice being true to the character in this course, and thought the course would be good for anyone who wanted to learn how to work with and perform Shakespeare’s works. Count held the leading male role in the spring play.

Andy. At the time of the study, Andy was a 20-year-old male, Caucasian, junior theatre major. Andy had the lead in the spring musical, and held a principle role in the spring play. He was raised in the Washington, DC area, and stated he hopes to either move to Boston or return to his hometown area to pursue acting in regional theatre after graduation. In our interview, Andy said he was considering the possibility of auditioning for graduate schools for theatre. Andy demonstrated a strong commitment to learning his craft. During this term, he played the role of Hamlet in the assigned *Hamlet* scenes. Andy lost his father during his freshman year of high school. I asked Andy if he reflected upon the loss of his own father while portraying the Hamlet role. He told me that he shied away from making any direct connection. He said in his portrayal of the role he tried to create Hamlet, using himself to fill-in the back-story not in the script. He

stated that he applies emotional memory to his performance, but does not believe he should try to be Hamlet.

Chester Ridge. At the time of the study, Chester presented as a tall, slender 20-year-old male, junior, Chemistry/pre-med major. Chester grew up in the suburbs of New York City. He performed in plays throughout his college career, but *Shakespeare through Performance* was his first acting class. Chester stated he hopes to perform in the college production of *Hamlet* next spring, so the professor suggested that he register for this course. At the time of the interview, Chester was undecided about his career path. He expressed that he wants to take a year off from school to work after graduation and he may apply to attend graduate school or medical school.

Robin. At the time of the study, Robin was a tall, slender, 21-year-old Caucasian female from the suburbs of New York City; Robin was a senior honors student with a major in psychology. Robin spent the majority of the spring term writing her senior thesis. Despite her intense preparation for her thesis defense, Robin found time to learn and prepare her Shakespeare monologues, soliloquies, and scenes, and rehearse and perform a principle role in the spring play. Prior to attending graduate school for psychology or public affairs, Robin stated that she intends to work for a few years either in theatre marketing or in a public affairs position involving LGBTQ rights or equal rights for women.

Leeloo Ellwood. At the time of the study, Leeloo was a 22-year-old Caucasian female senior with a dual major in theatre and English. She identified as Irish Catholic, and wore a promise ring given to her by her boyfriend, a classics major who graduated one year before. She took the course because it was a requirement for her major, and also because she loves Shakespeare. Leeloo stated that she aspires to work in professional theatre as a stage manager, and gained a lot of stage management experience while a student. Immediately following

graduation, and prior to entering the working world, Leeloo indicated that she would be joining other theatre majors from the college on a month-long trip to experience London theatre.

Lucky Lisa. At the time of the study, Lisa was pursuing a double-major in theatre and visual arts. She was a 21-year-old senior, female from Boston, Massachusetts, who identified as both Haitian-American and Catholic. Lisa was identified by the professor and others as a “fashionista,” as she was always well-dressed. She had two required courses this term that took place at the same time, so she attended the other course for the first hour and *Shakespeare through Performance* for the second hour. Lisa said she aspires to be a producer for the film industry, but she may pursue acting on the side. She said she felt the course prepared her to do Shakespeare, and opened her eyes to different approaches to Shakespeare. When she first read Shakespeare she indicated that didn’t understand what she was reading. After a semester of exposure to the language she found that she could recognize meanings faster than before, and it now makes sense to her.

Scar Holiday. At the time of the study, Scar was a senior pursuing a double major in theatre and history. Scar is American, but his parents are both from Cape Verde. He identified as multiracial, acknowledging his Italian, Portuguese, and African ancestry. Scar was known to be technically savvy. He worked on-campus for the Tech Director in the college theatre office. While a student, Scar had the opportunity to co-direct and produce a film documentary. He stated that he aspires to work in the film industry upon graduation. He took the *Shakespeare through Performance* course because it was a requirement for his major, and because he loves to act and it is an advanced acting course. Scar believed he learned to apply all that he had previously learned about Stanislavski’s system of method acting through this course. He felt like

this course was the final test, putting into context everything he'd ever learned about acting from four years of theatre study.

Prof. At the time of the study, Prof, the professor, was chair of the theatre department. Highly regarded in the field for his teaching, directing, scholarly Shakespeare and theatre research, and his regional, off-Broadway, and Broadway credits, Prof earned a Ph.D. in both Drama and Humanities from a prestigious west coast university. He took a week off during the semester of the study to participate as a reviewer in the NAST (National Association of Schools of Theatre) accreditation review. At the time of the study Prof was in his 50s, had long hair, wore glasses, and exhibited a generally casual appearance as he wore jeans each day to class. He appeared humble and accessible to his students. Instead of requiring students to call him Doctor or Professor, he had students call him by his first name. Differing from many of his students who were Catholic or Christian, Prof was Jewish. He lived in a neighboring state with his wife, a medical doctor. He was father of two college graduates who no longer lived at home. For several years he has planned a bi-annual trip to London for his students to share his love of London theatre with them. Prof was very demanding of his students and set his expectations high. He was understanding of his students' struggles and provided them with leeway when he deemed it appropriate or necessary. His students appeared to respect him a great deal and wanted to please him, if not impress him with their work. Prof shared with me that students call him and e-mail him at all hours of the night and on weekends. He also shared that he views himself as a surrogate father to his students while they are here, and in some cases, after they graduate.

Presentation of Findings

In this section I first describe evidence of opportunities for learning LEAP ELO within four categories: (a) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, which includes *global learning*; (b) *integrative and applied learning*, which includes *integrative learning*; (c) *intellectual and practical skills*, which includes *creative thinking, critical thinking, information literacy, inquiry and analysis, oral communication, reading, teamwork, problem solving*, and *written communication*; and (d) *personal and social responsibility* which includes *civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, foundations and skills for lifelong learning*, and *intercultural knowledge and competence*. Definitions of the LEAP ELO may be found in Chapter 3. In the subsequent section, I examine how opportunities for learning LEAP ELO were supported. My analysis indicated that there were three major ways that various LEAP ELO were supported, as addressed in the subsections: sense of community, word work, and classroom engagement. In the final section, I examine LEAP ELO not supported, which focuses on how opportunities for learning were not supported for two of the 16 LEAP ELO.

Evidence of Opportunities for Learning LEAP ELO

The *Shakespeare through Performance* course at [Pope Francis College] provided opportunities for learning many of the LEAP ELO, as well as opportunities for learning other skills and competencies not informed by the LEAP ELO. When coding my field notes and focus group transcripts, certain LEAP ELO and other skills and competencies appeared more frequently than others. I analyzed field notes from 25 days of class and transcripts from one focus group session. In my analysis, I found evidence of opportunities for learning 14 of the 16 LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, and constructed 21 new, additional codes. Code names and their frequencies are noted in Table 4. When noted with one asterisk (*), that particular LEAP

ELO or other skill or competency was found in most class sessions. Codes without an asterisk were either not present, minimally present, or found in less than half of all class sessions.

Table 4

Coding Frequency Overview

| Code Label | A priori | In vivo | Coding Frequency |
|---|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| Oral Communication | X | | ***** |
| Expectations | | X | **** |
| Inquiry & Analysis | X | | **** |
| Preparation | | X | **** |
| Support for Others | | X | **** |
| Courage | | X | *** |
| Integrative Learning | X | | *** |
| Listening | | X | *** |
| Reading | X | | *** |
| Sense of Humor | | X | *** |
| Teamwork | X | | *** |
| Creative Thinking | X | | ** |
| Critical Thinking | X | | ** |
| Deference | | X | ** |
| Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning | X | | ** |
| Global Learning | X | | ** |
| Receive Feedback Well | | X | ** |
| Sense of Community | | X | ** |
| Watching | | X | ** |
| Concern for others | | X | * |
| Ethical Reasoning | X | | * |
| Information Literacy | X | | * |
| Intercultural Knowledge & Competence | X | | * |
| Leadership | | X | * |
| Motivating Others | | X | * |
| Physical Exercise | | X | * |
| Problem Solving | X | | * |
| Strive for Excellence | | X | * |
| Written Communication | X | | * |
| Challenging others | | X | |
| Civic Engagement | X | | |
| Fairness | | X | |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Flexibility | | X |
| Improvisation | | X |
| Negotiation | | X |
| Quantitative Literacy | X | |
| Self-knowledge | | X |

Note. A total of 25 two-hour class sessions were coded.

* = coded 15-49 times; ** = coded 50–99 times; *** = coded 100-149 times;

****=coded 150-249 times; *****= coded 250+ times

LEAP ELO Supported

There were three major ways in which the *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported opportunities for learning LEAP ELO: through a sense of community, through word work homework, and through classroom engagement.

A strong sense of community was woven into the fabric of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course at [Pope Francis College]. Under the role-modeling of Prof, the classroom culture was a closely-woven fabric of friends who supported one another, allowing for free-flowing, open dialogue. This environment and the persons within it laid fertile ground for creativity and exploration in the course. I used McMillan and Chavis' (1984) sense of community theory to frame the presentation of opportunities for learning LEAP ELO in this section.

A literary analysis assignment performed throughout the semester offered students opportunities for learning many of the LEAP ELO. Prof referred to this assignment as “word work”. Word work assignments included eight separate components. These eight components will frame the presentation of opportunities for learning LEAP ELO in this section.

Classroom engagement was strong in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. Preparation was essential to success in this course, as students were expected to perform tasks, speak about the assigned readings, and perform Shakespeare’s works on a daily basis. In this

section I will provide telling cases that will illuminate how opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO and other skills and competencies were found through classroom engagement.

Opportunities for learning LEAP ELO through sense of community. The Theatre Department at [Pope Francis College] is a microcommunity within a broader college community. Theatre majors, students who take theatre course electives at the college, and students who perform or work backstage in the theatre department become known to one another academically, professionally, co-curricularly, and socially; they also regularly engage with faculty and staff who work in the department. I arrived to participate in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course having had minimal prior contact with the department, meeting with the professor only two or three times prior to the start of class. In order to successfully perform my ethnographic research as a participant observer, I needed to be accepted by this community. I came to learn, through analysis, that a *sense of community* contributed to my understanding of their culture, and that a *sense of community* supported the construction of opportunities to learn some of the LEAP ELOs.

In this section I will first examine how *sense of community* is defined in the literature, and then provide examples of how a *sense of community* supported LEAP ELO in two categories. Specifically, a *sense of community*, present in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, supported the construction of two LEAP ELOs from the *intellectual and practical skills* category: *oral communication* and *teamwork*, informing an answer to Question 2: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *intellectual and practical skills*? *Sense of community* also supported the construction of the LEAP ELO: *ethical reasoning*, informing an answer to

Question 3: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *personal and social responsibility*?

Sarason (1974) developed a construct called *sense of community* that laid the groundwork for the development of the field of community psychology. Based on Sarason's (1974) seminal work, *The Psychological Sense of Community: Prospects for a Community Psychology*, McMillan and Chavis (1986) systemized *sense of community theory*.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) theorized that four elements make-up a sense of community, including *membership, influence, meeting needs, and a shared emotional connection*. For the purpose of this study, McMillan and Chavis' (1986) four elements were used to frame examples of how *sense of community* contributed to the construction of opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO. Definitions from McMillan and Chavis' (1986) article may be found in Table 5.

Table 5

Sense of Community Components and Definitions

| No. | Name | Definition |
|-----|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Membership | Being part of something or having the right to belong |
| 1a | Boundaries | Limitations creating intimacy between those who belong, and placing up barriers for those who do not |
| 1b | Emotional Safety | Security and protection from emotional and physical harm |
| 1c | Sense of Belonging | A feeling of being the right fit or acceptance from group |
| 1d | Personal Investment | Earning the right to be part of a group |
| 1e | Common Symbols | Shared understanding of the meaning of things |
| 2 | Influence | Responsibility for contributing to or conforming to group standards |
| 3 | Meeting Needs | Positive reinforcement, status, competence, satisfaction |
| 4 | Shared Emotional Connection | Identification with common history or experience |

Membership. Membership is a sharing of personal relatedness or a feeling of belonging (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Examples of membership in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course are provided in the five separate sub-components of membership deemed pertinent by McMillan and Chavis including: *boundaries, emotional safety, sense of belonging, personal investment, and common symbols.*

Boundaries. As stated by McMillan and Chavis (1986), “Membership has boundaries; this means that there are people who belong and people who do not” (p. 9). Prior to the start of the term and prior to the start of the study, the [Pope Francis College] provost expressed a concern that my participation in the course might interfere with the exclusively undergraduate, traditional aged student culture of the theatre department and inhibit students’ performance in the class due to their discomfort in having an older, unaffiliated participant in the room. The provost shared this concern with Prof and me. We each assured the provost that I would no longer participate in the course if my presence were to negatively impact students’ learning or freedom of expression. Instead, I would proceed with my data collection via video.

Cognizant of the provost’s concerns, I periodically checked-in with the professor to ascertain whether my presence in the course was inhibiting his teaching, or if he perceived that my presence was having a negative impact on the students or the classroom culture in any way. I wanted to demonstrate my respect for the campus and classroom culture, by acknowledging these potential membership boundaries. Each time we spoke, Prof insisted that my presence did not pose a hindrance and he was pleased to have me continue as a member of the course.

At the end of the term, in a focus group with the students and the professor, Prof shared that before the semester began he had some concerns with boundaries related to my participation in the course; he questioned how I might fit-in or not fit-in with the classroom culture,

particularly because I was twice the age of traditional college students. Merriam and Scar shared their thoughts about the two class sessions when I was not physically present for class. The following excerpt of verbatim dialogue was taken from the focus group transcript:

| | | |
|----|----------|--|
| 1 | Prof: | You have enriched our experience, Jeanine. Which is kind of weird |
| 2 | | (laughter), only because you were not a fly on the wall--you |
| 3 | | became an integral part of this class and I think that my biggest |
| 4 | | fear was ...is this woman going to be a judgmental a-hole who's |
| 5 | | going to really kind of be a buzz-kill and constrain the mood? And |
| 6 | | it was just the opposite, so... |
| 7 | Merriam: | Yeah, (to Prof) because that week that she wasn't here was really |
| 8 | | weird. |
| 9 | Scar: | Yeah. |
| 10 | Merriam: | (to me) It was just the camera and there was no you! It was |
| 11 | | bizarre. |
| 12 | Scar: | Yeah, setting up the camera, it was like, weird. |
| 13 | Merriam: | Yes, (turning too Scar) and he did not set up the camera one day |
| 14 | | because (turning to me) you were not here. |
| 15 | Scar: | I wasn't able to get it to work! |
| 16 | Jeanine: | It was weird to watch it that way, too and not be here, but at least I |
| 17 | | got to see what you guys were learning and stuff. But I missed you |
| 18 | | guys that week! |
| 19 | Merriam: | Aw, missed you too! |
| 20 | | |

This excerpt acknowledges the professor's concern about having an outsider join his close theatre community, as noted in lines 3-5, and how he, Merriam (lines 10-11), and Scar (line 12) grew to believe that I did belong. They indicated that my lack of participation during one week of class made the course different somehow, as the students and Prof grew to accept me into their community. This example does not demonstrate any of the LEAP ELOs; it does, however, demonstrate how boundaries were opened by Prof and the students to accept me into their classroom culture.

Emotional safety: Opportunity for learning oral communication. Protection from harm is an important feature of emotional safety. As stated by McMillan and Chavis (1986), emotional

safety “may be considered as part of the broader notion of security. Boundaries established by membership criteria provide the structure and security that protect group intimacy.” (p. 10).

Some classroom activities required us to let our guards down and expose ourselves. While there were numerous occasions when this was required, there were two activities in which emotional safety was necessary for classroom participation: performing and providing peer feedback. Both of these activities supported opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO: *oral communication*.

The LEAP definition of *oral communication* is, “a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners’ attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors” (AAC&U, 2014b). *Oral communication* was coded more than any other LEAP ELO in this study, based on its regularity within the course.

The students and I were expected to prepare solo performances of sonnets, soliloquies, and speeches. Additionally, the students also performed Shakespearean scenes with a partner. All pieces were rehearsed on their own time, in coaching sessions with Prof, and during class prior to performing them for a grade. Performing required a sense of courage, enhanced by emotional safety and security.

McMillan (1996) addressed the three-step process of emotional safety, which involves truth, “The first step requires the member’s courage to tell his or her intimately personal truth” (p. 316). For rehearsals during class time, it was necessary for each of us to stand up and share an intimate part of ourselves through the presentation of our pieces; this was our personal truth. McMillan (1996) continued, “The second and third steps involve the community. Can the community accept this truth safely? Can members of the community respond with courage equal to the self-disclosing member’s courage and develop a circle of truth tellers and empathy

givers?” (p. 316). Each time we performed our pieces in rehearsal, and not for a grade, Prof would provide us with feedback. As the term progressed, Prof urged classmates to provide feedback for one another. The class and I needed to develop confidence in our understanding of what contributed to a good performance, and we needed to provide constructive criticism to our peers, which took both courage and empathy “responding with courage equal to the self-disclosing member’s courage and develop a circle of truth tellers and empathy givers” (McMillan, 1996, p. 316). This practice provided a sense of mutual respect and helped aid in creating the emotional safety needed for practicing *oral communication*.

During the focus group, Chester shared his thoughts about the unnerving, exposed nature of performing Shakespeare, and how the class camaraderie contributed to his emotional safety:

1 “...I've never been as close to a class as I've been with this one with exception of
2 my first year experience course*. We all, we all ... This class puts you under the
3 gun unlike anything else. It's truly a laboratory and you are the experiment when
4 you get up there and you're talking and you're being told that like, that wasn't as
5 good this time (laughter). You know, you come off realizing like, 'Holy shit, I
6 sucked!'” (laughter)

*Note. The course title was changed, but it was a first year experience course.

In line 1, Chester indicated that he had never been as close to a class as he had been with this one; I interpret this as contributing to Chester’s sense of emotional security. In line 3, Chester, a pre-med major, compared performing in the course to a laboratory experiment, which is how the syllabus also describes the course. He also indicated that he occasionally felt like he wasn’t successful in lines 4-6. Chester continued:

7 “I think that we all have an appreciation for how hard this was. We all had each
8 other's backs because we knew no one was... there were times when none of us
9 thought that we were good at this... and I think that was an appreciation that we
10 all had and the fact that we were all in it together and we're showing we did the
11 word work together--we're showing you our scenes together--we're memorizing
12 together. We saw how hard everyone else was working every time we were doing
13 it in front of the class, so I think that's why we are so close.”

In lines 7, 8, and 9 Chester explained that having an understanding of one another's struggles, and watching one another grow helped the class to form a bond that provided a sense of emotional safety. He also indicated in lines 10, 11, and 12 that since we were all in this together, we were kind to one another, and could provide non-judgmental support for one another.

Sense of belonging. Identifying with a group and feeling that one has a place within the group are features of a sense of belonging. Referring to a football team, Westre and Weiss (1991) observed that team acceptance creates a sense of attachment with group members. Earlier, I shared Prof's concern about boundaries and whether I would inhibit the classroom culture. I entered the course with some concerns; knowing that I would be at least twice the age of the students, I feared that I may not be accepted into their community. By the end of the first class session, it appeared that the students were not holding back, indicating that perhaps I was gaining acceptance into their group. The following vignette is an example, taken directly from my expanded field notes, that demonstrates how students appeared uninhibited by my presence, leading me to believe that I was welcome; I belonged:

1 Prof prompted the class to turn our chairs around, sitting with our legs spread
2 apart with the back of the chair at our chests. He had us put our hands on each
3 side of the back of the chair, and rock into the back of the chair pushing ourselves
4 with our hands like a mini- pushup, pushing on the "dum". We did this while
5 saying, "De-DUM de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM" then pausing for a
6 breath, which he referred to as a caesura, then doing it again and again for a total
7 of fourteen times. Once we finished, Prof asked the class what we just did.
8 Chester answered, "Sonnet?" Prof exclaimed, "Yes! Now what activity does this
9 remind you of?" No one answered. After several seconds of silence, he said,
10 "Let's do it again." We performed the rhythmic exercise again, doing a mini
11 push-up while saying, "De-DUM de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM." After
12 that, Prof asked again, "What is this is similar to?" The students and I all looked
13 around at each other for a moment, and then Robin blurted out, "Sex!" The class
14 erupted with laughter. Prof turned red instantly, and joked, "If you had sex this
15 way, it would be boring!" Robin retorted, "Just like a sonnet?" Once again the
16 class burst into laughter.

The action of straddling our chairs and thrusting rhythmically into the chair (lines 1-4 and 10-11), forced everyone to let down their guard. The entire class performed the task without complaint. Any tension or discomfort that any of us had through this activity was relieved when, as noted in line 13, Robin blurted out, “Sex!” This interaction set the tone for a semester of much humor, and many inside jokes. The relaxed, uninhibited atmosphere that Prof created in the course contributed to the development of a *sense of community* within the course and provided me with a sense of belonging.

Personal investment. The idea of “paying dues” and earning the right to be part of a community (McMillan, 1996; McMillan & Chavis, 1986), are elements of joining and being accepted into a group. As a newcomer to the [Pope Francis College] theatre community, I needed to demonstrate a personal investment in my role as a participant observer by fulfilling many of the course requirements. The next telling case, taken from my expanded field notes, demonstrates my personal investment in the classroom community through my performance of one of Shakespeare’s Sonnets:

1 On the first day of in-class sonnet performances, I sat next to the video camera
2 and recorded the students’ Sonnet deliveries. When class was nearly over, Prof
3 said, “We are not quite finished yet—I believe we have one more person left to
4 go!” Robin began chanting, “Jea-nine, Jea-nine!” Like a Greek chorus, other
5 students began chanting my name as well. I stood up, walked to the center of the
6 room, editorialized a bit about my impending performance, and performed
7 Shakespeare’s Sonnet 111, “O, for my sake do you with fortune chide...” When I
8 completed the sonnet, the students applauded. I then received feedback from Prof
9 and from the students indicating that they really didn’t understand what I was
10 saying, based on my delivery.

My willingness to perform a Sonnet (as indicated in lines 5-7) demonstrated to the students and to Prof that I had a personal investment in the course. The students, who did not normally applaud for one another’s performances, applauded for me as a sign of acceptance, as indicated in line 8. I believe that my willingness to take a risk in front of the group, and their subsequent

demonstration of support through applause and constructive criticism, afforded my indoctrination into the classroom community.

Common symbols. White (1949) described a symbol as “a thing the value or meaning of which is bestowed upon it by those who use it” (p. 22). Every community has a shared understanding of the meaning of things that are unique to that particular group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 10). As I will exhibit in the word work section for scansion and punctuation, this class used symbols for literary analysis that few individuals outside of the community would understand.

Influence: Opportunity for learning ethical reasoning. “The community must be able to influence its members and its members must be able to influence the community” (McMillan, 1996, p. 318). Guidelines for acceptable behavior and group standards are essential components of establishing a *sense of community*. This concept supports opportunities for learning *ethical reasoning*, which falls under the LEAP ELO category of *personal and social responsibility*.

Ethical reasoning involves “reasoning about right and wrong human conduct” (AAC&U, 2014a). When I expected to be treated as a researcher rather than traditional college student, my student colleagues intervened to address how I should be treated in the same manner as they were treated. Extracted from my expanded field notes, below is a vignette that demonstrates students’ influence on me midway through the term during our first day of running *Hamlet* soliloquies and speeches:

- 1 After physical warm-ups, Prof asked us to run through a few exercises as a group
- 2 while simultaneously reciting our lines. While reciting my lines for Ophelia’s
- 3 soliloquy, “Oh, what a noble mind is here o’erthrown...” I forgot the penultimate
- 4 line of the soliloquy. Prof said, “OK, everyone. Let’s have a seat and run through
- 5 your pieces in the order of the play.” I asked Prof, “Which direction will we be
- 6 facing for our performances today?” He replied, “Facing the door wall.” I paused
- 7 for a moment, looked at the chalk board, walked towards it and began to write
- 8 down the one line in my soliloquy that I repeatedly forgot during the warm-ups.

9 Noticing my actions, Shaquille exclaimed, “Wait, can she do that?” “No, she
10 can’t!” replied Chester. “But I am not really a student; I am not getting a grade,” I
11 responded. “Whatever happened to ‘I want to get the full experience,’ Jeanine?
12 That was the deal!” said Chester. Prof looked at me with a smirk and a raised
13 eyebrow. “Fine, you win!” I said grumpily, as I erased the line off of the board.
14 “You didn’t really think we’d let you get away with that, did you?” chuckled
15 Chester.

There was an unspoken ethical code of *fairness* in the class; a code that meant equal treatment for a group of peers. This unwritten code was enforced by shared governance. When I veered away from the code, students challenged me, as Shaquille did in line 9, and as Chester seconded in lines 9-10. Chester added his rationale for agreeing with Shaquille, stating that he wanted me to stay true to my original promise in line 11. I conceded, and responded by taking my words off of the board, as indicated in line 13. I had not realized that the students truly viewed me as a colleague until this particular interaction took place.

The mission page of the website addresses the responsibility community members should have to one another:

1 Shared responsibility for the life and governance of the College should lead all its
2 members to make the best of their own talents, to work together, to be sensitive to
3 one another, to serve others, and to seek justice within and beyond the [Pope
4 Francis College] community.

The idea of shared governance, as noted in line 1, supports the ideas of *ethical reasoning* and a *sense of community*, and lends credence to what the students did when they confronted me about my actions. The *[Pope Francis College] Student Handbook and Planner* stated a similar sentiment indicating an expectation of shared responsibility of community members in enforcing community standards:

1 Through shared responsibility with all members of this College community, we
2 foster an environment in which the pursuit of excellence and continuous
3 improvement permeate our efforts. (p. 7)

The excerpt explains that the college fosters an environment of shared responsibility across the college community for the pursuit of excellence and continuous improvement. Reflecting upon my experience, that was what the students were doing when they confronted me; they were holding me to a standard of excellence and improvement, which is a community expectation.

Ethical reasoning involves an element of shared governance, and contributes to the college's *sense of community*. The classroom experience, where two students and the professor, multiple informants, sought justice and equality by confronting me and holding me to a high standard of performance, enforcing a seemingly unwritten code is reflected in campus artifacts including the student handbook and the college mission statement.

Meeting needs. “Reinforcement as a motivator of behavior is a cornerstone in behavioral research, and it is obvious that for any group to maintain a positive sense of togetherness, the individual-group association must be rewarding for its members” (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 12).

The *Shakespeare through Performance* course took place over one academic term, from January 20, 2015, through April 30, 2015. On Tuesday, April 7, 2015, prior to the start of a lesson, Harry stated, “Hey guys, ya know today is the last day to withdraw from this class without penalty... just sayin’!” The students and I grew silent, stopped what we were doing, turned to observe Harry’s face, and saw that he was displaying a very wide smile and nodding. We all chuckled and returned to our previous activities.

This interaction was telling. I interpreted it to mean that: (a) students were initially concerned that Harry may have been seriously considering leaving the course, and (b) no one, not even Harry, would consider leaving the course at this point in the term. Harry’s humorous reminder that this course could be dropped without penalty reinforced that the course was

meeting students' needs, whatever those needs may be, as no one dropped or withdrew from the course.

Shared emotional connection: Opportunity for learning teamwork. The idea of a shared emotional connection is not concisely defined by McMillan (1996) or McMillan and Chavis (1986), but is broadly generalized as identification with a common history or experience. Opportunities for learning *teamwork* were present in every class session, making it a highly salient code, providing a common experience for all participants in the course.

The LEAP definition of *teamwork* is, “behaviors under the control of individual team members, effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on the team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions” (AAC&U, 2014b). The following example, using verbatim text from the focus group, speaks to the shared emotional connection of the students found in the *Shakespeare through Performance* class. This telling case demonstrates how students interacted with one another when I provided examples from my handwritten field notes about *teamwork* during classroom discussions:

- | | | |
|----|----------|--|
| 1 | Jeanine: | I also saw evidence of teamwork when we were talking about a |
| 2 | | play. I know Scar always had his notes done and Leeloo, I don't |
| 3 | | know if you had notes, or you just knew stuff? |
| 4 | Leeloo: | Yeah. |
| 5 | Jeanine: | (to Leeloo) Like everything? |
| 6 | Leeloo: | I wrote them. |
| 7 | Jeanine: | Prof would say, “Okay, so in Act I, what was that about?” Then |
| 8 | | there would be dead silence. Then Leeloo would say something; |
| 9 | | and then Scar would say something; then Leeloo would say |
| 10 | | something; and then maybe Robin would say something; and |
| 11 | | Leeloo would say something; then Scar would. Then, Prof would |
| 12 | | be like, "Really nobody else but these 3 people read the book? Go |
| 13 | | back and read it and I'll see you next time," you know? There was |
| 14 | | definitely evidence that there was teamwork there. I don't mean to |
| 15 | | suggest, Leeloo, that you were trying to cover for them, but... |
| 16 | | (laughter) |
| 17 | Group: | (various) No, but she was trying to cover for us. |

18 Leeloo: I happen to know, specifically, that like there were at least two
 19 more who read it amongst us. It wasn't just like us three, like
 20 obviously more people read the play but ...
 21 Scar: Harry read it at least some of the time! (laughter)
 22 Leeloo: Well, whatever, everybody asked questions and they would know
 23 the answer but maybe not to the full extent that somebody else
 24 could help fill in those little gaps that they were struggling with
 25 because, you know, I read the plays. But sometimes I'm like, 'Oh,
 26 yeah, I totally forgot that.' Like Calpurnia was baron? That totally
 27 went over my head. (laughter)
 28 Scar: I didn't miss that.
 29 Leeloo: You had that one.

The students in the course began to chime in, and gleefully recount their *teamwork* experiences of covering for one another. Through their responses noted in line 17, the students demonstrated to me that covering for one another was one way in which *teamwork* was present in the course. I provided another example for the group that acknowledged their relationship and understanding of one another, demonstrating their shared emotional connection:

1 Jeanine: Also when we were talking about troch and trochaic inversion and
 2 iambic pentameter and what's an iamb, and what's a troch, and
 3 what was trochaic inversion, and a spondee and all those other fun
 4 words, I remember saying at one point one of the answer's kind of
 5 under my breath. One of you was sitting next to me; I will not call
 6 that person out, and they raised their hand (laughter) and they gave
 7 the right answer to the question and they're like, "Thanks,
 8 Jeanine."
 9 Merriam: Classic.
 10 Jeanine: Again, I'm not going to call that person out.
 11 Merriam: Count!
 12 Group: (Uproarious laughter)
 13 Scar: It's not the first time Count has been known to take someone's
 14 answer. (laughter)
 15 Count: I have no idea what you're talking about. (Spoken straight, while
 16 others laughed).
 17 Andy: No guilt, no guilt! (Count then joined in with the laughter).

Everyone in the room had a reaction to this story. The story energized those in the room who had previously appeared to be sleepy or disinterested. Half of the class spoke, and everyone laughed. An outsider reading this may think that the group was laughing at Count maliciously

(in line 12), but the strong emotional connection among group members made this interaction seem familial. Everyone understood the context of the story, as they knew the players involved, and laughed about it as an inside joke. Even Count, who was the subject under discussion, thought it was funny (line 17).

The following text appears on the web page about the college experience and espouses a similar sentiment to what I observed in the focus group:

- 1 When you leave your hometown to attend [Pope Francis College], you'll quickly
- 2 discover a new home here on campus, and your circle of lifelong friends will
- 3 widen...Living and learning alongside friends who become like family.

Various aspects of *sense of community*, including membership and a shared emotional connection, are implied in this statement, as the phrase mentions how students develop friends who become like family (line 3). From what I observed throughout this course, and through our focus group discussion, the *Shakespeare through Performance* class did become like a family and supported a *sense of community*. Additionally, the theatre department web page promotes a *sense of community* as a departmental value by stating:

- 1 The Department of Theatre provides a nurturing and supportive environment for
- 2 students to express themselves and develop their artistic capabilities in a
- 3 collaborative environment.

The references to a nurturing and supportive environment (line 1) and freedom of expression (line 2) support the idea of emotional safety and a shared emotional connection, two elements of a *sense of community*. The reference in line 3 to collaboration supports the idea of *teamwork* and *sense of community* through membership in the theatre department community. From personal experience and from listening to and observing others as they interacted in the course and outside of the classroom, this group demonstrated a strong shared emotional connection, and daily

opportunities for learning *teamwork*. Based on review of campus artifacts, these are goals of the college and the department as well.

Sense of community section summary. This section provided an overview of the *sense of community* found in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. Data were presented within the conceptual framework of McMillan and Chavis' (1986) *Sense of Community Theory*. Stories of my acculturation into the classroom community provided examples of the elements of a *sense of community*. Other stories provided practical examples of how a *sense of community*, present in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, supported the construction of LEAP ELO including: *oral communication* and *teamwork*, informing an answer to Question 2, and *ethical reasoning*, informing an answer to Question 3. All elements of *Sense of Community Theory* were present in this course. When possible, data were triangulated to include the standpoints of multiple informants, examples of artifacts, and focus group data used for member checking.

Opportunities for learning LEAP ELO through word work. Word work was homework that required students to prepare several sheets of linguistic and analytic information about their assigned sonnet, soliloquy, speech or scene prior to memorizing their piece for performance. Prof required students to go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Shakespeare website, find their assigned piece, print eight copies of the piece in 16 point Times New Roman font, and sketch out word work on the printed pages. Word work (see Table 6) was submitted five times throughout the course of the semester. The sonnets, soliloquies, and speeches were independent word work assignments, while word work for scenes was accomplished in tandem with a scene partner. Students initially grumbled at the onset of the

word work assignment. Prof responded, “None of this stuff is meant to jerk your chain; it’s help for actors.”

Table 6

Word Work Homework

| Page | Expectations | Tasks |
|------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 | Translation | Look up words in the Oxford English Dictionary, and cite the words in a footnote at the bottom of the page. |
| 2 | Gist | Translate the text into words that make sense to you and write the gist of each line adjacent to each line of the text. |
| 3 | Scansion and punctuation | Scan the text using symbols of stress, un-stress, and count the syllables to make a ten count. When text does not equal ten, use elision or expansion to make the line a ten count. When a line is feminine, involving 11 syllables, check two lines down to see whether another line within the quatrain also contains 11 syllables, and if so, mark it with a circled letter F. Circle all capital letters and all punctuation in each line, box verbs, and underline nouns using multiple colored pencils. Color-code your work. |
| 4 | Rhetorical Devices | Underline rhetorical elements. Label the rhetorical devices adjacent to each line where rhetorical devices are found. |
| 5 | Quarto or Folio Comparison | Indicate the differences between the MIT Shakespeare version and the Quarto or Folio version of the piece. |
| 6 | Quarto or Folio Copy | Print a photocopy or picture of the Quarto or Folio version of the text, and submit it untouched. |
| 7 | Character Analysis* | Derive character traits from the play script, add your own back story, or in the case of <i>Julius Caesar</i> , draw from historical texts, if applicable. |
| 8 | Performance Chart | Develop a performance chart that incorporates scansion, emphasized verbs and nouns, objective, pre-scene, context, through-line objective/super objective, quatrain offset/tactic shifts, tempo/pacing, ladders (acceleration, for example), cutbacks, volume & intensity. Use this chart to memorize and prepare to perform your piece. |

**Character analysis was not a required component of the sonnet word work.*

Prof would review word work and return the assignments to each student with feedback and suggestions. I, too, performed word work, but did not submit it to Prof for feedback. He said he spent a great deal of time grading, reviewing, confirming, or challenging students’ individual

work and I did not want to burden him with one more task. Each page of word work often took me between a half hour and a full hour to complete. It took hours for Prof to grade the word work packets, as each individual submission was unique, providing analyses of 10 different pieces (one from each enrolled student); there was never a duplication of assignments.

The word work section of the chapter addresses the first four research questions: How does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning: (1) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, (2) *intellectual and practical skills*, (3) *personal and social responsibility*, (4) *integrative and applied learning skills*? Opportunities for learning these outcomes are presented under each of the elements of word work: preparation, translation, gist, scansion and punctuation, rhetorical devices, Quarto or Folio comparison, character analysis, and performance chart. Table 7 provides an outline of how word work assignments supported opportunities for learning specific outcomes. An image demonstrating which word work components support each LEAP ELO Category is presented in Figure 1.

Table 7

| <i>Opportunities for learning LEAP ELO through Word Work</i> | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Assignment | Integrative & Applied Learning | Intellectual & Practical Skills | Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural World | Personal & Social Responsibility |
| Preparation of Word Work | | teamwork | | foundations & skills for lifelong learning |
| Translation | | information literacy | | |
| Gist | integrative learning | | | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| Scansion and punctuation | | written communication | | |
| Rhetorical Devices | integrative learning | reading | | |
| Quarto or Folio Comparison | | information literacy, critical thinking | | |
| Character Analysis* | integrative learning | creative thinking, inquiry & analysis, problem solving, written communication | global learning | intercultural knowledge & competence, ethical reasoning |
| Performance Chart | integrative learning | | | |

*Note. Character analysis was not a required component of the sonnet word work.

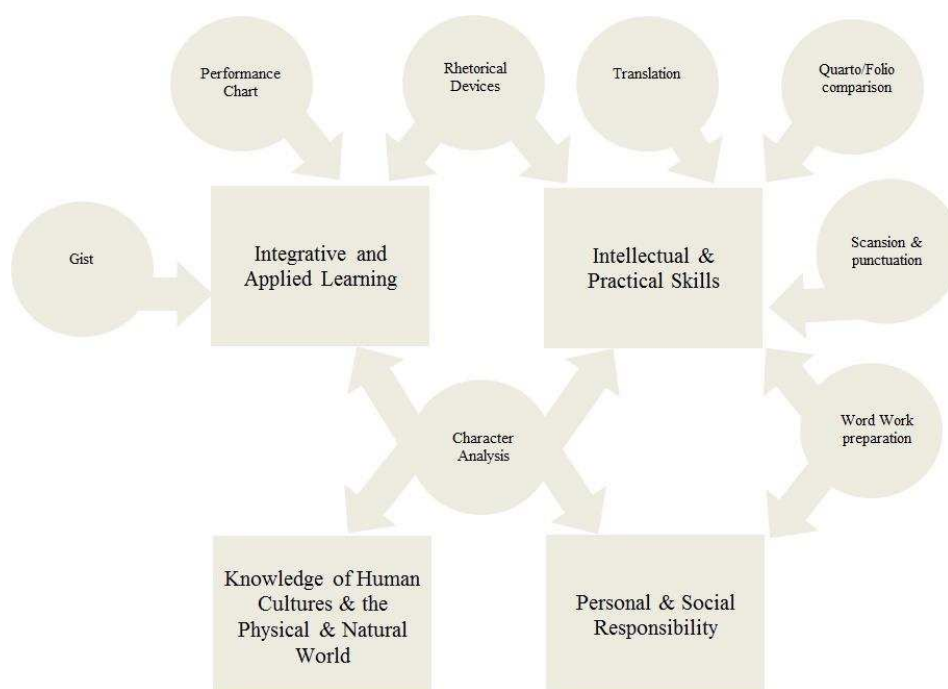


Figure 1. Word work homework support for LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes.

Preparation. Preparation of word work was a rigorous project that took several hours to complete. Each word work submission was unique, as each student had his or her own

distinctive assignment to fulfill. Preparation had several components (see Table 6), and each component required that students utilize and practice various academic skills.

Preparation: Opportunity to learn foundations & skills for lifelong learning. LEAP's definition of *foundations and skills for lifelong learning* involves "all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence" (CEC, 2000; AAC&U, 2014b).

Preparation of word work supported the construction of opportunities for learning this LEAP ELO. Word work was prepared five times throughout the semester; therefore it was undertaken on an ongoing basis. Prof graded word work packets and provided individual feedback for each student about their preparation of the materials. His aim was to provide information that could help students improve their future word work submissions, and improve their understanding of Shakespeare. Word work increased in intensity over the course of the term. After the first submission of the sonnet word work, students had to add another element, character analysis, to all future packets. The fourth and fifth word work submissions were performed in tandem with a scene partner, adding an element of *teamwork* to the preparation of the word work packet.

Review of campus artifacts demonstrated support for the LEAP Essential Learning Outcome, *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*. The college website includes a web page that describes the liberal arts and Jesuit tradition of the college:

- 1 As a liberal arts institution, [Pope Francis College] provides an education that's
- 2 about much more than getting a job. Instead of focusing on a narrow career path,
- 3 a liberal arts education provides an excellent foundation for the challenges and
- 4 opportunities that students encounter in both personal and professional situations
- 5 throughout their lives.

This text suggests that what students learn at [Pope Francis College] will help prepare them for life after college, as demonstrated in lines 3-5. This aligns well with the LEAP definition of *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*, which proposes purposeful learning that enhances knowledge, skills, and competence. Preparation of rigorous homework such as the word work assignment provided students with a set of challenges that mimic the challenges of life and post-college work, thus providing students with opportunities to learn *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*.

Preparation: Opportunity for learning teamwork. LEAP's definition of *teamwork* involves "behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions)" (AAC&U, 2014b). There were many opportunities for learning *teamwork* in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, as this was a highly salient code. In the case of word work, students had to discuss and come to an agreement about who would be responsible for each of the eight elements of their scene homework. They also needed to read one another's work to develop a clear understanding of the other character in their scene. The word work activity required them to interact with one another to explore how the characters relate to one another within the scene and develop a consensus prior to submitting word work and performing their scene.

Examples of *teamwork* from the focus group discussion were provided in the *sense of community* section of this chapter, and will also be addressed in the *community engagement* section of this chapter, reinforcing the importance of *teamwork* in the course. The following text from the college website demonstrates how teamwork is an important element of the campus culture:

- 1 We treat each other with respect and communicate in an open and candid manner.
- 2 We foster collaboration with others while maintaining individual accountability.
- 3 We listen to each other, respect our differences, and encourage the creative input
- 4 of all. We appreciate the value of multiple perspectives and diverse experiences.

Line 1 addresses the LEAP definition of “their manner of interacting with others on the team” (AAC&U, 2014b) in an open and candid manner. Lines 2 and 3 address, “behaviors under the control of individual team members” (AAC&U, 2014b) including listening, respecting differences, and gathering information and input from everyone. These ideals, espoused by the college, are reinforced through *teamwork* found in the course, including the word work assignment performed in tandem with a scene partner.

Translation: Opportunity for learning information literacy. To complete the translation element of word work, students had to look up Shakespeare’s words and cite the words using footnotes at the bottom of the page.

Prof indicated the importance of understanding the difference between Shakespearean English and contemporary American English:

- 1 “There are at least 800 words Shakespeare uses that are no longer a part of the
- 2 English language, but there are at least 800-1000 words that Shakespeare added to
- 3 the English language.”

Since “800 words” are no longer a part of the contemporary English language, as noted in line 1, and are not present in American English, Prof required students to do research and look up words in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as part of their word work. Students were required to look up at least ten words in their piece that they did not recognize, or appeared to have dual meanings, and submit a translation. They provided footnotes citing definitions of the words in MLA format. This demonstrates an example of how opportunities for learning *information literacy* were supported through word work, as students were asked to “know when there is a

need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand” (AAC&U, 2014b).

Text from artifacts reinforced the importance of *information literacy* at [Pope Francis College]. Specifically, the following text appeared on the campus webpage highlighting the academic approach of the college:

- 1 Through collaborative or self-directed research, honors programs and other
- 2 outstanding opportunities, students expand their knowledge and deepen their
- 3 understanding.

Just as Prof assigned students to research words in the *Oxford English Dictionary* to increase their understanding of Shakespeare’s words, the college supports students’ pursuit of knowledge through research (line 1).

Gist translation: Opportunity to learn integrative & applied learning. For the gist section of the word work, students were asked to translate Shakespeare’s text into words that made sense to them. They were to write the gist of each line adjacent to each line of Shakespeare’s text.

LEAP outcomes suggest that college students should *integrate* or synthesize knowledge at high levels across general and specialized studies (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012) in order to prepare for contemporary life challenges. Students should also make connections between curricular and co-curricular experiences and *apply* their learning in one area to new circumstances (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). Students had to research definitions of Shakespeare’s words and come up with a translation of the words using references from the *Oxford English Dictionary*. They were then asked to demonstrate their understanding of the words by writing a line-by-line gist translation in contemporary American English. This activity

required *applied learning*, as students applied their understanding of Shakespeare's text to develop new text written in their own words.

Text from artifacts reinforced the importance of *integrative and applied learning* at [Pope Francis College]. The web page regarding the Jesuit history of the college conveys this sentiment through the synthesis and interconnectedness of knowledge:

- 1 The liberal arts emphasize academic breadth and depth supported by essential
- 2 foundational skills—such as critical thinking, clear communication, and careful
- 3 analysis and synthesis of information—that are relevant in every line of work and
- 4 study. Much like the liberal arts, Jesuit education calls for education of the whole
- 5 person: intellectual, spiritual and personal. We view these facets of our students’
- 6 growth as interconnected and complementary.
- 7
- 8 At [Pope Francis College], open exploration and intellectual rigor combine to
- 9 create academic journeys that rarely proceed directly from A to B. The twists and
- 10 turns our students encounter during their four years on campus reveal new
- 11 possibilities and unanticipated opportunities that result in an experience greater
- 12 than the sum of its parts. As they pursue diverse threads of knowledge that
- 13 intertwine and intersect, students find deeply meaningful insights and discoveries
- 14 that transcend disciplinary lines.

The first paragraph refers to students’ growth as being interconnected and complementary (line 6). As stated in lines 2-3, students learn to synthesize information, as was the expectation in the gist activity. Lines 12-13 of the second paragraph refers to threads of knowledge that intersect and intertwine across disciplinary lines. Both paragraphs imply that students’ knowledge acquisition should be *integrative*. Opportunities to learn *integrative and applied learning* was found in word work and in classroom engagement; examples are provided in both sections.

Scansion and punctuation: Opportunity for learning written communication. For the scansion and punctuation segment of word work, students were to scan the text using symbols of stress, un-stress, and count the syllables to make a ten count. When text did not equal 10, students were expected to change the text by using elision or expansion to make the line a ten

count. When a line was feminine, involving 11 syllables, students were expected to check two lines down to see whether another line within the quatrain also contained 11 syllables, and if so, they were to mark the text with a circled letter F. Additionally, students were expected to circle all capital letters and all punctuation in each line, box verbs, and underline nouns using multiple colored pencils to color code their work.

LEAP’s definition specifies that *written communication* “can involve working with many different writing technologies and mixing texts, data, and images” (AAC&U, 2014b). The scansion and punctuation page of the word work packet mixes different forms of writing on one page, creating a color-coded visual picture of meter, aiding with textual understanding.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-----|--------|-------|-------|
| ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / |
| That | time | of | year | thou | mayst | in | me | be | hold |
| ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / |
| When | yel | low | leaves, | or | none, | or | few, | do | hang |
| ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / |
| Up | on | those | boughs | which | shake | a | gainst | the | cold, |
| ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / | ^ | / |
| Bare | ru | in'd | choirs | where | late | the | sweet | birds | sang. |

Figure 2. Shakespeare's Sonnet 73

Students were to print out the MIT Shakespeare version of their piece, circle all capital letters and punctuation in each line, box verbs, and underline nouns using multiple colored pencils. Students were then expected to explore the scansion of their piece. Scansion, by definition, is “the practice of checking the rhythm of speech written in verse” (Daw, n.d.). Students were expected to symbolically note the meter of each line of verse, using symbols of stress (/), un-stress (^) (see Figure 2). Shakespeare’s works in verse were written in iambic pentameter, thus making up a ten count meter that sounds like, “de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM de-DUM” (Daw, n.d.).

When students discovered text that did not equal 10 syllables, they were expected to use elision or expansion to convert the line to a 10 count. Expansion refers to the addition of a syllable to make the line equal a ten count. This can occur by adding a sound to a word that would not normally be spoken with an extra syllable. In the reading assignment, later discussed in class, Daw's (n.d.) example was the word "diseased." One would usually look at the word as having two syllables, "dis-eased," but if expansion were applied to the word, it could be pronounced with three syllables, "dis-eas-ed."

When a line ended with an extra, 11th, unstressed syllable, and appeared to be feminine, students were to check two lines down to see whether another line within the quatrain also contained 11 syllables; if so, they could mark the line with a circled letter F, indicating that the line was feminine. If a line had 11 syllables but was not deemed feminine, students were to use elision to reduce the syllables of the line to 10. Elision refers to the elimination of a syllable in a word in order to shorten it. In the reading assignment, later discussed in class, Daw (n.d.) provided the word "interest" as an example. Instead of sounding out three syllables, "in-ter-est," one would use elision to make the word two syllables, "in-trest."

The use of circles, boxes, underlines, and symbols of stress and unstress on the scansion and punctuation page of word work involved "working with many different writing technologies ...and images" (AAC&U, 2014b), providing opportunities for learning and using different forms of *written communication*. Opportunities for learning *written communication* were also supported by the character analysis component of word work. Text from campus artifacts supporting opportunities for learning *written communication* will be presented in that section.

Rhetorical devices. The rhetoric section of word work required students to understand what rhetorical devices are and how they are used. On the word work homework, students were

to underline their text where rhetorical devices were used and label them adjacent to each line where they were found.

Rhetoric: Opportunity for learning reading. Shakespeare through Performance required a large quantity of assigned *reading*. Snow's (2002) definition of *reading*, used by LEAP, is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" (p. 11). Among other readings, students were assigned to read all 153 of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and three plays: *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and *Hamlet* (in that order), and submit word work for assigned sonnets, speeches, soliloquies, and scenes found within those plays. It was challenging, but necessary in this course for students to be able to comprehend and construct meaning of the texts in order to successfully deliver their performances. Constructing meaning of the text provided opportunities for learning *reading*.

The assigned word work required students to identify rhetorical devices. Rhetorical devices were widely used in Shakespeare's works to construct meaning. Prof wanted students to learn about rhetoric, and be able to identify rhetorical devices used in Shakespeare's sonnets and plays, to help them understand Shakespeare's intended meaning. In an introductory lesson about rhetoric, Prof stated, "Grammar and rhetoric give clues about the context of the text." Prof highlighted the top six most common rhetorical devices that Shakespeare used, and provided a hand-out listing and defining 25 rhetorical devices. Prof provided examples of rhetorical devices over two class sessions. These lessons helped students identify rhetorical devices and understand how the rhetoric may inform performance. This information helped students to perform their word work assignments.

The rhetoric component of word work provided an opportunity for learning *reading*, “simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (Snow, 2002, p. 11).

Rhetoric: Opportunity to learn integrative & applied learning. Shakespeare through Performance was a course that integrated two artistic worlds: the world of literature and the world of theatre. The rhetoric word work assignment provided an opportunity to learn *integrative and applied learning* skills, as students had to make “simple connections among ideas and experiences...synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations” (AAC&U, 2014b). Students had to read and understand Shakespeare’s works, and develop a grasp of rhetoric in order to make the necessary connections to successfully complete the word work.

In class, Prof challenged the group to analyze *Richard II*’s Act 4 soliloquy when he cedes the throne, “Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be...” Together, the class scanned the first six lines of text in search of rhetorical devices. When students affirmed an understanding of the process, Prof asked the students to analyze the remainder of that soliloquy for homework. Prof joked as he challenged the class to an intellectual duel, “It’s a game for me to catch you for missing a rhetorical device... I kind of get my yayas out of catching you!”

Students shared their homework results in the next class. Prof demonstrated great excitement when students found uncommon rhetorical devices, and was equally excited when he “caught” them having missed a rhetorical device. Students were not graded on this homework, but the exercise prepared them to analyze their own pieces and find rhetorical devices in future word work assignments.

The concept of *integrative and applied learning* here is two-fold. Students first had to learn how to read Shakespeare and learn how to translate it to a level of comprehension.

Secondly, students had to learn and understand what rhetorical devices are, and what rhetorical devices are most commonly found in Shakespeare's works. Then, in a low-risk environment, Prof engaged students in a classroom assignment to apply this newfound knowledge together as a group. The word work assignment required an application of this integrated information.

The concept of *integrative learning* was also present in campus artifacts. On a webpage that shares information about academics at the college explained:

1 We don't think about learning as the acquisition of discrete pieces of information,
2 but rather as the exploration of an intricate web of connections and complex
3 relationships...To do so, our students must forge connections between ideas and
4 fields of study that are often assumed to be separate.... Engaged learning means
5 enriching classroom discussion with real-world experiences, and then bringing
6 that classroom experience out into the world to be tested, strengthened and
7 enhanced.

When the college website refers to learning as the exploration of an intricate web of connections in line 2, they are referring to *integrative learning*. When they refer to bringing outside experience into the classroom and the classroom learning out into the world in lines 5 and 6, they are talking about *applied learning*. In this course, the word work game of discovering Shakespeare's use of rhetoric, required students to *integrate* their prior knowledge of rhetoric from classroom exercises and *apply* their newfound knowledge to their homework.

Quarto or folio comparison. Shakespeare's texts were originally performed by actors using sides. Later, after the plays were performed, individuals other than Shakespeare compiled complete transcripts of his texts. The first complete Shakespearean scripts that were published assemble Quarto I; Quarto II and First Folio follow. Students were to find either a Quarto or Folio version of their scene, speech, or soliloquy and compare it to the MIT Shakespeare version of the text. They were to identify and indicate the differences between the versions for their word work.

The Quarto or Folio comparison, required in the preparation of word work, supports the construction of opportunities for learning *intellectual and practical skills*. LEAP outcomes suggest that college students should extensively practice *intellectual and practical skills* across the curriculum, in the context of increasingly challenging problems, projects, and standards of performance (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The Quarto or Folio comparison page of the word work supported opportunities for learning two *intellectual and practical skills*: *critical thinking* and *information literacy*. Each of these LEAP ELO will be described separately.

Quarto/folio retrieval: Opportunity for learning information literacy. LEAP's definition of *information literacy*, adopted from the National Forum on Information Literacy, states, "the ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand" (AAC&U, 2014b). Once assigned a piece, students were tasked with going to the MIT Shakespeare website to find a printable version of their text, and also find the Folio or Quarto version of the Shakespearean text. The library research required in pursuit of obtaining copies of the classical Quarto and Folio texts provided students with exposure to *information literacy*, and provided an opportunity for learning that skill. *Information literacy* was also a component of the translation section of word work. Additionally, opportunities for learning *information literacy* were supported through campus artifacts, as indicated earlier under the translation heading.

Quarto/folio comparison: Opportunity for learning critical thinking. *Critical thinking* involves "a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion" (AAC&U, 2014b). Prof did not want students to accept the MIT Shakespeare version of the text as the right version to use for performance; he wanted students to look at the early texts of Shakespeare,

including the original Quarto and Folio versions, and explore the potential differences in meaning of the text based on the discovery of punctuation differences, capitalization differences, and differently spelled words which may indicate that a word found in the MIT Shakespeare version was completely changed from Shakespeare's original intent.

Prof provided students with a handout that demonstrated a comparison of Quarto I, Quarto II, and Folio of the same section of the text of *Hamlet*'s "To be, or not to be..." (see Appendix F). Students read each version during class and discussed the differences between the versions. Q-1 indicates that it's the Quarto I version, Q-2 indicates that it is the Quarto II version, and F indicates Folio version. This task provided an opportunity for learning *critical thinking* skills, as the class reviewed multiple artifacts and discussed their unique meanings before determining their interpretation of the text. This exercise helped students understand what they should be seeking and identifying in the Quarto/Folio comparison section of the word work.

Character analysis. The character analysis component of word work provides opportunities for learning each of the LEAP ELO categories. This includes opportunities for learning: *integrative and applied learning; intellectual and practical skills* including *problem solving, inquiry, and analysis*; and *written communication; knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* including *global learning*; and *personal and social responsibility* including *intercultural knowledge and competence* and *ethical reasoning*. Each of these categories will be described separately.

Character analysis: Opportunity to learn integrative & applied learning. In order to develop the character analysis, students needed to research their character socially, culturally and psychologically through references in the text, and references in history. They would then *integrate* their personal understanding of the character and *apply* it to the development of their

page and a half written character analysis. Students would derive character traits from the play script, integrate those character traits with their own back story, and draw information from historical texts, whenever applicable. Campus artifacts supported this concept. A campus webpage about academics at the college mentioned the integration of learning between students' personal and academic lives:

- 1 The first year at [Pope Francis College] features our distinctive First Year
- 2 Experience program. Living and learning alongside one another, students
- 3 acclimate to life on campus while exploring intriguing, interdisciplinary topics.
- 4 Educational opportunities outside the classroom help students connect three parts
- 5 of college life—learning, living, and doing—that may sometimes be seen as
- 6 distinct activities, creating a holistic, transformative experience.

The idea in line 5 of synthesizing knowledge derived from three different aspects of college life—learning, living, and doing, supports what is stated in the LEAP definition of *integrative learning*, “An understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum” (AAC&U, 2014b). The application of personal experience to shape the development of a character analysis is similar; students life experiences, combined with their research of the character, inform the final product, the character analysis.

Character analysis: Opportunity for learning problem solving. Prior to performing any of the individual pieces or scenes, students needed to explore their character and write up a character analysis as part of their assigned word work. When the class was assigned to learn *Julius Caesar* speeches, Prof introduced his expectation of the character analysis component of word work:

- 1 “In any good character analysis there are three things: Where did I come from?
- 2 Why am I here? Where am I going? I also want to know who you are. You can
- 3 do research on Brutus, for example, in an historical context, but the script tells
- 4 you a lot about the character as well. There should be a breakdown about past
- 5 relationships. I don’t want a doctoral dissertation, but I don’t want a paragraph—
- 6 find the sweet spot—a page, page and a half.”

Developing a character analysis provided an opportunity for learning *problem solving*, “the process of designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal” (AAC&U, 2014b). The analysis of a character is like solving a puzzle, working with open-ended questions to achieve the goal of understanding, as noted in lines 1-2. Character analyses include both objective and subjective components. Students must research their character by looking for clues in the text and by researching the time period and person whom their character is based upon. Students must combine factual findings with their interpretive personal impression of the character, and write about it. Character analysis does not end once the initial written analysis is complete. While learning lines, more ideas emerge, and thus the students’ interpretation of the character becomes more clearly defined.

Character analysis: Opportunity for learning creative thinking. For the word work assignment, students were charged with developing a character analysis for each character they were to portray, synthesizing information taken from their reading of the texts, and their research of historical facts. Prof asked them not to watch versions of the plays on video, and not watch You Tube videos online of other people’s interpretations of their sonnet, speech, soliloquy or scene; they were to develop their own interpretation of their character by using *creative thinking*.

According to the LEAP definition, *creative thinking* involves the idea of developing original ideas in an imaginative way, and taking risks (AAC&U, 2014b). Prof urged students to avoid being influenced by others’ interpretations of a piece, offering them an opportunity for learning *creative thinking* in the development of their character analysis, as well as their performance chart and performance execution.

It appeared, upon review of campus artifacts, that the college values the application of *creative thinking* across disciplinary lines. They recently developed a new course, team-taught by

professors from different disciplines called “Create Lab.” The course description reads as follows:

- 1 Create Lab is a laboratory approach to learning led by eight professors from seven
- 2 departments. The goal is to foster creativity outside the confines of disciplinary
- 3 boundaries. Students will be asked to become risk-takers, use resourceful
- 4 thinking, and collaborate on creative work on the shared theme of time, memory,
- 5 and identity.

In a conversation with Prof. I learned that the course can be taken by anyone from any discipline, and it was developed one year ago with the intention of developing a creative mindset of all students so that they may learn to think differently, and infuse creativity into their work in science labs, in business, as well as in the arts and humanities, as noted in lines 2-3. By developing this course, it appears that the college values *creative thinking*, a competency that was also supported through character analysis word work.

Character analysis: Opportunity for learning inquiry & analysis. LEAP refers to inquiry as “a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments” (AAC&U, 2014b). As a college with a religious affiliation, one might think that [Pope Francis College] may tell students what and how to think, a contradiction to the LEAP essential learning outcome of *inquiry and analysis*. The college, however, supports a value of inquiry, both in classroom thinking, and in personal and spiritual development. The web page that describes the Jesuit, Catholic tradition of the college espouses an expectation of *inquiry and analysis*:

- 1 Just as learning at [Pope Francis College] is defined by asking more, each
- 2 individual’s relationship with their faith is an ongoing process of exploration. We
- 3 give students, faculty and staff tools and programs that enable them to think
- 4 deeply about their beliefs—and we never tell anyone what to believe.

The LEAP definition of *inquiry and analysis* includes the idea of exploring issues, objects or works through analysis of evidence, resulting in informed conclusions. By providing

information to students about faith (line 2), and encouraging them to explore their beliefs without telling students what to believe (line 4), students learn to explore religion and form their own conclusions. This process of exploration was also demonstrated in the course.

Character analysis, as a task, is both objective and subjective. There are tools that guide the process of analysis, such as seeking dramaturgical evidence within the text to support the development of one's understanding of the character. These are objective, fact-based findings that result from inquiry and research. Subjectively, students' life experiences and belief systems shape how they view the world, and these unique worldviews impact how they view each character resulting in "informed conclusions or judgments" (AAC&U, 2014b) that are presented in writing. This activity of character analysis supports the construction of opportunities for learning *inquiry and analysis*.

Character analysis: Opportunity for learning written communication. Written *communication* is defined by LEAP as "the development and expression of ideas in writing" (AAC&U, 2014b). Students were assigned to write-up a character analysis for each character they portrayed, totaling no less than three and no more than four character analyses.

Assignments included one character analysis for *Julius Caesar*, as each student performed a soliloquy or speech from that play, one character analysis for *As You Like It*, as they each performed one scene from that play, and either one or two character analyses for *Hamlet*, as they each performed a soliloquy or speech as well as a scene from that play (sometimes the scene character differed from their assigned speech or soliloquy character). The character analysis component of the word work provided opportunities for learning *written communication*, as students were expected to clearly express ideas in writing about each character they were

assigned to portray. As stated earlier, the scansion word work also supported opportunities for learning *written communication*.

One campus artifact supports the construction of opportunities for learning LEAP ELO from the *intellectual and practical skills* category including *written communication*, among others. The following text appears on the web page that discusses outcomes after graduation:

- 1 [Pope Francis College] students leave our halls prepared to think critically and creatively,
- 2 synthesize knowledge across disciplines, communicate effectively, and act with respect to
- 3 cultural and global contexts.

The text, as stated above, proclaims that by the time students' graduate, they have acquired skills in *critical* and *creative thinking* (line 1), and *oral* and *written communication* (line 2), supporting four learning outcomes within the *intellectual and practical* skills theme.

Character analysis: Opportunity to learn intercultural knowledge & competence.

Intercultural knowledge and competence is defined as “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2008, p.97; AAC&U, 2014b). In order to develop a character analysis, students must explore the cognitive, affective and behavioral characteristics and skills of the character they intend to play.

During class, while discussing the character analysis word work assignment, Prof posed an initial set of questions that were presented earlier in this chapter. Some of the questions he presented echo the questions of legendary acting teacher, Uta Hagen. In *Respect for Acting* (Hagen, 2009), nine questions were posed for *character analysis* discovery: “1) Who am I? 2) What time is it? 3) Where am I? 4) What surrounds me? 5) What are the given circumstances? 6) What is my relationship? 7) What do I want? 8) What is in my way? and 9) What do I need to get what I want?” (pp. 83-85). To answer the questions, Hagen (2009) encouraged actors to

explore all of the details of their character, including personal traits, the character's beliefs, religion, education, physical, and sociological influences, among other factors. Answering these questions about character provided students with an opportunity for learning *intercultural knowledge and competence*. Further opportunities for learning *intercultural knowledge and competence* will be discussed in the classroom engagement section of the chapter.

Character analysis: Opportunity to learn global learning. LEAP's definition of *global learning* includes, "Critical analysis of and engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives" (AAC&U, 2014b). Hagen's (2009) first question for character analysis, "Who am I?" explores the social aspects of the character, among other phenomenon. The natural, physical, and political environment is explored in question four, "What surrounds me?" The fifth question, "What are the given circumstances?" addresses the past, present and future of the character in relation to his or her surroundings. The character's economic status may be addressed through one or multiple questions as well.

The idea of exploring big societal questions (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012 & AAC&U, 2014b) is present in multiple areas of the campus website. The mission statement on the college's website states:

- 1 To participate in the life of [Pope Francis College] is to accept an invitation to
- 2 join in dialogue about basic human questions: What is the moral character of
- 3 learning and teaching? How do we find meaning in life and history? What are our
- 4 obligations to one another? What is our special responsibility to the world's poor
- 5 and powerless?

The questions in lines 2-5 are similar to the questions for character analysis, and are examples of big questions that encompass *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*.

The web page regarding the Jesuit history of the college echoes a similar sentiment, adding to it the idea of open-mindedness, and greater understanding of the world:

- 1 The order is known for its spirituality, commitment to education and service, and
- 2 active engagement with the world... Intertwined with this is the effort to free
- 3 ourselves of bias and ignorance, helping us to become more open-minded citizens
- 4 of the world.
- 5
- 6 Fostering a true and fruitful dialogue requires a diverse community of
- 7 participants... As [Pope Francis College] becomes an increasingly diverse
- 8 institution, we add new and enlightening voices to this dialogue, which bring us to
- 9 greater understanding of the world and ourselves.

The Jesuit ideal of freeing oneself of bias and ignorance in lines 2 and 3, becoming open-minded in lines 3 and 4, and adding enlightening voices in line 8 is similar to the LEAP definition of *global learning*, which states, in part, “Students should become informed, open-minded, responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences” (AAC&U, 2014b). Being attentive to cultural differences is required for answering some of the character analysis questions. Student actors differ from their characters in many ways; being attentive to differences may help them to better understand their character’s circumstances and help them to deliver an authentic performance. Further opportunities to learn *global learning* will be explored in the next section of the chapter, classroom engagement.

Character analysis: Opportunity for learning ethical reasoning. As stated earlier in the sense of community section of the chapter, LEAP’s definition of *ethical reasoning* involves,

Reasoning about right and wrong human conduct. It requires students to be able to assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Students’ ethical self-identity evolves and they practice ethical decision-making skills and learn how to describe and analyze positions on ethical issues. (AAC&U, 2014b)

Ethical reasoning was present in word work in two forms: (a) students submitted their own, unique character analysis in earnest; (b) students explored the ethical stance of their character for the development of their character analysis.

At the time of this study, it would have been very easy to perform a google website or Wikipedia search of any of Shakespeare's characters and find someone else's interpretation of a character. Students were expected to provide their own interpretation of their character for their written character analyses. Submitting their own work was an expectation that Prof stated multiple times in class, and was also outlined in the syllabus, as noted below:

- 1 Please remember that employing secondary sources *of any kind* ~ including the
- 2 Internet ~ without citing them constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious
- 3 offense. The College has a strict policy on plagiarism and other kinds of
- 4 academic dishonesty.

Holding students accountable for academic honesty (lines 3-4) presupposes that students will understand right from wrong, and apply *ethical reasoning* to each assignment and develop and submit their own work. This is also an expectation in the mission statement on the first page of the student handbook, "Since 1843, [Pope Francis College] has sought to educate students who, as leaders in business, professional, and civic life, would live by the highest intellectual and ethical standards."

In the focus group held five days after the last day of class I provided Prof and the students with a preliminary analysis of my findings. Since I did not have the opportunity to review all of my class videos or write out expanded field notes and transcripts prior to the focus group, I explained that my preliminary analyses were limited. I stated that I did not perceive a very strong opportunity for *ethical reasoning* in the course because we didn't discuss the ethical issues in class on a personal level. Andy disagreed, and cited the character analysis as a form of *ethical reasoning*:

- 1 “I think that in analyzing characters and then portraying characters you end up
- 2 doing a little ethical reasoning whenever you're doing the character. I don't know
- 3 if anyone else agrees...”

Andy had performed the role of Hamlet for both his assigned *Hamlet* scene (Act I, scene 2), and for his speech, “O that this too too sullied flesh would melt.” Hamlet, as a character, faces a number of ethical issues that cause him anguish throughout the play. Andy’s comment about the necessity of exploring *ethical reasoning* (line 2) to analyze and portray the character provided me with an insight that I had not experienced personally. Robin continued his thought:

- 1 “Especially in *Julius Caesar*. Like, ‘Friends, Romans, countrymen...’ is a huge
- 2 manipulative speech. Mine was about convincing someone that another human
- 3 was less than human and disposable.”

Robin had learned and performed Antony’s speech in *Julius Caesar*, “So is my horse, Octavius...” where Antony compares Lepidus to a horse. She stated in lines 2 and 3 that she explored the *ethical reasoning* of her character in order to better understand and portray the character’s true essence.

While coding my hand-written field notes, I had failed to consider the idea that one must explore the morality and ethical values of their character and find ways to convey an understanding of the character’s ethical position. The feedback from Andy and Robin, two strong actors enrolled in the course, helped me reconsider this while coding my expanded field notes. Most of the characters in *Julius Caesar*, and many of the characters in *Hamlet* struggled with making ethical decisions and made either just or unjust choices. In a discussion about *As You Like It*, we talked about the unfair treatment of certain characters as well. After this second look, I would concur with Andy and Robin that opportunities for learning *ethical reasoning* were supported in the character analysis word work assignment. References to other opportunities for learning *ethical reasoning* were noted in the *sense of community* section of this chapter.

Performance chart: Opportunity to learn integrative & applied learning. Students were required to develop a performance chart that incorporated many aspects of their word work analysis. They were expected to use this chart to memorize and prepare to perform their assigned pieces.

LEAP describes *integrative learning* as, “An understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex, situations within and beyond the campus. (AAC&U, 2014b), Students were expected to develop a performance chart for their assigned piece that *integrated* multiple elements of their prior work. They were to notate scansion (the stresses and unstresses) of meter, punctuation, and highlight all verbs and nouns found within each line. With an understanding of their character and their character’s relationship to the context of the scene, students were expected to make notes on the performance chart about specific performance decisions like tactic shifts, volume, and pacing. Students were then expected to use their performance chart to memorize their piece and prepare for performance. Once memorized, students were expected to take everything that they learned from their performance chart and apply it to their live performance of the piece.

The synthesis of knowledge required for demonstrating an understanding of the gist of the text, the subsequent character analysis development, and the ability to apply the understanding of a character into the development of a performance chart and subsequent live performance are strong examples of *integrative and applied learning*, as synthesis implies *integration* of knowledge, and performing demonstrates an *application* of the knowledge. *Integrative and applied learning* are referenced throughout this chapter in all sections.

Word work section summary. This section of the chapter demonstrated how word work supported opportunities for learning many of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes found in all four categories: (a) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, (b) *intellectual and practical skills*, (c) *personal and social responsibility*, (d) *integrative and applied learning skills*.

Most components of the word work assignment supported opportunities for learning one or two of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. Preparation of the word work itself provided opportunities for learning *foundations and skills for lifelong learning* and *teamwork*; the former being a component of the *personal and social responsibility* category, and the latter being a component of *intellectual and practical skills*. Translation of Shakespeare's text provided an opportunity to learn *information literacy*, a component of *intellectual and practical skills*. Gist translation provided an opportunity to learn *integrative and applied learning*. Scansion and punctuation homework provided an opportunity for learning *written communication skills*, a component of *intellectual and practical skills*. Rhetorical device searches provided an opportunity for learning *integrative and applied learning* as well as *reading*, components of *intellectual and practical skills*. The Quarto/Folio comparison supported opportunities for learning *information literacy* and *critical thinking*, components of *intellectual and practical skills*. The performance chart preparation provided *integrative and applied learning* opportunities.

Completing the character analysis component of word work supported opportunities for learning elements of all four of the LEAP ELO categories including: *integrative learning* from the *integrative and applied learning* category; *creative thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving*, and *written communication* from the *intellectual and practical skills* category; *global*

learning from the knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world category; and *intercultural knowledge and competence*, and *ethical reasoning* from the *personal and social responsibility* category. The character analysis component of word work offered opportunities for learning more of the LEAP ELO than any other assignment throughout the semester.

Opportunities for learning LEAP ELO through classroom engagement. This section of the chapter focuses on classroom and student engagement and provides answers to research questions numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning: (1) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, (2) *intellectual and practical skills*, (3) *personal and social responsibility*, (4) *integrative and applied learning*, and (5) *other skills or competencies not informed by the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories*?

The *Shakespeare through Performance* course was an hour and fifty minute class that met two times per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, over the course of the semester. Make-up classes were scheduled twice on Fridays; once due to inclement weather and once due to a faculty meeting. I attended and participated in 24 of the 26 class sessions, and audio and video recorded 25.

A typical class was segmented into three distinct sections. The first section of each typical class was a combination of lecture by the professor and a group discussion. This segment of the course lasted for 35 minutes to one hour, with a typical day falling somewhere in the middle at about 45 minutes. We would often take a five minute break after this first segment concluded. The second segment of the course involved physical and vocal warm-ups led by one or two student members of the class. These activities ran from seven minutes to 15 minutes, and preceded what Prof referred to as “The Shakespeare Work-out.” The Shakespeare work-out

involved a series of physical and mental activities called: *the air pump*, *swimming*, *boxing*, *swinging a bat* and *barrel lifting*. These activities were performed individually, and provided opportunities for each member of the class to rehearse their upcoming piece to be performed that day while doing a physical activity. The final section of the class was a performance or coaching of each piece. Prof also offered private and small group coaching sessions during many of the Fridays. The way Prof structured the course, a high level of student engagement was essential for student success.

Addressing the idea of student engagement, Chickering and Gamson (1987) penned seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education that: (a) encourages students and faculty contact; (b) develops reciprocity and cooperation among students; (c) utilizes active learning techniques; (d) provides prompt feedback; (e) stresses time on task; (f) communicates high expectations; and (g) respects diverse talents and different ways of learning.

There have been several studies that have demonstrated that effective teaching can stimulate and sustain student engagement and that engaged students learn well (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999; Handelsman, Briggs, Sullivan, and Towler, 2005; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) posited that the quantity and quality of student engagement and effort is positively linked to desired outcomes of an undergraduate education (p. 534-537).

Prof engaged students in the learning process, and helped to develop an environment where the students would engage regularly with each another, and receive performance coaching one-on-one or in pairs with him, affording a high level of student and faculty contact. This section of the chapter will demonstrate various ways in which classroom activities and student engagement contributed to opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO.

Opportunity for learning knowledge of human cultures & the physical & natural world through classroom engagement. “Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts, *focused* by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4).

The [Pope Francis College] campus website supports this idea, as it highlights the well-rounded nature of students and the expectation of post-graduation outcomes:

- 1 Our liberal arts foundation helps you develop every aspect of who you are,
- 2 positioning you for success on campus and with whatever comes next. By
- 3 graduation, you’ll be prepared to chart a course toward a career that’s right for
- 4 you, whether that means the sciences or law, business or the nonprofit sector, or a
- 5 combination of various fields.

The post-graduation goal stated in the paragraph above (lines 3-5) ties-in with the LEAP explanation of *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, which recommends that college students prepare for twenty-first century challenges through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts, thus the liberal arts (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The LEAP ELO category, *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, includes the LEAP ELO, *global learning*.

Global learning involves the critical analysis of and engagement with complex systems and their implications for people’s lives. Students should become informed and open-minded about the world around them, seek to understand how they impact the world, and learn to equitably address world issues (AAC&U, 2014b).

Five days after the last day of class, I held a focus group with the faculty and students from the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. At that time I had only coded my handwritten field notes. I shared information with the group that I thought *global learning* was minimally present in the course. I had recognized the presence of *global learning* during our discussion of the play, *Julius Caesar*, and in the character analysis word work. Chester, who read the definition of *global learning*, added his perspective of how *global learning* was present in the course, which was affirmed by Merriam:

- | | | |
|---|----------|--|
| 1 | Chester: | Did you get that first day when we talked, we did our Shakespeare |
| 2 | | background? |
| 3 | Merriam: | Yeah. |
| 4 | Jeanine: | That's true, that's good. |
| 5 | Chester: | Yeah, we did May Day. We talked about what was motivating the |
| 6 | | writing of the plays. |
| 7 | Jeanine: | True, and the Shakespeare timeline, putting an historical context to |
| 8 | | Shakespeare's life. Like for the first 2 weeks I think we did that? |
| 9 | Chester: | Yeah. |

Chester and Merriam's insightful comments (lines 1-2 and 5-6) helped me to understand how I may have missed opportunities for *global learning* in my initial coding. Armed with this new knowledge, I coded my expanded field notes seeking out opportunities for *global learning* that I had not coded in my hand-written field notes. Opportunities for *global learning* were predominantly found in the course through lessons of history. Additional opportunities to learn *global learning* were highlighted earlier in the character analysis word work section of the chapter.

Opportunity to learn global learning through lessons of history. Participation in this *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported the construction of opportunities for *global learning* through engagement in lessons of history. In the first two weeks of class, Prof dedicated a segment of each class session to cover the history of the time period before

Shakespeare's birth, during Shakespeare's life, and after his death. Prof introduced Shakespeare on the first day of class by debunking the myths of his life and his success, while sharing pieces of history:

- 1 "Whenever I teach Shakespeare, I always talk about the Beatles. John Lennon
- 2 and Paul McCartney? Born at the right freakin' time. Luck is really huge, and
- 3 Shakespeare came into the world at the right time. He was born in 1564, ok? And
- 4 he did not invent drama, he did not invent iambic pentameter, he didn't invent
- 5 anything, actually. In fact, the actual number of plays he has written is very
- 6 controversial..."

Prof's introduction of Shakespeare gave a contemporary social and historical context to the period in which Shakespeare lived when he talked about how the Beatles were born at the right time (line 2), and so was Shakespeare (line 3). He provided a visual Shakespeare timeline on the board, which was discussed over the course of the next few class sessions. Students were not required to memorize dates, but they were expected to understand the relationship of Shakespeare's life to English politics and the English language. This context aided students in developing a better understanding of the texts they would read, what motivated the writing of the plays, as well as a better understanding of the people and culture of Shakespeare's time. *Global learning* addresses the natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political implications of life. Since the historical lessons of Shakespeare's life included discussion of the social, cultural, and economic climate of Shakespeare's time period, I believe opportunities to learn *global learning* were present through these lessons.

Shakespeare's plays were written as a commentary about contemporary society, thus lessons of history provided context for the plays. While discussing *Julius Caesar*, Prof shared the following:

- 1 "If you grew up in Elizabethan England, and you were an educated 12-
- 2 year-old, you knew what was going on in the country—you understood the
- 3 collective fear of civil war—she doesn't have an heir. And you had read

4 Plutarch and you read the Old Norse texts and you would have a deep
5 intellectual understanding of the play. If you were uneducated, the beauty
6 of Shakespeare is that you would understand the gist of the play anyway
7 because it was written so everyone could understand it.”

Prof wanted students to understand that Shakespeare, while challenging to understand in contemporary times, was not intended for a sophisticated audience; the plays were accessible to individuals of the time regardless of their age, education level or station in life, as stated in lines 5 through 7. Providing this context to Shakespeare’s work gave students an historical and social perspective of the time, and may have additionally helped them to view reading Shakespeare as something that should be well within their intellectual reach. By providing a critical overview of the culture of Elizabethan England and the political and economic implications of the time, students were presented with an opportunity for *global learning*, which involves critical analysis of and engagement with cultural, economic and political systems and their implications for people’s lives (AAC&U, 2014b).

Later in the term, after the class read the play *As You Like It*, Prof facilitated an in-class discussion about the play in reference to all of Shakespeare’s comedies. Prof said that in a Shakespearean comedy, the characters always take time away from society to go into the forest, learn lessons, and come back having grown somehow, with young lovers giving birth to the new society. Referring to Jacques, Prof said there is always a character that does not come back to the reconstituted society. Prof stated that by doing this Shakespeare’s commentary was, “We have failed as a society because not everyone is part of the reformed society.”

A component of the definition of *global learning* states that students should seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities and do so collaboratively and equitably (AAC&U, 2014b). In the story, *As You Like It*, the lead characters proceed with their wedding follies and essentially turn their backs on Jacques, who leaves society to return to

the forest to be a hermit like Duke Frederick. By addressing the idea that lovers return from the forest to shape the new society, yet leave others behind, Prof provided an opportunity for *global learning*; there was nothing fair or equitable about Jacques in contrast to the other leading players of the story, who all ended in couples. Discussing this in class provided students with an opportunity to think about how individual actions can affect others, a component of *global learning*.

In the middle of the term, Prof reflected upon a lecture he gave on the first day of class regarding May Day. He applied the story of May Day to the story of *As You Like It*, and related it to all of Shakespeare's comedies:

1 "I leave you with the entire point of Shakespearean comedy. If you remember my
2 first lecture when I talked about May Day and May Day rituals? And how it was
3 built into Elizabethan society that there were days when all the young people
4 would go out into the forest and bring back trees and poles for the May Day
5 dance? Well, they weren't just supposed to go out into the forest and find poles
6 for May Day dance. It was basically an allowed space for erotic connectivity
7 outside of the bounds of—of really repressive social order. Yes? Do you follow
8 that?" (Uh-hmm and affirmative head nods from students). "So in some ways, the
9 entire structure of this play and of all Shakespeare's comedies is about that, right?
10 Because Orlando and Rosalind could never hook up in this twisted, dysfunctional
11 world; they had to go out to hook up so they could come back together. It's the
12 exact same thing in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*... In both cases it's a
13 dysfunctional social order that stands in the way of real love, so we have to create
14 this gap—this space—for the pursuit of erotic desire, that then has to lead to the
15 institution of marriage so it becomes wholly conventionalized, right? And is given
16 that stamp of approval."

Prof referenced the culture of society at the time as a dysfunctional social order and as being repressive and inhibiting to love (lines 6-7). The annual May Day ritual allowed freedom and exploration of sexual desire that, for one day, allowed young people of society to connect in ways that were otherwise unacceptable in Elizabethan culture (lines 4-6). This discussion of history, related to the story and characters of *As You Like It*, provided students with an opportunity for understanding the complex social culture of the Elizabethan era and its

implications for society, while providing an opportunity for gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of the play. This lecture and the classroom discussion that ensued provided an opportunity for *global learning* because it involved a critical analysis of the social order of Elizabethan England and its implications for people's lives at the time (AAC&U, 2014b).

Opportunity to learn integrative & applied learning through classroom lessons. LEAP outcomes suggest that college students should be able to synthesize knowledge at high levels across general and specialized studies (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012), in order to be prepared for contemporary life challenges. The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes category, *integrative and applied learning*, has one theme within the LEAP VALUE rubrics, *integrative learning*. Additional opportunities to learn *integrative learning* were highlighted earlier in the word work section of the chapter under the following headings: character analysis, gist, performance chart, and rhetorical devices.

With regard to *integrative learning*, LEAP espouses that students should make connections between curricular and co-curricular experiences and be able to transfer their learning in one area and be able to apply it to new circumstances (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012 & AAC&U, 2014b). Opportunities for *integrative learning* were supported through lessons of history and iambic pentameter.

Opportunity to learn integrative learning through lessons of history. Course objectives of *Shakespeare through Performance* were rooted in learning the history of Shakespeare's work as performing art. The following text was taken from the Overview section of the course syllabus:

- 1 This class is predicated upon the conceit that Shakespeare—as a member of a
- 2 producing theatre company—wrote his plays as theatrical artifacts and not literary
- 3 works. To understand, appreciate and master the plays of the Bard, students must
- 4 approach the texts as performance specimens.

This overview set the tone for how classes were focused; nearly every class involved discussion, and actual performance (line 4) of Shakespeare's works. This overview was supported by one of the assigned readings.

Prof assigned students to read Stern's (2004) chapter, *From Stage to Printing House*, which described how Shakespeare's work began as works of theatre that were later printed in manuscript format, from stage to page. Discussion of this article and an in-class printing exercise provided students with a hands-on opportunity for gaining increased understanding of the historical and artistic printing of Shakespeare's plays. Students were able to integrate what they learned from the assigned reading and apply it to the development of their own Quarto, which they made in class.

Opportunity to learn integrative learning through lessons of Iambic Pentameter. Iambic pentameter is a linguistic tool of the English language, which informs syllabic emphasis; an understanding of which helps performance. Early in the term, while learning the rhythm of iambic pentameter, Prof likened the meter of iambic pentameter to learning how to ski. He told us, "The stress and unstress of the syllables is equivalent to the weight and unweight of the skis." In the next class session, Prof asked Harry to read the entire first quatrain of one of the sonnets. Harry read through it sounding a bit stilted and unfeeling. When he finished the first quatrain, Prof corrected his rhythmic choices referring to iambic pentameter as "driving through the line as stress, unstress, like 'pedaling a bike'." When he asked Harry re-read the first quatrain, it was clear that he now understood how to stress the correct syllables and words, as the rhythm of each line was more well-defined. Relating tangible, real-life experiences to explain the rhythm of iambic pentameter appeared to have helped increase Harry's understanding of what the rhythm

should feel like in the body. This suggests an opportunity for learning *integrative learning*, which involves “making simple connections among ideas and experiences” (AAC&U, 2014b).

Text from artifacts reinforced the importance of *integrative and applied learning* at [Pope Francis College]. The mission statement promotes the shared nature of *integrative and applied learning* at the college:

- 1 ...In service of this ideal, [Pope Francis College] endeavors to create an
- 2 environment in which integrated learning is a shared responsibility, pursued in
- 3 classroom and laboratory, studio and theater, residence and chapel.

The mission statement text suggests how theatre (line 3) may play a role in integrative learning, as a shared responsibility of everyone (line 2). The nature of theatre as a performing art is in and of itself an *integrative* process. Acting, directing, and theatrical design of all types require the synthesis of knowledge of multiple disciplines. The marriage of the two disciplines, English and Theatre, in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course make this course a prime example of *integrative and applied learning*.

Opportunity to learn intellectual & practical skills through classroom lessons. LEAP outcomes suggest that college students should extensively practice *intellectual and practical skills* across the curriculum, in the context of increasingly challenging problems, projects, and standards of performance (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012 & AAC&U, 2014b). The LEAP ELO category, *intellectual and practical skills*, contains several themes within the LEAP VALUE rubrics including: *inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving*. I found evidence of each *intellectual and practical skill* in this study with the exception of *quantitative literacy*. I also constructed several new, in vivo codes, which became sub-themes under this category: *challenging others, flexibility, listening, negotiation, support for others*, and

watching. Based on the broad definitions of the a priori codes, all in vivo codes under this learning outcome became subcodes of a priori codes (see Table 8).

Table 8

Intellectual and Practical Skills Codes

| Category | Themes/A priori codes | Subthemes/In vivo codes |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Intellectual and Practical Skills | Creative Thinking | |
| | Critical Thinking | |
| | Information Literacy | |
| | Inquiry & Analysis | |
| | Oral Communication | negotiation* |
| | Problem Solving | flexibility |
| | Quantitative Literacy | |
| | Reading | |
| | Teamwork | challenging others listening support for others watching |
| | Written Communication | |

**Note.* The code, *negotiation*, played a role in both supporting and not supporting opportunities for learning. It could have been placed under *critical* or *creative thinking*, *problem solving*, *oral communication*, or *teamwork*. I elected to place it under the category of *oral communication* due to the nature of the segments of text coded.

Opportunity for learning oral communication through classroom performance. As stated earlier in the sense of community section of the chapter, *oral communication* was the most salient code in this study. The LEAP definition is, “a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners’ attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors” (AAC&U, 2014b). Students were required to prepare performances of sonnets, soliloquies, speeches and scenes. All pieces were rehearsed on their own time, in coaching sessions with Prof, and during class prior to performing them for a grade. The class also hosted an end of semester performance of these pieces that was open to the public on the last day of class. All pieces were prepared and purposefully researched by the performers.

Opportunity for learning oral communication through classroom discussion. Discussion was a prevalent component of class, usually taking up the first third or one half of each two-hour class session. When students were assigned to read an article or text for homework, Prof would pose questions to the group about the assigned reading during the next class session. Students who read the assigned material often prepared notes on the readings to reference while discussing the texts. Because these discussions required preparation and thought, I coded them as forms of *oral communication*.

Preparation, listening, and watching are subthemes that were often simultaneously coded with *oral communication*. A great deal of *preparation* was required prior to an in-class rehearsal, a coaching, or a performance. Memorization and rehearsal of a piece, using the prepared performance chart (see Table 6) as a guide, was also required. Physical and vocal warm-ups helped students prepare for performance, as those exercises helped with relaxation, flexibility, and were designed to prevent injury in performance. Mentally preparing for the stress of performing difficult text in front of the professor and peers, and mentally preparing for feedback was also necessary for performance. *Preparation* was labeled as a subtheme of *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*, not a subcode of *oral communication*.

Listening and *watching* were labeled as sub-codes of *teamwork*. While one or two individuals were performing their piece, the rest of the class remained engaged, *watching* and *listening* to the individual or individuals performing. When a piece was over, Prof often provided feedback to each performer. As the term progressed, Prof had other students in the audience provide direct feedback about the performance, using terminology taught in the course. I coded these interactions as *challenging others*. Below is an excerpt taken from the web page

containing information about the [Pope Francis College] experience that offers an example of how students are encouraged to challenge one another:

- 1 ...This exploratory approach—which embodies our institutional mission, Jesuit
- 2 tradition and liberal arts philosophy—permeates students’ day-to-day interactions.
- 3 They challenge one another to develop their individual talents in ways that
- 4 promote both fulfillment and personal success.

The way this is written, the idea of *challenging others* is viewed as a favorable attribute of a learning community, as it promotes fulfillment and personal success (line 4), and sets a cultural expectation of peer feedback for learning on a regular, day-to-day basis (line 2). Prof required students to provide one another with oral feedback on their performances, which enforced students’ development of their individual talents, as is stated in line 3.

In order to provide accurate and appropriate feedback, *listening* and *watching* were important skills to utilize. *Listening* and *watching* were also extremely important skills for scene work, throughout the rehearsal process with one’s scene partner, in coaching sessions with Prof, and during a performance.

Negotiation, an in vivo subtheme of *oral communication*, appeared regularly throughout the course. Upon review of the code, *negotiation*, the scenarios surrounding the code often involved a discussion between two or more students as they worked-out the most appropriate solution for a problem. For example, when Prof assigned the Hamlet and Horatio scene to Andy and Shaquille, he handed them the printed scene and said, “You can decide who’s Hamlet and who’s Horatio.” The two sat and read the scene and negotiated who should learn each part and why.

Whenever a student stood up to perform a piece they had prepared, Prof would provide feedback. By the end of the term, Prof solicited additional feedback from the class. The students learned to *receive feedback well*. Count was different; often when Count arose to perform his

pieces, Prof would give him feedback, and Count would occasionally become defensive, and use his *negotiation* skills to try to convince Prof why his actions were correct. The following vignette provides an example of Count's use of *negotiation* when discussing his speech with

Prof:

1 Prof requested that students sit on the floor against the wall of the dance studio
2 and watch and listen to each other perform their *Hamlet* soliloquies and speeches.
3 One by one each student stood up, walked to the center of the room, and
4 performed his or her speeches in front of the class. Each student received
5 feedback from Prof, sometimes running their speech again and adjusting their
6 performance based on Prof's suggestions. Once finished, students returned to
7 their seats on the floor.
8
9 After the first five students had finished performing; it was Count's turn. Count
10 stood up, walked across the room and picked up a large, leather armchair. He
11 brought it to the center of the room, paused for a moment to focus and compose
12 himself, and started reciting his Hamlet monologue. "To be—or not to be—that
13 is the question." Prof stopped him right away after the first line and asked, "Is
14 there punctuation after 'to be?'" Count said with a smirk on his face, "There
15 should be." Prof exclaimed, "There *should* be?" Prof reiterated what he had said
16 time and time again about knowing the punctuation of a piece prior to
17 performance. He said, "Count, you're really gutsy for deciding to deliver the
18 most popular monologue Shakespeare has ever written. You better be clear about
19 your punctuation." Count began reciting the speech again, without reviewing the
20 printed piece to double-check his punctuation. Sounding irritated, Prof cut him
21 off after a few lines, "Is there a question mark at the end of the line?" Count
22 replied, "I don't know." Then Prof recited the first several lines of the speech as
23 he knew them. Count said, "But the words were different in my text!" Prof
24 responded, "I don't want to make you paranoid, but you cannot f* up *To be or not*
25 *to be!*"

In paragraph one, (lines 4-6), students took the opportunity for learning *deference* and to how to *receive feedback well*; two in vivo codes that I placed under the theme of *personal and social responsibility*. Differing from his peers, Count used unsupported arguments to *negotiate* with Prof about his line delivery, particularly when he said, "There should be" (in lines 14-15) and "But the words were different in my text!" (in line 23). This form of *negotiation* differed from the *negotiation* cited earlier between Shaquille and Andy. The two of them used

negotiation as a problem solving tool. No arguments ensued. When Count negotiated, he angered Prof, and their banter delayed the progression of the class. Opportunities for learning and practicing *negotiation* were present in the course, and at times it appeared to constrain other opportunities for learning.

Opportunity for learning reading through homework. In addition to reading three of Shakespeare's plays, students were assigned to read the introduction of Vendler's (1997) *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Daw's (n.d.) *The Down and Dirty Guide to Scanning Verse: Some Hints to Help with Sounding Shakespeare's Words*, and a chapter entitled *From Stage to Printing House* in Stern's (2004) *Making Shakespeare*. Additionally, Prof assigned other hand-outs including one on *Rhetorical Devices* (Pressley & Shakespeare Resource Center, 2014), one entitled *Speech Exercises—Shakespeare Dramaturgy*, a copy of King Richard II's "Ay, no; no, ay..." speech, and a photocopied Quarto-Folio comparison of Hamlet's speech, "To be, or not to be..."

Upon distributing Vendler's (1997) introductory chapter, Prof told the class, "The Vendler article is very advanced—something you might expect to read in graduate school." The Shakespearean texts also provided a challenge, as some of Shakespeare's words are not a part of contemporary American English, and required translation for comprehension.

Prof recommended that students use the Folger version of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets, as these texts provide definitions of unfamiliar words on the left page, adjacent to Shakespeare's manuscript on the right. I found this version to be helpful, but despite the ease of retrieving definitions, some words required further exploration in order to clarify my personal understanding of what Shakespeare was trying to convey. Constructing meaning of the text provided opportunities for learning *reading*. It was challenging, but necessary in this course

order for students to be able to comprehend and construct meaning of the texts in order to be able to discuss the texts in class. Additional opportunities for learning *reading* were highlighted in the rhetoric word work section of the chapter.

Opportunity for learning teamwork through course activities. As stated earlier in the sense of community and word work sections of the chapter, LEAP definition of *teamwork* is, “behaviors under the control of individual team members, effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on the team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions” (AAC&U, 2014b). Opportunities for learning *teamwork* were present in every class session, making it a highly salient theme.

Prof expected that students would come to the studio where class was held, and set-up tables and chairs on their own. Each day, students who arrived early for class would help one another set-up the room to Prof’s requested specifications. In the middle of class, when we often shifted to physical warm-ups in the center of the room, students would join together in resetting the room layout. We would then form a circle, and listen to and follow the directions of the leader of the exercise, which was often another student in the class. Additionally, as stated earlier, Prof *challenged others* to contribute ideas and feedback for one another after performances, co-constructing a safe and comfortable environment with a balance of constructive criticism and praise for one another.

In most cases, scene work required students to decide between themselves who would learn which role. They also had to come to an agreement about word work and scene direction, as scenes always began as self-directed pieces. Prof sometimes changed the students’ direction for a piece during their coaching sessions, and they would work together to find solutions to resolve scene issues.

In the focus group, individual students shared that they found *teamwork* to be an important component of the course. Robin stated:

- 1 “I think teamwork is like an exceptional one; not just because of the scene work
- 2 that we did but just thinking about every day when we were doing warm-ups, or
- 3 helping other people set up, or gathering props, or cleaning up somebody else's
- 4 prop; that was a big one!”

Some of what Robin stated fits well within the LEAP definition of *teamwork*. The idea of helping people set-up or cleaning up for someone else, as stated in line 3, demonstrates *support for others*. It also provides an example of the *sense of community* in the theatre department and in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. I coded *support for others*, as a sub-theme of *teamwork*, as it an aspect of how students interact with one another.

During the focus group, Lisa shared her thoughts about the prevalence of *teamwork* in the course:

- 1 “I’d go back to teamwork again because I think, with all the scenes, everyone
- 2 helped by the comments everyone made. I think everyone helped to make the
- 3 scene better by speaking about things that they witnessed in the scene. I think that
- 4 an aspect of teamwork is critiquing each other to make each other better.”

Lisa touched upon the value of constructive criticism from classmates, as stated in lines 2-3, and made a direct connection to how critiques helped improve student performances (line 4). This speaks to the quality of contributions students made to class discussions, which echoes a component of the LEAP definition of *teamwork*.

Opportunity for learning problem solving through scene work. *Problem solving* was highlighted earlier in the word work section of this chapter. The LEAP definition of *problem solving* is, “the process of designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal” (AAC&U, 2014b). Problems must be solved when working on a scene. Each performer must work with other performers and a director to find ways

to make the scene work for everyone involved. This is where *teamwork* contributes to *problem solving*.

The college demonstrates value for developing students' competency in the area of *problem solving*. Upon review of campus artifacts, I found a campus webpage that discusses outcomes after graduation. The website states, "In almost every industry you can think of, our alumni serve as leaders of their field, tackling complex challenges with skill and alacrity." In order to be able to 'tackle complex challenges,' students must practice and have opportunities to learn *problem solving* skills.

Opportunities for learning *problem solving* were present throughout the course when members of the class performed and received feedback from Prof and colleagues. Scar explained this in the focus group:

- 1 "I thought problem solving was a huge thing, too...Prof would give you a note to
- 2 completely change or rearrange the way that you're doing things and you have to
- 3 figure that out exactly. Not only interpreting his notes, but also being able to adapt
- 4 and completely figure out exactly how you can do it to make it a stronger
- 5 performance. I thought that was really --at least from my experience in the class--
- 6 I thought that was huge."

Scar describes how adapting to suggestions with immediacy (lines 3-4) during coaching sessions or class feedback sessions, and applying those suggestions to his performance (lines 4-5) was a form of *problem solving*.

Robin used the word *flexibility* while presenting a similar scenario:

- 1 "Going back to what you were saying—it was flexibility. I know that's not on
- 2 here and it's not a learning goal, but I would back that up a lot ...flexibility is
- 3 about being able to go up, perform your monologue or sonnet or whatever. Then
- 4 be told by Prof to do it in a totally different way, and to be able to go up again
- 5 after like maybe 30 seconds do it a totally in different way and be okay with the
- 6 fact that you might be uncomfortable with it. I think that takes huge amounts of
- 7 flexibility."

Both Robin and Scar addressed *flexibility* as the key to *problem solving*. Problems in life are not always clearly framed with concrete solutions, and problems are not often presented with boundless time to solve them. The campus web page highlighting the liberal arts and Jesuit tradition of the campus states this, “It’s an education that prepares students to do good and do well in a rapidly changing and increasingly interdependent global marketplace.” This phrase demonstrates the importance the college places on preparing students for a rapidly changing world, implying the importance of *flexibility*. Both Scar and Robin were able to articulate situations where they had to adapt and rapidly solve problems with their performances, demonstrating support for opportunities for learning *problem solving*.

Opportunity to learn personal & social responsibility through classroom activity.

LEAP outcomes suggest that developing *personal and social responsibility* should help college students prepare for 21st century challenges. Learning should be attached to active engagement with diverse communities and involve practical, realistic challenges (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The LEAP ELO category, *personal and social responsibility*, has several themes within the LEAP VALUE rubrics including: *civic knowledge and engagement*, *intercultural knowledge and competence*, *ethical reasoning and action*, and *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*. Fourteen sub-themes constructed under this theme include: *concern for others*, *courage*, *deference*, *expectations*, *fairness*, *improvisation*, *leadership*, *motivating others*, *physical exercise*, *preparation*, *receive feedback well*, *sense of humor*, *self-knowledge*, and *strive for excellence*. Definitions are outlined in Table 9.

Table 9

Personal and Social Responsibility Codes

| A priori code | Definition | Subcode/In vivo code |
|------------------|--|----------------------|
| Civic Engagement | “Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.” (Ehrlich, 2000, p. vi). In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. | |
| Ethical Reasoning | Reasoning about right and wrong human conduct. It requires students to be able to assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Students’ ethical self-identity evolves as they practice ethical decision-making skills and learn how to describe and analyze positions on ethical issues. | fairness |
| Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning | "All purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence” (CEC, 2000). | courage improvisation leadership physical exercise preparation |
| Intercultural Knowledge & Competence | "A set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2008, p. 97). | concern for others deference expectations motivating others receive feedback well self-knowledge sense of humor strive for excellence |

Opportunity to learn foundations & skills for lifelong learning through actor training.

The LEAP definition of *foundations and skills for lifelong learning* is, “all purposeful learning

activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence” (CEC, 2002). Sub-themes within this theme are: *courage, improvisation, leadership, physical exercise, and preparation*. *Foundations and skills for lifelong learning* were presented earlier in this chapter in the section discussing preparation of word work.

Most *foundations and skills for lifelong learning* references that I coded involved pre-professional actor training. Below is an example taken from my expanded field notes, where Prof was trying to explain to the class how to make their acting naturalistic:

- 1 “You guys are ...walking Hamlets—every single one of you! It’s your lives!
- 2 And someone’s giving you this beautiful poetry that’s incredibly well-structured,
- 3 right? So instead of trying to perform it, why don’t you try to strip away
- 4 everything and be honest? Now that doesn’t mean there isn’t a given
- 5 circumstance and a trigger that gets you into it, but the trigger has got to come
- 6 from yourself.”

For the actors in the class, the idea of stripping away the emotional wash and performing their pieces using naturalistic acting is an idea that will resonate with them as they continue to explore roles throughout their lives. Prof’s lessons of naturalistic acting have resonated with me since leaving the course. The idea of being honest in acting requires self-discovery, which is something that applies to everyone, regardless of whether they become professional actors or not. These ideas provide opportunities for learning *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*.

Opportunity to learn foundations & skills for lifelong learning through preparation.

Throughout the term, students had many articles and texts to read, five pieces to memorize and rehearse, and five word work assignments to prepare. *Preparation* was required for every class session with the exception of the first class. Students were generally quite good about memorizing and practicing their sonnets, speeches, and soliloquies for class. Occasionally, Prof would grow frustrated with students who repeatedly forgot lines and appeared not to put in the

time and effort necessary to perform with consistency. Here is an excerpt of one of Prof's speeches about the necessity of *preparation* in Shakespeare:

1 "If you want to be serious about this, you need to rock it and be serious...if you
2 are a singer you don't go up there thinking, 'I think I'm going to hit this note!'
3 You go into an audition having practiced it correctly at least fifty times before
4 singing at an audition so you know you're going to hit the note. It's the same
5 thing with Shakespeare!"

Prof proclaimed that if you want to become good at something, you must put in the time and effort to improve your skill. This idea can apply to more than just learning Shakespeare, it is transferable to learning anything, and is a *foundation and skill for lifelong learning*.

Opportunity to learn foundations & skills for lifelong learning through courage. During the focus group, I had asked the students to reflect upon the semester and let me know if there was anything they thought was prevalent in the course that I missed in my coding. Count brought-up the idea of *courage*. The following excerpt was taken directly from my focus group transcript:

1 Count: Courage. I think more for some people than others, particularly, it
2 takes a lot of courage, I guess...It takes a lot of courage to stand
3 up. It's easier, I think, to stand up around a bunch of people you
4 don't know. When you talk about it, I think it's harder to stand up
5 in front of a bunch of people you do know and perform and buck
6 up. That's, I think, a really big deal for people.
7 Jeanine: Do you think that would fall under skills for lifelong learning?
8 Count: Yeah.
9 Merriam: Yeah, maybe.
10 Andy: Yeah.
11 Jeanine: I'll give you a couple of seconds to think about it.
12 Andy: Yeah, because whether you go into a career in the performing arts
13 or not, you're going to have to perform in front of people you don't
14 know. If you're going to working an office you're going to give
15 presentations on your work. If you're a scientist you're going to
16 present your research to strangers and to people you know, so I
17 think that's very applicable in various walks of life.
18 Scar: This class definitely helps you to come out of your shell a lot.
19 You know, Shakespeare's complicated to do, and it could be taxing
20 on your confidence, especially if you're very judgmental on

21 yourself—so this class helps you break away from that a lot. It
22 teaches you to just not think too much about—you know, basically
23 break out of your own ego and just get up there and do it!

The idea of *courage* was initiated by Count and was supported by Merriam (line 9), Andy (lines 12-17), and Scar (lines 18-23), as they each added their thoughts about why *courage* was an important part of the class, and a *foundation and skill for lifelong learning*.

Opportunity to learn foundations & skills for lifelong learning through leadership & physical exercise. During each class session, one or two students would have an opportunity to practice their leadership skills. Mid-way through the class, usually after a discussion of readings, and before performing, Prof would ask one student to lead the group in physical warm-ups, and he would often ask a second student to lead the group in vocal warm-ups. All of us would perform the exercises assigned by the delegated leaders.

Prof explained the importance of *physical exercise* in the life of an actor:

1 “Some of you already define yourselves as actors, others of you want to define
2 yourselves as actors, and others of you enjoy acting but you just don’t want to do the
3 work to be a professional. What it takes to be a professional is dedication to practice and
4 to working on your body and your voice...serious actors should practice physical and
5 vocal exercises, go to the gym every day, and cut down on alcohol consumption.”

Knowing that some of his students aspire to become professional actors, Prof explained the value of *physical exercise* and vocal exercise in the life of an actor, as their bodies are their instruments. For a pianist, their instrument is a piano, for a painter, their instrument is a paintbrush, for an actor, their instrument is their body and voice, so they need to do what is necessary to develop their body and their voice and keep both healthy and in good shape. These are *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*, as these are important for life, particularly for those who aspire to become professional actors.

Being given an opportunity to *lead* the class through a series of physical or vocal exercises required students to be prepared with an arsenal of activities, should they be called upon to lead. When asked by Prof to lead the group through a series of exercises, students would usually do so. They had a repertoire of physical and vocal warm-ups that they knew very well; they were able to engage the class in a variety of exercises that the other students knew. The opportunity to practice *leading* was a *foundation and skill for lifelong learning*, as it prepared students for improving their “knowledge, skills, and competence” (CEC, 2002) in *leadership*, which could be helpful in various professional and personal experiences throughout their lives.

Opportunity to learn foundations & skills for lifelong learning through improvisation.

Opportunities for learning and practicing *improvisation* were also present in the course. Two months into the term, students were paired up to perform scenes from *As You Like It*. Students rehearsed scenes on their own, chose their props, and set their own staging. Prof requested that students run their scenes for him during class. Robin and Chester, playing Ganymede (Rosalind in disguise) and Orlando, were the first to perform their scene. Prof critiqued the two, saying, “Act on the line, speak on the cue.” The two started again, but Prof cut them off, telling them that they were slow to respond to one another and their pacing was unnatural. “Do it again, but instead of saying your lines, just perform the scene without words.” The two paused for a moment to think about how they might do this, and they acted out the scene as a pantomime. Prof said, “That was good. Now do it again, but use your own words.” The two improvised the scene using their own words in contemporary English to convey the gist of Shakespeare’s words. The whole class watched them intently, laughing at the comedy throughout the scene, fully understanding what was happening. Prof praised their successful *improvisation* and had them perform the scene again using Shakespeare’s words.

Improvisation is a skill that is essential in theatre, and it is also important in life. Just as things don't always go according to plan in theatre, and you must adjust and improvise to work around it, things also don't always go according to plan in life. Opportunities for learning *improvisation* in the safety of a classroom can help build students' confidence in other situations in life where they must apply this skill.

Opportunity to learn intercultural knowledge & competence through classroom engagement. As highlighted earlier in the character analysis section of the word work, LEAP defines *intercultural knowledge and competence* as “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennet, 2008). I witnessed many ways in which students had opportunities for learning *intercultural knowledge and competence* through the course, labeled under the following subthemes: *deference, expectations, motivating others, receive feedback well, self-knowledge, sense of humor, and strive for excellence.*

As stated earlier, throughout the term, students rehearsed and performed their pieces in front of one another during class. When finished, each performer received feedback from Prof and also from one another. This presented students with an opportunity for learning *deference*, as they were to respectfully listen to Prof and his recommendations and feedback. It also provided students with an opportunity to learn how to *receive feedback well*, and avoid being defensive or appearing hurt by the feedback. These are behavioral skills that “support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2008, p.97).

Students had to develop an understanding of the time period and setting of each play, and explore the cultural context of characters within the plays prior to developing character analyses and performance charts for the word work assignments (see Table 6). Prof urged students to

stretch themselves and choose characters that may be dramatically different from themselves.

He never restricted students from playing a character that differed from their own gender

identity, in fact, he encouraged it. In a discussion of *Julius Caesar*, Prof stated:

- 1 “I recently saw an all-female production of *Julius Caesar* and it was incredible.
- 2 Unlike most of the Shakespearean plays, *Julius Caesar* has no sexual tension in it
- 3 whatsoever; the play is about power and politics which crosses-over gender
- 4 boundaries. The play was set in a women’s prison and ultimately a prison mate
- 5 kills another. It’s all about power. Today we are going to select speeches or
- 6 soliloquies and women should feel free to select speeches by men, and if men
- 7 want to select speeches by Calpurnia or Portia, go for it, since the play is truly
- 8 gender neutral and has been successfully done so.”

Prof urged students to explore opportunities for learning about *intercultural knowledge and competence* by encouraging students to cross gender boundaries (lines 6-7) in their character choices.

The following excerpt was taken from the college mission web page:

- 1 Because the search for meaning and value is at the heart of the intellectual life,
- 2 critical examination of fundamental religious and philosophical questions is
- 3 integral to liberal arts education. Dialogue about these questions among people
- 4 from diverse academic disciplines and religious traditions requires everyone to
- 5 acknowledge and respect differences.

Although the theme of *intercultural knowledge & competence* does not expressly state that students should learn to respect differences, as stated in lines 4 and 5, it is implied in the LEAP definition of supporting “effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of contexts” (Bennet, 2008, p. 97).

Prof has been teaching for many years at [Pope Francis College], and knows the value of making his *expectations* clear. He set *expectations* for grading on the first day of class:

- 1 “To get an A you must be a good actor and also be dedicated and committed, and
- 2 do well with your word work. Some not so good actors may get a B in acting, but
- 3 get an A in word work. Some actors may be lazy about word work and get an A
- 4 In acting but a B in word work.”

I coded *expectations* repeatedly in every class session, as Prof made student work *expectations* very clear at the beginning of the term, as stated above in lines 1-4, and adjusted and clarified *expectations* throughout the term. Although I never coded students' *expectations* of themselves or each other, students had an opportunity for learning the value of setting *expectations* from Prof's example. Setting *expectations* supports "effective and appropriate interaction" (Bennett, 2008, p. 97), a component of *intercultural knowledge and competence*.

In the focus group, students discussed how they were inspired by Prof and by one another to be the best they could be when they saw how good someone else may have been on a given day. One might look at this as a form of competition, but as a member of the class, I can say from personal experience that it never felt like there was a competition between anyone. Prof intentionally asked everyone to perform their own pieces in the course without duplication; this tactic prevented individuals from being jealous of others, and may have helped *motivate others* to *strive for excellence*. As Chester pointed-out in the focus group:

- 1 "...There were times where people would say to me, 'Oh, my God that was
- 2 amazing.' Like when people were on, right? And they would have an incredible
- 3 performance, either a soliloquy or a set speech or a scene. You'd be like, 'Wow, I
- 4 want to get there, too,' like, 'I want to meet that.'"

Chester's example suggested that when students were successful with their performances, they *motivated others*, as he pointed out in line 4. When they witnessed their peers succeed, they were inspired to *strive for excellence*. The affective characteristic of *motivating others* and *striving for excellence* transcends theatre; these skills can be applied to many different areas of life.

Learning something difficult and new provides students an opportunity for learning about themselves. I coded *self-knowledge* infrequently in my field notes, and frequently in the focus group. One month into the course, after practicing iambic pentameter and Shakespeare's

sonnets, Prof asked the class how they were feeling about their abilities. Merriam and Robin assessed their level of confidence in their skills:

- 1 Prof asked, “Are you guys getting to feel a little cocky about Shakespeare now?”
- 2 Merriam said, “Confident sometimes, but not cocky.” Robin said, “Sometimes
- 3 after I rehearse it again and again I say, ‘oh that was baller’, but then I don’t know
- 4 if I can do it that same way again...”

Self-knowledge is a cognitive characteristic. When you have an understanding of yourself and can assess yourself in the context of performance, as Robin appeared to in line 3, you have the potential to adjust your performance or behavior to change and improve. *Self-knowledge* could be beneficial in any workplace setting.

Classroom engagement section summary. This section of the chapter demonstrated how classroom engagement supported opportunities for learning one or more of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes found in all four categories: (a) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, (b) *intellectual and practical skills*, (c) *personal and social responsibility*, (d) *integrative and applied learning skills*. Supporting evidence from themes and sub-themes also suggested the presence of opportunities for learning skills and competencies not informed by the LEAP ELO, informing answer to Question 5: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of other skills or competencies not informed by the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories?

Lessons of history provided opportunities to learn *global learning* which demonstrated support for the construction of opportunities for learning knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world. This informed an answer to Question 1: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*?

Classroom performances and discussions provided students with opportunities to learn *oral communication*. Reading assignments provided opportunities to learn *reading*. *Teamwork* was practiced through various course activities. Scene work provided students with opportunities to learn *problem solving*. These opportunities to learn LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes informed an answer to Question 2: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *intellectual and practical skills*?

Lessons in actor training provided students with opportunities to learn *foundations and skills for lifelong learning through leadership, courage, improvisation, physical exercise and preparation*. Classroom engagement also provided students with opportunities to learn *intercultural knowledge and competence* by providing a safe space for learning acceptable forms of behavior, and taking risks. This informs an answer to Question 3: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *personal and social responsibility*?

Lessons of history and iambic pentameter provided opportunities to learn *integrative learning*, informing an answer to Question 4: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *integrative and applied learning*?

This section of the chapter demonstrated opportunities for learning elements of all of the LEAP ELOs.

LEAP ELO Not Supported

The previous sections of this chapter outlined how participation in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported the construction of opportunities for learning many of the

LEAP ELO. This section of the chapter addresses research questions numbered 2, and 3, addressing how participation in the course did not support the construction of opportunities for learning two of the LEAP ELO.

It is important to note that when I presented my preliminary data analysis to the students and Prof in the focus group, I had shared with the group that there were four LEAP ELOs that were either minimally present or not at all present. Students disagreed with me on two counts: *global learning* and *ethical reasoning*. Based on their responses, I coded my expanded field notes seeking out the opportunities for learning they believed were present. In the case of the other two areas that I stated were not present or were minimally present, the majority of the class, including the professor, agreed with my assessment. These two areas are *quantitative literacy* and *civic engagement*.

The information under the section heading *Opportunities for Learning Quantitative Literacy Not Supported*, informs an answer to Question 2: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *intellectual and practical skills*? The information under the heading *Opportunities for Learning Civic Engagement Not Supported*, informs an answer to Question 3: how does participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course support or not support the construction of opportunities for learning *personal and social responsibility*?

Opportunity for learning quantitative literacy not supported. As stated earlier in this chapter, LEAP suggests that college students should extensively practice *intellectual and practical skills* across the curriculum, in the context of increasingly challenging problems, projects, and standards of performance (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The LEAP ELO category, *intellectual and practical skills*, contains 10 themes. One theme, *quantitative*

literacy, appeared only minimally in my coding. Upon further investigation of the meaning of *quantitative literacy*, I grew to believe that participation in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course did not support opportunities for learning this outcome.

Quantitative literacy is defined by LEAP as

a ‘habit of mind’ competency, and comfort in working with numerical data. Individuals with strong quantitative literacy skills possess the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations. They understand and can create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence and they can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc. as appropriate). (AAC&U, 2014b)

The LEAP definition was open to various interpretations, so I investigated alternate resources and definitions to clarify my understanding. Steen (2001) stated, “although almost everyone believes quantitative literacy to be important, there is little agreement on just what it is” (p. 4).

Steen’s (2001) publication, *Mathematics and Democracy*, was a cooperative undertaking with a design team including 11 other higher education Mathematics educators, one workforce development professional, one higher education policy professor, one national research board member, and one human resource professional for a national science organization. The publication addressed the question, “What is quantitative literacy”? The publication provided a plethora of interpretations of *quantitative literacy* as it pertains to preparing students for the world of work and life. One definition, developed by the design team suggests, “Quantitative literacy is more a habit of mind, an approach to problems that employs and enhances both statistics and mathematics” (Steen, 2001, p. 4). To further clarify this definition, the first chapter provided elements of quantitative thinking, and examples of expressions of quantitative literacy found in various fields of study. None of the examples were representative of what the students and I encountered in the class. A pithy alternate definition is that “quantitative literacy is the ability to understand and reason with numerical information” (Steen, 2001, p. 68).

I sought out further clarification and found that in a similar vein, Wilkins (2000) provided the following definition, “Quantitative literacy is defined in terms of mathematical content knowledge, mathematical reasoning, understanding of the social impact and utility of mathematics, understanding the nature and historical development of mathematics, and mathematical disposition.” Both Wilkins’ (2000) and Steen’s (2001) design team’s definitions were clearly mathematic and statistical in nature. I have therefore interpreted the LEAP definition of *quantitative literacy* in those terms—strictly quantitative.

In my preliminary analysis of hand-written field notes, I was relying exclusively upon the LEAP definition of quantitative literacy. References to *quantitative literacy* were coded in classroom discussions of literary meter. In the focus group, I shared my preliminary analysis of collected data and addressed my concerns regarding the limited opportunities for learning *quantitative literacy*. I provided the LEAP definition of *quantitative literacy* for the group before sharing my perspective. To explore the potential of its relevance in the course I suggested, “This may be a stretch, but learning iambic pentameter and counting the syllables on our hands could be mildly interpreted as quantitative.” The students groaned, and Robin frowned and shook her head with an emphatic, no.

Later, while summarizing our discussion, I once again brought up the potential of citing *quantitative literacy* through iambic pentameter, as literary meter could be considered quantitative. Based on the facial reactions of the participants, I vocalized the concern, “I think at a collegiate level that somebody reading this may say, ‘Okay, Jeanine’s trying to put a square peg in a round hole’...and I don’t want to do that.” Students nodded their heads in agreement.

I coded my expanded field notes after facilitating the focus group. In total, I coded 14 references to *quantitative literacy*, each time referencing class discussions of meter or counting

syllables on our hands during class. Based on further exploration of the LEAP definition, Wilkin's (2000) definition, and Steen's (2001) definition of *quantitative literacy*, none of my coded references support opportunities for learning *quantitative literacy* in this course. It is important to note that I did not code any course syllabus references for *quantitative literacy*, as it was not a course objective.

Opportunity for learning civic engagement not supported. As stated earlier in this chapter, LEAP outcomes suggest that developing *personal and social responsibility* should help college students prepare for 21st century challenges. Learning should be attached to active engagement with diverse communities and involve practical, realistic challenges (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). The LEAP ELO category, *personal and social responsibility*, contains four elements. Participation in *Shakespeare through Performance* did not support one of elements of *personal and social responsibility: civic engagement*.

Civic Engagement is defined as

Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Ehrlich, 2000, p. vi)

“In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community” (AAC&U, 2014b).

In the focus group, I shared my preliminary analysis of collected data and I explained that I did not see opportunities for learning *civic engagement* in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. I provided the LEAP definition of *civic engagement* prior to sharing my perspective. I mentioned to the students that I remembered that Shaquille and Robin had both participated in an alternative spring break program during the term that was service-based. They

both confirmed that they did participate. I asked if it was run out of the theatre department and they indicated that it was not. Students appeared to be concerned that I found no evidence of *civic engagement* in the course, as community service, service learning, and civic engagement are integral components of the [Pope Francis College] experience. Content analysis of the college website indicated that opportunities for learning *civic engagement* at [Pope Francis College] are woven into the fabric of the institution. The following text appears on the web page that shares the college history:

- 1 With an agreed upon mission to educate men and women for others, [Pope
- 2 Francis College] students are urged to measure their personal successes in life by
- 3 what they have done to better the lives of others, especially those less fortunate
- 4 than themselves.

The college encourages students to be “men and women for others,” as indicated in line 1. Students are encouraged to participate in activities that are socially beneficial to the community, as indicated in line 3. Beyond that, as indicated in lines 2-4, students are urged to measure their life’s success by their contributions to others.

Expressing her concern that the course did not contain opportunities for learning *civic engagement*, Robin made the following statement:

- 1 “The only thing I can think of in terms of civic engagement, and I don't think that
- 2 it's a stretch even though it might not be 100% civic engagement in this course, is
- 3 the idea that we talk about how theater is really meaningful in communities and
- 4 not just like the theater department and the shows that we put on in [Pope Francis
- 5 College], but even in class there are things that we know are meant to spark
- 6 dialogue. Yes, it's an artistic form and a form of entertainment, but also we talk a
- 7 lot about historically what theatres meant in England at the time, and also what
- 8 theatres mean in our society; what theatre means in London whenever Prof
- 9 references our past trip to London. Then, so I think in a way, even though it's not
- 10 very blatant or strong, there's that idea of theater as an important part of civic
- 11 engagement in a community.”

Andy echoed what Robin said as well. Their points were indeed valid. I would agree with Robin's assertion that theatre has a social and community purpose. Theatre can spark dialogue (lines 5-6), and has the potential to change or expand an individual's view of the world.

In an exploration of campus artifacts, I found the following text on the web page that discusses the Jesuit tradition:

12 The Jesuits have also promoted living in solidarity with the poor and
13 disenfranchised. This not only involves acts of service, but also encompasses a
14 profound love and respect for all human beings. This is reflected in the College's
15 mission statement; it's also a unifying message for our campus community.
16 Through activities such as alternative spring break and Student Programs for
17 Urban Development, our students live out the call to be "men and women for and
18 with others" in places near and far.

As stated in line 12 of the text above, the Jesuits believe in respecting all human life, and serving the poor and disenfranchised. The website specifically cites the alternative spring break program (lines 16 and 17), which Shaquille and Robin both participated in, and reiterates the idea of "men and women for and with others" in lines 17-18. These are direct examples of the ideals promoted within the LEAP definition of *civic engagement*.

While review of various artifacts demonstrated that the college itself supports *civic engagement*, participant observation of the course did not support the construction of opportunities for learning this LEAP ELO. To be consistent between all of the codes, I coded opportunities for learning found within the course, not within the campus or in theatre in general. Based on my desire to be consistent and reviewing the LEAP definition, I found no opportunities for learning *civic engagement* in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Theatre has faced a long-standing problem of demonstrating its value in higher education (Anton, 2010). The literature surrounding theatre's value in higher education is largely based on theory and faculty self-reported data. There is a gap in empirical research that illuminates an understanding of what opportunities for learning may be found through undergraduate theatre study. This study attempted to address this gap in the literature.

For more than 20 years, the National Leadership Council of the AAC&U researched what outcomes undergraduate faculty believed students should attain by graduation, and sought to discover what skills and competencies employers seek upon hiring college graduates (AAC&U, 2007). This combined information guided the development of 16 outcomes in four categories that formed the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO). The LEAP ELO categories and outcomes served as the conceptual framework for this study.

This chapter reveals the interpretation of key findings of the study, implications for theory and practice, limitations and improvements, and recommendations for future research related to undergraduate theatre study and the LEAP ELO.

Interpretation of Key Findings

Through participant observation, I sought to illuminate how participation in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported or did not support opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO in four categories: *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, integrative and applied learning, intellectual and practical skills, and personal and social responsibility*. Within the four LEAP ELO categories, 16 LEAP ELO were explored as separate themes including: *civic knowledge and engagement, creative thinking, critical thinking, ethical*

reasoning, foundations and skills for lifelong learning, global learning, information literacy, integrative learning, intercultural knowledge and competence, inquiry and analysis, oral communication, problem solving, quantitative literacy, reading, teamwork, and written communication. One new theme, *sense of community*, and several subthemes were identified that fit within the LEAP ELO framework including: *challenging others, concern for others, courage, deference, expectations, fairness, flexibility, improvisation, leadership, listening, negotiation, motivating others, physical exercise, preparation, receive feedback well, sense of humor, self-knowledge, strive for excellence, support for others, and watching.* These constructed subthemes supported opportunities for learning LEAP ELO.

A Rich Source for Opportunities for Learning LEAP ELO

Since its application in American colleges in universities, no other LEAP ELO studies, to my knowledge, have been performed using ethnographic data collection methods. This study, therefore, contributes to the body of literature about opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO in unique ways. This study demonstrated that participation in the *Shakespeare through Performance Course* at [Pope Francis College] supported opportunities for learning all four LEAP ELO categories and 14 out of 16 LEAP ELO. This leads me to believe that theatre courses structured with similar content and pedagogy can provide a rich source of opportunities for learning the LEAP essential learning outcomes. The AAC&U espouses that over the course of four years, students should acquire all 16 LEAP ELO within the four LEAP ELO categories. While LEAP proposes that students should have opportunities for learning some of these outcomes in different courses throughout his or her college tenure, they do not promote that students should acquire these outcomes within one course. Although this study did not seek to explore the acquisition of outcomes, the number of opportunities for learning LEAP ELO

supported by this single course was notable. This study suggested support for Kindelan's (2012) proposition that theatre study presents an "optimal learning environment" (p. 87), as it offers opportunities for learning and achieving many of the desired outcomes of a 21st century liberal arts education.

My analysis indicated that opportunities for learning LEAP ELO were supported in three major ways in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course including: sense of community, word work, and classroom engagement. A summary of supported LEAP ELO and how they were supported is presented in Table 10. Specifically, sense of community supported opportunities for learning two LEAP ELO from the *intellectual and practical skills* category: *oral communication* and *teamwork*, as well as *ethical reasoning* from the *personal and social responsibility* category. Word work supported opportunities for learning many aspects of each of the four LEAP ELO categories including: *integrative learning* from the *integrative and applied learning* category; *creative and critical thinking*, *information literacy*, *inquiry and analysis*, *problem solving*, *reading*, *teamwork* and *written communication* from the *intellectual and practical skills* category; *global learning* from the *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* category; and *ethical reasoning*, *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*, and *intercultural knowledge and competence* from the *personal and social responsibility* category. Classroom engagement supported opportunities for learning: *integrative learning* from the *integrative and applied learning* category; *oral communication*, *problem solving*, *reading*, and *teamwork* from the *intellectual and practical skills* category; *global learning* from the *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world* category; and *foundations and skills for lifelong learning*, and *intercultural knowledge and competence* from the *personal and social responsibility* category.

In this section of the chapter, I interpret how participation in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported or did not support the construction of opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO categories and provide information about the construction of other skills or competencies that were supported through participation in the course that are not informed by the LEAP ELO. I also reveal unexpected findings. The presentation of my interpretation of key findings integrates existing knowledge from prior research literature.

Table 10

Summary Table of Supported LEAP ELO Findings

| LEAP ELO Category | LEAP ELO | SC | WW | CE |
|---|--|----|----|----|
| Integrative & Applied Learning Intellectual & Practical Skills | Integrative Learning | | * | * |
| | Creative Thinking | | * | |
| | Critical Thinking | | * | |
| | Information Literacy | | * | |
| | Inquiry & Analysis | | * | |
| | Oral Communication | * | | * |
| | Problem Solving | | * | * |
| | Reading | | * | * |
| | Teamwork | * | * | * |
| | Written Communication | | * | |
| Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural World | Global Learning | | * | * |
| Personal & Social Responsibility | Ethical Reasoning | * | * | |
| | Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning | | * | * |
| | Intercultural Knowledge & Competence | | * | * |
| | | | | |

Note. SC=sense of community; WW=word work; CE=classroom engagement

Sense of community. As stated in the Presentation of Findings section of Chapter 4, and as presented visually in Table 10, the sense of community of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course supported the construction of opportunities for learning three of the LEAP

ELO: *ethical reasoning*, *oral communication*, and *teamwork*. This section will address each of the LEAP ELO separately.

Established communities have rules and values that are often set by community members. *Ethical reasoning* involves “reasoning about right and wrong human conduct” (AAC&U, 2014b). A vignette in Chapter 4 demonstrates students’ reactions when I wrote a soliloquy line that I was struggling with on the chalkboard prior to a practice performance of our assigned *Hamlet* soliloquies and speeches. Two students confronted me for my behavior, as it contradicted accepted cultural expectations of the classroom community. The students applied *ethical reasoning* to determine that my actions were unacceptable, and to confront me about my misconduct. Since student learning extends beyond the teacher-student hierarchical model; opportunities for learning come from different sources and interactions (Tuyay et. al, 1995). Their interaction with one another and with me provided support for opportunities for learning *ethical reasoning* for others in the course. In Robles’ (2012) study, 93% of business executives surveyed indicated that integrity was the most important skill sought in employees. An employee with integrity was defined as an individual who is honest, *ethical*, has high morals, has personal values, and does what’s right (p. 455). This supports what LEAP espouses regarding the importance of *ethical reasoning* skills as a desirable outcome for college graduates entering the workforce. This course supported opportunities for learning and practicing *ethical reasoning*, which suggests theatre students from the *Shakespeare through Performance* course had opportunities to attain this desired skill.

Since a *sense of community* in the course created a safe environment for risk-taking, students had opportunities for learning *oral communication* skills through practice in front of the class and with one another. The LEAP definition of *oral communication* is, “a prepared,

purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors" (AAC&U, 2014b). Opportunities for learning *oral communication* came through performance and practice of sonnets, soliloquies, speeches, and scenes, and through classroom discussions. Oral communication was the most salient code in this study, and thus played a vital role in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. While it is important for theatre professionals to develop *oral communication* skills in order to be successful whether they work on or off-stage, *oral communication* has been found to be an important skill for success in many career paths. Robles (2012) performed a mixed methods study to identify the top 10 soft skills perceived most important by business executives and found "executives overwhelmingly indicated that integrity and communication were the top two soft skills needed by employees in today's workplace" (p. 455). Specifically, 91.2% of business executives stated that oral communication was extremely important (p. 456). Robles' (2012) study suggests that students are likely to require cultivated *oral communication* skills in any job they pursue after graduation. Theatre students enrolled in this course were exposed to many opportunities for learning and practicing *oral communication*, which suggests they had many opportunities to attain this desired skill.

The LEAP definition of *teamwork* is, "behaviors under the control of individual team members, effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on the team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions" (AAC&U, 2014b). The "effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on the team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions" (AAC&U, 2014b) was demonstrated in a telling case in Chapter 4 where students admittedly covered for one another when some of the group members did not perform the assigned reading in time for class

discussion. Their demonstration of *teamwork* and peer camaraderie by covering for one another contributed to the construction of a supportive, non-competitive classroom environment. Tinto (1987) advocated for the creation of classroom experiences where all classmates were equal members, and where students could “develop supportive, rather than competitive peer relationships” as a way to increase college student retention (Spann, 1990, p. 22). This suggests that the supportive nature of participation in a course where students develop a *sense of community* and support one another, as was the case in this course, may have positive implications on college retention for these individuals.

The theatre practitioners at [Pope Francis College] seemed exceptionally close. I was never a student in another college theatre program so I am comparing this program to that of my undergraduate and graduate programs in music where a competitive spirit often inhibited one’s ability to form close relationships inside the community. I was surprised to discover that rather than competition between students, the students demonstrated a mutual understanding and support for one another. One day I asked Merriam if I was wrong in my assertion. She stated that the only time competition comes into play is during auditions for shows. Once plays are cast, grudges are not held and people support one another. Students often take on a backstage or off-stage role when not cast in a show, and at a minimum, participate as members of the audience. I believe that my assertion was real; the theatre practitioners at [Pope Francis College] form a supportive community, as advocated by Tinto (1987). What I experienced there felt like a family; it was something that I have not ever seen or experienced in another theatre setting or in any other department on a college campus. As stated in Chapter 4 in the *sense of community* section, the [Pope Francis College] website indicates this is the type of experience college students will have when they come here, “When you leave your hometown to attend [Pope

Francis College], you'll quickly discover a new home here on campus, and your circle of lifelong friends will widen...Living and learning alongside friends who become like family.”

I did not ask a research question about retention, but I believe that student retention in this course is likely to be partly attributed to the *sense of community* present in the course and the department. The fellowship among the [Pope Francis College] theatre community members may be considered, by definition, a learning community. Pike and Kuh (2005) indicated that participating in learning communities can substantially increase student retention rates, and self-reported learning gains. As I noted in Chapter 4 in the *sense of community* section, one day Harry commented to his classmates about it being the last day to drop the course. Although he was trying to be funny, members of the class initially looked at him with concern; it was apparent that no one wanted to lose a member of their established learning community. Once it was obvious, from the wide smile on his face, that Harry was joking, everyone laughed and breathed a sigh of relief. The *sense of community* in this learning community may have contributed to class retention, as no one dropped the course.

Word work. After performing extensive nationwide research on college students using the *Collegiate Learning Assessment*, Arum and Roksa (2011) proclaimed that students of the current generation are not devoting a lot of time to school work and not making a lot of gains in learning throughout their college careers. The book implies that students are in school to get a degree and not to obtain an education. After seeing and experiencing one semester in the theatre department at [Pope Francis College], it is my perception that the *Shakespeare through Performance* course was the antithesis of the theme of Arum and Roksa's (2011) book *Academically Adrift*. The faculty crafted a rigorous academic curriculum and the students in this course rose to the challenge and exhibited an obvious commitment to learning.

The word work assignment was a challenging and important component of this course. Word work was homework that required students to prepare several sheets of linguistic and analytic information about their assigned Shakespeare piece prior to memorizing it for performance. Word work was divided into several components: translation, gist, scansion and punctuation, rhetorical devices, Quarto or Folio comparison, Quarto or Folio copy, performance chart and character analysis. Prior to preparing word work, students performed extensive reading assignments that required intense research for understanding.

Reading assignments elicited both critical and creative thought processes. Arum and Roksa (2011) considered any course with more than 40 pages of reading per week to be academically challenging. In a 15-week semester, that would calculate to 600 pages. This course required significantly more reading than that. The three Shakespearean plays and the Sonnets alone (in the Folger editions, with imbedded translation pages) were close to 300 pages each. Prof also assigned additional readings of articles and book chapters that he referred to as “graduate school level” material. The reading alone would be enough to classify the course as academically challenging, but other components of the course also contributed to its rigor. LEAP views *reading* as an essential *intellectual and practical skill*.

As stated previously, opportunities for learning many of the LEAP ELO were supported by word work homework. The most relevant component of this was the character analysis section which supported opportunities for learning LEAP ELO from each of the four categories. When I presented the initial results of the study with the students and professor at the end of the term, everyone was surprised at how this homework assignment provided such rich support for opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO. Specifically, character analysis supported opportunities for learning *integrative and applied learning, problem solving, creative thinking,*

inquiry and analysis, written communication, intercultural knowledge and competence, global learning and ethical reasoning, as presented in detail in Chapter 4.

Each word work assignment required seven or eight pages of work. This was followed by the addition of the memorization of an excerpt of text for performance. These excerpts were sonnets, soliloquies, speeches, and scenes; the excerpts were written, as Lisa stated in an interview, “in difficult Shakespearean language.” Each word work assignment took me, as a graduate student, approximately eight hours to complete. Memorization of a sonnet, speech, or soliloquy took me, on average, three to four hours. Once memorized, however, I would rehearse it while driving in my car, eating, or standing in the shower. I remember telling Robin one day that I felt most connected with Ophelia when I was rehearsing my soliloquy over a bowl of popcorn; I thought after Hamlet left her she would probably start stress-eating. Robin confessed that she felt most connected with Gertrude when she was rehearsing while doing her hair or brushing her teeth. This informed me that I was not alone in the constant rehearsal of a piece. The hours of formal rehearsal in class or in private coaching sessions with Prof, were complemented by untold hours of running lines on our own. In Arum and Roksa’s (2011) study, “37% of students reported spending less than five hours per week preparing for their courses” (p. 69). In contrast to this data, I spent an average of 12 hours a week on word work, assigned readings, and rehearsals for this class suggesting that the undergraduate students in the course likely committed a similar amount of time.

In Arum and Roksa’s (2011) study, results indicated that students attending liberal arts colleges saw “significantly higher gains in critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing skills over time than students enrolled elsewhere” (p. 122). As noted in Chapter 4, this aligns with my experience in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course at [Pope Francis College], a

college steeped in the liberal arts tradition, where opportunities for learning *critical thinking*, *ethical reasoning*, and *written communication* were supported throughout the semester.

Arum and Roksa (2011) stated that academic challenge has a strong relationship with student persistence (p. 131). The rigor of academic work for this undergraduate course was very high, which may have contributed to students' retention in the course.

Classroom engagement. Studies have demonstrated that classroom engagement is positively linked to desired outcomes of an undergraduate education (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). The *Shakespeare through Performance* professor engaged students in the learning process, and kept lectures to a minimum. Most classes involved extensive discussion, physical warm-ups, and coaching and/or performance opportunities. All activities, particularly the latter two, engaged the students physically, mentally, and emotionally, supporting opportunities for learning LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes from each of the four categories, as outlined in Table 10: (a) *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*, which included *global learning*; (b) *integrative and applied learning*, which included *integrative learning*; (c) *intellectual and practical skills*, which included *reading*, *teamwork*, and *problem solving*; and (d) *personal and social responsibility*, which included *foundations and skills for lifelong learning* and *intercultural knowledge and competence*. Several subthemes were also explored including: *challenging others*, *concern for others*, *courage*, *deference*, *expectations*, *fairness*, *flexibility*, *improvisation*, *leadership*, *listening*, *negotiation*, *motivating others*, *physical exercise*, *preparation*, *receive feedback well*, *sense of humor*, *self-knowledge*, *strive for excellence*, *support for others*, and *watching*. These constructed sub-themes supported opportunities for learning LEAP ELOs.

The *Shakespeare through Performance* course required students to both study Shakespeare's literature and execute performances of play excerpts. This integration of both study and performance of plays have played a vital role in the Jesuit educational system throughout history (Kindelan, 2012; Levy, 1997). LEAP indicated that by the completion of their studies, students should be able to demonstrate *integrative and applied learning skills*, including synthesis of knowledge across general and specialized studies, through application of theory to practice, and application of knowledge and skills to new territories (AAC&U, 2007; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012). This course was built on this premise, as students integrated their knowledge of the plays and their word work to the application of performance.

At [Pope Francis College], the lessons of history that complemented the study of the plays supported opportunities for learning *knowledge of human cultures and the physical world* as it was "focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring" (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4). As highlighted in Chapter 4, Prof provided examples of how the issues addressed in each of the plays still endure in contemporary society. This is why Shakespeare's plays are still being taught in schools and still being performed in theatres today.

LEAP espoused that upon graduation, all students should have developed *intellectual and practical skills* that are "practiced extensively across the curriculum in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance" (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4). As highlighted in Chapter 4, the most supported *intellectual and practical skill* in this course was *oral communication*. Levy (1997) summarized Sir Francis Bacon's (1607) thoughts about the benefits of theatre performance:

It is a thing indeed, if practiced professionally, of low repute, but if it be made a part of discipline, it is of excellent use. I mean stage-playing; an art which strengthens the

memory, regulates the tone of the voice and efficacy of pronunciation, gracefully composes the countenance and the gesture, procures a becoming degree of assurance, and lastly, accustoms youth to the eye of men. (Levy, 1997, p. 66; Robertson, 2013, p. 132)

The excerpt promotes the idea that rehearsals and performances of plays contribute to the development of *oral communication*. There were numerous opportunities for learning and practicing this skill throughout the 15 weeks of the course.

LEAP asserted that by graduation, all students should have developed an understanding of *social and personal responsibility*, “anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 12; Kuh & AAC&U, 2012, p. 4). Prof developed a culture in the classroom that supported different identities and beliefs supporting the LEAP ELO *intercultural knowledge and competence*. In an example presented in Chapter 4, students were introduced to this concept when Prof asserted that individuals should feel free to choose to perform works that they find interesting without the boundary of their assigned gender identity. Robin did this, as she learned and performed Antony’s speech “So is my horse, Octavius...” during the *Julius Caesar* unit of the course. Leeloo and Lisa also did this, as they each performed the title role in the *Hamlet* scenes, affording them an opportunity to freely cross gender boundaries through exploration and performance of the leading male role.

Levy (1997) offered examples throughout human history that demonstrate that the practice of theatre can train participants to identify, understand, and evaluate human behavior and moral dilemmas. As presented in the focus group excerpt in Chapter 4, Andy and Robin saw value in the practice of developing a character for performance, and stated that this supported their development of *personal and social responsibility* as it promoted opportunities for learning *ethical reasoning*.

The ATHE's (2001) white paper applied and assessed Boyer's (1990) model of scholarship for faculty to the discipline of theatre including: (a) the scholarship of discovery, (b) the scholarship of teaching and learning, (c) the scholarship of application, and (d) the scholarship of integration. The white paper also outlined examples of theatre pedagogy that can apply to Boyer's categories; this was restated by Kindelan (2012). Although I did not enter the course seeking out this pedagogy, Prof implemented aspects of this model throughout the semester, which contributed to classroom engagement.

The *scholarship of discovery* was defined in the ATHE (2001) white paper as the generation of new and unique knowledge or research. As outlined in the Chapter 4 word work section regarding character analysis, Prof encouraged students to discover their assigned characters and interpret their assigned pieces without watching performances using *creative thinking*. They were instructed to perform the word work assignment and make scansion and character analysis interpretations on their own. While I do not know for certain whether the students followed his instruction, each student appeared to provide his or her own unique interpretation of character in classroom performances.

ATHE (2001) described the *scholarship of teaching and learning* as "work that deepens our understanding of teaching and learning in the discipline, or sharpens our focus on student learning" (p. 3). For the discipline of theatre, the scholarship of teaching and learning was noted as "inquiry that produces knowledge that supports the process of learning the art of theatre" (p. 3-4). Each component of word work was to be executed prior to the memorization phase. The word work assignment produced knowledge that supported the process of learning each assigned sonnet, soliloquy, speech, or scene. Additionally, Prof varied lesson formats during each two-hour class, fostering an educational environment conducive to diverse learning styles.

The *scholarship of application* (later re-named “*engagement*”) emphasized the use of knowledge in solving societal problems or in developing civically engaged citizens (ATHE, 2001). Prof offered lessons of history including sharing information about Shakespeare’s motivation for writing some of his plays. When discussing *Julius Caesar*, Prof highlighted similarities between Queen Elizabeth I’s monarchy and Julius Caesar’s reign in Rome. Prof explained that censorship would have prevented Shakespeare from writing a commentary on the political situation of the Elizabethan era, but it was perfectly acceptable for Shakespeare to write a play that paralleled the story of the Elizabethan era. This prompted student discussion and provided examples of opportunities for learning *global learning and knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world*.

The *scholarship of integration* was expressed as the way in which cross-disciplinary connections are made (ATHE, 2001). A Harvard (2008) *Report of the Task force on the Arts* reported that the “inherent interdisciplinary character of a dramatic arts program, within the context of a liberal arts education, provides meaningful links to other concentrations” (Kindelan, 2012, p. 16). The entire course was interdisciplinary, as it involved the written literature of William Shakespeare and the performance of theatre. The course was grounded in the integration of learning across disciplinary lines. The most obvious example of this could be the transfer of knowledge between *English* courses and the *Shakespeare through Performance* course. Some students knew rhetoric and understood the meanings of rhetorical devices prior to joining this course. Prof provided lessons about how to find the rhetorical devices in Shakespeare’s work. This practice ties back to what LEAP would describe as *integrative and applied learning*.

Unexpected findings. As an ethnographic study, I believed it was important to interview the theatre students enrolled in the course so I could better understand who they were as individuals in relationship to the course and the theatre community. In informal interviews held before or after class or during break time, I asked students questions about their identities, as well as questions about why they took the course. Students' answers were compiled and shared in the biographical section of Chapter 4. What I found interesting about these interviews is what they did not say.

I first asked students about their ethnic and racial identity. Students in the course identified as white or Caucasian, black, biracial or multiracial. In a few cases, without prompting, students shared specific information about their ancestry, such as Cape Verdian, Haitian, Irish, Italian, or Portuguese. I then asked students about their religious identity. Many of the students identified as Catholic or Christian, which I expected, given the Jesuit Catholic foundation of the college. I then asked students one of two questions, "Are there other identities that you hold dear?" or "Are there any other identities that you would like to share with me?" In one case, a student stated that he considers himself to be athletic, as he boxes on the side. Another student stated that he identifies as a ballet dancer. Neither of my additional identity questions provoked any student to voluntarily share their sexual identity.

It is important to note that I chose not to specifically ask any questions about sexual identity, as it was not something I set out to discover in this study, but I did expect that I might learn this information through interactions with students or through informal interviews. In my reflective journal, I wondered why none of the students voluntarily shared their sexual identity when asked the identity follow-up question. In my prior experience at nonreligiously affiliated institutions, students voluntarily shared information on sexual identity without prompting. This

made me question whether the Jesuit, Catholic, campus culture impeded students' comfort level in sharing this identity with me. Ritter and O'Neill (1989) indicated, "Representatives and followers of traditional religion have often hurt lesbians and gay men by weaving a moral and historical tapestry of guilt, shame and repression rather than by providing a validation and inspiration for their inherent goodness" (p. 9). I decided to bring up the idea of repression and guilt in the focus group discussion at the end of the term.

In my presentation of findings during the focus group, I shared that I was surprised that no one voluntarily disclosed their sexual orientation in their interviews. I asked if the Jesuit Catholic nature of the college contributed to a heteronormative culture leading to homosexual repression. Prof responded first by saying, "I just want to say... it's 2015—I don't think it's a big deal anymore." I responded in the affirmative, but asked if identifying as anything other than heterosexual is a big deal on this campus. The following discussion ensued:

Prof: ...It's certainly not on the 4th floor of this building, but I can't speak for the experience of the students here.

Count: I would say that everyone here is pretty open about who they are, you know what I mean? If you ask someone their sexual orientation, I feel like they're pretty relaxed...

Robin: ... I think a lot of people, especially if you're raised Catholic, might come to college with issues of repression and guilt, and if anything, I think that this doesn't have to go into a critique of the college. For the most part [Pope Francis College], and especially this department of [Pope Francis College], does a really good job of fostering that ability to liberate yourself and be free. If there are issues of repression and guilt, which I think there are, I don't think that they're the fault of the college. I think that it's mostly what baggage people have brought to college.

Others affirmed what Robin was saying with follow-up remarks, and head nods in the affirmative. A recent study by Willette (2015) addressed the question of marginality and mattering for gay male students enrolled on Jesuit Catholic college campus. The study demonstrated that the students, "overwhelmingly described their daily experiences with campus climate as safe, accepting and inclusive" (p. 80). The reactions of students in this cohort at [Pope

Francis College] suggested a similar sentiment. Students believed that although some students may carry repression and guilt, it is not due to the fault of [Pope Francis College] and its Jesuit Catholic culture, but rather it may stem from life before college.

Implications of Findings for Theory and Practice

This study could make a case for theatre study as an element of a well-rounded liberal arts education. In Chapter 1, I cited that theatre programs have long struggled to demonstrate their worth in higher education. In recent years, theatre programs have faced threats of being cut or being merged with other programs, thus demonstrating a value problem for theatre in the academy. As stated by Clark (1971), “theatre is an administrative enigma” (p. 27), as administrators do not always understand its inherent value in a liberal arts education. Kindelan (2001) identified the importance to “dispel the myth that theatre programs deliver nothing on campus but *entertainment* and *feel-good, fun courses*” (p. 78). This study demonstrated that the *Shakespeare through Performance* course at [Pope Francis College] supported opportunities for learning many of the LEAP ELO, demonstrating its value beyond “entertainment” and being a “feel-good, fun course.” This study could serve as an example to make a case for theatre as part of a well-rounded liberal arts education, as theatre courses structured with similar content and pedagogy may provide a rich source of opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO.

This study highlighted the sociocultural nature of teaching and learning processes constructed within a theatre course, focusing on the social interaction of community members leading to a *sense of community*. These findings could have implications for pedagogic theory.

Sense of community was important in this study in two ways: (a) the classroom environment laid fertile ground for constructing opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO, as stated earlier, and (b) it provided opportunities for students to learn how to build and experience

a *sense of community*. Opportunities for learning a *sense of community* may stand on its own merit as a desirable outcome of a liberal arts education, as a *sense of community* is something that is helpful in college and in life. The University of Washington (2016) promotes this importance of sense of community to their community on a campus webpage:

With our society moving at a faster and more detached manner due to technology, busy schedules and the frequency at which we change jobs, homes and locations, it makes it harder and harder to feel any sense of community. It is too easy to become isolated in our homes and yet isolation tends to beget a sense of loneliness and depression not to mention the breakdown that can occur in communities due to a detachment from others—increased violence, substance abuse, mental illness and so forth. A strong community benefits the individual, the community as well as the greater society. People of all ages who feel a sense of belonging tend to lead happier and healthier lives, and strong communities create a more stable and supportive society.

A *sense of community* has implications for both an individuals' well-being, as well as others' well-being. A *sense of community* could be considered as one of the desired outcomes of a 21st century liberal arts education, as it is a competency that is valuable in all aspects of life, and can be valuable to individuals and employers. This could provide a case for National Leadership Council's inclusion of *sense of community* in a future version of the LEAP ELO.

This study has implications for faculty professional development. The *Shakespeare through Performance* course was developed at an institution that does not subscribe to LEAP ELO, and was taught by a Professor who knew nothing about the outcomes prior to teaching the course. Despite this fact, Prof infused opportunities for learning opportunities for learning fourteen of the sixteen LEAP ELO in the course, representing aspects of all four LEAP ELO categories: *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; integrative and applied learning; intellectual and practical skills; personal and social responsibility*. If every college course supported the construction of multiple opportunities to learn LEAP ELOs, students may have a better chance of attaining all of the outcomes by graduation. Finley and the

AAC&U (2012) suggested that faculty need to become champions for the learning outcomes. Since it is highly unlikely that every undergraduate faculty member already infuses opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO in their courses, I would agree with Finley and the AAC&U (2012) that it would be prudent for colleges to train faculty on the LEAP ELO, and ask them to consider ways to infuse each of the 16 ELO into their syllabi. This would improve students' exposure to opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO, and ultimately, may improve students' attainment of the LEAP ELO by graduation.

Limitations and Improvements

To strengthen this study, it would have been helpful to perform this study at an institution that infuses the LEAP ELO into their curricula, or at a minimum, provides faculty with training on the LEAP ELO. In this way, the faculty teaching the course would have an understanding of the LEAP ELO and may be more intentional about infusing opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO into the course.

If I had been granted permission to review student homework assignments, I could have assessed the homework submissions against the LEAP Value Rubrics taken from the *AAC&U LEAP Campus Toolkit* (AAC&U, 2016). This would have contributed an additional element to my findings, as the study could have addressed whether students were demonstrating any learning gains throughout the 15 weeks of the course.

If I had the foresight to see how strongly a *sense of community* may have influenced opportunities for learning within this study, I might have considered administering an instrument to measure student and faculty perception of the *sense of community*. The *Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2)*, developed by Chavis, Lee, and Acosta (2008), empirically measures Sarason's (1974) construct and McMillan and Chavis' (1986) theory. The instrument has been tested

($\alpha=94$), and in contrast to the original SCI, was found to be very reliable on all previously criticized measures (Chavis et al., 2008). If I had the opportunity to perform this study again, I would likely administer this instrument to address the internal validity of the *sense of community* aspects of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296).

Recommendations for Future Research

Opportunities exist for further exploring opportunities for learning found through theatre study. Further investigation of the in vivo codes that emerged in the present study could provide additional insight into their relevance in supporting opportunities for learning. A longitudinal study demonstrating outcomes from those who participated in college theatre study 5 or 10 years post-graduation could tell us more about the value of theatre study over the long term.

First, I would recommend that someone duplicate this study to see if there are common opportunities for learning LEAP ELO in a similar theatre course at another institution to determine if findings would be similar or different. The next time around, it would be important to perform the study on a liberal arts college campus that uses the LEAP ELO framework for their courses. A classroom ethnography methodology using a participant observation model for data collection would be recommended. Requesting access to review student homework submissions would be advisable, as it may provide deeper understanding of opportunities for learning, if not demonstrate actual learning outcomes. The biggest drawback of performing classroom ethnography is the time consuming nature of data collection and the dense resulting dataset. I would recommend retaining the structure of the research questions. If this study were to be reproduced with similar results, it could lend credibility to the results of this study, and produce broader implications for practice.

In the present study, several in vivo themes were coded including: *sense of community, challenging others, concern for others, courage, deference, expectations, fairness, flexibility, improvisation, leadership, listening, negotiation, motivating others, physical exercise, preparation, receive feedback well, sense of humor, self-knowledge, strive for excellence, support for others, and watching*. Each code supported opportunities for learning LEAP ELO in this course. In a future study, a researcher might consider applying a different theoretical framework to specifically explore the role of one of these themes in supporting opportunities for learning in a theatre course.

There is currently very little research about the longitudinal experience of college graduates who participated in college theatre programs. The current research by SNAAP (2014) focused on the post-graduation employability of students who majored in theatre and the arts. A comprehensive longitudinal study tracking college theatre students who graduated from a variety of academic majors over a longer period of time would provide an interesting addition to the body of research. This would help us to understand the long term influence of theatre study on student participants.

Summary

The purpose of this classroom ethnography was to explore what opportunities for learning, aligning with LEAP ELO categories, could be found in an upper-level theatre course for theatre majors at a small, selective, baccalaureate degree granting institution in the northeastern United States. The study included twelve participants, including the course professor, 10 students enrolled in a *Shakespeare through Performance* course, and myself as a participant observer. Using ethnographic data collection methods, the study explored how participation in an upper level theatre course supported or did not support the construction of

opportunities for learning the LEAP ELO categories. My analysis indicated that opportunities for learning LEAP ELO were supported in three major ways in the *Shakespeare through Performance* course including: sense of community, word work, and classroom engagement. Results demonstrated opportunities for learning 14 of the 16 LEAP ELO in the course, representing all four LEAP ELO categories: *knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, integrative and applied learning, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility*.

Using references to the literature, this chapter sought to deepen understanding of the findings of the study. This chapter included a discussion of how a sense of community in the course may have contributed to students' learning. I also discussed how academic rigor through word work and other homework assignments made the course exceptionally challenging and how such rigor may have influenced students' retention in the course. A discussion of the professor's pedagogy in the course demonstrated elements of Boyer's theory of scholarship and teaching. Lastly, in addressing what Kindelan (2001) stated of the importance to "dispel the myth that theatre programs deliver nothing on campus but *entertainment* and *feel-good, fun courses*" (p. 78), this study presented data that demonstrate that theatre is not just for fun, it can be academically rigorous, contributing value to a 21st century liberal arts education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter to the Dean of the College/Provost

[CSU LOGO/LETTERHEAD]

Date

Provost

[Pope Francis College]

Street Address

Northeastern United States

Dear Provost,

Thank you for your willingness to provide me with access to members of your college community for my upcoming dissertation research project. I am a doctoral candidate, pursuing a Ph.D. in Education and Human Resource Studies, with a specialization in Higher Education Leadership at the Colorado State University School of Education. For my study, I am interested in exploring what learning opportunities, aligning with the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes categories, can be found in an upper-level theatre course. I would like to use the spring 2015 THEA 370 course for my classroom ethnography.

I am writing to request your assistance with recruiting students for my dissertation research project. The working title of my dissertation is: *Opportunities for Learning LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes: A Classroom Ethnography of an Undergraduate Shakespeare*

through Performance Course. If you could forward the attached e-mail to all of your students who are enrolled in *Shakespeare through Performance*, THEA 370, by Date, I would appreciate it. Ideally, I would like to recruit all students enrolled in the course to participate in my study. Any of the students who agree to participate may withdraw from the study at any time. I will ask that students sign the attached Informed Consent form on or before the first day of class to solidify their interest in participating.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to clarify the details of my study and provide any additional information that you require. I may be contacted via e-mail jeanine.belcastro@gmail.com or by mobile phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Thank you for your assistance with this endeavor!

Sincerely,

Jeanine B. Went

Advisor: Dr. Linda Kuk

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Transmittal Message to be Distributed by the Dean of the College

Dear Participant of THEA 370,

I am conducting research to explore what learning opportunities, aligning with the LEAP Essential Outcomes categories, can be found in an upper-level theatre course. This research is a part of my doctoral work in Higher Education Leadership at the Colorado State University School of Education. The title of this dissertation is ‘Opportunities for Learning LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes: A Classroom Ethnography of a Shakespeare through Performance Course’.

I am inviting you to take part in this study. You are one of ____ (number of persons) invited to participate. Data for this study will be collected in the following ways: 1) participant observation, in other words, I will participate in the course, observe my surroundings and document my observations in field notes; 2) interviews, that is, I will occasionally, informally interview students or faculty in the course to better understand the information I am collecting; 3) focus group, on the last day of class the professor will perform an exit interview with students enrolled in the course. Participants will be invited to stay after that class to hear about the preliminary findings of my study and provide me with feedback. This process is known in the research community as “member checking”. All who participate in the focus group will be invited to lunch immediately following the focus group. I will pay for lunch in exchange for your participation. 4) I will review artifacts from the college such as the college website and the course catalogue, and artifacts from the course which will include textual documents such as the course syllabus, course texts and other reading assignments. Other artifacts may include photographs, video, and audio recordings of class sessions or interviews. All data will be

collected between January 20, 2015 and May 20, 2015. All data collected will remain confidential; only the researcher and committee members directly involved in the research will have access. Information you share will be listed under a pseudonym to ensure that you remain anonymous in the study.

The findings from this research will provide a richness of understanding of an academic theatre course that may influence decision makers to make informed decisions about theatre in higher education. This study might support the implementation of LEAP (Liberal Education and America's Promise) standards on this college campus, or on other liberal arts college campuses. The results of this study may provide supportive information for individual colleges' development of theatre concentrations, minors, or majors that do not currently exist, or support the hiring of theatre faculty on campuses with no current theatre faculty.

It is my hope that all students enrolled in *Shakespeare through Performance*, THEA 370, will participate in this study. If you would like to participate in this study, please sign and return the attached Informed Consent on the first day of class, on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, or before the first day of class through e-mail. The consent form was approved by the Colorado State University Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects in the research. If you have questions about this study, please contact me via e-mail at jeanine.belcastro@gmail.com or via phone at 617-817-6442.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate.

Sincerely,

Jeanine B. Went

Advisor: Dr. Linda Kuk

APPENDIX C

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Colorado State University

TITLE OF STUDY: Opportunities for Learning LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes: A Classroom Ethnography of a Shakespeare through Performance Course

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR:

Linda Kuk, Ph.D.

School of Education,
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
970-491-7243
Linda.kuk@colostate.edu

CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Jeanine B. Went, Colorado State University, School of Education. Doctoral Candidate in the Higher Education Leadership specialization of the Ph.D. in Education and Human Resource Studies program. E-mail: jeanine.belcastro@gmail.com
Telephone: 617-817-6442.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH? You are invited to participate in this study because you are registered for the THEA 370 course at the [Pope Francis College] during the Spring 2015 term.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY? The research will be conducted by me: Jeanine B. Went, under the supervision of my advisor, Dr. Linda Kuk.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY? I am conducting research to explore what learning opportunities, aligning with the LEAP Essential Outcomes categories, can be found in an upper-level theatre course.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST? The study will take place through participant observation of the *Shakespeare through Performance* course, THEA 370. The study begins on the first day of class, Tuesday, January 20, 2015 and it will end after the final exam period in May of 2015. Informal interviews will be held for no more than 15 minutes before or after class. Semi-structured interviews, when applicable, will take no longer than 45 minutes to one hour, and will be scheduled in advance. The interviews will be conducted in a private setting, either in a classroom, theatre, or office space on the college campus. Questions will be aimed at your learning experience in THEA 370.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO? Data will be collected for this study through various means. As stated earlier, I will be observing the Shakespeare through Performance class as a participant observer. I ask that you try to forget that I am observing the class, and just be yourself. Try to behave in the classroom as you normally would behave with no one observing. If you are interviewed for this study, please respond to all questions honestly. Informal interviews can be as simple as me asking you a quick question before class, or having an impromptu conversation with me. If you are present for the end of term focus group, please provide critical feedback about my interpretations. If you believe that my interpretations of course experiences are correct, please be prepared to state why, and if you believe my interpretations are incorrect, please be prepared to explain your views. Due to the nature of the focus group, some members of the group may agree with some of my findings while others disagree. Please do your best to offer your own responses, and not be swayed by group majority if your opinion happens to differ from others. It is my desire to hear all of your voices and develop a better understanding of your individual perspectives.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY? If you are under the age of 18, prior written consent of your parent or legal guardian is required.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS? There are no anticipated risks associated with your participation in this study. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researchers have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? There are no direct benefits for individuals participating in this study. However, the findings may benefit the [Pope Francis College], other liberal arts institutions, and other academic theatre programs across the country.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY? Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE? We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law. For this study, we will assign a pseudonym to your data (i.e.: *Jane* = Amy, *Jennifer* = Marla, etc.) so that the only place your real name will appear in our records is on the consent and in our data spreadsheet which links you to your pseudonym. Only the research team will have access to the link between you, your pseudonym, and your data. The only exceptions to this are if we are asked to share the research files for audit purposes with the CSU Institutional Review Board ethics committee, if necessary. When we write about the study to share with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be identified in these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private.

WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? At the end of the term, individuals who agree to participate in the Focus Group will be treated to lunch immediately following the focus group. No other compensation will be provided.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS? Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Jeanine B. Went at jeanine.belcastro@gmail.com or 617-817-6442. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the IRB Coordinator at: the CSU IRB at: RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu; 970-491-1553. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW? This study is a classroom ethnography; therefore there are several different steps involved with data collection, including participant observation, interviews, photography, audio recording, video recording, and review of discussion board posts in Moodle. Please check off each activity and initial each step you agree to.

Participant confirms participation in multiple activities (list):

Please initial by each research activity listed below that you are volunteering to participate in.

- ☐ Researchers can observe me in the course of my daily classroom activities _____(initials)
- ☐ Researchers may review and cite my discussion board posts in Moodle _____(initials)
- ☐ I will participate in an interview _____ (initials)
- ☐ I will participate in an end of term focus group _____ (initials)
- ☐ Researchers may take photos of me in the course of my daily classroom activities _____ (initials)

Permission to audiotape interviews and classroom experiences:

The researchers would like to digitally audiotape your interview(s) and classroom dialogue to be sure that your comments are accurately recorded. Only our research team will have access to the audio recordings, and they will be destroyed when they have been transcribed.

Do you give the researchers permission to audiotape your interview? Please initial next to your choice below.

- ☐ Yes, I agree to be digitally recorded _____ (initials)
- ☐ No, do not audiotape my interview _____ (initials)

Permission to re-contact:

Do you give permission for the researchers to contact you again in the future to follow-up on this study or to participate in new research projects? Please initial next to your choice below.

- ☐ Yes _____ (initials)
- ☐ No _____ (initials)

Permission to use direct quotes:

Please let us know if you would like your comments to remain confidential or attributed to you. Please initial next to your choice below.

- ☐ I give permission for comments I have made to be shared using my exact words and to include my (pseudonym/position/title). _____ (initials)
- ☐ You can use my data for research and publishing, but do NOT associate my (pseudonym/position/title) with direct quotes. _____ (initials)

Permission to videotape classroom experiences:

The researchers would like to digitally videotape the course to be sure that your comments are accurately recorded and taken within the context of the setting and the action. Only our research team, and select [Pope Francis College] faculty and staff will have access to the video recordings, and they will be destroyed one year after the course has ended.

Do you give the researchers permission to videotape the class? Please initial next to your choice below.

- ☐ Yes, I agree to be digitally recorded _____ (initials)
- ☐ No, do not videotape me during class _____ (initials)

Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 4 (four) pages.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of person providing information to participant

Date

Signature of Research Staff

APPENDIX D

Shakespeare through Performance Field Note Form

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Date: _____ Time: 10:00AM-11:50AM</p> <p>Location: _____</p> <p>Faculty/Facilitator:</p> <p>Participant/Observer: Jeanine B. Went</p> <p>Students: _____ _____ _____</p> | <p>Physical set-up of Room</p> |
|---|---|

| DESCRIPTIVE NOTES | | Opportunities for Learning LEAP Learning Outcomes |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Describe the physical setting. Describe the social environment and the way in which participants interacted within the setting. This may include patterns of interactions, frequency of interactions, direction of communication patterns (including non-verbal communication), and decision-making patterns. Describe the participants and their roles in the setting. Describe, as best you can, the meaning of what was observed from the perspectives of the participants. Record exact quotes or close approximations of comments that relate directly to the purpose of the study. Describe any impact you might have had on the situation you observed (important).</p> | | <p>Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical and Natural World</p> <p>Global Learning</p> <p>Intellectual & Practical Skills</p> <p>Creative Thinking</p> <p>Critical Thinking</p> <p>Information Literacy</p> <p>Inquiry & Analysis</p> <p>Oral Communication</p> <p>Problem Solving</p> <p>Quantitative Literacy</p> <p>Reading</p> <p>Teamwork</p> <p>Written Communication</p> <p>Personal & Social Responsibility</p> <p>Civic Engagement</p> <p>Ethical Reasoning</p> <p>Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Intercultural Knowledge & Competence</p> <p>Integrative & Applied Learning</p> <p>Integrative Learning</p> |
| REFLECTIVE NOTES | | |

| REFLECTIVE NOTES | Other Opportunities to Learn |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <p>Note ideas, impressions, thoughts, and/or any criticisms you have about what you observed. Include any unanswered questions that have arisen from analyzing the observation data as well as thoughts that you may have regarding any future observations. Clarify points and/or correct mistakes and misunderstandings in other parts of field notes. Include insights about what you have observed and speculate as to why you believe specific phenomenon occurred.</p> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

Describe the physical setting. Describe the social environment and the way in which participants interacted within the setting. This may include patterns of interactions, frequency of interactions, direction of communication patterns (including non-verbal communication), and decision-making patterns. Describe the participants and their roles in the setting. Describe, as best you can, the meaning of what was observed from the perspectives of the participants. Record exact quotes or close approximations of comments that relate directly to the purpose of the study. Describe any impact you might have had on the situation you observed (important).

REFLECTIVE NOTES

Note ideas, impressions, thoughts, and/or any criticisms you have about what you observed. Include any unanswered questions that have arisen from analyzing the observation data as well as thoughts that you may have regarding any future observations. Clarify points and/or correct mistakes and misunderstandings in other parts of field notes. Include insights about what you have observed and speculate as to why you believe specific phenomenon occurred.

TIME NOTES

This section indicates timestamps when I should return to recordings for more in-depth note taking or transcription.

APPENDIX E

Focus Group Questions

For the purpose of member-checking, one week prior to the focus group day, I sent each participant a copy of their mini-bio via e-mail. The e-mail included the following question:

Is the information I presented about you as an individual accurate? If not, what would you like me to change?

At the time of the focus group, I explained what “opportunities for learning” meant & handed the students a copy of my definitions of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. I then presented a slideshow sharing my preliminary findings. After my presentation, I asked the following:

- 1) With regard to the section on opportunities for learning, what responses do you have?
 - a. What parts resonated with you?
 - b. What suggestions do you have for making this summary more representative of your own experience?
- 2) With regard to the section on LEAP learning outcomes that were not apparent during this course, what responses do you have?
 - a. What parts resonate with you?
 - b. What suggestions do you have for making this summary more representative of your own experience?
- 3) With regard to the references to campus culture as a Jesuit, Catholic institution, what responses do you have?
 - a. What parts resonate with you?
 - b. What suggestions do you have for making this summary more representative of your campus culture?

APPENDIX F

Hamlet's "To be or not to be..." Quarto/Folio comparison.

(Q-1)

Ham. To be, or not to be, I there's the point;
To Die, to sleepe, is that all I all:
No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
And borne before an euerslasing Iudge,
From whence no passenger euer return'd,
The vndiscover'd country, at whose sight
The happy smile, and the accursed damnd.
But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
Whol'd heape the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich, the rich curst of the poore:
The widow being oppress'd, the orphan wrong'd,
The raffe of hunger, or a tyrants raigne,
And thousand more calamities besides;
To grant and sweate vnder this weary life,
When that he may his full *Quarrie* make,
With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,
But for a hope of something after death?
Which pusses the braine, and doth confound the sence,
Which makes vs rather beare those ills we haue,
Than lye to others that we know not of.
I that, O this conscience makes cowards of vs all,

(Q-2)

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question,
Whether tis nobler in the minde to suffer
The slings and arrowes of outragious fortune,
Or to take Armes against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing, end them, to die to sleepe
No more, and by a sleepe, to say we end
The hart-ake, and the thousand naturall shocks
That flesh is heire to, tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd to die to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to dreame, I there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death what dreames may come
When we haue shuffled off this mortall coyle
Must giue vs pause, there's the respect
That makes calamitie of so long life:
For who would beare the whips and scornes of time,
Th'oppressors wrong, the proude mans contumely,
The pang of despiz'd loue, the lawes delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurnes
That patient merit of th'vnworthy takes,
When he himselfe might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin, who would fardels beare,
To grunt and sweat vnder a wearie life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscover'd country, from whose borne

No traveller returnes, puzzles the will,
And makes vs rather beare those ills we haue,
Then lye to others that we know not of.
Thus conscience does make cowards,
And thus the native hew of resolution
Is sicklied o're with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprizes of great pitch and moment,
With this regard their currents turne awry,
And loose the name of action.

(F)

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
Whether tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune;
Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe
No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall Shocks

That flesh is heire too? 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To dye to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; I, there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
When we haue shuffled off this mortall coile,
Must giue vs pause. There's the respect
That makes Calamity of so long life:
For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time,
The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
The pangs of despiz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
When he himselfe might his *Quarrie* make
With a bare Bodkin? Who would these Fardles beare
To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscover'd Country, from whose borne
No Traveller returnes, Puzzels the will,
And makes vs rather beare those ills we haue,
Then lye to others that we know not of.
Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
And thus the Native hew of Resolution
Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
And enterprizes of great pitch and moment,
With this regard their Currents turne awry,
And loose the name of Action.