January 2014

Actualizing The Seventh Generation Prophecy In Teacher Education: A Case Study Of Preparing Teachers At A Tribal College

Lisa Jo Azure

ACTUALIZING THE SEVENTH GENERATION PROPHECY IN TEACHER EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF PREPARING TEACHERS AT A TRIBAL COLLEGE

by

Lisa J. Benz Azure

Bachelor of Science, University of Mary, 1992
Master of Science, University of North Dakota, 2000

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Grand Forks, North Dakota
August
2014

This dissertation, submitted by Lisa J. Benz Azure in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

_____
Dr. Bonni Gourneau, Chairperson

_____
Dr. Mark Guy, Member

_____
Dr. Glenn Olsen, Member

_____
Dr. Sherryl Houdek, Member At Large

This dissertation is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.

_____
Wayne Swisher
Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

_____
Date

PERMISSION

Title Actualizing the Seventh Generation Prophecy in Teacher Education: A Case Study of Preparing Teachers at a Tribal College

Department Teaching and Learning

Degree Doctor of Philosophy

In presenting this dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree from the University of North Dakota, I agree that the library of this University shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor who supervised my dissertation work or, in her absence, by the Chairperson of the department or the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. It is understood that any copying or publication or other use of this dissertation or part thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of North Dakota in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my dissertation.

Lisa J. Benz Azure
June 3, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Bonni Gourneau, my advisor and committee chair, and committee members, Dr. Mark Guy, Dr. Sherryl Houdek, and Dr. Glenn Olsen, who provided constructive feedback and guidance with the research and writing process. Dr. Guy and Dr. Olsen helped me identify the topic for the case study in their teacher education classes.

I was privileged to have Dr. James Banning as peer reviewer, Sharon Fields-Uhrich as editor, and Sandy Krom as formatter. I am fortunate the administration of the tribal college where I am employed allowed and encouraged me to conduct my research on campus.

My sincerest gratitude goes to my husband, Gerald, for encouraging me. I would like to acknowledge my three children for giving me purpose and a reason for modeling a lifelong desire for learning. A heartfelt thank you to my parents, Lloyd and Virginia Benz, who raised me to believe I can do anything with hard work, perseverance, and the grace of God.

I would like to thank Dr. Karen Gayton Comeau for being there for me when I had no idea where to start and at times when I was not sure how to continue. Finally, I would like to thank my former students, now professional educators, who participated in this case study. My life is richer because of knowing them and for that I am forever grateful.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study was to conduct a descriptive analysis of a teacher education professional educator licensure program for American Indian pre-service teachers at a tribal college. The professional educator was generally defined as one who completed a state-approved teacher education program and met state licensure requirements, including standardized testing requirements. The case study describes the context of a tribal college teacher education program and the dimensions of the program. Included are an analysis of documents, processes, and, most important, perspectives from the program graduates of the dimensions that contributed to their successful completion of the program, and meeting state licensure requirements, and factors that should be considered to strengthen the program for future teacher candidates, as well as those they felt were less significant.

Participants in this case study were 10 American Indian graduates of the tribal college elementary education baccalaureate program that was the setting for the case, all of whom have met state licensure requirements, and are currently practicing teachers. In addition, five faculty members from the same tribal college were included as participants to provide their perspectives.

Results from a series of qualitative surveys indicated four primary themes as contributing to the participants becoming licensed teachers: (1) rigorous program with high expectations for performance; (2) student financial grant support; (3) extensive

professional development opportunities; and (4) competent, caring faculty in diverse settings.

In addition to the survey results, an overall theme, "committed student and supportive program," was identified from analyses of individual interviews of participants based on their perspectives as students. The individual interview responses of the graduate participants, Tribal descendants who are overcoming diversity and fulfilling their roles of mending the "broken hoop," included a wealth of insight into the participants' experiences in their journey to becoming professional educators, actualizing the *Seventh Generation* prophecy, and making a difference in the lives of numerous children and their families. Their invaluable perspectives include implications for tribal, public, and private institutions of higher education intent upon increasing the number of licensed American Indian professional educators in classrooms throughout the United States.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> A professional consultant presented a session on campus for orientation at the beginning of the fall semester. The consultant, a Native American woman, used her personal life story as part of her introduction to connect with the students as a way of letting them know that she had been exactly where they were at some time in her life. After the presentation, the consultant met with a group of teacher education students to encourage them in their pursuit of becoming professional educators. She asked each one to share his or her own personal story. Hearing the students' individual stories had such an impact on the consultant that, from that day forward, she decided not to tell her own personal story again. She was humbled that her experiences paled in comparison to the challenges they had overcome to get to this point in their lives. (R. Klein, personal communication, June 3, 2008)

Professors at mainstream higher education institutions have observed American Indian[1] students who enter classrooms their first days of the new semester, sitting near the back of the classroom, rarely interacting with other students. They typically do not voluntarily participate in classroom discussions and will only respond to instructor questions when directly called upon. Most are first-generation college students who may be academically underprepared. They appear as if they have entered a foreign country, unfamiliar with the language or customs. As the semester progresses, they start missing one or two class periods per week. Eventually, the absences increase and they may miss a full week of classes. In time, they quit attending classes all together. By the end of the

[1] The terms American Indian, Native American, and Native are used interchangeably to indicate the indigenous people of the lower 48 states of the United States.

semester, they may or may not officially withdraw from the course or the institution; we just know they do not return to class and do not return the next semester.

The case study described in this dissertation will address what professors can do differently to engage their Native students in the classroom or prevent them from "disappearing" before the end of the semester. It will explore the data for reasons why American Indian students do not apply, persist, or graduate from colleges and universities at the same rate as other groups of students. Specifically, this case study describes a teacher education program at a tribal college institution of higher education that is contributing to the pool of American Indian professional educators as elementary education teachers: students who apply, persist, and graduate against considerable odds. The selection requirements for the case, the boundaries to the case, are "tribal college teacher preparation" and "one that produces students who meet requirements for professional licensure." The research question can be stated simply as "what is going on to produce the results in this program" from the perspectives of graduates of the program and the teacher education faculty.

There are currently 37 tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) in the United States serving approximately 20,000 students and representing 250 different tribal groups. Dine College, founded in Arizona in 1968 as Navajo Community College, was the first tribal college. United Tribes Technical College was the second tribal college founded in the United States, beginning as the United Tribes Employment Training Center with classes beginning September 1969. Most TCUs are less than 25 years old, have open admission policies, and all began as two-year institutions. According to the college catalog, in 1983, Sinte Gleska University in South Dakota became the first TCU in the United States

accredited to confer baccalaureate degrees. Elementary education was one of the first three bachelor degrees offered (*Sinte Gleska University*, n.d., p. 8). Of the nine TCUs in the country with teacher education programs, four are located at TCUs in North Dakota. All of the TCUs in North Dakota started their own teacher education programs by partnering with public, tribal, or private institutions. As recent as 2011, all now hold accredited status for their own teacher education programs by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (*Tribal Colleges*, n.d.).

The teacher education program described in the case study for this dissertation is located at a tribal college in the northern Midwest region of the United States. The college is a nonprofit corporation, governed by a board of directors made up of tribal representatives, is considered a land grant institution, and is regionally accredited through the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

The graduates of the teacher education program are participants in this research project and contributed through a series of surveys and interviews. The 10 graduates are American Indian, attended K-12 school on a reservation, graduated from the teacher education program at the tribal college that is the setting for this case study, and have met state licensure requirements as professional educators.

The five faculty who contributed to the data for this case study teach in the teacher education program. Three of the faculty are full-time faculty members and the other two are what the Teacher Education department refers to as "community-based faculty." Community-based faculty members teach one course every semester and are

employed full-time as teachers in local elementary schools. All of the faculty members hold an Educator's Professional License and have been teaching courses in the teacher education program for a minimum of five years.

The Teacher Education department has been involved with preparing students for professional teaching licensure for nearly 10 years. Prior to 2011, the bachelor degrees were conferred by an NCATE-approved teacher education program at a tribal university located in a neighboring state through a memorandum of agreement. The challenge with the partnership was the differences in educator licensure requirements between the two states.

In 2009-2010, a collective decision was made for the tribal college to seek approval to offer its own baccalaureate degrees. An article published by Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) would later become the impetus for the conceptual framework of the new teacher education program. The research reported in the article addressed the contrasting perceptions of students and institutions of higher education as one of either university-centered, "'coming' [to the institution] to partake of what the university has to offer" ("Coming to the University," para. 1), or student-centered, "what it has to offer is useful only to the extent that it respects and builds upon the cultural integrity of the student" ("Coming to the University," para. 5). Others may have addressed this concept more recently than this article but none could be found that included the subsequent philosophical implications for colleges and universities serving American Indian students. The "ideal teacher education program" described in this document is student-centered, designed after thoughtful consideration of and reflection on the unique personal traits and characteristics of the students who enter the program.

One of the first things to become evident in the development of the teacher education program was that preparing effective teachers is a complex process, encompassing a vast continuum of intertwined dimensions from program admissions policies, meeting the requirements for gateways throughout the program, to graduation requirements. For purposes of this case study, the focus remained solely on the teacher education program and its components that are specific to the actual preparation of individuals as professional educators for the elementary education classroom.

Based on observations of existing teacher education programs at other campuses, and from extensive readings of teacher education literature, it became apparent that an effective elementary education program, as one we envisioned creating, is comprised of multiple dimensions, all equally vital to the success of the program and reciprocated with one another. Encompassing these dimensions is the conceptual framework of the program. The conceptual framework is the guiding, overarching framework from which all else emerges.

Conceptual Framework of the Teacher Education Program

The conceptual framework of a teacher education program is the philosophical foundation for the program and is threaded throughout each one of the dimensions that represent the program. The conceptual framework is created collaboratively and agreed upon by consensus among stakeholders including students, teacher education and general education faculty, community members, external consultants, and representatives from student and campus services. We developed the philosophy, mission, and vision for the program, guided by these questions: What were our expectations for all involved? What was our philosophy of teacher education? What was our mission and how did it

incorporate the mission of the institution? What did we want our graduates to "look like" at graduation? What were our goals and what would be our assessment system to know if we met our goals? All of the decision-making that guided and emerged during the process was focused on the best interests of the elementary school children our graduates would teach when they became licensed educators.

As the conceptual framework for the teacher education program at our college was developed, the challenges were maintaining an identity as a tribal institution and designing the framework to encompass the state and national program standards (e.g., Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, or InTASC; and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, or NCATE). This is no different from any institution, each with our own identities with programs grounded first and foremost in state and national standards and simultaneously reflecting the identity of our students. We also needed to consider a graphic representation that was memorable and related to the framework to display across campus.

The conceptual framework for our elementary education program, represented by the figure of a dragonfly with its four wings, was based on the “4 Rs” concept (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991) and is as follows:

The conceptual framework is based on the philosophy that a competent, caring teacher is prepared to teach all children. We believe that teaching from what was traditionally a Native perspective is the best way for all children to learn. A Native perspective begins with recognizing the child in the context of family, community, and culture. Learning is a natural part of human growth, development, and socialization in all cultures. In many cultures, particularly Native American, the learning experiences that

constitute education are based in cultural values of relevance, relatedness, respect, and responsibility—referred to in this framework as the "4 Rs" ("Conceptual Framework," 2008).

> **Relevance** is demonstrated through meaningful and authentic learning experiences tied directly to state and national standards. Candidates learn and experience reflective practice through . . . [hands-on practicum] placements in the classroom under mentor and instructor guidance. They are provided the opportunity to study things that are meaningful and relevant to one's life and interests.
>
> **Relatedness** is believing and behaving as if you are a relative to another person or thing. It is demonstrated and reinforced through collaborations with children and families.
>
> **Respect** is a very important traditional Native value. Respect is demonstrated through student contributions and their respect of others' contributions. The disposition of respect is demonstrated through courtesy, kindness, and acceptance of individuals and their contributions.
>
> **Responsibility** is a core value of Native cultures as well as the teaching culture. Candidates are expected to demonstrate accountability for their actions and decisions as they engage in their general education and teacher education curriculum. ("Conceptual Framework," 2008, pp. 2-3)

The "4 Rs" are integrated throughout the teacher education unit and program(s) and are placed in the context of a holistic worldview and global interconnectedness.

These and other values will prepare teacher candidates, and in turn the children they will teach, to be productive members of society and have a good quality of life.

Child Development Foundation

Research in best practices for teacher education supports teacher candidates having a strong foundational background in child development theory. Typically, elementary education programs require an introductory psychology course and a child psychology or child development course. It is challenging to include all of the coursework that would truly prepare a teacher for "day one" within the time frame of an undergraduate degree so we have to be creative in program design. Regardless of the challenge of incorporating sufficient instruction in child development into a program of study, it is undisputed that knowledge of child development is the foundation for all teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

There is considerable research to support increased retention of teachers who have a good understanding of child development (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). It makes sense that teachers who are able to plan developmentally appropriate lessons will have less behavioral challenges in the classrooms, a factor that contributes to teachers continuing in the field of education. In addition, teachers who understand development and how to guide growth and development in children's learning are more effective educators. Teaching with consideration of the zone of proximal development and an understanding of scaffolding strategies is required for all teachers and gained through an extensive background in child development (pp. 105-106).

Within the past year, since the elementary education program was approved at our campus, two new courses were added to the program of study that support the emphasis

of developmentally appropriate practice for *all* children. Our conceptual framework supports preparing teachers to teach *all* children and it seemed as if we were missing a piece. A new course was developed, "Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children," that focuses on children who are culturally and linguistically diverse, including English language learners, children whose language is impacted by an indigenous language, and children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The second course, "Creating Inclusive Classrooms," focused on strategies to increase elementary education classroom teachers' knowledge and expertise for creating an inclusive classroom that accommodates children with diverse learning needs. The purpose for both of these courses was to build upon the child development theory courses and elevate the teacher candidates' level of skill and knowledge to enhance their abilities to engage in developmentally appropriate practice and meet the needs of *all* students in their classrooms.

Critically Reflective Practitioners

Effective classroom teachers are reflective practitioners (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The ability to reflect on teaching and learning, our actions and the students' learning, permeates all learning experiences within and throughout the ideal teacher education program. An inference from the *Powerful Teacher Education* (Darling-Hammond, 2006) case was that teacher preparation programs must provide opportunities for candidates to practice and reflect on teaching while still enrolled in their preparation program.

The elementary education program at our tribal college provides opportunities for teacher candidates to practice reflective thinking skills. Increasing critical reflection skills

was identified as a focus goal the first year and we have been successful with creating this foundation. Candidates are taught critical reflection skills early in their program of study and provided opportunities to practice in their college classrooms so they are skilled before they enter the classrooms in their field placements.

One of the topics for reflective practice exercises is apprenticeship of observation. Apprentice of observation is defined as the "phenomenon whereby student teachers arrive for their training courses having spent thousands of hours as schoolchildren observing and evaluating professionals in action" (Borg, 2004, p. 274). This apprenticeship, according to Borg, is responsible for the preconceptions about teaching that pre-service teachers have upon entering their formal teacher education experience. Because our students typically come from educational systems that may not practice effective teaching practices, we use these apprenticeship experiences as case studies for critical thinking practice. The candidates recall teaching experiences they had as students and then reflect on the role of the teachers. Without being critical, we discuss their interactions with the teachers and either justify their actions or brainstorm what we might do differently.

In addition, the teacher education program has implemented electronic portfolios that are aligned with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). As the candidates upload artifacts to their portfolios, they write a reflection of the artifact, supporting why they chose it, its effectiveness, and suggestions for modifications. On their lesson and unit plan forms, there are specific sections for including their reflections after the unit or lesson is implemented. This information is included in the portfolio, as well.

This past fall, two additional courses were developed and added to our program that are named similar to two graduate teacher education courses at one of the public research universities in the state. They are each two credit courses, one in the fall and one in the spring, "Teacher Education: The Teacher" and "Teacher Education: The Student." The two courses provide opportunities for the pre-service teachers to practice critical reflection as they create and implement unit and lesson plans and apply these reflections to case studies aligned with the InTASC standards. This can be viewed as concurrent preparation for using reflective practices in their field placement.

Coherent, Relevant Curriculum

Historically, teacher education programs seemed to have been criticized for being heavily focused on theory with little connection to practical applications. The trend in program development, as supported by evidence-based research, is coursework and subsequent learning experiences that are connected, coherent, and relevant (Hammerness, 2006). Integrated throughout the coursework are supervised field placements that link theory and practice in schools serving diverse student populations and providing opportunities for engaging with classroom teachers who model good teaching.

Defining Characteristics of the Teacher Education Program

According to the research in teacher education, and as previously discussed, an effective teacher education program includes multiple dimensions, all contributing to the success of the teacher candidates participating in the program. Enormous strides have been made in teacher education over the past 30 years with various designs of programs that are all effective. One thing that appears to be agreed upon is there is no consensus on how to best prepare teachers (Sadker & Zittleman, 2010). If the goal is success for our

graduates, and success is defined as graduating and achieving professional educator licensure, then the effectiveness of the program is determined by its participants achieving success within each of the multiple dimensions.

There are four dimensions, or defining characteristics, of the teacher education program at the tribal college for this case study that may contribute to the success of its teacher candidates graduating from the program and meeting the requirements for teacher licensure. These four characteristics will be specifically addressed in the surveys and interviews with the program graduates and faculty who are participants in this case study research to determine their significance, if any, on the outcomes achieved by the teacher education graduates.

The first defining characteristic of the teacher education program is the curriculum, intentionally designed to reflect the philosophy of the teacher education conceptual framework that a competent, caring teacher is prepared to teach *all* children. Based on observation and interpretation of American Indian cultures, as well as others, the learning experiences that constitute education are based in cultural values of relevance, relatedness, respect, and responsibility—referred to in this framework as the "4 Rs." Relevance is demonstrated through meaningful and authentic learning experiences. Relatedness is the belief you are a relative to another person, and act accordingly. Respect is demonstrated through teacher candidate contributions and respect of the contributions of others, demonstrated through courtesy, kindness, and acceptance of individuals and their contributions. Responsibility is a core value of Native cultures as well as the teaching culture. Candidates are expected to demonstrate accountability for their actions and decisions as they engage in their general education and teacher

education curriculum. The "4 Rs" are integrated throughout the teacher education program, as the philosophy for the conceptual framework, within the curriculum, and as four of the seven teacher dispositions candidates are expected to demonstrate.

The teacher education curriculum does not include coursework specific to any one particular American Indian tribal group because of the diverse tribal groups represented within the student population. As described in the conceptual framework, teacher candidates are prepared for the purpose of teaching *all* children. If the candidates are prepared as they should be, they are able to teach all children, particularly but not specifically Native children. American Indian content is learned in general education coursework at the college and is integrated within and infused throughout all of the teacher education coursework, building on the contribution of the students as *cultural brokers*, with each bringing their own tribal values and customs to the classroom and reflected in their assignments and other contributions. But just as teacher candidates at mainstream institutions benefit from learning strategies for teaching children from backgrounds different than their own, so too the American Indian teacher candidates at this tribal college benefit from learning strategies for teaching children from different backgrounds than their own, including but certainly not limited to American Indian children. As previously mentioned, we cannot assume our graduates will return to reservations to teach nor can we assume they will not. They must be prepared to teach *all* children and in *any* community. Therefore, the program of study includes a significant number of courses specifically designed for teaching children who are culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse (see Appendix C).

The second defining characteristic is a practice for student teaching placements that is a variation of "walking around" culture (Sparapani et al., 2011). Candidates are required to student teach in a school with a majority population of children and families from cultural backgrounds different than their own. This means the American Indian teacher candidates are placed in one of the public schools in the local community. There is an elementary school on the college campus serving Native children that would be an appropriate placement for the candidates. The teachers employed at this school participate in extensive professional development opportunities, have advanced degrees and extensive experience, and demonstrate commitment to the education of the Native children who attend their school. The American Indian, or Native, candidates would prefer to student teach at this school because of their comfort level with the setting, the student population, and the families. Candidates are placed at this school for field placements prior to student teaching, during their first three years in the program; however, for the culminating student teaching experience, candidates are required to student teach in the public schools. The public schools placement for student teaching moves the teacher candidates outside of their comfort zones into an environment with people who are typically culturally different than the candidates. This is more challenging than one might think and candidates must be prepared in advance for this experience in order for it to be effective.

The third defining characteristic of the teacher education program described in this section is the intentional focus on the personal and professional growth and development of the teacher candidates. All teacher candidates are required to maintain memberships in professional organizations, attend and participate in the meetings of the

organizations, judge local and state science fairs, and attend professional conferences. Each one of the candidates is also required to present at least once at a local, state, or national conference. They may choose to do their presentation with a peer, or group of peers, but they must take an active role and have a speaking part during the presentation. After participating in the professional organization meetings and completing their presentations, they reflect on their experiences, what they learned, and what they would do differently next time. These types of experiences are significant for people who have never done these types of things before, or ever imagined they could, particularly in settings that have been typically dominated by the mainstream culture. Without exception, the levels of insecurity and apprehension initially experienced by the candidates decrease significantly with each experience.

The professional development characteristic is one of seven teacher dispositions candidates are expected to demonstrate. The candidate dispositions are assessed each semester beginning with the first semester in the "Introduction to Education" course. Candidates participate in a process of self-reflection and self-assessment that is continued throughout each semester in the program. They are familiar with the expectations of behavior included in each of the dispositions, are aware of their own progress as they develop the dispositions, and through the self-assessment process are able to assume a level of responsibility for their own growth and development.

The fourth defining characteristic of the teacher education program is the criteria and schedule for the Praxis I: PPST requirement. All students in the teacher education program progress through a series of gateways referred to as *touchstones* as they pursue teacher candidacy status. The term, touchstones, was brainstormed by two teacher

education faculty intent on finding a term unique to the program for the "gateways" candidates pass through, or meet, as they progress through the program (see Appendix D). The criteria for each touchstone include minimum requirements such as a cumulative grade point average, a designated score on the dispositions assessment tool, grades of B or higher in select courses, and completion of certain identified coursework. The students are required to take the Praxis I: PPST in reading, writing, and mathematics when they apply to the teacher education program; however, a feature unique to this program is teacher candidates are not required to meet the cut scores determined by the state in order to continue in the program. This means they do not have to pass the test in order to continue. Instead, the PPST scores are used to identify baseline levels of achievement and as an assessment of areas the students need to focus on improving. It is our contention that our students are not deficit in their ability to master content in these three areas. They are, from their own perspectives, often products of K-12 education systems that did not teach them the skills they need to meet the cut scores on these tests.

Many first-year students at this college are required to complete remedial courses the first semester. Again, the students are not viewed as having deficit abilities; they simply have not acquired the knowledge and skills prior to coming to campus to prepare them for postsecondary education, for various reasons. Building on skills acquired in the remedial courses, the students proceed through a coherent series of General Education and teacher education courses that include direct teaching of the knowledge and skills they need in order to become effective professional educators with a level of competence in the basic skills as evidenced by the cut scores of the Praxis I: PPST. As their skills continue to increase, they re-take the PPST tests when they and the teacher education

faculty feel they are ready. Students, as candidates, are not allowed to apply for student teaching until they have successfully met (passed) the cut scores for all three areas of the Praxis I: PPST that have been set by the state board that oversees the professional educator licensure process. In the past 10 years, only 2 of approximately 30 teacher education candidates have been denied the opportunity to student teach based on the inability to meet the cut scores of the PPST. Both of these candidates are in the process of studying for the test and have one academic year to meet this requirement. Of course, a number of our students meet the cut scores the first time they take these tests, similar to any other institution.

Purpose for the Study

The purpose of this research study was to conduct a descriptive case study analysis of a teacher education professional licensure program for American Indian pre-service teachers at a tribal college. The professional educator was defined as one who completes an approved teacher education program and meets state licensure requirements, including standardized testing requirements. An approved teacher education program is one that has met the criteria established by the state teacher education program approval office. The literature supporting effective programs in teacher education is extensive; however, little attention is paid to programs at tribal colleges, particularly those that prepare professional educators who are able to meet state licensure requirements. The results of this case study may contribute to the research by examining and describing dimensions of a program for preparing American Indian professional educators at a state-approved teacher education program at a tribal college. The case study described the context of a teacher education program and, consequently,

the dimensions of the program. It included an analysis of documents, processes, and perceptions of the research participants. Most important, this case study included perspectives about the program gained through surveys and interviews of graduates and faculty, what they identified as most valuable, what they felt was less significant, and their recommendations for future considerations.

The following terms will guide the reader to a better understanding of terms that may be unique to the tribal college that is the setting for this case study.

Glossary of Terms

Advisor: At this tribal college, all full-time teacher education faculty serve as advisors to all of the teacher education students.

Campus elementary school: A K-8 school located on the tribal college campus. The school is considered a contract school, operated by the Bureau of Indian Education. Services children who are dependents of the college students attending the tribal college described in this case study.

Cultural brokers: A person who can "straddle" two or more cultures comfortably, who can move in and out of one culture and into another quite different from their own, another tribal culture, social setting, religious event, and so on.

Cut scores: Numeric scores that have been identified by the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board, the entity that oversees the professional educator licensure process. Cut scores are the minimum scores considered as "passing" for Praxis I or Praxis II tests.

Enrolled tribal member: A person who meets the criteria for membership for a federally recognized tribe. Criteria may include a certain percentage of American Indian

heritage or lineage, referred to as "degree of blood," or being a descendent of an enrolled tribal member. Lineage must be documented and parentage verified in order to meet the criteria and be assigned a tribal membership identification number.

Faculty participants: Faculty members teaching in the teacher education program and participating in this case study.

Federally recognized tribes: Tribal affiliations usually associated with a reservation land base in the United States and recognized as official tribal groups by the United States government.

General Educational Development (GED): A group of tests that certify, when passed, that the test taker has high-school level academic skills. Passing the GED test gives those who did not complete high school the opportunity to earn their high school equivalency credential in the United States.

Graduate participants: Former students who have graduated with a degree in elementary education from the tribal college teacher education program, have met the criteria for teacher licensure, and are participating in this case study.

Home agency: Federal or tribal entity allocating resources, located on a tribal member's reservation where he or she is enrolled.

Red road: A term used to refer to remaining drug and alcohol free. A person who is "walking the red road" is a person who is living life without using alcohol or drugs.

Seventh generation prophecy: According to this prophecy, after seven generations of living in close contact with the Europeans, young tribal descendants who are growing up today will seek to find ways to bring back their culture/language. Different tribes have different interpretations of this prophecy.

Success: For purposes of this case study, defined as one who meets state licensure requirements, including program completing and standardized testing requirements.

Teacher candidate: A student in the teacher education program who has met certain criteria for admissions into the program.

Tribal higher education program: Many tribes in the United States have their own tribal higher education programs that provide financial support in the form of scholarships to students who are enrolled members of that particular tribe and maintain satisfactory academic progress, as well as other criteria.

Statement of the Problem

There is very little research about American Indians in teacher education programs and even less for teacher education at tribal colleges and universities. In the literature that exists, researchers have attempted to explain reasons for the low retention rate of American Indian students in general but the problem persists. In 2003, Butt from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee published an issue brief addressing resources for institutions of higher education to access to increase success rates of American Indian students in higher education. Butt (2003) cited sources from 1993 and 1997 that 93% of American Indian students drop out of college prior to graduation. Butt (2003) identified risk factors that contributed to Native students' low rate of retention: "delayed

enrollment, part-time attendance, financial independence, having dependents, being a single parent, working full time, and being a GED recipient" (para. 1). Butt (2003) determined that 35% of American Indian/Alaskan Native undergraduate students faced four or more of these factors compared to 22% of all undergraduates. These statistics indicate roughly one in five of all undergraduate students have four or more of the risk factors compared to one in three Native undergraduate students having four or more of these factors. Is this significant and were these risk factors prevalent among the graduates of the program at the tribal college for this case study? The research participants for this case study provided their perceptions of these risk factors in their interviews.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (2013) reported in the annual *2012-13 Administrative & Instructional Personnel Data in Public Schools* that of the 8,064 elementary and secondary school teachers in the state of North Dakota, 195 of these teachers identified themselves as American Indian. In addition, the following statistics reported for the state reinforce the immediate need for more American Indian teachers:

> North Dakota ranks as one of the top 20 states with a significant enrollment of Native American student populations in the country with 10,734 [Native American] students enrolled in BIA, Tribal, and Public schools in the state. Native American students constitute approximately 8.9% of the total North Dakota enrolled student population. By ethnicity, Native American [students] comprise the second largest group of students in North Dakota. (North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, n.d., para. 1)

To summarize the problem, and strengthen the case for more research in teacher education programs for American Indian students, calculating the statistics for the state of North Dakota results in 2.4% of the elementary and secondary teachers in the state as identifying themselves as American Indian. Comparing this to the approximately 8.9% of Native American student population, it seems obvious that we need to increase the numbers of Native American professional educators in this country, and particularly the northern Midwest region.

Research Questions

The central research questions for this case study focused on the teacher education program at a tribal college and the dimensions of this program that contributed to the graduates' successful completion of the program and meeting state licensure requirements. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What defining characteristics, or dimensions, of the teacher education program contributed to the graduates' success with meeting teacher licensure requirements?
2. What are the participants' perceptions of factors the teacher education program should adopt that, if adopted, would strengthen or enhance the success of the graduates to meet teacher licensure requirements?
3. What are the participants' perceptions of existing factors that detract from being successful in the program and meeting teacher licensure requirements?

Researcher Background

I have invested considerable time and energy into the development of the teacher education program at this tribal college. As an advisor and faculty, I have a relationship

with my students, the program graduates who are participants in this case study research project, and with the faculty, whom I supervise. My intent is to use the results of this study similar to that of a formative assessment tool that will provide information for continuous improvement of the program. The best sources of information for guiding improvement and identifying strengths are the graduates of the program and the teacher education faculty.

A researcher must recognize potential for bias to support validity when analyzing data (Creswell, 2007). Because I was aware of the potential for bias, and the possibility that I may influence the responses to the interview questions because of my position here at the tribal college, I assured the research participants that I was seeking their perspectives because I valued their contribution and that they possessed knowledge and insight that I do not have. In addition, I solicited the input of a peer reviewer, James H. Banning, Ph.D, Professor Emeritus at Colorado State University, in an attempt to increase the level of validity of the data analysis. Dr. Banning was a professor of mine for two online qualitative research courses, although I have never personally met him.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this qualitative case study is based on the work of Noddings (2003) and others who advanced the *ethic of caring*. This framework is grounded in caring reciprocal relationships, building levels of trust, and the establishment of high expectations that, when conveyed to the students, result in increased academic performance.

Noddings (2005a) suggests the establishment of caring relationships forms the foundation for pedagogical activity. When educators listen to students, and the students

perceive they are listening, a sense of trust emerges. In a mutual relationship of caring and trust, students are more likely to accept what the teachers are trying to teach. Through this reciprocal caring relationship, the teacher learns the students' needs, interests, and talents. Furthermore, as they learn more about the individual students and their unique needs, as part of the reciprocity of the relationship, competence is increased in both parties.

The integration of this theoretical framework recognizes the impact of reciprocal caring relationships on increasing retention of American Indian students in postsecondary institutions by responding to three questions:

1. Who are the American Indian students from rural and reservation communities who enter our college classrooms?
2. What are the implications for reciprocal caring relationships between these students and their faculty?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of faculty in the relationship?

Noddings (2003) defines reciprocity as "what it means to care and to be cared for" (p. 4) and describes a caring relation as,

> in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for. In order for the relation to be reflective of the ethic of caring, both parties must contribute to it in characteristic ways. (p. 15)

Reciprocal caring relationships have proven effective with students at elementary and secondary levels of education, particularly with those from underserved populations. The question that is the foundation for the theoretical framework of this case study is

what, if any, are the implications for reciprocal caring relationships at the postsecondary level of education and will the interviews with the participants who are graduates of the program result in themes that indicate the impact of the reciprocal relationships on their success at meeting licensing requirements.

De Guzman et al. (2008) conducted a quantitative study with 1,000 junior undergraduate students at a large university in the capital city of Manila, in the Philippines. The study addressed the following three research objectives: (a) the effect of college teachers' acts of caring on students' personal and academic behaviors, (b) identity students' sources of caring support, and (c) the students' perceptions of their teachers' caring behaviors when grouped according to demographics.

The researchers developed a survey instrument that was administered to determine the students' perceptions of reciprocal caring relationships. The results of this study provided implications supporting the need to promote pedagogy of caring in university teaching. Interestingly, the acts identified by the students as "caring" acts of teaching were what some would identify as typical expectations of best practices in teaching, sound pedagogy and transformative teaching at the elementary and secondary levels but often absent at the postsecondary level of education (de Guzman et al., 2008).

While the ontology of caring may seem simplistic, the act is an extraordinary process. The surveys indicated "teachers' caring behavior pushes students to do well and excel in class activities, meet teachers' expectations; effect positive changes through proper channels, experience self-discovery and appreciation and at times, test the limits of boundaries set in class" (de Guzman et al., 2008, p. 499).

Outline of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters and appendices. The first chapter provides an introduction to tribal colleges in general, a description of the tribal college that is the setting for the case study, a brief description of the participants and the dimensions of the teacher education program, the purpose for the study, statement of the problem, and the research questions. Chapter II presents a comprehensive review of the literature. Chapter III describes the research methods including how the case was selected, the forms of data collection, the data analysis processes, the validation strategies, limitations, as well as the role and background of the researcher. Chapter IV describes the program documents, the results of the surveys, and the themes that emerged from the interviews with the research participants accompanied with quotes. The results are presented using rich, thick description characteristic of case study design.

The last chapter, Chapter V, discusses the implications for practice, future research potential, the strengths and limitations of the study, and a conclusion. The appendices will include the interview protocols, as well as other supporting documents.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter II presents an overview of the literature that informs the tribal college teacher education program described in this qualitative case study. The following section includes the work of researchers and theorists who have studied the dimensions of teacher education and the factors that contribute to the design of the program, the faculty who teach in the program, and the students themselves.

The teacher education program at the tribal college that is the setting for this case study views itself as a professional program. One of the defining characteristics of a profession is a scholarly knowledge base (Shulman, 1998). The obligation of the program is to help candidates "to both understand and move beyond their own personal knowledge and experiences to bring to bear a wider set of understandings on the problems of helping others learn" (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005, p. 12). In addition to the three general knowledge areas beginning teachers must acquire—knowledge of learners, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals, and knowledge of teaching (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005)—beginning teachers must also have knowledge in areas specific to the populations that they will be prepared to teach.

The unifying concept on which this college, as an institution, and the teacher education program base teacher preparation is the competent, caring educator with the skills, knowledge, and disposition to empower their communities by teaching the children

in these communities. In striving to name the qualities believed to be apparent in great teachers and great pre-service teachers, the teacher education program personnel arrived at the words competent and caring.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (n.d.) defines competent teacher candidates as those who can (a) demonstrate that they can teach all children—including students of diverse backgrounds; (b) use technology effectively to help students learn; and (c) reflect on their practice, and change what does not work. The concept of caring in this framework is equated to that of the warm demander. Kleinfeld (1975) first used this phrase to describe the type of teacher who was effective in teaching Athabaskan Indian and Eskimo ninth graders in Alaska schools. Warm demander is a teacher stance that communicates both warmth and a nonnegotiable demand for student effort and mutual respect. Even though Kleinfeld's research was more than 40 years ago, the concept remains relevant today.

In 1996, the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future summarized its challenge to the American public in stating, "By the year 2006 . . . [America] will provide . . . [all students] with what should be . . . [their] educational birthright: access to competent, caring, [and] qualified . . . [teachers]" (p. 10). The Teacher Education department accepted this challenge and identified it as the theme for the department's conceptual framework.

Program Design

According to the literature, an important dimension of an effective teacher education program is program design and pedagogies as applied to the coursework included within a program of study. The core knowledge is evident within each of the

courses in the program but equally important is the organization of the pre-service teachers' experiences within the course sequences, or what is referred to as "coherence." According to Darling-Hammond (2006), "teacher educators must worry not only about what to teach but also how, so that knowledge for teaching actually shapes teachers' practice and enables them to become adaptive experts who can continue to learn" (p. 306).

Organizing candidates' experiences in a program so they integrate their knowledge and skills adeptly in a classroom environment is challenging (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Three challenges in particular are identified:

1. Learning to teach means that we may have to re-think what we know about teaching and practice in ways quite different from our previous experiences. This is referred to as "apprenticeship of observation" and is referenced in this document.
2. Learning to teach requires us to "think" like teachers as well as "act" as teachers. We not only have to understand a wide variety of content and contexts but we also have to be able to do a wide variety of things, simultaneously.
3. Learning to teach requires us to deal with the complex nature of the classroom, responding to and acting on assessments, standards, academic and social goals, all within a classroom environment with a wide range of diverse learners (pp. 394-395).

The seven exemplary programs described in the case study by Darling-Hammond in *Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs* were able to meet

and overcome these challenges (Darling-Hammond, 2006). These programs had three pedagogical features in common that were identified as essential:

- Coherence and integration among and between coursework—Subject matter is learned best when it is brought together with content pedagogy through courses that are linked together. Core ideas transcend across assignments and courses, allowing candidates and faculty to see relevance in the material and its relationship to the program as a whole.
- Extensive and intensely supervised clinical work—The key is for candidates to learn from expert practice in schools that serve diverse students. Extensive clinical work, intensive supervision, expert modeling of practice, and diverse students are critical to allowing candidates to learn to practice in practice with students who call for serious teaching skills (Ball & Cohen, 1999).
- New relationships with schools—No amount of coursework can overcome the perceptions of students who have been apprenticeships of observation. Coursework alone cannot prepare candidates to teach in a way they have never actually been engaged in and to ignore their own observations and experiences in school. Although professional development schools partnerships are extremely challenging to enact, in theory, the model is highly conducive to implementing relationships with schools that contribute to the teacher candidates' expertise as an educator.

The teacher education program at our tribal college, and the coursework that comprises the elementary education program of study, was graphically organized to visually display the concept of coherence as it relates to curriculum (see Appendix A). A

chart was created that listed the coursework, from the General Education core courses to the teaching pedagogy courses, and showed the connection between and amongst the courses, how the content from one contributed to another, and so on. It made sense that each course should be part of a "bigger picture" and, most important, that the candidates understand the relevance for each of the courses in the program of study.

Cultural Brokers

The students at the tribal college that is the setting for this case study are, for the most part, members of federally recognized tribes from across the United States and Canada. Unlike most tribal colleges, the campus is not located on a reservation; therefore, our curriculum does not include an emphasis on one particular tribal group nor do we require specific indigenous language courses. Because of the vast differences between tribal beliefs and languages among the many tribal groups on campus, an inclusive, intercultural or cross-cultural global approach has been adopted with coursework reflecting many different tribes.

This challenge was a topic of conversation as the conceptual framework for the program was developed. How do we maintain our identity as a tribal college by including Native studies courses representing many different tribal groups and concurrently include sufficient coursework for our students to meet state and national standards? We also strive to keep the total credits in the program manageable and somewhat consistent with other institutions. The challenge was met, in part, by integrating Native content into the General Education courses (e.g., History, Humanities, Native American Studies) and education courses (e.g., Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students, Multicultural Education).

The students in the teacher education program at this tribal college can be thought of as “cultural brokers.” A cultural broker, for purposes of our program, is a person who can "straddle" two or more cultures comfortably, who can move in and out of one culture and into another quite different from their own, another tribal culture, social setting, religious event, and so on. The students refer to this as “style shifting,” shifting their style to “fit” the cultural setting they are in at the time. Students are given the tools they need to become culture brokers and opportunities to practice in specifically designed field placements. By the time they graduate from the program, they consider themselves proficient.

Szasz (2001) published a book, *Between Indian and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker*, that describes the historical significance of American Indian people as interpreters, or linguistic brokers; as traders, or economic brokers; and as cultural brokers. Szasz refers to the role of cultural brokers as intermediaries who have straddled the “cultural divide” throughout history amongst various and numerous other diverse cultural groups (p. 294). There is the old adage about “walking in two worlds.” The students in our program, as cultural brokers, have experienced walking in many worlds, and are provided opportunities to do so, becoming increasingly proficient at it as they progress through the program.

Field Placements

Field placements that provide teacher candidates opportunities for observations and practical experiences are fundamental for teacher education program development. Darling-Hammond (2006) released *Powerful Teacher Education,* a research publication about seven teacher education programs and the abilities of the graduates from each of

these programs. The programs selected for the study were Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI; Bank Street College, New York, NY; Trinity University, San Antonio, TX; University of California, Berkeley, CA; University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME; University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; and Wheelock College, Boston, MA. To be selected, the programs had to have graduates who were consistently considered well prepared for "learning centered" practice by teacher educators, administrators, cooperating teachers, and accreditation representatives. School administrators consistently considered the graduates of these programs the "best of the best" beginning teachers for hiring purposes.

The results of the study determined that despite the differences, all seven of the programs had features in common. One of these features was extended clinical experiences—at least 30 weeks of supervised practicum and student teaching opportunities in each program—carefully selected to support the ideas presented in simultaneous, closely interwoven coursework (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

In the fall of 2011, shortly after the teacher education program at the tribal college setting for this case study was approved, the number of hours of field placements prior to student teching was increased considerably from 60 hours to 210 hours. Course schedules were revised so candidates would have Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings available for field placements. As is the practice in most teacher education programs, the intent was for teacher candidates to have field placements concurrent with coursework so they could apply what they were learning in the classroom and then have opportunity for reflection and revision immediately following. This field placement design seems to be typical in many teacher education programs.

A perceived strength of the field placements in this teacher education program, which will be addressed in the interviews with the study participants, is the community-based faculty and the opportunity for the candidates to engage in their elementary classrooms. Zeichner (2012) supports the creation of a *third space*, often referred to as a hybrid space, in which school and university educators and practitioner and academic knowledge come together, enhancing the learning of pre-service teachers. The concept of *third space* is applied with the community-based faculty at United Tribes who teach teacher education courses and then allow the students opportunity to transfer what is learned in the college classroom to the community-based faculty person's classroom. Because the community-based faculty member is on the college campus, in the classroom with the students, and also in the elementary classroom, with the students, the *third space* allows for integrated application of knowledge and skill with immediate feedback that is crucial to optimum learning. This practice is presumed to be highly effective for the candidates.

Family Collaboration and Service Learning

The family collaboration dimension is one that is included in most teacher education programs, common in early childhood and special education programs, and equally important for elementary education pre-service teachers. Most elementary education programs of study include the typical "home/school relations" course. In the elementary education program in this case study, the course is "Family and School Collaborations," a title that includes the term "collaboration," implying an inclusive coexistence between and among families, the community, and the teacher and other

school personnel. Families and a school are part of the community and can be thought of as a microcosm of the community, reflecting the values and ideals within.

An outcome for the family collaboration course is for teacher candidates to participate in service learning opportunities in the community. It is important for children and their families to see teachers as active members of the community. This is particularly important in reservation communities, as it is quite common for teachers to commute to the schools, spend the day teaching, and then leave the community at the end of the school day. The children and their families do not perceive the teachers as being interested in their communities.

Participating in service learning and community involvement opportunities contributes to the teacher candidates' knowledge and skills for working with families from culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse backgrounds. Getting to know and building a relationship with families not only benefits the children and their families but teachers, as well. Establishing relationships of trust and mutual respect prior to meeting enhances parent teacher conferences and other parent/teacher interactions.

It is particularly important for teacher candidates to have experiences with families from diverse backgrounds because we cannot assume to know where pre-service teachers will get their first teaching jobs. We cannot assume beginning teachers who graduate from tribal colleges will teach on reservations. Therefore, it is our responsibility as teacher educators to prepare them for experiences with children and their families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In 2005-2006, three teachers participated in what they referred to as “walking around” culture (Sparapani, Byung-In, & Smith, 2011). Each one of them sought a

teaching job in an area that was significantly different, culturally and geographically, from their own. Their goal was to immerse themselves into the culture of the school and community and to actually live among their students and their families. Multicultural education scholars (i.e., Banks, Gay) have provided teacher educators with volumes of research and techniques to teach in our courses and suggestions for teachers to use in the classrooms. But the experiences of the three teachers who participated in "walking around" culture were significantly relevant because they considered the principles and techniques and incorporated them into the ultimate field experience. According to Sparapani et al. (2011), their experiences culminated in what they referred to as five essentials for teacher preparation:

1. Culture is communication. Teachers must fully understand their culture and how their culture is similar to and different from another culture.
2. Culture is personal. Teachers must be mindful of the personal nature of culture . . . and be sensitive to how what they do or say in a classroom affects that nature.
3. Culture has boundaries. All cultures have parameters of behavior [or boundaries]. In order for teachers to be successful . . . they must know and be familiar with the boundary conditions.
4. Culture is perceived by those who stand outside the culture. To be successful in cross-cultural teaching, teachers must set aside any perceived stereotypes or beliefs they may have about that culture.
5. Culture is defined by the people in that culture. To be effective cross-cultural teachers, we need to know the people in a culture. When we get to know . . .

> [them], it changes our perceptions of that culture, and knowing people and *changing perceptions is what "walking around" culture is all about.* (pp. 64-65)

Dispositions Assessments

According to the information provided on teacher education program websites at campuses throughout the United States, dispositions assessments are common to most all teacher education programs and are required for program approval. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (n.d.) defined dispositions as the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice.

The dispositions assessment tool for this tribal college teacher education program is used for program selection criteria, for continuing in the program, assessed during field placements and student teaching internships, and included in program completion requirements (see Appendix B). Dispositions assessments are collected each semester and from both teacher education and general education faculty. A rubric is used as the measurement tool. Students are taught the behaviors that are included on the assessment and are provided the opportunity to self-assess early on and throughout the program. If a student, or candidate, scores below a pre-determined score on the rubric, a corrective action plan may be implemented. This plan is developed with the student and one of the teacher education faculty. It is reviewed at a later time and progress, or lack of progress,

is noted. Results are shared with the student. If the scores do not reflect an improvement, the student may be denied acceptance into the program or not be allowed to continue.

Content Knowledge

Ball, Thames, and Phelps (2008) identified one of the most important aspects of teachers' content knowledge as that it may predict student achievement. The Teacher Education department, as well as the institution, considers the mastery of content knowledge essential to the development of an effective educator, as well as a lifelong learner. Content knowledge is acquired as the teacher candidate progresses through a sequence of courses specifically designed so that content knowledge courses are taken first in the program of study, teaching pedagogy courses follow shortly thereafter, and then pedagogical content knowledge courses are integrated throughout. In most of the content knowledge courses, pedagogical content knowledge is integrated. This allows the teacher candidates to develop their content knowledge simultaneously with their teaching pedagogy courses.

Technology content knowledge has been recently identified as a fourth category of knowledge in the relationship with content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Technological content knowledge is knowledge of the reciprocal relationship between technology and content and requires the teacher has a foundation in technology applications used for instructional purposes. According to Mishra and Koehler (2006), "teachers need to know not just the subject matter they teach but also the manner in which the subject matter can be changed by the application of technology" (p. 1028).

Pedagogy

The competent educator must have highly refined pedagogical skills; content mastery alone is not sufficient for the competent educator. These refined skills include effective communication; understanding that how children learn informs how they should be taught; appreciation of diverse learning styles exhibited by diverse populations of children; the use of innovative methods, such as technology; and, very important, being able to select the appropriate strategies to use for different children from different cultures with different learning styles. To become proficient with these skills, the competent educator realizes the value of grounding practice in theory and research.

Our constructivist view makes us aware that what students know is their own best understanding of their particular experiences and that understanding is influenced by cultural context (Gordon, 2009). This constructed knowledge will affect both their learning context and their learning style. In order to address the variability that students bring to the task of learning, the competent educator must be able to develop a variety of strategies to provide appropriate instruction.

There is considerable literature regarding learning theories. Based on extensive readings, there seems to be consensus that the constructivist view of learning is based on the theory that all human beings construct knowledge through discover and problem-solving. According to Gordon (2009), constructivism was not initially intended for the field of education; therefore, Gordon advocates for what is referred to as "pragmatic constructivism," defined as "a way of knowing that comes out of purposefully changing the environment and then reflecting on this change" (p. 49). To

address the issue of accountability, Gordon reports pragmatic constructivism offers educators answers to questions such as

> What does it mean to demonstrate genuine understanding of the subject matter? How do teachers manage a classroom in which students are talking to one another rather than just to the teacher? What types of skills do teachers need to become good facilitators of learning? And what type of assessments will evaluate the deep learning for understanding that we wish to foster? (p. 54)

These guiding questions are the foundation for pedagogical knowledge and practice.

Brain research and work in brain compatible learning is also consistent with the constructivist approach. Jensen (2005) and Caine, Caine, McClintic, and Klimek (2009), pioneers in research and conceptualizers in brain compatible teaching and learning, emphasize the importance of active engagement, emotion, context, and relevance to the meaning-making process. Gunzelmann (2009) recommends teacher education programs interface coursework such as psychology, biology, and neuroscience as the foundation for teacher preparation. Research on learning and the brain, according to Gunzelmann, is briefly mentioned in some teacher education courses by faculty who have limited knowledge of the field. By integrating research from experts in the field of neuroscience, teachers can develop the skills needed to make students "world class learners" (p. 24).

The competent educator understands that "technologies are not deliverers of content, but tools that educators and students use to construct knowledge and share meaning" (Vrasidas & McIsaac, 2001, "Need for Pedagogical Shift," para. 3); as such, technology supports constructivist learning. The competent educator utilizes technology

as an innovative tool to meet the diverse needs of students, particularly those students with special needs (Stanford, Crowe, & Flice, 2010).

The teacher education program at this tribal college guides future educators in developing their expertise with various forms of technologies. Technology education as practiced in education programs involves more than just learning how to use computers; it includes a wide range of instructional support tools, materials, and processes. In professional education courses, candidates demonstrate competence in a wide range of technologies and demonstrate their abilities to use those technologies in instructional design and in teaching, as well as for personal and professional use.

Teacher candidates who are competent, dedicated educators wishing to improve their teaching skills or to become educational leaders must study theory. They must also observe the theories in practice and practice them themselves with students and teachers to achieve mastery. Candidates will spend approximately 200 hours in the classroom prior to student teaching. These pre-student teaching hours involve field experiences incorporated into various education classes. During these field experiences, candidates observe and teach under master teachers in classroom settings. Then, during student teaching, candidates spend 14 weeks of student teaching for each major. Authentic situations, where children from diverse groups are included and where a variety of technology-infused experiences are available, are imperative to the development of the competent educator.

Building a Community of Diverse Learners

McCormick (2008) advocates for creating communities of learners in teacher education courses to give all candidates an opportunity to share their ideas, take risks, and

challenge each other's thoughts and ideas. By allowing the teacher candidates to form their own groups, and create their own norms of behavior, the candidates not only benefit from the community of learners themselves, but they will learn how to create these communities in their future classrooms (p. 4).

Building community begins with an ethic of caring (Noddings, 2005b). Creating a caring and supportive classroom and school environment is essential if academic objectives are to be met (Noddings, 2003, 2005b). Noddings discusses the importance of inclusion and dialogue in creating and nurturing a caring community of learners. Wentzel (1997) reports significant results from a longitudinal study of "perceived pedagogical caring." She found that students' perceptions that their teachers cared led to greater efforts to achieve positive social and academic outcomes. Students in the study characterized caring teachers as those "demonstrating democratic interaction styles, developing expectations . . . in light of individual differences, modeling a 'caring' attitude toward their own work, and providing constructive feedback" (Wentzel, 1997, pp. 415-416).

Cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching are also central to any vision of developing a diverse community of learners. Culturally competent teachers demonstrate the ability to develop curriculum that is representative of the myriad of individuals in our global community, select materials that are inclusive of the contributions and perspectives of multiple groups (Ladson-Billings, 2001), and develop an awareness and responsiveness to the particular cultural context within which they live and teach (Banks et al., 2005; Irvine & Armento, 2001).

Gay (2010) identifies five key characteristics of culturally responsive teaching:

- It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.
- It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities.
- It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.
- It teaches students to know and praise their own and one another's cultural heritages.
- It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. (pp. 31-32)

Villegas and Lucas (2002) identify the importance of culturally responsive teaching in the preparation of educators. According to their research,

> culturally responsive teachers (a) are socioculturally conscious, (b) have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, (c) see themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable, (d) understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction, (e) know about the lives of their students, and (f) design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar. (p. 20)

Gay (2010) emphasizes teachers need to understand that culturally responsive caring is action oriented in that it demonstrates high expectations and uses imaginative strategies to ensure academic success for ethnically diverse students. The teacher candidates at this tribal college experience how communication styles of different ethnic groups reflect cultural values and shape learning behaviors and ways to use this information to modify classroom interactions to better accommodate all students.

Critical Reflection

The body of literature demonstrating the importance of reflection and self-assessment in learning to teach is considerable. Korthagen, Loughran, and Russell (2006) advocate for implementing a framework of fundamental principles, including providing teacher candidates opportunities for researching and reflecting on their own practice to "gain insights into how they might come to better understand that situation and act within it" (p. 1030). This is a change from the past when a situation was identified for a student teacher and they were told what they should know or learn from the situation. The teacher education program is attempting to implement this framework in an effort to graduate teachers who are reflective, responsive practitioners who are able to reflect on their actions as they impact student learning. It is particularly important in creating culturally relevant and responsive practices (Howard, 2003). Reflection takes place before, during, and after teaching and is focused and stimulated by analysis of critical incidents (Griffin, 2003).

Bergsma (2004) advocates for empowerment-oriented education interventions focusing on "enhancing wellness as well as improving problems, providing opportunities for participants to develop knowledge and skills, and engaging professionals as

collaborators instead of authoritative experts" (p. 154). According to Mezirow and Associates (1990), transformative reflection leads to emancipatory learning. This vision of individual and social transformation calls for including issues of knowledge, power, and social change in the curriculum. Vavrus (2002) makes clear the importance of transformative academic knowledge for teaching and for teacher education, and Marri's (2005) research highlights a role for educational technology in developing such knowledge.

Critical reflection has been recommended as a means of incorporating issues of equity and social justice into teaching thinking and practice (Howard, 2003). It is a personal and challenging look at one's identity as an individual person and as an active professional. According to Howard (2003),

> the purpose of critical reflection should not be to indict teachers for what they believe and why it does not work for students. It is a process of improving practice, rethinking philosophies, and becoming effective teachers for today's ever changing student population. (p. 17)

Community, Collaboration, and Service Learning

The competent, caring educator creates an empowering school climate through the development of a community of learners. A community of learners is a group of partners in conversations who seek to construct knowledge through negotiation and through sharing of individual areas of expertise (Pringle, 2002). Building on the concept of empowerment, a community of learners is developed by weaving the common threads of communication, collaboration, service, and leadership.

School-community collaboration is essential for promoting the concept of a community of learners. The competent educator invites members of the community to share expert knowledge and forges partnerships with community resources to support the learning process and to serve the needs of families.

Service learning reflects the belief that teacher education programs should provide students opportunities to be involved in thoughtfully organized service experiences that fulfill a need in a community (Buchanan, Baldwin, & Rudisill, 2002). Marchel, Shields, and Winter (2011) advocate for service learning as a pedagogy that combines increased field experiences with the opportunity for teacher candidates to develop professional dispositions reflected in the belief that all children can learn. Service learning opportunities as a means for developing these dispositions is a key outcome of the teacher education program at the tribal college in this case study.

Service learning involves a blending of service activities with the academic curriculum in order to address real community needs, which students learn through active engagement (Anderson, 1998). The competent, caring educator arranges opportunities for the provision of direct or indirect services to individuals or organizations in ways that will benefit the community.

The competent, caring educator is committed to taking a leadership role. Effective leaders are successful in forming partnerships that encourage active school and community participation. Effective leaders have the ability to articulate a shared purpose and make it visible to others. The competent, caring educator exhibits leadership qualities that influence others to reflect on and to solve problems collaboratively. This is particularly true in tribal communities. Rightfully so, a person with an education degree

is considered to have the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions commensurate to a leadership role in the community.

Dedicated, competent educators are characterized by many attributes. By focusing on the future educators' mastery of content knowledge, refinement of pedagogical skills, ability to critically reflect, and realization of community importance, we can best prepare them to educate *all* children, including those who are culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse. In summary, the teacher education program at this tribal college strives to prepare competent, caring educators by addressing the essential dimensions of the program and supporting the vision, mission, philosophy, purposes, and goals of the conceptual framework for the program. These essential elements are supported by classic and current research, developed to meet community and global needs, and designed to evolve as necessary.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Case study research design is a research method that allows for an examination of events or contemporary phenomena within a real-life context for purposes of theory development and testing or simply as a learning tool. Case study research can be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, although it is typically associated with qualitative methods. The case study research design for this dissertation draws on qualitative methods.

There are almost as many definitions of case study research design as there are case studies, each one varying in the elements included in research design type. For purposes of this research, the focus was on positions according to Stake (1995), Merriam (1998), and Yin (2009), three researchers who have contributed extensively to the foundation and continued evolution of case study research methodology, each emphasizing different features.

Stake (1995) focused his stance on case study research on the role of the researcher as an interpreter. His contribution to the definition was the interpretation by the researcher of the phenomenon under study through "not only commonplace description, but 'thick description'" (p. 102) with rich, extensive description being one of the hallmarks of case study research agreed upon by all three researchers.

Merriam (2009) asserts that most people are familiar with case studies; however, "there is little consensus on what constitutes a case study or how this type of research is done" (p. 26). Merriam's contribution to the definition was from the perspective of an educational researcher. She characterized the intended outcome of the case study research design as the process of inquiry for understanding a situation. Merriam (2009) described the case as "a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (p. 27).

Yin (2009) describes case study research design using a twofold, technical definition. The first part of the definition includes the scope of the case study:

1. A case study is an empirical inquiry that:
    - investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when
    - the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (p. 18)

Yin (2009) includes data collection and data analysis strategies in the second part of the technical definition:

2. The case study inquiry
    - copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
    - relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
    - benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (p. 18)

The intent or purpose of the research, as well as the size of the bounded case, determines the type of case study used. The bounded case is established by whether the case involves one individual, a number of individuals, a small group, large group, a program, or an activity (Creswell, 2007). A single case study is considered appropriate when representing a test of an existing theory or describing a rare or unique event or program. Single case study research is most applicable when the case is unique, testing a well-formulated theory, or a pilot study. A single case study can include triangulation of data (Yin, 2012).

Case Study Research Methodology

When I started the dissertation process, I did not intend to conduct case study research. The concept was too vague, there were too many varying perceptions on the design process, and too many people seemed to question the validity and reliability of this research design type. The wealth of literature about case study research was so extensive it was almost overwhelming. I knew what I wanted to research and intended that my study would provide context-dependent (practical) knowledge. I also knew that it would be rich with description and, if carefully crafted, would include powerful narrative. It was my hope that the people I intended to interview would provide insight into the topic, although I was unsure of what themes might emerge as the study evolved. Throughout this thought process, I was unknowingly laying the general framework for what would later become the decision to conduct case study research.

According to Willis (2007), case study research involves overlapping processes or phases (p. 240). The phases are overlapping and may not be completed in sequence. One phase builds upon the next but the researcher may not know what the next phase is until it

reveals itself within the process. For example, the literature review is occasionally the last chapter completed in a case study because until the themes are identified, and the data collected, analyzed, and interpreted, the focus of the literature review may be unknown. This flexibility in research construction is another one of the hallmarks of case study research design; however, the process for conducting case study research includes the same general process as most research designs: plan, collect data, analyze data, and disseminate findings.

The first general step in constructing case study research was selecting a topic for study and determining what data would be collected. Brainstorm topics of interest, keeping in mind that the research should contribute to scholarly works about the topic, either adding to what is already known or finding evidence of something that is unknown. Willis (2007) recommends selecting a topic of study you find very interesting as case study research is "time intensive and mind intensive" (p. 241). After you have decided on a topic, sources of information, documents needed, types of data, and stakeholders who will be involved in the study are identified, keep in mind that your plans may change as the case study progresses.

After the topic is selected and the researcher is aware of the level of involvement required for conducting a case study, the next step is to identify the case or cases; determine boundaries; and decide between exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory types. For purposes of my case, my topic was American Indian pre-service teacher success in a tribal college teacher education program. I pre-defined success as "one who meets state licensure requirements, including program completion and standardized testing requirements." My selection requirements for the case, the boundaries to the case, were

"tribal college teacher preparation" and "one that produces students who meet the requirements of the state." The research question was basically "what is going on to produce the results" in our program—why are our students successful, with success defined as meeting teacher licensure requirements.

The concept of "boundaries" in case study research design is unique to this type of research methodology. Merriam (2009) maintained that the “single most defining characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study, the case” (p. 27). The case is considered a "unit, entity, or phenomenon with defined boundaries that the researcher can demarcate or “fence in” (p. 27), and, therefore, can also determine what will and will not be studied. One of the challenges of case study research is keeping the case study manageable. By establishing boundaries, the researcher is able to focus solely on the “unit, entity, or phenomenon” within the boundaries that have been established; in this case, the tribal college teacher education program and the graduates and faculty within the context of the program.

My case study is a descriptive case study. Typically, a descriptive case study is an intrinsic case study in which the focus is on the case itself; for me, the focus is a description of the program. It resembles narrative research except that the detailed description of the case is set within its context or surroundings. I used the case study method because I wanted to include contextual conditions that may be contributing to the success of the students. My intent was to provide evidence to support the idea that the context within which our students are "becoming successful" is relevant to their success.

An important process within the first general step in constructing case study research was gaining entry into the environment being studied and building and

maintaining rapport with the participants in the case (Willis, 2007). Willis was the only author who specifically identified this process as a phase for constructing case study research (p. 241), but it makes sense. Researchers conducting case study research design enter into the contextual environment of the case and must gain the trust and respect of the participants. The premise of the case study is based on an "ability to understand and empathize with [the] participants and hear what they are telling you" (Willis, 2007, p. 241). If the researcher is not able to establish this relationship, the data collected will not result in themes that convey the context reflected within the boundaries of the case.

The second general step in constructing case study research is data collection, data analysis, and writing. These three processes are not separate dimensions in case study research; they are integrated and identified in the case study protocol, an essential element of every case study. Yin (2009) describes the case study protocol as the procedures and general rules to be followed in the case and that its use increases the reliability of case study research (p. 79).

After the case study protocol was developed, the natural progression in the process was to identify and develop data collection instruments. Examples of sources of evidence in case study research include documents; archival records; interviews (open-ended, focused, structured, and surveys); direct observation (formal or casual); participant observation (assuming a role in the environment); and physical artifacts. Among these types, Merriam (1998) supports interviews and observations as the most common sources of data in case study research with a word of caution for observations as having the potential for being a highly subjective data source. I used qualitative surveys

and open-ended interviews, documents, and archival records as my data collection instruments.

The following three principles of data collection were designed by Yin (2009) as a means of organizing data sources and, when done appropriately, "help to deal with the problem of establishing the construct validity and reliability of the case study evidence" (p. 114):

1. Use multiple sources of evidence
    - Triangulation—searching converging findings from different sources increases construct validity
2. Create a case study database (separate from the final report to be written)
    - Case study notes (clearly written and available for use)
    - Case study documents
    - Narratives (initial open-ended answers to study questions)
3. Maintain a chain of evidence (increases reliability of the information)
    - Link between initial study questions and case study procedure identified
    - Circumstances of evidence collected is indicated
    - Data collection is put to practice on basis of the protocol
    - Actual evidence storage in the database for later checks (specific collection)
    - Link between content of protocol and initial study questions (pp. 114-124).

I used the three principles of data collection suggested by Yin (2009) for my case study research. Under principle number three, however, I did not use the last indicator: link between content of protocol and initial study questions. Instead, I kept a research

journal that documented every step of the data collection and analysis process to the best of my ability.

Creswell (2007) recommends two considerations that warrant inclusion in this section. The first consideration is to adhere to legal and ethical requirements for conducting research and to consider informed consent, as well as other criteria established by respective institutional review boards. Informed consent was obtained from the participants for this case study research project, participants were given a signed copy, and the original documents are stored in a safe, secure location. The second consideration is to develop a system for storing the immense amount of data generated by a qualitative research study. Specific suggestions include (a) backup copies of computer files, (b) high-quality audio recording tapes, (c) master list of information gathered, (d) methods for protecting anonymity of participants, and (e) data collection matrix for locating and identifying information (pp. 142-143). Most of my data is stored electronically on three different computers, my office computer and two personal laptops. A backup file of the data is stored in Dropbox, a web-based file-hosting site that is password protected.

The third general step in constructing case study research is analyzing the evidence. It appears the analysis of evidence may be one of the least standardized and most difficult aspects of conducting case study research, particularly for a novice researcher. It was important to consider each piece of data, or what Stake (1995) refers to as "patches," as part of the entire case and not as separate entities. It is when these patches are combined through analysis that we have the "whole." He considers the most important role of the case study researcher as that of interpreter, as one who draws

conclusions and makes inferences based on the data collected, resulting in a complete story with a beginning, middle, and end.

Yin (2009) suggests the analysis of case study evidence "is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies" (p. 127). He cites examples of researchers who have ignored their case study data, unsure of how to proceed with the results. Merriam (1998), Stake (1995), and Yin (2012) advocate for data collection and analysis to occur simultaneously as part of an ongoing process. Merriam (1998) suggests performing rudimentary analysis in the field as the data are being collected. Without ongoing analysis, data can be "unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that needs to be processed" (p. 162). To compensate, Yin recommends the novice researcher start slowly, and simply, and use computer-assisted tools (e.g., Atlas.ti, HyperRESEARCH, NVivo) to support the analysis process. I did not use computer-assisted tools for data analysis for this case study. I collected and analyzed a wealth of various data sources; however, with the number of research participants for this case study, and the wide variety of data sources and types, data analysis was conducive to being analyzed manually.

The fourth general step in constructing case study research is bringing the results and findings of the case study to closure by reporting and disseminating the case study. Yin (2009) recommends the researcher start composing the case study report early in the process. He also reminds the researcher to consider anonymity among researchers, within the context, and with the participants. To ensure the overall quality of this case study, and raise the level of validity, the participants reviewed the transcripts of their individual interviews and a draft of the case study.

All of the steps for constructing case study research were considered when composing the final report for this case study. Other considerations for writing the final case study, and preparing it for dissemination, were identifying the primary audience, establishing the purpose of the case (e.g., contribute to the research, affect policy decisions), and preparing and submitting it for publication. The single most important consideration for preparing the case study as an exemplary research study for dissemination was formatting and editing that reflects the highest level of quality and professionalism available.

Research Consent

Consent was requested and received from two universities: the one at which I am a researcher conducting the study as a student and the one that is the setting for the case study. An informed consent document was distributed to all of the participants, the graduates of the program and the faculty members, for their signatures. The participants received a copy of the signed document with the original signed forms stored in a secure, locked file in my office for three years after the study concludes and the dissertation is submitted.

Setting for the Study

The setting for the study was a teacher education program at a tribal college located in the northern Midwest region of the United States. The tribal college is one of two tribal colleges in the country that is not located on a reservation. The students who attend this college come from all over the United States and Canada, representing various tribal nations as well as other ethnic backgrounds. The teacher education program was

approved by the state in which it is located in spring of 2011 to offer a bachelor degree in elementary education.

Research Participants

Ten former students, all graduates of the teacher education elementary education program, were invited to participate in this study. All 10 American Indians completed a baccalaureate degree in Elementary Education on the campus of the tribal college that is the setting for this case study. They are now licensed professional educators, having met the criteria identified by the state for a teaching license. The rationale for choosing 10 program graduates participate, and not more or fewer, was the program is small in numbers and only recently approved; therefore, there was not a large pool from which to choose.

All faculty members were invited from the small pool of faculty in the teacher education elementary education program described in the case. In addition, community-based faculty (also referred to as adjunct faculty) were included in the study. The selected faculty have maintained their professional educator licenses even though they are no longer K-12 contracted teachers. The community-based faculty members are current practicing elementary school teachers in a local public school district and at a Bureau of Indian Education contract elementary school on the tribal college campus.

Research Methodology

The general procedures for this case study were based on practices described by Stake (1995), Merriam (1998, 2009), and Yin (2009), three researchers who have contributed extensively to the foundation and continued evolution of case study research methodology, each emphasizing different features. Particular attention was afforded to

research protocol described by Merriam (2009) because it is specific to the field of education. Stake (1995) also appeared to have contributed extensively to the field of educational qualitative research methodology, but it was my opinion that the contributions of Merriam (2009) were just as extensive and more recent.

As indicated in the literature, the characteristics of qualitative research methods, including this case study, are grounded in understanding the meaning of people's experiences based on the perceptions of the people themselves and not that of the researcher. Interviews are a common source of this type of information and were included as a data source in this case study. These experiences are described within the context of a setting, referred to as a "bounded system" in case study research (Stake, 1995, p. 2). In this case, the tribal college teacher education program, and the research participants, are integrated to form the bounded system that is the "object" of the case (p. 2).

Before the data collection began, approval from two Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) was obtained, one from the tribal college, the setting for the case study, and one from the institution through which I am conducting the research. The participants, the graduates of the program and the faculty, were contacted by electronic mail, inviting them to contact me if they were interested in participating in the research. If interested, I arranged a time to meet with each one individually to discuss and sign the informed consent forms. All of the participants were given a copy of their signed consent agreement.

The data collection process began with a series of qualitative surveys. The surveys were distributed electronically to 10 graduates of the teacher education program, referred to as graduate participants, and five faculty from the program, referred to as

faculty participants. All of the surveys for this research project were developed using *Qualtrics*, a software program available through the university.

The individual interviews were conducted after the surveys were completed. The graduate participant interviews were conducted in a conference room in the Education Building and in a vacant classroom near the computer lab, on the campus of the tribal college setting. The rooms were located where privacy was a primary consideration. The faculty participant interviews were conducted in the adjunct faculty workroom, in the lower level of the Education Building. Each interview lasted approximately 50 to 60 minutes. I took notes during the interviews but I made sure the participants knew they had my full attention.

After each interview was concluded, the participant and I visited briefly about the next steps in the process. They were assured, again, that the information they provided would be reported anonymously and that they would have an opportunity to read the interview transcript for accuracy.

Participants

Participants for this qualitative case study who were graduates of the teacher education program were selected from the 10 American Indian students who completed the teacher education program on the campus of the tribal college for this case study, and who met the requirements as professional licensed educators in the state of North Dakota. All of the graduate participants were female. This was not intentional; to date, all of the graduates of this teacher education program have been female. The faculty participants included three full-time faculty, the total number employed in the teacher education program, and two part-time faculty, also referred to as community-based or adjunct

faculty. The faculty were invited to participate because of their insight into the dimensions of the program and because of their professional and personal relationships with the graduate participants.

To maintain the anonymity of the graduate participants, I am not able to provide descriptive information about the participants who were students in the program. Because the teacher education program at the tribal college for this case study is a small program with low numbers, and because there are so few American Indian licensed teachers in the state where it is located, providing personal information and descriptions of the participants may result in divulging their identity. A description of the participants is provided here that, coupled with the demographic information obtained from the surveys, will provide a generic description of whom the graduates are and where they were before coming to the campus to pursue their elementary education degree.

All but one of these women, the participants in this case study who are graduates of the program, came from reservation communities in the northern Great Plains. Birth mothers, grandmothers, and foster families raised them. They have experienced trauma and heartache that most of us will only read about in fictional novels. They have witnessed and been victims of violence, drug abuse, and alcoholism. One was estranged from her mother until she was out of high school for reporting her mother's boyfriend for sexually abusing her. One witnessed her father kill himself. Another was left home alone with five siblings, all younger than 8 years old, opening cans of food to eat until the social services agency came and removed them from the home. And yet another forged her mother's name so she could leave for boarding school at the age of 12 to escape sexual and physical abuse perpetrated by family members. According to Subia BigFoot

and Schmidt (2010), from the Center on Child Abuse and Neglect at the University of Oklahoma, these types of experiences are common in Native American communities:

> Violence is an all too common occurrence in Indian Country. The yearly average rate of violent crimes among American Indians and Alaska Natives is 124 per 1,000, which is almost more than 2.5 times above the national rate (Bureau of Justice, 2004). American Indians and Native Alaskans also lead the nation in homicide rates. AI/AN women report more domestic violence than men or women from any other race (CDC, 2004). One study found that AI/AN women were twice as likely to be abused (physically or sexually) by a partner as the average woman (CDC, 2004). The incidences of repeated exposure to family violence can create a reverberating effect with AI/AN children and youth because they are at higher risk for subsequent victimization. AI/AN children are victims of child abuse and neglect more frequently than other children. When comparing the rates of one substantiated report of child abuse or neglect for every 30 AI/AN children age 14 or younger (Bureau of Justice, 2004) against the national rate of 12.3 per 1000 (NCANDS, 2002), it is easy to understand that AI/AN children are at an increased vulnerability to trauma exposure. (p. 848)

The majority of the graduate participants have children. They care for their own children, in their own homes, and are pursuing a dream for themselves and their children. They are breaking free from the clutches of drugs and alcohol and are “walking the red

road" (sobriety). They are aware of their Native culture, some know their language, and many practice Native American traditions.

The present generation of American Indian college-aged young adults, including the participants in this study, are by their own accord fulfilling the "prophecy of the seventh generation." As tribal college graduates, the participants are aware of their role in the prophecy and are intent upon making a difference in the lives of all children, particularly Native children, which includes ending the cycle of violence with which they are all too familiar. To better understand the significance of this prophecy for the participants in this case study, I asked Phil Baird (Sicangu Lakota), Vice President of Academic, Career and Technical Education at United Tribes Technical College, to provide insight into this phenomenon. This is how Phil Baird explained it to me:

> The Lakota/Dakota/Nakota bands of the Oceti Sacowin (Seven Council Fires) have historically referred to a prophecy about the mending of the "broken hoop" (Sacred Circle) caused by the collective genocide upon indigenous People. The mending or healing will emerge with the ***Seventh Generation*** of young Tribal descendants who are now growing up today. With the guidance of elders, educators, and prayers, the Seventh Generation will seek to learn and find ways to bring back the Lakota culture/language which originally came from the Pte Oyate (Buffalo Nation).
>
> The White Buffalo Calf woman, who brought us the pipe and 7 sacred ceremonies, said she would return again when the People were at a crossroad with themselves and "Unci Maka" (Grandmother Earth). There

are three albino buffalo residing in Jamestown, N.D.; this would appear to provide testimony and encourage the Seventh Generation to fulfill the prophecy—keeping the indigenous cultures/languages alive for future generations, healing ourselves, reviving the unified Spirit among Indian Nations, and uniting all People to take better care of Grandmother Earth, the source of all life.

Many times, we end our prayers by saying, "*The things we do and say today, we do not do for ourselves. We do this for the children, grandchildren, and those yet to come.*"

I've heard and read about other Tribes embracing the Seventh Generation prophecy. But I am not an expert to say I know about Seventh Generation perspectives among other Tribes.

[This is] my humble response to your question. Hecetu yelo (So be it). (personal communication, December 12, 2013)

Data Collection

Methods for data collection for this case study encompassed qualitative surveys, documents and archival records, and open-ended interviews. This data triangulation was used to increase internal validity of the study. Consent to use the archival data was obtained from the college and the participants.

Surveys. The survey method of data collection in qualitative research, such as in this case study, is a means for defining and investigating distinctions in populations. Unlike the quantitative survey, used for establishing frequencies and/or means, qualitative surveys establish the relevant dimensions and values within the participant

population (Jansen, 2010). Advantages of using the survey tool for data collection were they were completed anonymously and provided a wealth of demographic as well as other relevant information about the graduate and faculty research participants.

Fifteen surveys were distributed using *Qualtrics* software three different times for a total of 45 surveys (Survey #1, #2, and #3) and all were completed for a response rate of 100% (see Appendices E, F, G, and H). The survey links were distributed through an electronically generated message using *Qualtrics*, similar to an email, to the participants after the Informed Consent Forms were signed. In the body of the messages, participants were told the surveys were for a dissertation research project and were provided a link to the surveys. They were also told participation was voluntary, that minimal compensation was involved for graduate participants only, and that the highest level of anonymity would be maintained, reiterating what was already shared with them on the Informed Consent Forms.

The content for Survey #1 was different for the graduate participants than for the faculty participants. The content for Surveys #2 and #3 was the same for the graduate participants as it was for the faculty participants. When the responses to the surveys were submitted to *Qualtrics*, I distinguished between the graduate responses and the faculty responses for purposes of future data analysis. For example, the graduate responses to Survey #1 were submitted as "Survey #1 – Graduates" and the faculty responses to Survey #1 were submitted as "Survey #1 – Faculty." Responses to Surveys #2 and #3 were distinguished between graduates and faculty in the same manner. The results of the surveys were submitted anonymously, and I had no way of determining the identity of the

participant; however, I knew if the respondent was a graduate of the program or a faculty member. Again, this was necessary for data analysis purposes.

The first survey distributed to the graduates of the program was referred to as "Survey #1 – Graduates" and the survey distributed to the faculty was referred to as "Survey #1 – Faculty." The intent of Survey #1 was to collect demographic, personal, and professional information from the participants. Unlike Surveys #2 and #3, the questions on Survey #1 for the graduate participants were different than those on Survey #1 for the faculty participants. Refer to Appendix E for "Survey #1 – Graduates" and Appendix F for "Survey #1 – Faculty."

Within one week, the participants started submitting their responses to Survey #1. Because the surveys were distributed anonymously, it was challenging for me to know who had submitted their survey responses and who had not, other than if they were graduates of the program or faculty. In an effort to keep momentum going, after receiving 8 of the 10 graduate survey responses, and 3 of the 5 faculty survey responses, I sent a message using *Qualtrics* with the link to Survey #2 (see Appendix G).

Survey #2 was the second qualitative survey used for data collection. This survey was intended to gather data through the use of three open-ended discussion questions. (See Appendix G for Survey #2 – Graduates and Faculty.) Similar to the collection of responses for Survey #1, responses to Survey #2 were received sporadically over a period of three weeks, with the 7 of 10 from graduates and 2 of 5 from faculty coming in within the first week. Graduates of the program submitted their responses sooner than the faculty. I sent an electronic message using *Qualtrics*, asking for their assistance and encouraging them to complete the second survey. This message served as a reminder to

the participants who had not yet completed Survey #1, as well. Again, it was challenging collecting responses from two surveys simultaneously, Survey #1 and Survey #2, but I intended to continue the momentum so as not to lose the interest of the first respondents as they waited for others to respond. I explained this in my messages, reminding them and asking for their assistance with completing the surveys, and that if they had already submitted their surveys, to disregard my requests. The graduates of the program, the former students, submitted their responses sooner than the faculty. Within a four-week period, I had received at total of 15 responses to Survey #1 and a total of 15 responses to Survey #2 for 100% response rate.

Survey #3 was developed based on the responses to the three questions on Survey #2; therefore, I had to wait until I had received all of the responses to Survey #2 before developing and distributing Survey #3. Survey #3 was described, on the survey, as containing information collected from the results of Survey #2. Survey #3 was distributed to both the graduates and the faculty. (See Appendix H for Survey # 3 – Structured Probes.)

I had initially considered convening a focus group for a structured or standardized interview (Merriam, 2009, p. 89) using the questions that were on Survey #3; however, I was concerned with the issue of validity. Because of my involvement with the program, and relationship with the participants in this case study, validity may have been negatively impacted if I would have conducted the focus interview. Having an objective third-party individual conduct the focus group was an option; however, I was concerned the graduate participants would be reluctant to share their perspectives with someone with whom they were unfamiliar. I could imagine one participant speaking for the group

and the others simply replying they agreed. I also wanted to give the participants time to reflect on their responses to the questions before responding. Therefore, as the researcher, I made the decision to use a third, and final, qualitative survey for the data collection tool.

The responses to Survey #3 were received over a seven-week period. It took longer to collect the responses as this was during the late summer-early fall months and school started, presumably occupying the time of the participants. As before, I sent an electronic message through *Qualtrics*, assuring participants this was the last survey and that I would be scheduling interviews after analyzing the survey responses. Again, the graduate participants completed their surveys sooner than the faculty participants.

Interviews. In qualitative research, the most common form of interview is the person-to-person format "in which one person elicits information from another" (Merriam, 2009, p. 88). The interview protocol was developed based on the responses to Surveys #2 and #3. Some of the data from these surveys were excluded from the interview protocol, but will be included in the summary of findings, because I interpreted responses as becoming redundant. Researchers recommend gathering data until the information collected reaches redundancy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Merriam, 2009). The interview protocol was designed to gather in-depth information from the participants in areas that either needed clarification or that had emerged as the result of prior responses.

The type of interview format used for this case study was the semistructured interview format. According to Merriam (2009), interview structures for qualitative research are typically less structured, allowing respondents to "define the world in unique ways" (p. 90). This format uses questions flexibly, requires specific data from each

respondent in no particular order, and the interview is, for the most part, guided by a list of questions or topics (see Appendix I).

Five of the 10 graduate participants were contacted to schedule a time for the interview. The five participants were chosen because they had attended colleges or universities other than the tribal college from which they graduated. This experience was relevant to meaningful interpretation of the defining characteristics of the program at this college as they needed to be able to draw a comparison. I gave them the option of meeting at one of three locations, all areas that would assure a level of confidentiality, and at a time that was convenient for them.

When I met with each participant, a brief discussion took place to ensure the participant knew the interview was voluntary, that there would be no penalty for declining to be interviewed at any time, that the identity of the participant would be kept confidential, and that the participant could review the transcript of the recorded interview. Each interview took approximately 60 to70 minutes. Stake (1995) recommends listening to the interviewee and taking notes, instead of using a voice recording device, and that it is better to "listen, to take a few notes, to ask for clarification . . . and *immediately* following the interview to prepare the facsimile and interpretive commentary" (p. 66). Immediately following the meeting, I transcribed, read, and coded the digitally-recorded interview. All participants were given a copy of the transcribed interview to read. None of the participants requested any corrections. The interview transcripts, with identifying information removed, were emailed to Dr. James H. Banning, Professor Emeritus at Colorado State University. To increase the validity level of data analysis for this case

study, Dr. Banning provided peer review services and read the interviews and identified themes to compare to those that I identified, as primary researcher.

Documents. Documentary information is relevant to most case study research (Yin, 2009). The value of this type of information to case study research is that it is stable and can be reviewed repeatedly; is unobtrusive as it was not created specifically for the case study; is exact; and it provides coverage of periods of time, events, and settings (p. 102). According to Yin (2009), the most important role of documents in case study research is to "corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 103). The documents that are included as sources of data in this case study are dispositions scores, Praxis II scores, and touchstone progress reports. No special permission was needed to obtain this information because all student names and other identifying information were removed. The intent for including this information in this case study was to identify trends and corroborate and augment data collected from the survey and interview responses.

Data Analysis

Merriam (2009) reported that "simultaneous data collection and analysis occurs both in and out of the field. That is, you can be doing some . . . analysis while you are in the process of collecting data" (p. 171). The goal of data analysis is to make sense of and draw inferences from the data collected (Merriam, 2009). Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) recommend early analysis and analyzing data as it is being collected, in case gaps are discovered and more or different data need to be collected and the study progresses.

Coding. Codes are "[tags or] labels that assign . . . [units of] meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 71).

Identifying codes involved searching the data for topics, patterns, or themes that emerged and then assigning and recording a term to represent the code for the particular topic, pattern, or theme. Gibbs (2007) suggests those who are new to coding are challenged by "identifying chunks of text and working out what codes they represent in a way that is theoretical and analytic and not merely descriptive" (p. 41). A basic coding procedure, as described by Miles et al. (2014) and Gibbs (2007), was used to organize data-driven coding of Survey #2 responses. The responses were read and codes were identified based on the data, without a preconceived notion from me, the researcher, to the maximum extent possible. The codes were then used to develop the questions for Survey #3. The same process was conducted with the responses to Survey #3. Codes were identified based on the data from the responses to Survey #3. These codes, and the concepts reflected by the codes, were used to create the interview protocol and interview questions. The codes generated from the graduate responses and the faculty responses were compared, contributing to the trustworthiness of the data analysis (triangulation of sources).

Open coding. The transcripts from the interviews were analyzed using a technique referred to as open coding. Gibbs (2007) describes open coding as the process of identifying relevant categories by reading the text. Gibbs (2007) explains the process of open coding as "actual text is always an example of a more general phenomenon and the code title should indicate this more general idea" (p. 50). I proceeded through the interview transcripts, line by line, coding each line of the transcript text. This type of coding kept me intent on analyzing each line of the data source, a transcript of each participant interview, and focused on what the participant actually said and not on any

presuppositions I might have had. Codes were then read, and re-read, to construct categories or themes. Merriam (2009) states that "the fewer the categories, the greater the level of abstraction, and the greater ease with which you can communicate your findings to others" (p. 187). The theme that emerged from the codes identified in the interview transcripts was identified for its relevance to the research questions for this case study and supported by the codes that emerged from the participants' own words in their responses.

Limitations

Although every effort was made to reduce the impact of potential limitations to the research for this case study, all research has the potential for limitations. It is my opinion, as a novice researcher, that being aware of potential limitations may reduce the potential for such. Limitations to this case may include the following:

- The participants may perceive the survey and interview questions as culturally biased;
- The participants may not feel comfortable responding to interview protocol in a one-to-one conversational setting or to particular survey items;
- The participants may not feel comfortable reporting information they perceive as negative because of their relationship with the researcher; and
- The researcher may misunderstand or misinterpret information collected while conducting the research.

Validation Strategies

I chose to conduct a case study of a teacher education program at the tribal college where I have been employed for 20 years, in an effort to identify defining

characteristics of the program that may or may not contribute to the success of the program graduates from the perspectives of the graduates themselves, all former students, and faculty who teach in the program. Personnel at other tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) may be able to use the description of the program that is part of a case study and the findings at their own institutions as they develop teacher education programs. It is my intent for my research to contribute to the existing literature on teacher education programs at TCUs and on considerations for increasing the numbers of American Indian professional educators in the United States.

As a researcher, I utilized a method for checking for validity referred to as peer review. Merriam (2009) recommends "a . . . [knowledgeable peer] to . . . [review] the raw data and assess whether [or not they thought] the findings are . . . [credible] based on the data" (p. 220). Dr. James H. Banning, Professor Emeritus at Colorado State University, agreed to act as peer reviewer for this case study. Dr. Banning teaches qualitative research courses at Colorado State, has published extensively over a span of more than 40 years, and currently serves as a qualitative analyst for a number of grant projects. I have never personally met Dr. Banning, as the courses I took from him were online courses; however, I had indicated my concern about the issue of validity and potential for bias with my case study research because of my role at the college and role within the program that is the context for the case. A year later, while analyzing data for the case, I emailed Dr. Banning and asked if he would consider the role of peer reviewer and he agreed to do so. Dr. Banning was not compensated for his contribution to the data analysis and, when I asked about it, referred to it as a "professional courtesy."

An audit trail of notes, checklists, copies of electronic messages, and a research journal were kept to record processes and progress of how the case study was conducted and dates data collection tools were distributed and collected. The audit trail is a detailed account of how the study was conducted and the data were analyzed and is one of the strategies Merriam (2009) identifies as using to "ensure for consistency and dependability or reliability" (p. 222).

One of the more common strategies for ensuring internal validity is data triangulation. Merriam (2009) refers to data triangulation as "the most well known strategy to shore up internal validity of a study is what is known as *triangulation*" (p. 215). Triangulation strategies used for this case study were using multiple sources of data in the forms of three surveys of two distinct groups of participants, interviews of people from various perspectives (graduates and the faculty), and having Dr. Banning, a peer reviewer, independently analyze and then compare data.

Yet another validity strategy used for this case study was "member checks" (Merriam, 2009). Member checks are defined as taking your analysis "back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation 'rings true'" (p. 217). The participants in this case study read the transcripts of their interviews to ensure they had been transcribed accurately. They were also provided with the themes or categories that emerged from their responses to Survey #2 prior to being interviewed.

External validity is the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to another setting (Merriam, 2009). To increase the possibility of the results of case study research "transferring" to another setting, the strategy recommended most often is rich, thick description (p. 227). Rich, thick description is defined in just about every qualitative

research methods book on the market. According to Merriam (1998), "rich, thick description" is defined as "providing enough description so that readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred" (p. 211). Every effort was made to provide rich, thick description with this case study. Because the setting and participants for this case study constitute the "case" being researched, my intent was to provide a description of a program, and the participants, that would allow the reader to imagine going to a place where he or she had not previously visited.

Role and Background of the Researcher

Creswell (2007) describes the role of the researcher as one of the characteristics unique to qualitative research. My role as researcher in this case study was what Creswell referred to as a "key instrument." According to Creswell (2007),

> the qualitative researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants. They may use a protocol—an instrument for collecting data—but the researchers are the ones who actually gather the information. They do not tend to . . . rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers. (p. 38)

I developed the data collection tools for this qualitative case study, as well as the survey and interview protocols.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this case study was to conduct a descriptive case study analysis of a teacher education professional licensure program for American Indian pre-service teachers at a tribal college in the upper Midwest region of the United States. For purposes of the research, the professional educator was defined as one who completes an approved teacher education program and meets state licensure requirements, including standardized testing requirements. The results of this case study examined and described dimensions of a program for preparing American Indian professional educators at a state-approved teacher education program at a tribal college. This chapter includes an analysis of documents, processes, and perceptions of the research participants, gained through survey responses and interview transcripts from graduates and faculty; what they identified as most valuable; what they felt was less significant; and their recommendations for future considerations.

In 2003, Butt from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee published an issue brief addressing resources for institutions of higher education to access to increase success rates of American Indian students in higher education. Butt (2003) identified risk factors that contributed to Native students' low rate of retention: "delayed enrollment, part-time attendance, financial independence, having dependents, being a single parent, working fulltime, and being a GED recipient" (para. 1). Butt (2003) determined that 35%

of American Indian/Alaskan Native undergraduate students faced four or more of these factors compared to 22% of all undergraduates. This chapter will also include a data analysis of interview transcripts collected from the graduates of the teacher education program about their perceptions of these risk factors.

The central research questions that guided this case study focused on the teacher education program at the tribal college that was the setting for this case study and the dimensions of this program that contributed to the graduates of the program meeting state licensure requirements. One assumption was this case study would identify defining characteristics, or dimensions, of a program that increases the numbers of graduates who meet teacher licensure requirements. A second assumption was that factors would be identified that enhance and strengthen a teacher education program, through the perspectives of the graduates. The third assumption was that factors identified, again through the perspectives of the graduates, as negatively influencing or detracting the graduates' ability to be successful in the program would be considered for future program development, as long as the integrity of the program or institution was not jeopardized. The research questions from these assumptions, and this case study, are as follows:

1. What defining characteristics, or dimensions, of the teacher education program contributed to the graduates' success with meeting teacher licensure requirements?
2. What are the participants' perceptions of factors the teacher education program should adopt that, if adopted, would strengthen or enhance the success of the graduates to meet teacher licensure requirements?

3. What are the participants' perceptions of existing factors that detract from being successful in the program and meeting teacher licensure requirements?

This chapter provides an account of the findings from the data collection process for this case study. The data collected indicated factors that influence the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the teacher candidates in the tribal college teacher education program, and contributed to their ability to graduate from the program and meet state professional educator licensure requirements. These factors reflect the "ethic of caring" theoretical framework for this case study, as proposed by Noddings (2003, 2005a, 2005b).

Analysis of Responses to Survey #1

The demographic information survey items in the first section of Survey #1 were intended to provide a clearer picture of personal characteristics of the graduate participants. Because this case study was conducted at one of only nine tribal colleges/universities in the United States with a teacher education program, and because each of these programs has considerably fewer graduate than most public and private institutions, it was important that I not include too much personal information about each one of the participants or their anonymity may be jeopardized. It is, however, important to identify trends in personal characteristics of the graduate participants, as tribal college students, within the context of this case study.

Survey #1: Graduate Participant Results

As indicated in Table 1, all of the graduate participants, or 100%, were enrolled tribal members, meaning they met the criteria as members of federally recognized tribal groups in the United States. Nine of the graduate participants were members of tribes

Table 1. Demographic Information for Graduates Participating in Survey.

Demographic Information	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
1. Enrolled tribal member		
a. Yes	10	100
b. No	0	0
2. Enrolled in a tribe located in North or South Dakota		
a. Yes	9	90
b. No	1	10
3. Attended K-12 school on a reservation		
a. Yes	9	90
b. No	1	10
4. Graduate from a reservation high school		
a. Yes	7	70
b. No	3	30
5. Completed a GED		
a. Yes	1	10
b. No	9	90
6. This college was first college attended		
a. Yes	1	10
b. No	9	90
7. Under 25 years old when education degree was started		
a. Yes	3	30
b. No	7	70
8. 25 years or older when education degree was started		
a. Yes	7	70
b. No	3	30

located in North or South Dakota and one was from a tribe in the southwest. Nine of the 10 graduate participants attended school at a K-12 reservation school and seven of them graduated from high school at a school located on a reservation. Of the three who did not graduate from a reservation high school, one completed General Education Development (GED) tests as an alternative to a high school diploma. This would imply the remaining two graduate participants graduated from a public or private off-reservation high school.

Nine of 10 of the graduate participants had attended another college or university prior to attending the tribal college from which they graduated. Seven of the 10 were 25 years old, or older, when they began their program of study in elementary education at this college. The other three were less than 25 years old when they started but the survey results did not indicate if they were close to 25 or significantly younger.

As indicated in Table 2, 8 of 10 of the graduate participants reported being raised by biological parents. There is a possible discrepancy here due to cultural variations in graduates' perceptions of "biological parent." When I reviewed the findings from this survey, a number of the participants reported they considered their grandparents as "biological parents." They were biologically related to them and they filled the role as "parents" for them. They also reported having lived with one or both of their biological parents in their grandparents' homes with the grandparents as the primary caregivers. The intent of this survey item was to provide a glimpse into the lives of the graduate participants' formative years by reporting the presence of a parental influence. I did not address this particular survey item in a subsequent survey as the intent was to determine a parental influence and it did, just not from the same familial source as some may assume.

Table 2**.** Graduate Participant Responses: Familial Status.

Familial Status	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
9. Raised by a biological parent		
a. Yes	8	80
b. No	2	20
10. Parent(s) or guardian who raised me graduated from college with a bachelors degree		
a. Yes	3	30
b. No	7	70
11. Married while completing my education degree		
a. Yes	5	50
b. No	5	50
12. Have 1-3 children		
a. Yes	5	50
b. No	2	20
c. N/A	3	30
13. Have 4 or more children		
a. Yes	2	20
b. No	5	50
c. N/A	3	30
14. Children lived with me while I was completing my education degree		
a. Yes	7	70
b. No	0	0
c. N/A	3	30
15. Child(ren) attended the child development centers or elementary school on campus		
a. Yes	7	70
b. No	0	0
c. N/A	3	30

As is typical of most students at the tribal college for this case study, 7 of 10 of the graduate participants are first-generation college students. Five out of 10 were married. Five of the 10 reported having three or fewer children and two reported having more than four children, so 7 of the 10 graduate participants have children. Three reported "Not Applicable," indicting they neither had three or fewer or more than four, so the survey reports they do not have any children. All of the children of the graduate participants lived with the participants and all attended the K-8 school located on the college campus.

As indicated by the survey results reported in Table 3, 5 of 5 of the graduate participants worked part-time and 5 of 5 worked full-time. The same participants may have reported working both full-time and part-time over the period of their program of study. The intent of this prompt was to provide evidence that approximately half were employed.

Nine of 10 of the graduate participants received funding from tribal higher education programs and 2 of the 10 took out student loans. All of the graduate participants received funding from a federal teacher preparation grant while attending college. Four of 10 of the participants reported having a spouse or significant other for financial support, and 3 of 10 reported having a parent or extended family member providing financial support.

The first two survey items reported in Table 4 indicated the graduate participants did not report experiencing circumstances that resulted in higher numbers of absences impacting their programs of study. The next four survey items indicated the graduate

Table 3. Graduate Participant Responses: Financial Support.

Financial Support	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
16. Worked part-time (less than 20 hours per week) while I was completing my degree		
a. Yes	5	50
b. No	5	50
17. Worked full-time (40 hours per week) while completing my degree		
a. Yes	5	50
b. No	5	50
18. Received tribal higher education funding while attending college		
a. Yes	9	90
b. No	1	10
19. Took out student loans while attending college		
a. Yes	2	20
b. No	8	80
20. Received funding from a federal teacher preparation grant while attending college		
a. Yes	10	100
b. No	0	0
21. Have a spouse or significant other who helped support me financially while I completed my education degree		
a. Yes	4	40
b. No	6	60
22. Have a parent or extended family member who helped support me financially while I completed my education degree		
a. Yes	3	30
b. No	7	70

Table 4. Graduate Participant Responses: Social/Emotional Support Systems.

Social/Emotional Support Systems	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
23. Experienced personal or family issues that resulted in me missing 5-9 consecutive days of school while I was a student completing my education degree		
a. Yes	1	10
b. No	9	90
24. Experienced personal or family issues that resulted in me missing more than 10 consecutive days of school while I was a student completing my education degree		
a. Yes	0	0
b. No	10	100
25. Have a spouse or significant other who encouraged and supported me emotionally and/or socially while I completed my education degree		
a. Yes	7	70
b. No	3	30
26. Have a parent or extended family member who encouraged and supported me emotionally and/or socially while I completed my education degree		
a. Yes	9	90
b. No	1	10
27. Had friends and/or relatives already attending college (in any program) or starting at the same time as I started my education degree on campus		
a. Yes	7	70
b. No	3	30
28. Had a circle of friends to socialize with while I was completing my education degree		
a. Yes	9	90
b. No	1	10

participants reported having some form of social support system while attending college, either a spouse or significant other (7 of 10 participants) or a parent or family member (9 of 10 participants). Seven of 10 of the participants indicated having a friend or relative attending the college at the same time they did, and 9 of 10 reported having a circle of friends with which to socialize.

Survey #1: Faculty Participant Results

The five faculty participants who completed the surveys for this case study were selected for their experience with and insight into the teacher education program, including the students whom they taught in their classrooms, the graduate participants for this case study. The three full-time faculty teach a minimum of 12 credits per semester and serve as advisors. The two part-time faculty, referred to as community-based faculty, teach a minimum of one course per semester, teach courses every semester, and have been teaching without interruption at the tribal college for more than five years.

As shown in Table 5, one of the five faculty participants is an enrolled tribal member, or American Indian. Two of the five faculty have lived on a reservation and five of five have friends or relatives currently living on a reservation, indicating a present connection to reservation communities. All of the faculty taught, or continue to teach, in a K-12 school on a reservation or in a school with at least 75% American Indian student population. I included the "75% American Indian student population" so the elementary school on the campus would be considered; however, all five of the faculty participants taught in a reservation school sometime during their professional career.

Table 5. Demographic Information for Faculty Participating in Survey.

Demographic Information	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
1. Enrolled tribal member		
a. Yes	1	20
b. No	4	80
2. Lived on a reservation		
a. Yes	2	40
b. No	3	60
3. Has friends or relatives currently living on a reservation		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0
4. Taught, or still teaching, in a K-12 school on a reservation or in a school with at least 75% American Indian student population		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0
5. Masters degree in Education		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0
6. Minimum of a bachelors degree in Elementary Education		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0
7. Currently a licensed K-12 teacher		
a. Yes	4	80
b. No	1	20
8. Minimum of 5 years of K-12 classroom teaching experience		
a. Yes	4	80
b. No	1	20
9. This is my first experience teaching at a college or university		
a. Yes	3	60
b. No	2	40

One of the strengths of the teacher education program identified by the graduate participants in this case study, the students themselves, was the qualifications of the faculty participants. Five of five of the faculty participants have a minimum of a master degree in education and have an undergraduate degree in elementary education. Four of five of the faculty participants are currently licensed professional educators with a minimum of five years of elementary level classroom teaching. Two of the five of the faculty participants have taught at another college or university other than this tribal college.

As shown in Table 6, three of five of the faculty participants identified as full-time faculty who advise students and have regularly scheduled office hours. The other two faculty members identified as part-time, do not advise students, or hold regularly scheduled office hours. Five of five of faculty participants indicated, however, they are available to students outside of regularly scheduled office hours and communicate with them when school is not in session and on personal cell or home phones. One of my survey questions, item number 17, appears to be the same as item number 16, except for texting. This would indicate that five of five faculty participants reported using their personal cell and home phones to communicate with students and four of the five faculty participants communicated through text messaging. As indicated by responses to survey items 18, 19, and 20, faculty participants reported using a variety of other technology tools to communicate with students, in addition to their personal cell phones. Two faculty participants used email to communicate with the majority of their students and one used her personal social media account (i.e., Facebook). Three of the five faculty participants, or more than half, reported using an alternate social media site (i.e., Facebook or blog),

Table 6. Faculty Participant Responses.

Roles and Relationships	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
10. Teach full-time in the teacher education program		
a. Yes	3	60
b. No	2	4
11. Teach part-time (6 credits or less) in the teacher education program		
a. Yes	2	40
b. No	3	60
12. Advise (i.e. degree planning, registering) students in addition to your teaching duties		
a. Yes	3	60
b. No	2	40
13. Have regularly scheduled office hours		
a. Yes	3	60
b. No	2	40
14. Available to students outside of regularly scheduled office hours		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0
15. Communicate with students when school is not in session, either before or after the semester begins or ends		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0
16. Communicate with students on personal cell or home phone number		
a. Yes	5	100
b. No	0	0

Table 6 cont.

Roles and Relationships	Overall Sample, N=Count	%
17. Communicate with students through personal cell or home phone (calling or texting)		
a. Yes	4	80
b. No	1	20
18. Communicate with the majority of students through email		
a. Yes	2	40
b. No	3	60
19. Communicate with students on personal social media site (Facebook, blog, etc)		
a. Yes	1	20
b. No	4	8
20. Communicate with students regularly on an alternate (other than personal) media site (Facebook, blog, etc.)		
a. Yes	3	60
b. No	2	40

which implies the faculty participant has set up an alternative Facebook account or blog for the purpose of communicating with students.

Analysis of Responses to Survey #2

This survey was developed for the purpose of gathering data from the participants that would provide the foundation for subsequent data collection. I debated collecting this data through a focus group but decided on a qualitative survey with open-ended responses. Merriam (2009) describes qualitative data collection techniques used in a study as "determined by the researcher's theoretical orientation, by the problem and

purpose of the study, and by the sample selected" (p. 86). My decision to use a survey for qualitative data collection was based on a concept of an explorative survey with open questions that provides unique responses from all of the research participants (Jansen, 2010). According to Jansen (2010),

> in explorative surveys, well-performed interviews or observations may produce valuable sophisticated knowledge by concurrent validity checking (probing, replicating, triangulating). In this way much of analysis may have been performed during the data collection itself, with little need for more analysis afterwards. This may be quite suitable to the aim of the study. (p. 11)

The inductive codes identified in Tables 7, 8, and 9 include those identified by me, as primary researcher, and Dr. James H. Banning, as peer reviewer, in an effort to establish trustworthiness of the study. My codes appeared more descriptive and less inductive than those of Dr. Banning. In addition, I purposefully identified separate codes from graduate participant and faculty participant responses to determine different perspectives, if any, whereas Dr. Banning combined the two. The codes are aligned in the tables to show similarities between those identified, independent of each other, by Dr. Banning and myself, further assurance that I was directing my attention and analyses to the participants' responses and not previous established biases.

The codes identified in Table 7 for "Survey #2: Item One - Strengths of the teacher education program" were constructed into themes, or categories, by clustering the data segments (codes) and then naming each segment (category) (Merriam, 2009). The themes constructed met the criteria recommended by Merriam (2009). All of the data fit into a category, and only one; the data were "responsive to the purpose of the research";

and the name of the category was reflective of what was actually in the data

(pp. 185-186). These themes were then used to create Survey #3.

Table 7. Results From Survey #2: Item One – Strengths of the Teacher Education Program.

Azure (Researcher)		Banning (Peer Reviewer)
Graduate Participant Responses	Faculty Participant Responses	Graduate/Faculty Participant Responses
Admission standards Program requirements Dispositions assessment	Dispositions assessment	Role of dispositions
Opportunities for professional development	Emphasis on professional development	Array of professional development opportunities
Kind, caring, compassionate faculty Faculty support and encouragement Open minded and understanding faculty Family relationships with faculty	Faculty commitment Personal relationships with students	Student centered program and faculty
High standards in program – faculty have high expectations Rigorous coursework View candidates as strong Native leaders	High expectations Rigorous program of study	High expectations of students
Faculty with classroom experience Adjunct faculty: practicing, classroom teachers	Practicing teachers as adjunct faculty Faculty qualifications	Contributions of adjunct faculty and participating teachers
Field experience and practicum: multiple grade levels and settings	Field placements	Diversity of practicum experiences
Student financial grant support		
Small class sizes: high level of student engagement		

Table 8. Results From Survey #2: Item Two – Weaknesses of the Teacher Education Program.

Azure (Researcher)		Banning (Peer Reviewer)
Graduate Participant Responses	Faculty Participant Responses	Graduate/Faculty Participant Responses
Increased technology training and access	Technology training	Technology (particularly the availability of laptops)
Partnering institutions – conflicting expectations, schedules, financial aid		Logistic issues regarding requirements and the two institutional involvements
	Sub-par physical location	Cold building as a setting for the program

Table 9. Results From Survey #2: Item Three – New Opportunities for the Teacher Education Program.

Azure (Researcher)		Banning (Peer Reviewer)
Graduate Participant Responses	Faculty Participant Responses	Graduate/Faculty Participant Responses
Full day classroom observations prior to student teaching		The role of logistics (timing of activities, time in classroom per day, time spent on specific topics)
Continue emphasis on dispositions		Support was also given for the dispositions
Increased training on curriculum, instructional planning, and classroom management	Professional development	
Increased access to laptops (to check out)	Technology training for grades 1-6 students	Addressing the technology problem both hardware (laptops) and use (greater use of E-portfolios)

Analysis of Responses to Survey #3

The third and final qualitative survey used for data collection was developed and distributed using *Qualtrics* software. Survey #3 was designed to reduce the number of themes from the responses to Survey #2. According to Creswell (2007), there are more categories early in the analysis process but the researcher then strives "to reduce and

Table 10. Constructed Themes.

Inductive Codes from Responses to Survey #2: Item One	Themes (Categories) Constructed from Codes
Admission standards Program requirements Dispositions assessment	Admission Requirements: 2.50 GPA. Dispositions Score 2.0 or Higher
Array of professional development opportunities	Extensive Professional Development Opportunities
Kind, caring, compassionate faculty Faculty support and encouragement Open minded and understanding faculty Family relationships with faculty Faculty commitment Personal relationships with students Student centered program and faculty	Caring Faculty: Open-Minded, Encouraging, Belief in Students as Strong, Native American Leaders: Family Atmosphere
Rigorous coursework	Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging
Small class sizes: high level of student engagement	Small Class Sizes: High Level of Student Engagement
Faculty with classroom experience Faculty qualifications	Faculty with K-12 Classroom Experience
Adjunct faculty: practicing, classroom teachers	Adjunct Faculty: Practicing, Classroom Teachers
View candidates as strong, Native leaders High standards in program - faculty have high expectations	High Standards in Program – Faculty Have High Expectations
Student financial grant support	Student Financial Grant Support
Field experience and practicum: multiple grade levels and settings Diversity of practicum experiences	Field Experience and Practicum: Multiple Grade Levels and Settings

combine them into the five or six themes that . . . will [be used] in the end" (p. 152). Merriam (2009) suggests, "A large number of categories is likely to reflect an analysis too lodged in concrete description" (p. 187). One facet of qualitative research data

analysis that all researchers seemed to agree on, based on my extensive readings of case study research methodology, was to analyze data as they are being collected. Based on the data collected and analyzed from Survey #2, and in an effort to establish reliability, Survey #3 was distributed to ensure the responses from the participants, and the themes identified based on these responses, were credible dimensions based on frequency of response and not simply the perspective of one participant. Survey #3 was intended to narrow the number of categories into themes that were comprehensive, focused on the research questions, and yet inclusive of features unique to the case setting and participants.

The constructs for Survey #3 were based on the themes, referred to as dimensions, identified from the data collected from responses to items on Survey #2. All of the graduate participants and all of the faculty participants responded to this survey. Question 1 on this survey was as follows:

> **Q1:** Below you will find a list of the dimensions of the program that you and the other participants identified on Survey #2 as strengths of the program. You indicated that if these were removed, students in the program would be negatively impacted.
>
> For students to succeed in the teacher education program, which of these dimensions is most important? Rank the dimensions in order, from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most important for students to succeed.
>
> - Admission Requirements: 2.50 GPA, Dispositions Score 2.0 or Higher
> - Extensive Professional Development Opportunities

- Caring Faculty: Open-Minded, Encouraging, Belief in Students as Strong, Native American Leaders: Family Atmosphere
- Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging
- Small Class Sizes: High Level of Student Engagement
- Faculty with K-12 Classroom Experience
- Adjunct Faculty: Practicing, Classroom Teachers
- High Standards in Program - Faculty Have High Expectations
- Student Financial Grant Support
- Field Experience and Practicum: Multiple Grade Levels and Settings

Eight of 10 of the graduate participants, and three of five of the faculty participants, selected the following dimension as the one they felt had the most significant impact on the program as "being the most important for students to succeed":

- Caring Faculty: Open-Minded, Encouraging, Belief in Students as Strong, Native American Leaders: Family Atmosphere

There were four other dimensions that ranked higher in frequency than others as being important to the success of the graduates as indicated by the graduate responses. Five of the 10 graduate participants ranked these four dimensions as the next four in order of importance to the success of the graduates:

- Extensive Professional Development Opportunities
- Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging
- High Standards in Program - Faculty Have High Expectations
- Field Experience and Practicum: Multiple Grade Levels and Settings

There were two dimensions that ranked higher in frequency than others as being important to the success of the graduates, in addition to “Caring Faculty,” as indicated by the faculty responses. Two of the five faculty participants ranked these two dimensions as next in order of importance to the success of the graduates:

- Admission Requirements: 2.50 GPA, Dispositions Score 2.0 or Higher
- Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging

None of the other seven dimensions was selected by more than one faculty participant as being most important to student success other than these three.

The remaining 10 questions on Survey #3 were developed using the same 10 themes, or dimensions, ranked in order based on responses in Question 1. The questions and themes that emerged from responses to each question are as follows:

Q2: What role do "Admission Requirements: 2.50 GPA, Dispositions Score 2.0 or Higher" have with students successfully completing the program? Some of you said these requirements are important to students’ success with graduating and becoming licensed teachers. Why?

The theme of "competent, caring teachers" was evident in most of the graduate responses to this prompt. Graduates identified having high standards for themselves and the children they teach, and, as practicing teachers, actually implementing the dispositions they learned that they would not have known otherwise. High standards, high expectations, and commitment were frequent terms in their responses.

Q3: What role do "Extensive Professional Development Opportunities" have with students successfully completing the program? What skills are learned from

participating in these opportunities and why is professional development important?

The theme most evident in the graduate responses to the third prompt was "networking opportunities in diverse settings." The graduate responses included having numerous professional development opportunities for strengthening their interpersonal skills and refining their professional skills through interactions with practicing teachers, teacher candidates from other schools, school administrators, and professionals in the field of education. One participant responded that professional development opportunities provided an "opportunity to practice our dispositions."

Q4: What role do "Caring Faculty: Open-Minded, Encouraging, Belief in Students as Strong, Native American Leaders: Family Atmosphere" have with students successfully completing the program? Provide one example of a faculty member being open-minded, encouraging, or believing in a student.

The theme most evident in the graduate responses to this prompt was "encouragement and support." Responses included specific examples, as requested. One participant responded,

> Not everyone is fortunate enough to have a wingman or avid supporter in their life, so this one opportunity may be the only experience; it helps to know that at least one teacher/instructor actually cared and believed in you enough to see you through to the end.

Another graduate shared this example of her interactions with one of the faculty:

> She is a good people person. She is always willing to sit and listen no matter what, whether it is a discussion about school or just a conversation. She is

professional yet personable. That is a very important quality to have as a teacher. She is also very encouraging. She helps you just enough and walks you through things so you can get it and have an ah-ha moment. You can tell she sincerely cares about the success of her students.

And yet another graduate shared this example:

This was at the top of my list of the set of dimensions addressed. I owe a huge part of my success to the staff here at this college. They have helped me through many obstacles I faced while completing my education. One example I can remember was when I came to my advisor in tears. Something from my past had caught up with me. I did not know what to do so I went to my advisor for guidance. I was scared and wanted to quit. My advisor comforted me and assured that everything would be ok. She also assured me that I would not be kicked out. She helped me come up with a solution to the problem. She treated me more like a daughter than just another student. She has always done this for many of us in the program. She is always honest with us and gives us genuine feedback. It is clear that she truly cares about all her students and wants them all to succeed.

Q5: What is the role of "Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging" with helping students complete the program and become professional educators? Why is high quality and challenging coursework important for students to graduate and become licensed?

The theme that emerged from the graduate participant responses was “preparation for the profession.” Responses included phrases such as "how to be the best teacher";

“prepared me a great deal for the profession”; “being good examples for peers, co-workers, and students”; and “prepare us for 'real-world' situations.”

One of the graduate participants explained it this way:

> If the coursework is too easy, we won't learn what we need to learn to become good teachers. There are too many bad teachers in reservations schools. There are too many poor Native teachers who were passed through but don't know what they're doing. We are proud to be graduates of this program because if you can make it, you know you've accomplished something. If you want easy, go somewhere else. But you might not pass the Praxis tests and get your teaching license.

Q6: Describe the importance of "Small Class Sizes: High Level of Student Engagement" for students successfully completing the program and being able to meet teacher licensure requirements (i.e. pass the Praxis II).

The theme that emerged from the graduate participant responses to this prompt was one of “collaboration.” Some of the terms used to describe this dimension included “engaging in discussion,” “learning from my colleagues,” “individual instruction,” and "no one was left out of the classroom discussions.”

Q7: What role do "Faculty with K-12 Classroom Experience" have for students successfully completing the program and becoming licensed educators? How are faculty with K-12 experience important to students' ability to graduate and meet licensure requirements?

The theme that transpired from the graduate participant responses to this prompt was “learning from experience,” with the experiences being those of the teacher

education faculty. Phrases that were mentioned in responses included “real-life tips,” “knowledge of current best practices,” and “using their classroom experience to help us make sense of things.” One of the graduate participants described her perspective:

> Faculty that have classroom experience with K-12 are able to provide the students with their personal direct experiences that you may not encounter throughout the normal college course. Having the faculty there to answer any questions about your experiences whether it be about practicum, field experience, or during your student teaching experience, is essential to helping students graduate and meet licensure requirements. The wide range of faculty who have taught various grades and in many different school settings throughout their educational careers helps them to provide us, the students, with a wealth of different knowledge.

Yet another graduate participant shared this observation:

> Our teachers used their experiences in the classroom to help us make sense of what they were trying to teach us. They would share funny stories about things they tried that flopped and that, when you flop, you stand back, make some changes and try again. I don't know how somebody could teach education courses if they hadn't “been there.” We had one teacher for one year who didn't have classroom experience. When we asked her what she would do in a situation, she didn't know. Having teachers with experience helped us learn the content better and be able to apply it.

> **Q8:** What role do "Adjunct Faculty: Practicing, Classroom Teachers" have with preparing students to meet graduation and licensure requirements? Why are these faculty important to the program and student success?

The responses to this prompt included terms such as “actual classroom experience,” “able to go into their classrooms and work with students,” and “a role model to look up to.” One of the graduate participants responded,

> The adjunct faculty are great. They have their own classrooms and we are able to go into their classrooms and practice what we're learning in our college classes. They also get the latest and greatest professional development training and share it with us. We know more about common core, differentiated instruction, Daily 5, and deconstructing standards than most teacher ed students because of our adjunct faculty. It seems like this is the best way to keep up with the rapid changes in education.

> **Q9:** What is the importance of "High Standards in Program - Faculty Have High Expectations" with students graduating and meeting licensure requirements? Why are high standards and high expectations necessary?

The theme that emerged from the graduate participant responses to this prompt was “meeting expectations.” Most of the graduate participants included terms, or phrases, such as “knowing what was expected of me,” “strive for personal best,” and “to work at his/her highest level of performance.” One graduate participant shared her perspective:

> High standards and expectations are important for the students so we are meeting the criteria for teacher licensure. Without them we would have bad grades, be late, not prepared, uncompleted work, and not be ready to get out in the field on our own. It really gets us ready to get out in the classroom and be prepared. It gives the college a good reputation that we have highly qualified educators who are ready to teach and are going to be awesome educators.

Q10: What difference does "Student Financial Grant Support" make with students being able to meet graduation and licensure requirements?

The theme that transpired from the responses to this prompt was “focus remains on academics.” The graduate participants referred to being able to support themselves and their families without having to work two jobs, being able to provide for their children, being able to focus on academics instead of seeking financial support. One student explained her perspective:

> Student financial and grant support is helpful for everyone. Not everyone is able to get assistance from their home agencies and this will take away those stresses of bills, and not having to get a second job. Most of the students who come have families and/or have no dependents and with either situation they are accommodated and helped so they may stay in school and finish out strong.

Q11: What role does “Field Experience and Practicum: Multiple Grade Levels and Settings” have with preparing students to meet graduation and licensure requirements? What are specific skills or knowledge students gain from field experiences and practicum that cannot be learned in the college classroom?

The theme that emerged from the responses to the last prompt in this survey was “practical experiences.” Terms, or phrase, that were used included hands-on learning, experiencing various teaching techniques, and variety in teaching materials. One of the graduate participants shared her perspective:

> I loved my field experience and practicum hours and settings. You never know how the classroom experience will be until you are actually there for yourself to see and experience it. Being able to take part in multiple grade levels was great as

well because it gave you a sense of what grade levels you yourself would like to teach when you were done and were an actual teacher. Specific skills you were able to use were the teaching strategies learned throughout the courses. The faculty's experiences of what worked for them were great but it's not until you are in the actual classroom that you find out what strategies worked for you and what ones didn't.

The data collected from the graduate and the faculty responses to the 10 questions on Survey #3 indicated the data collection process was reaching the point of saturation, what Merriam (2009) defines as "the point at which you realize no new information, insights, or understandings are forthcoming" (p.183). Applying what Gibbs (2007) refers to as the coding hierarchy, an analysis of the participant responses to the 10 themes on Survey #3 resulted in a merge from the 10 original themes into what Gibbs refers to as "parent" themes, the most general or dominant themes, with the other eight themes identified as "children" themes, lower on the hierarchy and merged into the four "parent" themes (pp. 73-74). Figure 1 shows this hierarchical relationship.

Using the "parent-children" code hierarchy provided for more manageable themes and organized the themes into categories in which the relationships could be seen more clearly. It also decreased the duplication, or redundancy, that was appearing within the participant responses because of the impending saturation point, or the point Merriam (2009) defines as "nothing new is coming forth" (p. 183). Creswell (2007) suggests the number of categories must be "combined and reduced" in order to focus the narrative of the study (p. 152). Equally important, the four parent themes are responsive to the purpose statement for this case study as they include perspectives about the program

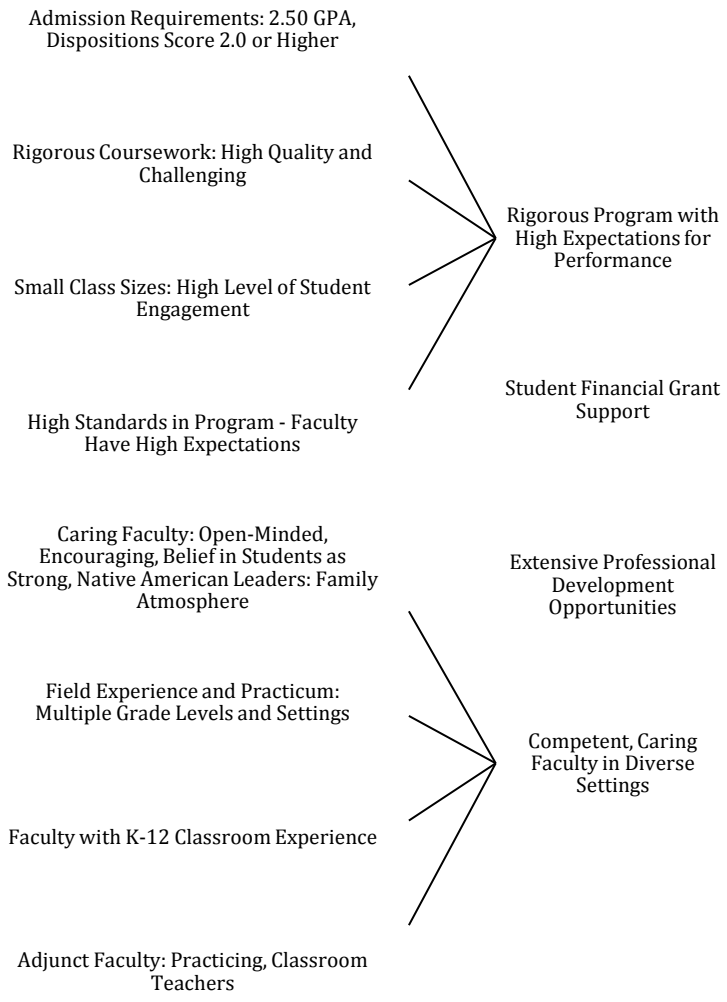


Figure 1. Hierarchical Theme Relationship.

gained through surveys and interviews of graduates and faculty and what they identified as most valuable.

Document Analysis: Praxis Scores

In addition to the three qualitative surveys used for data collection, this case study includes document analysis: the Praxis scores and the dispositions assessment system. A description of this case study would be incomplete without data collected from the participants themselves as well as an analysis of these two important sources of

information. Following the analysis of the documents, this results section will return to an analysis of the interview data collected from the participants.

One of the characteristics that may be somewhat unique to the teacher education program at this tribal college is the schedule for the Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) program admission requirement. According to numerous teacher education handbooks describing the admissions process for teacher education programs, it appears that most colleges and universities require potential teacher candidates to take and pass the Praxis I: PPST, a series of tests of basic skills, prior to being accepted into the teacher education programs. Some allow students to complete a number of selected courses but it seems the majority require passing scores on this series of tests, or some type of equivalent test, prior to full acceptance into the teacher education programs.

The teacher education program on this campus is similar to these other programs in that students are required to take the Praxis I: PPST in reading, writing, and mathematics when they apply to the teacher education program; however, the difference, or feature that may be unique to the program for this case study, is that they are not required to pass the tests, or meet the cut scores, in order to continue in the program. Instead, the PPST scores of the students in this program are used to identify baseline levels of achievement and as an assessment of areas the students need to focus on improving throughout their program of study. It is our contention that the students are not deficit in their ability to master content in these three areas; many of them simply have not been taught the skills they need to meet the cut scores on these tests (pass) in the schools they attended prior to coming to our campus. Therefore, we believe it is our job to teach the skills required for the students to be successful with this series of tests.

Many of the students who enroll at our college are required to complete remedial courses their first year in college. Building on the scope and sequence of skills in the remedial courses, the students proceed through a coherent series of remedial, general education, and teacher education courses that include direct teaching of the knowledge and skills they need in order to achieve a level of competence in the basic skills as evidenced by the cut scores of the Praxis I: PPST. As the students progress through the sequence of courses, and their skills increase, they re-take the PPST tests when they feel they are ready and after conferring with their instructors. Students, as teacher candidates, are not allowed to apply for student teaching until they have successfully met the cut scores set by the state in all three areas of the Praxis I: PPST, but they are allowed to take courses and continue in the program up to that point without passing the tests.

In the past 10 years, only 1 of approximately 30 teacher education candidates has been denied the opportunity to apply for student teaching because of the inability to meet the cut scores of the PPST prior to student teaching. This candidate passed two of the three tests and is in the process of studying for the remaining test. This student has one academic year to meet this requirement before she will be required to reapply to the program. Students are aware of this requirement and acknowledge the risk of not being able to complete the bachelor degree if they are unable to pass all three tests prior to student teaching.

As displayed in Table 11, the 10 graduate participants in this case study passed the three Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST). Four of the 10 met the cut scores for the three tests the first time they took the tests; therefore, they were considered to

Table 11. Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST).

Graduate Participant	(R) Reading	(W) Writing	(M) Math	Total	Re-Take	First Test	Last Test	Graduated
1	176	170	181	527		2009	2009	2012
2	178	172	170	520		2004	2010	2012
3	171	174	171	516	R-M	2011	2013	2013
4	182	173	182	537		2009	2009	2012
5	175	169	174	518		2009	2009	2012
6	173	169	174	516	R-W-M	2009	2012	2012
7	176	171	174	521	R-W	2009	2011	2012
8	173	174	169	516	R-M	2009	2011	2012
9	175	172	170	517	W-M	2011	2012	2013
10	174	172	170	516	R-W-M	2006	2009	2012

Note. Passing Scores: Reading (R) – 173; Writing (W) – 173; Mathematics (M) – 170; or Cumulative Score – 516.

have passed. Four of them did not meet the cut scores for two of the tests the first time they took the tests and passed only one. This group had to re-take two of the tests. The two remaining participants did not meet the cut scores and had to re-take all three tests. When students have to re-take the test(s) due to low scores, and have more than one test to re-take, they take the test(s) one at a time. This allows time to prepare for one subject area at a time, engaging with an instructor for tutoring and remediation, and taking practice tests offered on the Praxis website.

Graduate participants 3 and 6, as indicated in Table 11, passed the last of their three Praxis I: PPST tests the same year they completed their student teaching and graduated. (Participants student teach 15 weeks of the same semester they graduate.) Graduate participants 7, 8, and 9 passed the last of their three Praxis I: PPST tests the year prior to student teaching and graduating. If the teacher education program at this tribal college was similar to programs at other institutions that require students to pass these three Praxis I: PPST tests prior to applying for and continuing in the teacher education program, 5 of the 10 graduate participants in this case study would not have been allowed to continue pursuing a career as a licensed educator. This translates to half of the graduate participants in this case study who are now licensed elementary school teachers, meeting state professional educator licensing requirements, would not be teachers. Based on these results, this unique characteristic of the teacher education program for this case study appears to be significant for increasing the number of American Indian teacher candidates who complete their programs of study and meet licensure requirements.

As indicated in Table 12, the graduate participants took two Praxis II tests, the Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment test and the Principles of Learning and Teaching, and met the scores identified as passing scores by the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board. The teacher education program requires teacher candidates to take these two tests during the same semester they student teach. Passing these two tests is not a graduation requirement; however, it is a teacher licensure requirement. Seven of 10 of the graduate participants passed both tests the first time they were attempted, during their final semester in which they were student

Table 12. Praxis II Scores.

Graduate Participant	(5011) CIA	Pass	(0622) PLT	Pass	Re-Take	First Test
1	168	Yes	162	Yes		2012
2	163	Yes	162	Yes	CIA	2012/2013
3	160	Yes	162	Yes		2013
4	185	Yes	160	Yes		2012
5	180	Yes	167	Yes	CIA & PLT	2012/2013
6	170	Yes	165	Yes		2012
7	159	Yes	165	Yes	CIA	2012/2012
8	170	Yes	170	Yes		2012
9	164	Yes	175	Yes		2013
10	164	Yes	167	Yes		2012

Note. Passing Scores: Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (CIA) – 158; Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) – 160.

teaching. Graduate participant 7 completed student teaching and graduated the spring semester of 2012 and passed one of the two Praxis II tests. During the summer semester of 2012, graduate participant 7 took the Praxis II: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment test for the second time and passed. Graduate participants 2 and 5 completed their student teaching and graduated the fall semester of 2012. Graduate participant 2 took the Praxis II: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment test for the second time at the beginning of the 2013 semester, the semester immediately following student teaching and graduation, and passed. Graduate participant 5 took both Praxis II tests for the second

time at the beginning of the 2013 semester, immediately following student teaching and graduation, and passed. At the end of the spring semester of 2013, all 10 of the graduate participants in this case study had graduated with bachelor degrees and met licensing requirements as professional educators for the state of North Dakota.

Document Analysis: Dispositions Scores

The development and refinement of personal and professional dispositions of the teacher candidates in the teacher education program is a crucial component of the program and was indicated as such by the research participants for this case study. The program defines dispositions as behaviors that all effective teachers possess and the principles that underpin a teacher's success in the classroom. They are the values, commitments, and professional ethics that govern how a teacher acts with students, families, colleagues, and communities. Based on extensive review of the research, and through experiences with individual teacher candidates, certain dispositions were identified for the teacher candidates graduating from the teacher education program. These had to do with values such as professional commitment, communication skills, adaptability, caring, and integrity.

As displayed in Table 13, each candidate in the teacher education program is assigned a score using a dispositions assessment tool (see Appendix B). The scores in Table 9 reflect the scores for the 10 graduate participants in this case study at the time they completed the program and graduated with their elementary education degrees. As indicated, all of the scores were 2.0, or higher, a requirement for continuing in the program and progressing through each touchstone (see Appendix D).

Table 13. Dispositions Assessment Scores – 2.0 Average Required.

Graduate Participant	Collaboration	Integrity	Respect	Reverence for Learning	Professionalism	Reflection	Flexibility	Responsibility	Average
1	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	2.50	2.88
2	2.00	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.67	2.67	2.00	2.33	2.46
3	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.67	2.96
4	2.67	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.67	2.67	3.00	2.71
5	3.00	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.67	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.79
6	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.75	2.75	3.00	2.50	2.75	2.84
7	2.80	3.00	3.00	2.60	2.60	2.60	3.00	2.60	2.78
8	3.00	2.75	2.75	2.50	2.50	2.25	2.50	2.25	2.56
9	3.00	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.67	2.67	2.67	2.00	2.67
10	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	3.00	2.75

It should be clarified that the scores in Table 13 were the scores for the graduates participating in this case study at the time of program completion. This is not meant to imply these scores were maintained throughout the time the graduate participants were in the program and progressing through the touchstones. The behaviors signified by the dispositions scores are learned behaviors that must be taught, practiced, and reinforced, resulting in fluctuating scores. If a score falls below 2.0, and remains there into the subsequent semester, corrective action is initiated and a timeline and process for improvement is developed. This is not viewed as punitive, but simply a developmental learning process. What is not flexible is scores falling and remaining below the minimum criteria of 2.0. Unfortunately, students who were meeting academic minimum requirements, but were not able to meet minimum dispositions assessment criteria, have been dismissed from the program. This practice is consistent with the conceptual framework of *preparing competent, caring teachers*.

Analysis of Individual Interviews

The central research questions for this case study focused on the teacher education program at the tribal college that was the context for this case study and the dimensions of this program that contributed to the ability of the graduates of the program to meet state licensure requirements. The research methods described in this case study, thus far, have addressed the research questions that guided this study. Characteristics, or dimensions, of the program influencing the ability of the graduates to meet teacher licensure requirements have been identified. The participants' perceptions of practices that influence or detract from their ability to be successful in the program have been described. There were a few questions that had emerged from the qualitative survey

responses, however, that remained unanswered that needed to be addressed in order for this case study to be complete. Stake (1995) reported it is not uncommon to survey all respondents in qualitative research and then use interviews to confirm and expand upon what was asked in the surveys. To respond to the unanswered questions, and confirm and expand upon themes that surfaced during the surveys, the final method of data collection for this case study was individual interviews.

Five of the graduate participants were invited to participate in individual interviews and all five agreed. These five were selected because they (a) were all graduates of the teacher education program at the tribal college and licensed teachers; (b) had attended other colleges and universities other than the tribal college so were able to draw some comparisons; (c) are, as American Indian professional educators, members of a group often underrepresented in higher education and the teaching profession.

The interview questions were established prior to the actual interviews and each one of the participants was emailed a list of the questions two weeks prior to the actual interview. Interviewing techniques described by Stake (1995) were utilized. This included asking the participant the questions, listening to the participant responses, taking notes, and using an audio recording device. Immediately after the interview, I transcribed the responses as recorded, and then gave the reconstructed account to the participant. The participant then read the responses for accuracy and message conveyed and edited some of the wording of the responses. Stake (1995) suggests, "Rather than tape record or write furiously, it is better to listen, to take a few notes, to ask for clarification" (p. 66). This style of interviewing seemed to work well with the participants as they were able to recall and then elaborate on their intent, based on the recorded interview. The responses to the

interview questions, as provided by the participants, are included in this section as they were transcribed. I purposefully included the majority of the transcribed responses and did not reduce the transcripts to codes and themes. I believed it was more important to include their narrative responses so as not to lose any of the rich description through the analysis process.

The first interview question recalled a "weakness" previously identified by the participants. The question was, "Now that you're teaching in your own classroom, and are realizing the role of technology in the classroom, what can the teacher education program do differently to move the use of technology from a weakness to a strength?" The first graduate participant responded about the need for access to technologies:

> If not already doing so, the Education program would benefit the students by providing them with laptops to use that have most recent or up-to-date software and programs. Also educating the student on the technology that is used in classrooms daily would benefit them after completing the program and entering the school system. I think adding a higher-level computer/technology class that educated students on how to use programs that are used in mainstream schools would be beneficial. For example, incorporate a class that teaches students about working with Smart Boards, making printables, using iPads, creating word documents, and so on.

The other four participants did not see technology necessarily as a weakness of the program but felt it was their responsibility, as practicing teachers, to remain current:

> Technology is always changing so I don't know if the program could have done any more. We were taught how to use it but it is our responsibility to make sure

> we are current with new technologies. It's going to be that way for our whole career; that we are going to have to take it upon ourselves to make sure we know the latest and greatest.

The second interview question addressed the "new opportunities" that, if implemented, would improve the teacher education program. The prompt was, “Three areas identified by participants were 1) greater use of electronic portfolios; 2) using students as mentors; and 3) class schedules and time in actual classrooms. Choose at least one of these areas and discuss how the implementing this new opportunity would improve student learning within the teacher education program.”

Two of the participants interviewed addressed the suggestion for increased time in actual classrooms. Both indicated increased field placement opportunities had already been implemented:

> I learned a lot from being in the classrooms. I was one of the last ones of this group to graduate and I had a lot more hours in classrooms than some of my peers who finished earlier because you added more field placements. So I think this has already been implemented.

The other three participants interviewed identified using students as mentors as the new opportunity that would improve student learning within the teacher education program. I had not realized, prior to this, that students as mentors was something the teacher education students might be interested in, as indicated by the responses of these graduates of the program. Their insight is as follows:

> I would choose the graduate/mentor opportunity. I can state from my current experiences as a graduate student, it makes a great difference. We were

> geographically assigned to our mentors. We were given the option to decline and pair up with mentors whose experiences and goals aligned with our own if we so chose to. I just went with the initial pairing and am happy with the results. We signed a mentor/student "contract" outlining our expectations and set one personal/professional goal for the semester. We meet in person twice a semester and have full access to them throughout the semester if we require advice and assistance with anything. It has been most helpful, and provides us with much needed motivation.

Another graduate participant expressed her perception of the benefits:

> For me, working in the elementary school setting helped me greatly in my education courses so I feel that having students as mentors for new students would be very beneficial. Being a new student in the educational field can be overwhelming sometimes, especially if you have never had any experience working with children. Having a mentor to guide you and give you some direction might help alleviate some of that stress.

The last participant interviewed questioned the practicality of students as mentors:

> Students as mentors? It sounds great in theory but when we would have time? We all have our own kids and families so when would we work with a mentor? I don't mean to sound negative but unless it was set up with specific times to meet, I'm afraid it would end up being one more thing to do that might not get done.

The third interview question was based on a study by Pavel et al. (1998) that reported Native American students entering college possessed an unusually high number of risk factors that threatened their ability to succeed in higher education (35% faced four

or more risk factors compared with only 22% of undergraduates overall). These risk factors are (1) financially independent; (2) at least one dependent; (3) single parent; and (4) enrolled part time, part year attendance. The third interview question had three parts:

- From your perspective, did Native American students in colleges and universities that you attended have these risk factors?
- Do you believe Pavel is correct with his assumption that these four risk factors are what prevent Native students from completing their college degrees?
- Are there other factors that you feel are more significant than these and what are they? (If you think about friends who have started college but not finished, what do you think kept them from doing so?)

Five of the five graduate participants interviewed affirmed the first question, that the Native American students in colleges and universities they attended possessed the four risk factors Pavel et al. identified. Four of the five responded "yes," and one participant responded, "Yes, we are a family oriented, mobile, and socioeconomically deficient group of learners." Based on the interview responses, however, the consensus ended there. The graduate participants shared varied perceptions about the second question, if these four risk factors are what prevent Native American students from completing their college degrees.

One participant agreed these risk factors contributed to Native students not finishing college but added,

> I think "culture shock" contributes to it. Students are put in a new place that isn't familiar to them and they are unaware of their surroundings, which may be people or their environment, and they do not know how to react. They find the change

overwhelming and realize it is easier to go back into their familiar lifestyle. Also I think a contributor is peer influence, what your peers say and do influence your failure or success.

When asked if there were other factors they felt were more significant for Native students finishing college than those identified by Pavel et al., in the third part of this question, one of the participants responded as follows:

> There are two more factors I can think of that should be added to this list and, from my experience, are more common than Pavel's. A lot of Natives aren't able to deal with things. If something happens, they quit. They don't know how to take things in stride, deal with them, and overcome them. These might be minor things like their car breaks down or they have a sick child. Instead of dealing with it, taking care of it and then getting back on track, they quit. I don't know why this is but I'm sure it has something to do with the culture of poverty and alcoholism. The other one is they don't really want to go to school, to college, they just want to leave the reservation. So when they leave to go to college, they don't have a commitment to get their degree and education, they just want to live somewhere else. They don't realize they are going to need to work hard, get to class and do their homework. So it goes back to the first one, then they quit. They quit school and go home, back to the reservation and give up. I guess there are tribal colleges on the reservations that might be different but this is what I think about off-reservation college students.

A second graduate participant shared this insight:

> While attending college I have found that many of the students I knew could all fit into this category of risk factors one way or another. The one thing that stands out the most to me is that many were financially independent. Not one student had their parents paying for their college education. I somewhat agree with Pavel that these risk factors do prevent some from finishing college but I also feel that sometimes there are other factors as well such how much effort you put into your college courses. I have seen that sometimes people just don't put in the effort needed to complete courses therefore they end up quitting and just not finishing. Sometimes it seems that people look for reasons, like these risk factors, but ultimately many of the Native students I know lack commitment. This isn't necessarily their fault. They just don't know what they want to do with their lives. It's hard to be committed when you don't have a passion for something or you don't know what your options are.

A third graduate participant elaborated on this same concept:

> The people I knew who finished college had these factors and overcame them. The people I know who did not finish also had these same factors. I don't believe these four factors, in isolation, are what cause Natives to drop out. There are bigger things than these, like the pull of a way of life that's miserable but hard to get out of. It's easier to stay down because then you don't have to be responsible for anybody or anything or do the hard work required to change it. Some people don't finish school because they don't know what they want to do with their lives.

> They go to school just for something to do and don't look at it as a career or life changing thing.

The fourth question in the interview asked the participants to identify circumstances by which students typically underrepresented in teacher education programs, specifically American Indian students, achieve success. The interview prompt clarified the definition of success for purposes of this research as meeting the requirements for professional educator licensure and becoming a licensed teacher. Based on the responses to this interview question, the participants identified the following circumstances affecting American Indian students achieving success in teacher education. The first participant provided this perspective:

> It takes a commitment from the students that they are going to do it. But it also takes people, like we had here at our college, who believed in us, mentored us, stayed until 6 o'clock on Friday afternoons to visit with us when we were feeling lonesome or insecure, and who were more like family than teachers and advisors. They know the balance between being hard on us, and demanding we get things done, and nurturing us and bending the deadlines when we needed it but still making us accountable. I'm not sure how to describe it but I didn't have this at the other college I attended and that was a tribal college.

Another participant identified a level of commitment as a requirement for success in her response:

> I can only speak for myself and my Native relatives. They have to want it, like really want it, and know what "it" is. They have to have somebody who thinks they can do it. What did [Dr. Lone Man] say about every child needing somebody

> who is absolutely crazy about them? They have to have somebody who they respect who will be disappointed in them if they don't achieve this success, almost like a parent. You here at this college are like parents to us. We don't have that from our own families. You believe in us and we respect you so we don't want to let you down. We think if our teachers here think we can do this, maybe we can. A lot of us have never had anybody expect anything from us.

Another one of the participants responded more specifically to some of the circumstances contributing to American Indian student success, and challenges accompanying these circumstances:

> There are many circumstances that minority students go through in order to graduate from college. I have seen friends struggle with working part and full time jobs while juggling coursework at the same time. I have seen friends struggle with being single parents and dealing with things from sick children, having no vehicle, not enough money for personal needs, and also with trying to adjust to a new environment. I myself have overcome many of these barriers while trying to finish college. I was a single parent of two boys and I worked a full time job. I had to work to support my family. I did not receive any child support nor did I receive any state services. It was a hard struggle at times because my hourly wage wasn't that much and it barely made ends meet at times. Trying to complete your homework assignments in the evenings with two children was hard at times. I was very thankful that I had access to a laptop from my employment that I could complete my assignments at home, rather than coming to campus to the computer room. I could see how my friends who had little ones struggled in this area as

well, because they would have to find babysitters for their little ones, just so they can complete their assignments. So yes there are many barriers that one needs to overcome to graduate. I am just very glad that I was able to complete my degree and get my teaching license.

In addition to circumstances contributing to American Indian student success, the student participants were asked about barriers they faced, and overcame, in order to achieve their goal of becoming a teacher. The first graduate participant did not identify specific barriers but talked about her struggles and challenges:

> I overcame many barriers on my way to becoming a teacher. I have struggled with my own doubts of failure. I have moved away from home to establish my own living. I have had to make the right decisions for my future regardless of what my personal choices would have been. I have had to stay motivated and push myself through school.

Typical of many college students, the second graduate participant identified the development of new relationships as helping her overcome barriers she experienced:

> I overcame being homesick and moving from the southwest all the way across the country. I moved from a desert to the tundra. I had no family or friends in the northern plains when I came. But I had already started developing a relationship with my teachers and advisors because they would visit with me on the phone and respond to my emails even before I came to the northern plains. I felt like I already knew them when I got to campus. I made friends and got a job when I got here so that helped me meet people. But I could have felt very alone, and maybe would have left and gone home, if these things didn't happen.

Another graduate participant referred to her choice to do something with her life as helping her overcome barriers:

> Some people think I have it easy because I'm married and my husband works. But I've gone through the same things as other people but I chose to do something different with my life. My mom drank all the time so we stayed with our grandmother. I've been hungry, cold, scared, seen people die and way more death than a kid should and other things I won't go into. But I'm here!

The last graduate participant response to this interview question included here provided insight into perceived barriers that had not been previously mentioned:

> Barriers I have faced, and overcame, were fear of failure and fear of success. I think that Native American populations may be viewed as successful in traditional or historical contexts. However, I do not see that that the same view holds true for contemporary Native Americans. We are limited in our access to "high achievers" not only amongst our tribes, but across Indian Country as a whole. Thankfully, with the use of technology those barriers are becoming weakened. We now have greater access to and can view "the greater possibilities" of what we can achieve as individuals and communities. We are no longer isolated in our reservation communities, unaware of the potential opportunities available to us, if we choose to pursue them.
>
> Here are questions I have asked myself in the past and present:
>
> - What does success look like?
> - Do I have the ability, resources, and potential to reach my goals, to be successful?

- What is my potential and can I really achieve what I set out to do?
- What will be expected of me if and after I reach my goals?
- How will my family, community, and peers view me for setting goals and achieving them? Will they look at me differently and am I ready for that?
- How will my life change after achieving my goals?
- After achieving success, what if I cannot deliver 100% of the time?
- Am I afraid of change, and if so, why?
- Am I worth it?
- What do I do and who will help me decide what to do when I struggle?

I recognize that I have come a long way since entering adulthood. I grew more as an adult than I did as a child or adolescent. I also have a long way to go. With that in mind, I have chosen to pursue what I want with no regrets or excuses. I am no longer afraid to be "wrong" or to fail. I try to learn from my failures; I seek out answers and resources to assist me in moving forward; I set goals and move forward with purpose. I take time to think before acting; I try to live as an example for my family and others; I have learned to be patient; and I do not take "no" for an answer—I find alternative solutions. I don't know how I came to be this way but it happened and I like it.

I was intrigued by the last participant's reference to "fear of success," as I had heard this term before, so I decided to include a question about fear of success in the interview. Yin (2009) refers to the person being interviewed as more of an "informant" when the person provides the researcher insight into a matter that is "critical to the success of a case study" (p. 107). Since this was a semi-structured interview format, I was

able to include a question to find out more about the fear of success as its possible relevance to this case study.

My question referenced a former employee of the tribal college. The question was, "A former instructor at our college, an American Indian woman, used to refer to a 'fear of success' that she said we see all too often—students who are just about ready to graduate who fail a course so they won't graduate. Do you think fear of success exists and what do you think causes it?" The first graduate participant defined fear of success as not being aware of available opportunities:

> I don't know if it is a fear of success or more of a not having a clue what you want to do with your life. It is easier to stay where you're at, even if you hate it, than to change. And do you have the inner strength to actually do something to change the status quo once you do get that degree? Getting the degree is the easy part. Making changes to a way of life that is all you know is not.
>
> I agree fear of success is real for our Native people. I have seen people who go into one vocation and later change or they graduate and then go into another vocation just to stay here at the college. It seems like they are afraid of something, maybe it was being afraid of actually finding a job or maybe it was just not knowing what to do next in their lives. I can remember when I first came to campus. It was my first time leaving the reservation and I was scared, but I did what I needed to do and finished. My last semester I sort of slacked off and got lazy. I still got good grades but they weren't as good as the previous semesters. So I think some students, like me, get a little lazier in the end as well. But as I think about the fear of success more and more, I think they are afraid of not knowing

what to do next in their lives. They are afraid of the unknown, of taking that next step after graduation and finding employment. A lot of our people do not know how to do this and it is sad. But they have never had anybody show them how to get a job or tell them what you do next after graduation. It is easier to fail and then you don't have to do anything.

The next graduate participant referred to the fear of success as personal, a view of herself. She provides insight into how she feels she overcame this fear:

> My fear of success is more like failing myself. How do I live with myself knowing that I could have achieved something more or by knowing that I had the potential and opportunity to take a step that wasn't taken? It is like living on a teeter-totter; if I lean too far back—failure, if I lean too far forward—success. Do I maintain a balance and teeter or do I put my foot forward tipping the scale and move ahead? I think the "safe" thing for most is to teeter. It is easy to know, expect, and feel failure, but much more uncomfortable and unknown to feel success.
>
> After I was able to experience what personal success and achievement felt like, I was eager to become more successful in my endeavors. That feeling drives me today. But I can't go home again, to the reservation, because things are different. One of the things that I think contributes to the fear of success is that people from the home change the way they feel about you. They think if you go off to college and earn a degree that you think you're better than they are. I am now teaching on my own reservation and the people I grew up with treat me

different. We all know this is going to happen when we leave for college. But it hurts when friends and family treat you that way.

Another graduate participant also referred to the fear of success being the result of students being unaware of options available to them:

> I've never heard this called that but I know what it is. The people I know who do this don't want to move back home to the reservation so they fail their classes, thinking they can stay longer. They don't realize they can't live at the school forever. That's why there are so many students who keep getting more two-year degrees, one right after another. They don't know what they want for a career and they don't know how to get a job. They feel secure in school because now they know how to do it.

The last graduate participant to respond to this question agreed with others that the fear of success is the result of being unaware of available options, or of subsequent actions. Included in her response is a description of her own life, as a child, and how her upbringing helped determine who she is today:

> I think the fear of success is true and I believe it is a fear of "what do I do now" or "what happens next." I also think it is directly related to the ability to cope. Many factors contribute to us developing coping skills. I went through many things as a young child that made me the way I am now. I lost my mother at a young age and was moved to many new and different places before settling into one place for more than a few years. I also am of mixed nationality so I had to deal with many different acceptance issues throughout childhood. Every home I lived in was a "broken" home. I was forced to cope with these things or I would fail, be pushed

around or be left behind. I simply found something telling me that I HAD to finish school. I had to do it for many people, and for many reasons. Of course everyone faces hardships in their lives but it is up to the person to push herself. A person can have all the support in the world but if you cannot find "the drive" in yourself, no matter what, you will not succeed. I feel many people look at the people around them, and who influence them, and either choose to be like them or choose to be different. If something is embedded in the mentality of students that the only choice is success, they will be successful. In my opinion, and without meaning to pass judgment, students who lie down and stay there, or quit, find that failure is an option and that it is an acceptable.

The last question of the interview was asking the graduate participants to suggest one thing colleges and universities could do to increase the graduation rates of their teacher candidates and to exclude funding, housing, daycare, or a laptop. The first graduate participant response stressed the importance, from her perspective, of high expectations with a level of flexibility with meeting these expectations:

> One thing I didn't like at the university I attended was their Indian Center. I don't want to be separate from the other students, or get different services or things like that, because then the other students think you graduated because you were given special treatment. I want to earn my degree and have it just as valid as anybody else's. When I first came here to campus, I was afraid it was going to be like one of those "Indian programs" that anybody could finish. I thought it was going to be easy and my degree wouldn't be respected or recognized as valid. But once I got in and found out how hard they worked us, and when people who were slacking

started disappearing (getting kicked out), I knew it was the real thing. Big colleges should have high expectations for us, just like with all of the students, but be a little flexible with the path to getting there.

The next graduate participant responded to the question with the need for a sense of community, feeling part of a group, possibly like a cohort. She also referred to the need for support with navigating the systems involved in attending college:

> I do think that American Indian students would be more likely to complete their degrees here because the college is much smaller than larger city colleges and I feel that most students feel that they are part of a community. I feel that when you feel like you are a part of something that is going to make you want to do better and complete your courses. The adjuncts play a huge role as well, in making the students feel welcome and important in the classroom. Another thing is here at this college students get way more help with navigating the system where at mainstream colleges you don't get that. You are basically on your own. You have to figure out everything by yourself. This can be a good thing sometimes but then you have to remember that most Native students come from the reservations and aren't quite used to that yet. Also being a part of the education program community, you see that everyone is coming to class and completing their assignments and in turn that makes you want to do the same.

The next graduate participant response also included reference to flexibility with meeting program requirements as well as allowing for and recognizing individual differences:

> At this college, we were each looked at as individuals. I didn't pass my PPST until the semester before I student taught. If I had been at a different college, I probably

> would have been kicked out, not allowed to continue in the program. But here, they kept working with me and helping me improve my skills. The teachers worked with me, one on one, helped me do practice tests and tutored me with math for almost two years. As long as I was making progress, they kept encouraging me that I would get there. I attended school on a reservation where most of the children did not speak English. I didn't know some of the material that was on these tests. But when it was taught to me, I learned it. When I finally passed, I think they were as happy as I was.

Yet another graduate participant referred to the sense of community and what she perceived as the benefits of a cohort with her peers:

> I believe that advisors and instructors should exemplify the unconditional support and understanding that I have received from the staff and faculty at this college. I believe it is equally important to have a comfortable family environment, especially for students who are far from home and in an environment that is much like a foreign country to us. Reflecting on my personal experience in a cohort, I have gained professional colleagues as well as lifelong friends. The support and belief to succeed from my instructors, colleagues, and the institution was key to me becoming a teacher, so I can now go out and provide the same to the children in my classroom.

The last graduate participant response suggesting one thing colleges and universities could do to increase the graduation rates of their American Indian teacher candidates included her perspective of her experiences at the college as an example:

> Providing genuine student support and educational guidance are two factors that largely influenced my success. Throughout my education classes I was always met with encouraging words and was told that I was going to be a "great teacher." This may not seem like a big deal to some but I had never been told I was going to be good at anything when I was growing up. There were times when I maybe didn't do things to my top potential and my advisors and teachers called me on it and made me feel like I could do better. They were more like friends and family rather than advisors and teachers. I felt like our advisors were like our families should have been if they could have been or would have known how to be. I could go to my advisor with any obstacles or hardships and I never felt that I was going to be judged. I felt they genuinely cared about their students' success by the way they treated us.

An analysis of the responses to the questions from the individual interviews of the graduate participants was conducted using holistic coding. According to Miles et al. (2014), holistic coding "applies a single code to a large unit of data in the corpus, rather than line-by-line coding, to capture a sense of the overall contents and the possible categories that may develop" (p. 77). The overall theme, identified from my analysis of the responses to the questions for the individual interviews, as primary researcher, was that success in the program is dependent upon a commitment from the student coupled with support from the teacher education program. The theme "committed student and supportive program" was evident in most all of the graduate participant responses. A number of the responses indicated the level of commitment necessary from students who do not graduate from their programs as lacking for various reasons. But when the

graduate participants referred to their own personal experiences, and their success with graduating with their degrees and meeting licensure, being fully committed was an overarching theme.

The "supportive program" was interpreted in the interview responses as support from each other, in what they referred to as their cohort, support from the institution, support from their faculty and advisors (one and the same at the tribal college), and support from their families. The perceptions shared in the responses indicated this support may not always occur for all students, but that it was a contributing factor in the success of the graduate participants who were part of this case study.

The interview responses were also sent to a peer reviewer, Dr. James H. Banning, Professor Emeritus at Colorado State University, for his analysis as an attempt to increase the level of validity of the results. His response was as follows:

> The overall theme for me is that success in the program is related to high quality and high expectations with "flexibility in pathways," with one of the interviewees providing the clearest statement of this theme. It is my opinion that "flexibility in pathways" is a key theme in all the interviews; that is, everyone has a unique set of challenges within their educational pathways—financial support, family issues, personal motivational concerns, and so on—but the students should not be seen as having "Indian problems." They should be viewed as having their individual unique problems and issues. One way to support this flexibility for individual paths is through close contact with faculty, and that is what they seemed to be saying about their field experiences and general contact with their faculty. In other words, the goal of any institution intending to increase the retention and

> graduation rate of American Indian students in teacher education should be "high expectations and quality of program coupled with an appreciation and support of individual issues within the pathways to meet these high expectations." (personal communication, August 14, 2013)

Two themes that emerged from the interview responses for ways the program could be enhanced to increase student success for completing the program and meeting licensure requirements were (a) continuing to focus on technology and (b) the implementation of a student/mentor program. The participant consensus seemed to be the technology training the program provided was adequate; however, technology changes so rapidly that it should continue to be a focus of the program and opportunities provided for the program participants to hone their technology knowledge and skills should continue.

A recommendation from a number of the graduate participants interviewed of something that would enhance the program if it were adopted was a student/mentor program. I found this particularly interesting as I have never heard mention of this before these interviews, nor do we currently have anything in place like this within the program. Because this was the most frequently suggested potential enhancement identified by the graduate participants and, to the best of my knowledge, they had not corroborated their responses prior to the interviews, this is significant. The graduates expressed support for having a returning student, or upperclassman, assigned to the new students to help them navigate the college, the processes, and someone with whom they could go to for support and encouragement. They seemed to feel this would have helped them when they began their college experience and recommended it be considered. One of the graduate participants suggested,

> I would choose the graduate/mentor opportunity. I can state from my current experiences as a graduate student, it makes a great difference. We were geographically assigned to our mentors. We were given the option to decline and pair up with mentors whose experiences and goals aligned with our own if we so chose to. I just went with the initial pairing and am happy with the results. We signed a mentor/student "contract" outlining our expectations and set one personal/professional goal for the semester. We meet in person twice a semester and have full access to them throughout the semester if we require advice and assistance with anything. It has been most helpful in providing me motivation when its needed, support when I need moral support, and my first colleague.

Another graduate participant addressed the stress of being an education student participating in field placements and having a mentor as support:

> Being a new student in the educational field can be overwhelming sometimes, especially if you have never had any experience working with children and you are expected to go into a classroom. Having a mentor to guide you and give you some direction might help alleviate some of that stress.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research study was to conduct a descriptive case study analysis of a teacher education professional licensure program for American Indian pre-service teachers at a tribal college. For purposes of the research, the professional educator was defined as one who completes an approved teacher education program and meets state licensure requirements, including standardized testing requirements. An approved teacher education program is one that has met the criteria established by the state teacher education program approval office. This case study examined and described dimensions of a teacher education program for preparing American Indian professional educators at a state-approved teacher education program at a tribal college. The case study described the context of the teacher education program and the dimensions of the program. Most important, this case study includes perspectives about the program gained through qualitative surveys and interviews of graduates and faculty, what they identified as most valuable, what they felt was less significant, and their recommendations for future considerations. Included is an analysis of documents, processes, and perceptions of the research participants, all intimately involved in the program.

Ten graduates of the tribal college teacher education program, with degrees in elementary education and all licensed professional educators, participated in qualitative surveys and individual semi-structured interviews for the case study. Five teacher

education faculty participated in qualitative surveys to provide their perspective of the teacher education program that was the focus of the case study. This case study was intended to provide perspectives from the graduates of the program, referred to as graduate participants, and the faculty with the results used for continuous improvement of the program as it prepares competent, caring teachers.

This last chapter, Chapter V, provides a summary of the research, implications for future research, the strengths and limitations of the study, and a conclusion. The appendices include the interview protocols, as well as other supporting documents.

Summary of the Research

The research data collection and analysis processes for this case study were guided by the three research questions. Qualitative surveys were developed and distributed, individual interviews were conducted and responses recorded, and documents were gathered and analyzed. Demographic data from the graduate participants and faculty participants were gathered in the first survey and common characteristics were revealed, as well as a few exceptions.

An analysis of the participant responses to the second survey identified, from their perspective, 10 dimensions of the teacher education program that influenced their ability to graduate and meet requirements for licensure. The results from this survey did not indicate anything significant for factors that would strengthen or enhance the ability of the graduates to meet licensure requirements, or factors that detracted from their ability to be successful, other than the need for more technology access and increased opportunities for field experience. The participants who identified these factors expressed they felt the

program had increased the hours of field experience placements since they had completed the program.

The third survey was designed to seek clarification from the participants about the 10 dimensions they perceived as elements of the program that contributed to their ability to successfully complete the program and meet licensure requirements. The data collected from the graduate and the faculty responses to the 10 questions on Survey #3 indicated the data collection process had reached the point of saturation (Merriam, 2009), indicating it was time to move on to the individual interviews.

Individual interviews were conducted with the graduate participants with the intent of clarifying and expanding upon themes identified through analysis of the survey responses as well as gaining additional insight into their perspectives of the factors contributing to, or detracting from, their success in the program. The interview responses were also sent to a peer reviewer, Dr. James H. Banning, Professor Emeritus at Colorado State University, for his analysis as an attempt to increase the level of validity of the results.

Two themes that emerged from the interview responses for ways the program could be enhanced to increase student success for completing the program and meeting licensure requirements were (a) continuing to focus on technology and (b) the implementation of a student/mentor program. The participant consensus seemed to be the technology training the program provided was adequate; however, technology changes so rapidly that it should continue to be a focus of the program and opportunities provided for the program participants to hone their technology knowledge and skills should continue.

Two types of documents were included in the data collection and analysis process, Praxis scores and dispositions assessments. Table 11 indicated the scores for each graduate participant, if a re-take was necessary due to not meeting the cut score, the year the graduate met the cut score for the test, and the year the graduate participant graduated. The significance of the year the cut score was met (test was passed) and the year of graduation is that, as denoted on the table, some of the graduate participants met the Praxis I: PPST requirement of meeting the state-established cut scores the year of, or immediately preceding, graduation. It is my interpretation that some teacher education programs at other institutions do not allow teacher candidates to progress in the programs without meeting the Praxis I: PPST requirement first. If that was the practice in the teacher education program for this case study, a number of the graduate participants would not have been allowed to continue in the program, would not have graduated and met teacher licensure requirements, and would not be practicing American Indian professional educators today.

The Praxis II scores were indicated in Table 12. The graduate participants, as teacher candidates, were required to take two Praxis II exams to meet licensure requirements as established by North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board, the entity that licenses teachers in the state of North Dakota. The graduate participants completed the teacher education program, graduated with bachelor of science degrees in elementary education, met the cut scores established for the state of North Dakota on the Praxis I: PPST and Praxis II exams, and consequently are licensed in the state of North Dakota as professional educators.

The dispositions scores were the other type of documents included in the data collection and analysis process. Table 13 included the scores for each one of the graduate participants in each one of the areas assessed for dispositions. The dispositions assessment process, including self-assessment and goal setting based on areas or behaviors that may need to be improved upon, has become an integral dimension of the teacher education program. The graduate participants and faculty participants both indicated being in agreement with this point of view.

Implications for Future Research

Based on the available literature, research has been conducted on the dimensions of teacher education at colleges and universities in the United States. There appears to be a gap in the research, as evidenced by the comparatively limited availability of current literature, on the preparation of American Indian professional educators in this country from the perspective of the teachers themselves. This case study will contribute to the research and identify potential topics for further research.

One of the dominant themes participants in this case perceived as contributing to their successful completion of the program and meeting licensure requirements was funding from a federal teacher preparation grant while attending college. There may be existing literature available on this topic, as funding for underrepresented groups in teacher preparation programs seems to be increasing. A potential research topic may be the impact of the funding on the graduation and licensure rate of American Indian educators and the return on investment compared to those pre-service teacher candidates who are not funded by federal grants.

Another potential topic for research might be the advisee-advisor relationship for students who are typically underrepresented at public and private mainstream institutions of higher education, as well as at tribal colleges and universities. All participants in this case study identified competent, caring faculty in diverse settings as a dominant theme, based on their perceptions, as contributing to their successful completion of the program and meeting licensure requirements. In their survey responses, and during the individual interviews, the relationships with their faculty, who also serve as their advisors, were consistently identified as strengths of the program. Most faculty and advisors at colleges and universities might assume they have a productive, positive relationship with their students; however, the students' perception of the relationship is what determines the impact on their retention in and graduation from the program.

As stated previously in this chapter, one of the unique characteristics of the teacher education program for this case study that was identified was the schedule for taking and passing the Praxis I: PPST exams, the tests for proficiency in three areas of basic skills: reading, writing, and mathematics. The 10 graduate participants for this case study passed by meeting or exceeding the cut scores identified by the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board for the PPST exams. However, if they would have attended an institution that required them to pass the tests before proceeding with the program of study, some of them may not have completed their degrees. They would not have been allowed to continue taking courses until the exam requirements were met. The pass rate of American Indian pre-service teacher candidates, as well as the considerations raised below, are potential questions for future research. Were the 10 graduate participants in this case study high-achieving students, as indicated by the rate

they passed these exams, or did they represent typical American Indian students in a teacher education program that was specifically designed to raise their levels of proficiency with basic skills? Will allowing students to meet the cut scores on the PPST later in their program of study, after completing the majority of their courses, increase the number of students, particularly those from underrepresented groups, in teacher education programs and ultimately graduates of these programs? Does a coherent curriculum specifically designed to increase knowledge and skills in areas tested by PPST, such a writing, reading, and mathematics, increase the probability of students meeting these cut scores?

The responses to the qualitative surveys by the graduate participants reflected the perceptions of American Indian elementary education program graduates. Another implication for future consideration would be to administer these same surveys to populations other than American Indian and then compare the responses. The questions could include the following: Would participants from other populations have similar or different perspectives? Would non-Native populations identify the same dimensions of their teacher education program as contributing to their success? Would they suggest the same strengths, areas that should be enhanced, and practices that should be discontinued as the American Indian participants in this case study did in their responses to the survey prompts? It would be interesting to duplicate the surveys with non-Native elementary education program graduates and compare the results for similarities and differences.

One of the themes that emerged from the interview responses regarding suggestions for enhancing the teacher education program for purposes of increasing program completion was implementation of a student/mentor program. The interview

responses of the graduate participants indicated support for a process in which students, as teacher candidates, in their third and fourth year of college would serve as mentors to students who were in their first and second years of college. The participants shared their own experiences of mentor-mentee relationships at the graduate level and expressed support for implementing this same concept within groups of undergraduate students. This mentor-mentee relationship, and its potential positive influence on the retention and persistence of first- and second-year students, is a topic for future research.

The potential research topic of particular interest surfaced in responses from the graduate participants during the interviews for this case study. They did not refer to it as "fear of success," as this term was unknown to them, but they described a psychological state tribal college students experience during the latter part of their degree completion. The concept of fear of success was first characterized by Horner (1972) and grew out of an effort to define achievement for women. She believed that fear of success was acquired, that it inhibited performance, restricted level of aspiration, and was an expression consistent with the developed self-concept (p. 159). The general premise is that some people are so frightened of attaining success that they sabotage themselves just as they are about to achieve the desired goal they are pursuing. This research project could investigate this phenomenon, identify and define it if it is found to exist, and determine if it is a factor affecting persistence among tribal college students.

The interview responses of the graduate participants contained insight into the challenges and accomplishments experienced by the graduate participants before they came to campus and while they were on campus, completing their programs of study. The rich descriptions of their experiences, indicative of the resiliency of human spirit they

possess, would be of particular interest to tribal college and university (TCU) faculty and administrators; public and private teacher education department personnel; as well as college students from tribal, public, and private institutions of higher education. The perspectives shared by the graduate participants would benefit all teacher education department personnel who work with teacher candidates from diverse cultural backgrounds. College students would benefit from hearing the stories shared by the graduate participants in their responses about their own personal struggles and the choices they made to persevere, thrive, and experience success, against what some might consider insurmountable odds.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

From my perspective, the most apparent strength of this case study was the insight contributed to the case by the graduates of the teacher education program who agreed to participate in the research. Their perspectives of the factors that contributed to their ability, as American Indian teacher candidates, to graduate from a program and meet licensure requirements, as well as the dimensions of the teacher education program, may contribute to a void presently existing in available research. Education personnel in the tribal college teacher education program benefit from the relationships with these graduates, and their peers, and have benefited from hearing their perspectives.

There were conceivably limitations to this study. As is typical of a single case study, the small number of participants presented challenges. In order to obtain adequate data, participation from all of the graduate participants and faculty participants was crucial. Getting the participants to respond to the surveys was challenging at times, particularly with the faculty. With a goal of a 100% response rate, and considering the

low numbers of participants, unless all of the participants responded, the response percentages would have been negatively impacted and the level of validity would have been decreased. The timing of the data collection was a consideration, as well. The data collection process was started at the beginning of the summer months when the graduate participants, all practicing teachers, and the faculty were ending their academic teaching year and starting summer schedules. This made it a bit more challenging to get responses and resulted in a considerable number of email reminders being sent. Once the fall semester started, the participants seemed intent upon finishing their participation in the case study data collection process before school started so the survey data collection process was completed and individual interviews were scheduled and completed.

A potential limitation of the case study research was researcher bias. As initially addressed in Chapter I, I have invested considerable time and energy into the development of the tribal college teacher education program described in this case study. As an advisor and faculty, I have a relationship with my students, the program graduates who were participants in this case study research project, and with the faculty, some of whom I continue to supervise.

Because I was aware of the potential for bias, I solicited the input of a peer reviewer, Dr. James H. Banning, Professor Emeritus at Colorado State University, in an attempt to increase the level of validity of the data analysis and decrease the potential for bias. Dr. Banning contributed to the analysis of the responses to the surveys and the individual interviews, as reported in Chapter IV.

Conclusion

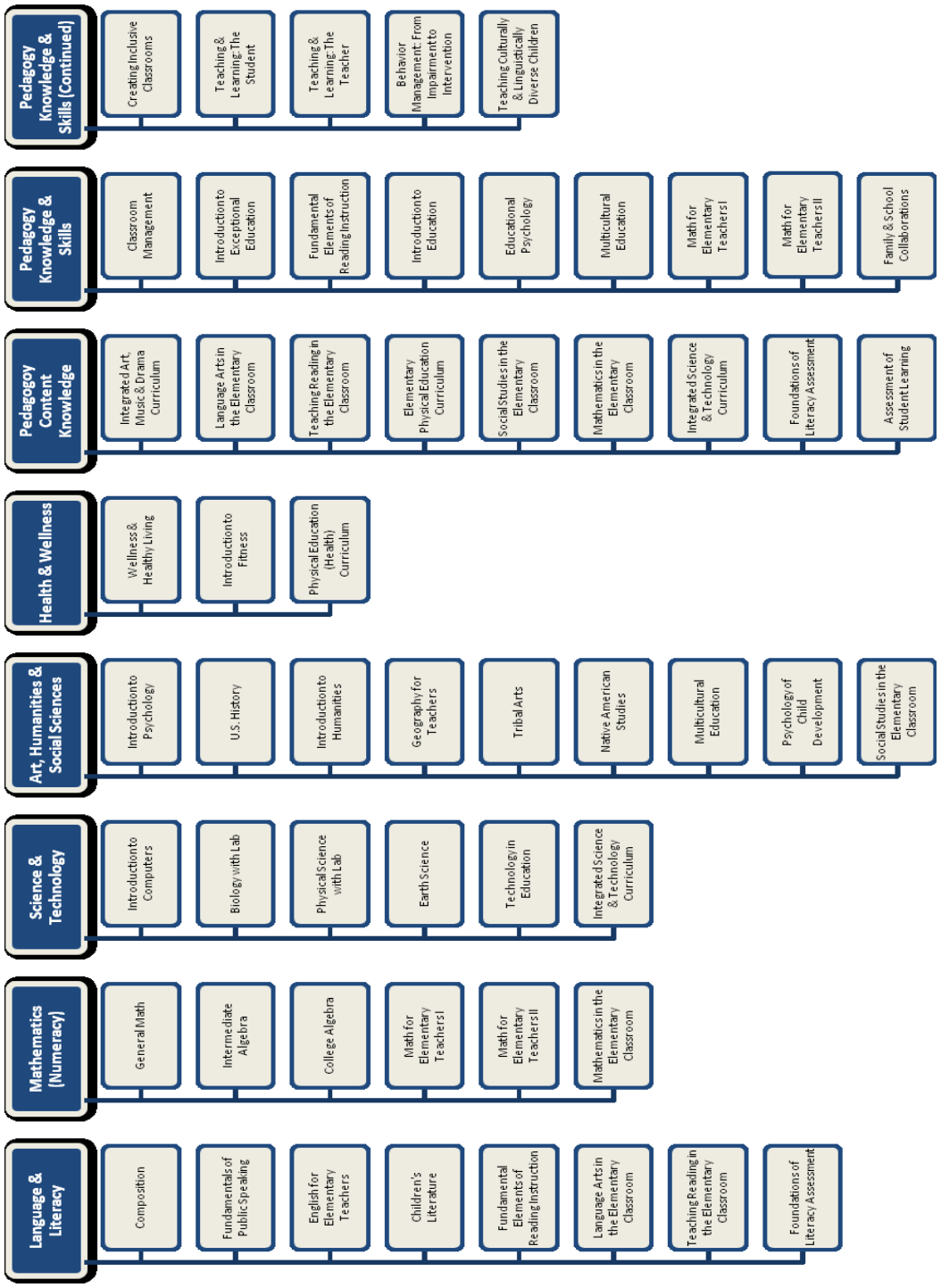
The focus of this case study was an elementary education program in a Teacher Education department at a tribal college located in the upper Midwest region of the United States. Typical of a case study, the program was described using what Stake (1995) referred to as "thick, rich description" (p. 102). Neither the college nor the program would exist without the students who attend the college, American Indian people who come from all over the country to realize their roles, through resilience and perseverance, within the prophecy of the seventh generation. This case study was the story of 10 women graduates of the teacher education program, who moved to this region, to attend college, with dreams of becoming competent, caring teachers who would make a difference in the lives of the children they teach. Lessons were learned from the beginning of the program and continued through graduation and beyond. As the graduates moved on to new careers, another group of American Indian men and women have taken their places on campus, ready to follow the path laid out before them, as they fulfill their own hopes and dreams of becoming professional educators.

As a researcher, I purposefully provided minimal description of the hardships and tragic circumstances experienced by some of the participants. My intent was to avoid perpetuating stereotypes that American Indian people experience adverse circumstances in life more than other groups of people. The participants who were part of this case study have faced challenges in their lives, challenges that would have caused others with less tenacity and resolve to lose sight of their goals. One of them said it best during her interview: "I've been hungry, cold, scared, seen people die and way more death than a kid should and other things I won't go in to. But I'm here!" Yes, they are here; they have

experienced success by achieving one of what will be many goals in their lives, by becoming professional educators. They are the young Tribal descendants, referred to in the prophecy of the *Seventh Generation*, who are overcoming adversity and fulfilling their roles of mending the "broken hoop" (Sacred Circle). Their journeys have only just begun; they are actualizing the prophecy and realizing their place as professional educators who will most certainly make a difference in the lives of numerous children and their families.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Coherent Curriculum



Appendix B
Dispositions Assessment Tool

Dispositional Professional Qualities in Teacher Education Candidates

A Teaching Tool

As you know, teachers must demonstrate certain dispositions in order to be considered "competent, caring teachers". The Teacher Education program focuses on these dispositions and assesses the progress of each one of the students in developing these dispositions. In order to do so effectively, we are asking a select group of faculty members on campus to assist us with the assessment process. The following is a description of each one of the dispositions and what the indicators are for each one. This will give you an idea of the specific behaviors or attributes we are hoping to develop within the students (candidates) in each area.

The rubric that is included is designed to measure the dispositions and to be time efficient. We know faculty are pulled in many different directions and time is valuable. Therefore, we have purposefully kept the rubric to one page so it can be filled out within a limited amount of time. We ask that one rubric be filled out for each one of the students once per semester. Please put the student's name (candidate) on the rubric, your name as the Rater, the date and the course name. We will send you the rubric and the list of students each semester so you will know when to fill it out and on whom. When the rubrics are filled in, please return them to the Teacher Education department.

Thank you for your contribution to preparing "competent, caring teachers"!

This form describes dispositions educators aspire to in the pursuit of becoming competent, caring teachers. The form can be used to help teacher candidates learn about the indicators for each characteristic through activities such as class discussions and personal reflections. This form will also be used to evaluate dispositions that teacher candidates display during class and field experience, to document professional progress, and to identify areas where improvement is needed.

Not Applicable or Not Observed	Serious Concerns	Needs Improvement	Emerging	Acceptable
NA	0	1	2	3
	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently

1. COLLABORATION: Collaboration can be as simple as two teachers informally discussing a student's progress or as complex as long-term, regularly scheduled meetings, involving various school stakeholders, state standards, and research to overhaul curricula. One of the constants, however, when educators come together to collaborate is the intellectual effort they put forth to better themselves as a group to benefit their students. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors which characterize a set of collaboration skills that the teacher candidate must demonstrate:
1.1 Cooperates with others
1.2 Makes contribution to group effort
1.3 Shares information and materials with others
1.4 Makes relevant contributions to discussions
1.5 Supports decisions of group willingly, even if different from own
1.6 Volunteers to participate in group effort
1.7 Supports work of others
2. INTEGRITY: Integrity can best be described as doing the right thing even when no one else is watching. Teachers must have personal integrity as they are, for the most part, unsupervised during the time with the students. Therefore, it is vitally important that the teacher exhibits proper classroom instruction and discipline even when there are no other adults present. The education experience consists of teaching important life skills and meaningful objectives that include: learning to cooperate, understanding how to share, completing tasks, showing compassion, and reflecting on the world around. If a teacher hasn't already mastered those skills herself, it will be nearly impossible for her to set that example for the children. These skills are:
2.1 Maintains confidentiality of students/colleagues
2.2 Models behavior expected of both teachers and learners in an educational setting
2.3 Communicates without intent to deceive
2.4 Demonstrates ethical behavior
2.5 Makes decisions based on honesty and integrity
2.6 Gives credit to others when using their work
3. RESPECT: Respect as a teacher disposition is demonstrated when the teacher appreciates and values human diversity, shows respect for students' varied talents and perspectives, and is committed to the pursuit of individual excellence. The teacher respects students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, talents, and interests. The teacher must be sensitive to community and cultural norms and make students feel valued for their potential as people, and helps them learn to value each other. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors which characterize a set of skills or tendencies that reflect the disposition of respect:

3.1 Considers opinions of others with an open mind
3.2 Listens attentively to others in a variety of contexts
3.3 Demonstrates a warm, friendly, and caring manner to others
3.4 Interacts in a polite and respectful manner
3.5 Uses appropriate language
3.6 Takes care of property of others
3.7 Demonstrates empathy and concern for others
3.8 Displays equitable treatment of others
3.9 Acknowledges perspectives of individuals from diverse backgrounds
3.10 Interacts appropriately in relation to cultural norms
3.11 Appreciates and embraces individual differences
3.12 Demonstrates positive attitudes toward diverse cultures and learners
4. REVERENCE FOR LEARNING: Candidates with this set of dispositions have the ability to examine closely, to critique, and to ask questions. They do not accept the status quo at face value but employ higher level thinking skills to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize. Self-evaluation and reflection characterize candidates with this set of dispositions. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors which characterize a set of critical dispositions:
4.1 Values knowledge, content, and experiences in preservice academic programs
4.2 Takes initiative to expand knowledge base
4.3 Values instructional time
4.4 Seeks opportunities to learn new skills
4.5 Uses credible and data-based sources
4.6 Demonstrates enthusiasm for the subject being taught
4.7Demonstrates positive attitude toward learning
4.8 Conveys high expectations for achievement
5. PROFESSIONALISM: The disposition of professionalism is multi-faceted and broad reaching. Professionalism includes qualities and practices teacher candidates must exhibit in order to be recommended for licensure. The candidates will display *all* of the following qualities and/or behaviors that characterize professionalism:

5.1 Uses appropriate strategies to respond to emotional and emergency situations
5.2 Responds to situations professionally
5.3 Uses appropriate tone of voice
5.4 Initiates communication to resolve conflict
5.5 Maintains emotional control
5.6 Uses self-disclosure appropriately
5.7 Uses appropriate non-verbal expressions
5.8 Responds appropriately to actions and reactions of others
5.9 Acts from a positive frame of reference most of the time
5.10 Accepts feedback from others
5.11 Identifies personal responsibility in conflict/problem situations
6. REFLECTION: Reflection is the ability to review, analyze, and evaluate the success of past decisions in an effort to make better decisions in the future. This disposition includes the practice of critical reflection. Indicators of the ability to reflect include, but are not limited to, the following:
6.1 Accepts and incorporates suggestions in subsequent practice
6.2 Identifies own biases and prejudices
6.3 Demonstrates accurate self-analysis regarding one's own strengths & weaknesses
6.4 Uses reflective practices to set goals
6.5 Collects accurate data and incorporates it into the reflective process
6.6 Recognizes situations that call for a problem-solving approach
7. FLEXIBILITY: Flexibility is the willingness to accept and adapt to change. Teachers must be consistent but also flexible. Since no two situations are ever the same, a teacher must be flexible enough to adhere to all situations presented. The teacher must be able to stand firm in his or her own convictions but be flexible and welcome changes to routine. Characteristics of flexibility include:
7.1 Adapts to unexpected or new situations
7.2 Accepts less than ideal situations when necessary
7.3 Maintains positive attitude when necessary changes occur
7.4 Implements ideas suggested by others

7.5 Demonstrates willingness to apply a problem-solving approach
8. RESPONSIBILITY: To act independently, demonstrating accountability, reliability, and sound judgment indicates the disposition of responsibility. Teachers take responsibility for establishing a positive climate in the classroom and participate in maintaining such a climate in the school as whole. Teacher candidates must demonstrate the following qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors which characterize responsibility at the pre-service level:
8.1 Accepts consequences for personal actions or decisions
8.2 Submits assignments on time or follows procedures for extension
8.3 Uses sound judgment in decision making
8.4 Takes action to solve problems
8.5 Prepares for classes, meetings, and group work
8.6 Manages time effectively
8.7 Completes assigned tasks from group activities within an acceptable time frame
8.8 Seeks clarification and/or assistance as needed
8.9 Prioritizes work based upon established goals
8.10 Returns borrowed materials in a timely manner
8.11 Takes initiative to get materials and notes when absent from meetings or classes
8.12 Seeks/locates needed resources
8.13 Ensures accuracy of information for which he/she is responsible
8.14 Gives priority to health and safety concerns of others

Dispositional Professional Qualities in Teacher Education Program Candidates – *A Teaching Tool*

Professional Dispositions Rubric

Candidate: _____ Date: _____

Rater: _____ Course: _____

Please rate the candidate's behavior according to the following rubric.

Disposition	0	1	2	3	Score
Collaboration: Positive interaction w/peers, faculty & P-12 personnel	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Integrity: Exhibits honesty and demonstrates ethical behavior	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Respect: Demonstrates self-respect & respect for others	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Reverence for Learning: Accepts constructive criticism & willing to modify behavior, values knowledge	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Professionalism: Communicates appropriately, verbally and non-verbally, at all times	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Reflection: Ability to review, analyze, and evaluate past decisions in order to make better decisions in the future	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Flexibility: Willingness to accept and adapt to change; ability to problem-solve	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
Responsibility: Acts independently, is accountable, reliable and exhibits sound judgment	Serious concern, behavior displayed contrary to expectations	Needs improvement, behavior displayed occasionally	Emerging, behavior displayed frequently	Acceptable, behavior displayed consistently	
				TOTAL SCORE (Add the scores and divide by 8 for the mean)	

Appendix C
Degree Plan

Teacher Education Elementary Education
Bachelor of Science Degree

Preparing Competent, Caring Teachers

General Education Requirements

(Total 47 credits - 44 + 3 for EDU 288)

Communication – 9 credits

Course	Credits	Sem./Grade
ENG 110	3	
ENG 290	3	

Course	Credits	Sem./Grade
COM 110	3	

Social Science – 12 credits (Must be taken in a minimum of 2 departments)

PSY 111	3	
PSY 252	3	

**SOC 275	3	
HIS 104	3	

** SOC 275 Native American Studies is required for ND teacher licensure.

Arts & Humanities – 5 credits (Must be taken in a minimum of 2 departments)

NAS 112	2	

HUM 101	3	

Math, Science & Technology – 18 credits

SCI 103	3	
Lab	1	
MTH 103	4	
CSC 101	3	

BIO 150	3	
Lab	1	
SCI 201	3	

*North Dakota Science Requirement: To obtain a teaching license in N.D. coursework must be completed in life (BIO 150), physical (SCI 103), earth (SCI 201) and space science. **Two areas of science may be satisfied with **one** course and will be determined by the **title/description** or **course content**.*

World Cultures Requirement (This may also count as a General Education Requirement) Satisfied with ____

Computer

EDU 288 Technology in Education	3	

Competency

For Department Use Only:

Admission to Teacher Education Requirements:

Informed		Complete
_____	2.50 Cumulative GPA	_____
_____	Teacher Education Interview	_____
_____	Letters of Recommendation	_____
_____	Dispositions 2.0 or Higher	_____
_____	Portfolio Subscription	_____
_____	Criminal Background Check	_____
_____	PPST Reading, Math and Writing	_____
_____	INTASC Self-Assessment	_____

Graduation Requirements:

Informed		Complete
_____	2.75 Cumulative GPA	_____
_____	Register for Praxis II	_____
_____	Portfolio Presentation	_____
_____	Dispositions 2.0 or Higher	_____
_____	Student Teaching Application	_____
_____	Criminal Background Check	_____
_____	Fingerprinting	_____
_____	Graduate Exit Survey	_____

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION – GRADES 1-6

Required Professional/Education Courses (65 credits) (minimum grade of "B" or above)

	Course	Cr.	Sem	Grade	Course	Cr.	Sem	Grade
TOUCHSTONE #1	EDU 200 Classroom Management	2			EDU 205 Intro to Exceptional Education	3		
	EDU 220 Geography for Teachers	2			EDU 232 Fundamental Elements of Effective Reading Instruction	3		
	EDU 250 Intro to Education (FE)	3			EDU 290 Multicultural Education	3		
	EDU 305 Creating Inclusive Classrooms (FE)	3			EDU 310 Teaching & Learning: The Student	2		
	EDU 315 Integrated Art, Music & Drama Curriculum (FE)	2			EDU 312 Teaching & Learning: The Teacher	2		
	EDU 338 Family & School Collaborations	2			LAB 348/348/398 Field Experience II (3 Semesters - LAB Required) **	3		
TOUCHSTONE #2	**Provisional admission to Teacher Education is required before enrolling in the following Teacher Education courses.**							
	EDU 325 Language Arts in the Elementary Classroom (FE)	2			EDU 330 Teaching Reading in the Elementary Classroom (FE)	3		
	EDU 335 Principles of Behavior Assessment & Intervention (FE)	3			EDU 340 Elementary Physical Education Curriculum (FE)	3		
	EDU 345 Assessment of Learning (FE)	3			EDU 350 Social Studies in the Elementary Classroom (FE)	2		
	EDU 352 Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children	3			EDU 355 Mathematics in the Elementary Classroom (FE)	2		
	EDU 360 Integrated Science & Technology Curriculum (FE)	3			EDU 370 Foundations of Literacy Assessment (FE)	2		
	TOUCHSTONE #3 - Full admission to Teacher Education is required before enrolling in EDU 499.							
	EDU 499 Internship in Elementary Education	12						
TOUCHSTONE #4 – Program Completion – Eligible for graduation and professional licensure.								

*FE – Field Experience Requirement ** LAB Credits Not Included in Degree Total

Other Required Courses (14 credits) (minimum grade of "B" or above)

Course	Cr.	Sem	Grade	Course	Cr.	Sem	Grade
ENG 238 Children's Literature	3			MTH 277 Math for Elementary Teachers I	3		
MTH 377 Math for Elementary Teachers II	3			PSY 230 Educational Psychology	3		
GPE 102 Introduction to Fitness	1			GCA 103 Wellness & Healthy Living	1		

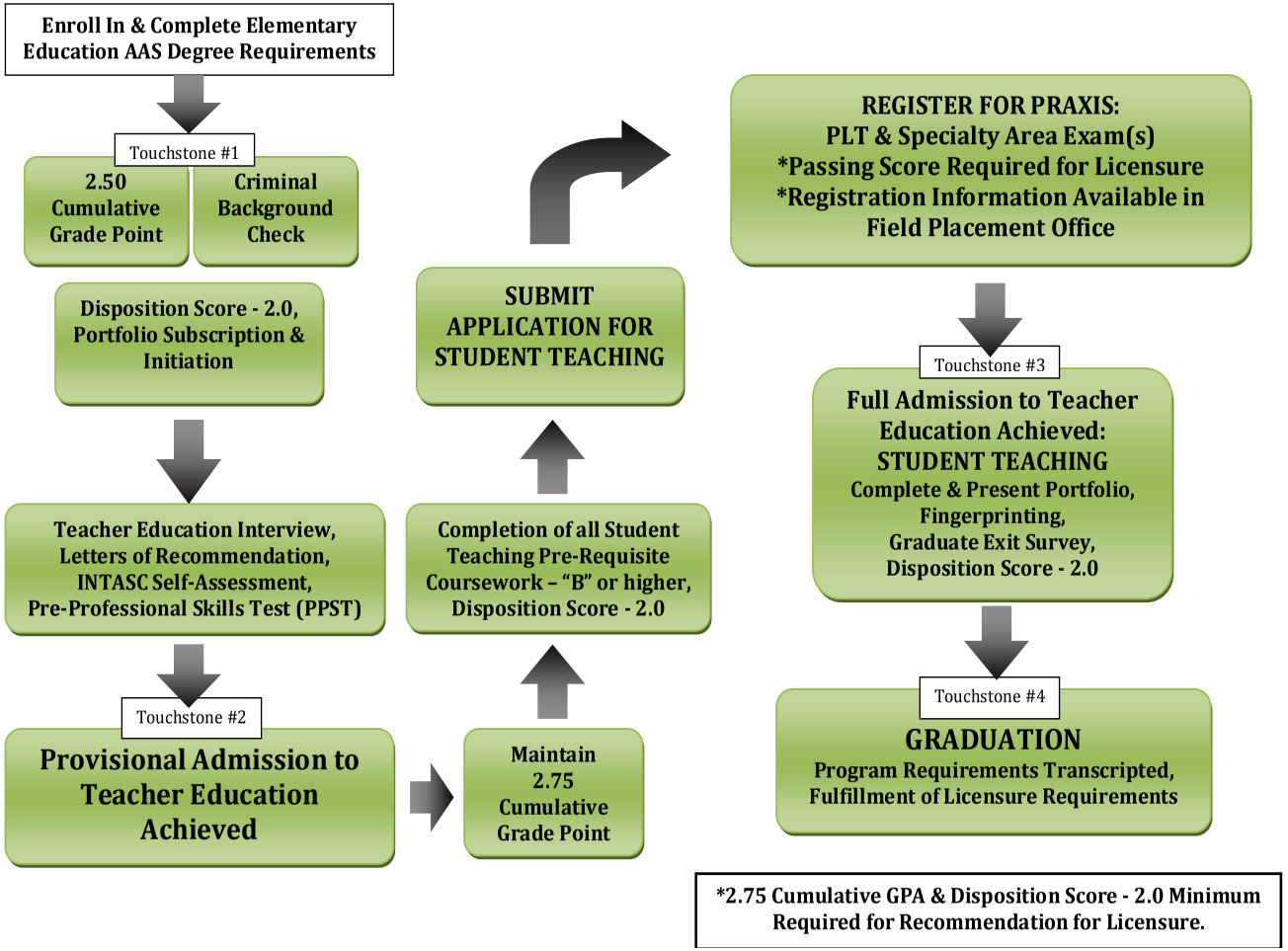
Total degree hours required = 126 semester hours

My signature below confirms I have reviewed this program of study and am aware of the grade requirements for the courses as indicated above.

_____ _____

Teacher Candidate Date

Teacher Education Program
Admission to Teacher Education and Student Teaching



*2.75 Cumulative GPA & Disposition Score - 2.0 Minimum Required for Recommendation for Licensure.

Appendix D

Touchstones

Appendix E
Survey #1 – Graduates

Survey #1 - Effective Teacher Education: Participant Info
Thank you for agreeing to participate in the case study research project I am conducting for my dissertation as part of a doctoral degree. This survey was developed with the purpose of identifying characteristics common and unique among the graduates of our teacher education program. Please select appropriate responses to the following questions. Any identifying information from you, the respondent, on this survey will be collected, recorded and reported in a manner consistent with maintaining your anonymity. Thank you.

Demographic Information				
1.	Are you an enrolled tribal member?		Yes	No
2.	Are you enrolled in a tribe located in North or South Dakota?		Yes	No
3.	Did you attend K-12 school on a reservation?		Yes	No
4.	Did you graduate from a reservation high school?		Yes	No
5.	Did you complete a GED?		Yes	No
6.	Was UTTC the first college you attended?		Yes	No
7.	Were you under the age of 25 when you began your education degree?		Yes	No
8.	Were you 25 years or older when you began your education degree?		Yes	No
Familial Status				
9.	Were you raised by a biological parent?		Yes	No
10.	Did the parent(s) or guardian who raised you graduate from college with a bachelor degree?		Yes	No
11.	Were you married while completing your education degree?		Yes	No

12.	If you have children, do you have 1-3 children?	N/A	Yes	No
13.	If you have children, do you have 4 or more children?	N/A	Yes	No
14.	Did your children live with you while you were completing your education degree?	N/A	Yes	No
15.	If you have children, did your child(ren) attend the child development centers or the elementary school on campus?	N/A	Yes	No
Financial Support				
16..	Were you working part-time (less than 20 hours per week) while you were completing your degree?		Yes	No
17.	Were you working full-time (40 hours per week) while completing your degree?		Yes	No
18.	Did you receive tribal higher education funding while attending college?		Yes	No
19.	Did you take out student loans while attending college?		Yes	No
20.	Did you receive funding from a federal teacher preparation grant while attending college?		Yes	No
21.	Did you have a spouse or significant other who helped support you financially while you completed your education degree?		Yes	No
22.	Did you have a parent or extended family member who helped support you financially while you completed your education degree?		Yes	No
Social/Emotional Support Systems				
23.	Did you experience personal or family issues that resulted in you missing 5-9 consecutive days of school while you were a student completing your education degree?		Yes	No
24.	Did you experience personal or family issues that resulted in you missing more than 10 consecutive days of school while you were a student completing your education degree?		Yes	No

25.	Did you have a spouse or significant other who encouraged and supported you emotionally and/or socially while you completed your education degree?		Yes	No
26.	Did you have a parent or extended family member who encouraged and supported you emotionally and/or socially while you completed your education degree?		Yes	No
27.	Did you know anybody - friends and/or relatives - already attending this tribal college (in any program) or starting at the same time as you started your education degree?		Yes	No
28.	Did you have a circle of friends to socialize with while you were completing your education degree?		Yes	No

Appendix F
Survey #1 – Faculty

Survey #1 - Effective Teacher Education: Faculty Info
Thank you for agreeing to participate in the case study research project I am conducting for my dissertation as part of a doctoral degree. This survey was developed with the purpose of identifying characteristics common and unique among the faculty in our teacher education program. Please select appropriate responses to the following questions. Any identifying information from you, the respondent, on this survey will be collected, recorded and reported in a manner consistent with maintaining your anonymity. Thank you.

Demographic Information				
1.	Are you an enrolled tribal member?		Yes	No
2.	Have you ever lived on a reservation?		Yes	No
3.	Do you have friends or relatives currently living on a reservation?		Yes	No
4.	Have you taught, or are you still teaching, in a K-12 school on a reservation or in a school with at least 75% American Indian student population?		Yes	No
5.	Do you have a Masters degree in Education?		Yes	No
6.	Do you have a minimum of a bachelors degree in Elementary Education?		Yes	No
7.	Are you currently a licensed K-12 teacher?		Yes	No
8.	Do you have a minimum of 5 years of K-12 classroom teaching experience?		Yes	No
9.	Is UTTC the first experience you have had teaching in a college or university?		Yes	No
Roles and Relationships				
10.	Do you teach full-time in the UTTC Teacher Education program?		Yes	No
11.	Do you teach part-time (6 credits or less) in the UTTC Teacher Education program?		Yes	No
12.	Do you advise (i.e. degree planning, registering) students in addition to your teaching duties?		Yes	No
13.	Do you have regularly scheduled office hours?		Yes	No
14.	Are you available to students outside of regularly scheduled office hours?		Yes	No
15.	Do students contact you when school is not in session, either before or after the semester begins or ends?		Yes	No
16.	Do students have your personal cell or home phone number?		Yes	No
17.	The majority of students contact me through my personal cell or home phone (calling or texting).	N/A	Yes	No
18.	The majority of students contact me through email.		Yes	No
19.	Do students communicate with you on your **personal** social media site (Facebook)?		Yes	No
20.	Do you have an alternate social media site in which you communicate regularly with students (Facebook, blog, etc.)?		Yes	No

Appendix G
Survey #2 – Graduates and Faculty

Survey #2 - Open-Ended Question Protocol

Survey Prompts

Strengths of the Teacher Education program: Describe the first two (2) things that come to mind that must continue. If we changed these two things, the program and students would be negatively impacted.

1.

2.

Weaknesses of the Teacher Education program: Describe the first two (2) things that come to mind that should be stopped or changed. If these two things were stopped or changed, the program would be improved.

1.

2.

New opportunities for the Teacher Education program: Describe the first two (2) things that come to mind that the program is not doing now but should be. If these two things were implemented, the program would be strengthened.

1.

2.

Appendix H
Survey #3 - Structured Probes

PLEASE READ THESE OPENING COMMENTS CAREFULLY. YOU WILL NEED THIS INFORMATION WHEN RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONS IN THIS SURVEY.

The central question for my dissertation research focuses on the dimensions of the teacher education program that contribute to the graduates' abilities to 1) successfully complete the program by fulfilling all of the graduation requirements; and 2) meet state professional educator licensure requirements, including passing the Praxis II.

Simply stated, the study seeks to identify factors that contributed to the student's success - graduating with a bachelor degree and becoming a licensed teacher - so they can be continued in an effort to increase the number of American Indian professional educators.

Your responses from the last survey provided insight into your perceptions of the program's strengths, weaknesses, and potential opportunities for improvement.

This survey, the final survey I am going to ask you to complete, contains questions based on your responses from the last one. My intent is to take the most common responses, referred to as themes, from the last survey and dig deeper into each one, seeking rich information that only you can provide.

You are considered a co-researcher in this process. You hold the answers to the central research question for this study. As an American Indian, you are member of a group that has been historically under-represented in colleges and universities.

You have also successfully completed a bachelor degree program, or will be shortly, and are or will be a licensed teacher.

Unfortunately, many Native students are not able to succeed at a college or university like you did. We want to find out what helped you meet your goals successfully so we can continue the process here and elsewhere, ultimately increasing the number of qualified American Indian professional educators.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration as you respond to this survey.

Survey Prompts

Q1: Below you will find a list of the dimensions of the program that you and the other participants identified on Survey #2 as strengths of the program. You indicated that if these were removed, students in the program would be negatively impacted.

For students to succeed in the teacher education program, which of these dimensions is most important? Rank the dimensions in order, from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most important for students to succeed.

Click on the dimension term. Then drag and drop the dimension into the order of importance with number 1 on the top.

- Admission Requirements: 2.50 GPA, Dispositions Score 2.0 or Higher
- Extensive Professional Development Opportunities
- Caring Faculty: Open-Minded, Encouraging, Belief in Students as Strong, Native American Leaders: Family Atmosphere
- Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging
- Small Class Sizes: High Level of Student Engagement
- Faculty with K-12 Classroom Experience
- Adjunct Faculty: Practicing, Classroom Teachers
- High Standards in Program - Faculty Have High Expectations
- Student Financial Grant Support
- Field Experience and Practicum: Multiple Grade Levels and Settings

In the next section of this survey, I am asking you to provide more information about each one of the 10 dimensions (listed in no particular order) identified in the previous section as it relates to students succeeding in the program.

Remember - For this research study, success is defined as meeting graduation requirements for a bachelor degree in Elementary Education and being able to pass the Praxis II test for teacher licensure.

Q2: What role do "Admission Requirements: 2.50 GPA, Dispositions Score 2.0 or Higher" have with students successfully completing the program? Some of you said these requirements are important to students' success with graduating and becoming licensed teachers. Why?

Q3: What role do "Extensive Professional Development Opportunities" have with students successfully completing the program? What skills are learned from participating in these opportunities and why is professional development important?

Q4: What role do "Caring Faculty: Open-Minded, Encouraging, Belief in Students as Strong, Native American Leaders: Family Atmosphere" have with students successfully completing the program? Provide one example of a faculty member being open-minded, encouraging, or believing in a student.

Q5: What is the role of "Rigorous Coursework: High Quality and Challenging" with helping students complete the program and become professional educators? Why is high quality and challenging coursework important for students to graduate and become licensed?

Q6: Describe the importance of "Small Class Sizes: High Level of Student Engagement" for students successfully completing the program and being able to meet teacher licensure requirements (i.e. pass the Praxis II).

Q7: What role do "Faculty with K-12 Classroom Experience" have for students successfully completing the program and becoming licensed educators? How are faculty with K-12 experience important to students' ability to graduate and meet licensure requirements?

Q8: What role do "Adjunct Faculty: Practicing, Classroom Teachers" have with preparing students to meet graduation and licensure requirements? Why are these faculty important to the program and student success?

Q9: What is the importance of "High Standards in Program - Faculty Have High Expectations" with students graduating and meeting licensure requirements? Why are high standards and high expectations necessary?

Q10: What difference does "Student Financial Grant Support" make with students being able to meet graduation and licensure requirements?

Q11: What role does "Field Experience and Practicum: Multiple Grade Levels and Settings" have with preparing students to meet graduation and licensure requirements? What are specific skills or knowledge students gain from field experiences and practicum that cannot be learned in the college classroom?

The survey is complete - in fact, all of the surveys for this study are complete!
Thank you for your time and consideration!

Appendix I
Individual Interview Protocol

You were selected for this individual interview because 1) you are a graduate of the teacher education program and a licensed teacher; 2) have attended other colleges and universities other than United Tribes so are able to draw some comparisons; and 3) as a Native American professional educator, you are a member of a group often underrepresented in higher education and the teaching profession.

Question 1:

Survey #3 included a section in which participants were asked to identify "weaknesses" in the Teacher Education program.

The use of technology, and the availability of laptops, was identified by a number of respondents as a weakness of the teacher education program. Now that you're teaching in your own classroom, and are realizing the role of technology in the classroom, what can the teacher education program do differently to move the use of technology from a weakness to a strength?

Question 2:

Survey #3 included a section in which participants were asked to identify "new opportunities" that if implemented would improve the Teacher Education program. Three areas identified by participants were 1) greater use of electronic portfolios; 2) using students as mentors; and 3) class schedules and time in actual classrooms. Choose at least one of these areas and discuss how the implementing this new opportunity would improve student learning within the teacher education program.

Question 3:

Pavel et al. (1998) reported that Native American students entering college possessed an unusually high number of risk factors that threatened their ability to succeed in higher education (35% faced four or more risk factors compared with only 22% of undergraduates overall). These risk factors are (1) financially independent; (2) at least one dependent; (3) single parent; and (4) enrolled part time, part year attendance.

- From your perspective, did Native American students in colleges and universities that you attended have these risk factors?
- Do you believe Pavel is correct with his assumption that these four risk factors are what prevent Native students from completing their college degrees?
- Are there other factors that you feel are more significant than these and what are they? (If you think about friends who have started college but not finished, what do you think kept them from doing so?)
- Share your thoughts.

Question 4:

The "Big Picture":

Success, for purposes of this research, is defined as meeting the requirements for professional educator licensure and becoming a licensed teacher. There are no bigger questions:

- Under what circumstances do minority students achieve this success?
- What are barriers you have overcome in order to achieve your goal of becoming a teacher?

Question 5:

Anne Kuyper used to speak of a "fear of success" she felt many Native people had. She said we see it all too often—students are just about ready to graduate and they will fail a course so they won't graduate. Or they'll quit their last semester. She felt they were afraid to see themselves as successful.

What do you think about this? Do you think it's true? Can you describe what she may have been referring to and what do you think causes it?

Question 6:

Do you think American Indian students are more likely to complete their education degrees and meet teaching licensure requirements by attending United Tribes than a bigger college or university? Why or why not?

If you could suggest one thing that these institutions could do to increase the graduation rates of their teacher candidates, what would it be? Exclude funding, housing, daycare, or a laptop.

Pavel, D. M., Skinner, R. R., Farris, E., Cahalan, M., Tippeconnic, J., & Stein, W. (1998). *American Indians and Alaska Natives in postsecondary education* (NCES 98-291).Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

REFERENCES

Anderson, J. (1998, August). Service-learning and teacher education. *ERIC Digest*. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education. (ED421481)

Ball, D. L., & Cohen, D. K. (1999). Developing practice, developing practitioners: Toward a practice-based theory of professional education. In L. Darling-Hammond & G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice* (pp. 3-32). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ball, D. L., Thames, M. H., & Phelps, G. (2008). Content knowledge for teaching: What makes it special?, *Journal of Teacher Education*, *59*, 389-407.

Banks, J., Cochran-Smith, M., Moll, L., Richert, A., Zeichner, K., LePage, P., Darling-Hammond, L., & Duffy, H. (2005). Teaching diverse learners. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 232-274). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bergsma, L. J. (2004). Empowerment education: The link between media literacy and health promotion. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *48*(2), 152-164.

Borg, M. (2004). Key concepts in ELT: The apprenticeship of observation. *ELT Journal*, *58*(3), 274-276.

Bransford, J., Darling-Hammond, L., & LePage, P. (2005). Introduction. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 1-39). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Buchanan, A. M., Baldwin, S. C., & Rudisill, M. E. (2002). Service learning as scholarship in teacher education. *Educational Researcher*, *38*(8), 30-36.

Butt, N. (2003, June). *Post-secondary American Indian students perceived factors of academic success: What resources can institutions foster?* (Issue Brief). Milwaukee, WI: The Dr. Beverly E. Cross Center of Practical Application for 272-816 Students, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Caine, R. N., Caine, G., McClintic, C., & Klimek, K. J. (2009). *12 brain/mind learning principles in action: Developing executive functions of the human brain*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Conceptual framework for a UTTC baccalaureate teacher education [Agenda]. (2008, July). (Available from United Tribes Technical College, 3315 University Drive, Bismarck ND 58504)

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010, July). Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). *Model core teaching standards: A resource for state dialogue (Draft for public comment)*. Washington, DC: Author.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Baratz-Snowden, J. (Eds.). (2005). *A good teacher in every classroom: Preparing the highly qualified teachers our children deserve*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (Eds.). (2005). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

de Guzman, A. B., Uy, M. M., Siy, E. Y., Torres, R. K. C., Tancioco, J. B. F., & Hernandez, J. R. (2008). From teaching from the heart to teaching with a heart: Segmenting Filipino college students' views of their teachers' caring behavior and their orientations as cared-for individuals. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *9*(4), 487-502.

Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gibbs, G. R. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London, England: SAGE Publications.

Gordon, M. (2009). Toward a pragmatic discourse of constructivism: Reflections on lessons from practice. *Educational Studies*, *45*(1), 39-58.

Griffin, M. L. (2003). Using critical incidents to promote and assess reflective thinking in preservice teachers. *Reflective Practice*, *4*(2), 207-220.

Gunzelmann, B. A. (2009). New possibilities for a new era: Research-based education for equality and excellence. *Educational Horizons*, *88*(1), 21-27.

Hammerness, K. (2006). From coherence in theory to coherence in practice. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(7), 1241-1265.

Horner, M. S. (1972). Toward an understanding of achievement-related conflicts in women. *Journal of Social Issues*, *28*(2), 157-175.

Howard, T. C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory into Practice*, *42*(3), 1-17.

Irvine, J. J., & Armento, B. J. (2001). *Culturally responsive teaching: Lesson planning for elementary and middle grades*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Jansen, H. (2010). The logic of qualitative survey research and its position in the field of social research methods [63 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *11*(2), Art. 11. Retrieved from http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1002110

Jensen, E. (2005). *Teaching with the brain in mind* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Kirkness, V. J., & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and higher education: The four Rs—Respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education*, *30*(3). Retrieved from http://jaie.asu.edu/v30/V30S3fir.htm

Kleinfeld, J. (1975). Effective teachers of Eskimo and Indian students. *School Review*, *83*(2), 301-344.

Korthagen, F., Loughran, J., & Russell, T. (2006). Developing fundamental principles for teacher education programs and practices. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *22*, 1020-1041. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2006.04.022

Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Marchel, C. A., Shields, C., & Winter, L. (2011). Preservice teachers as change agents: Going the extra mile in service-learning experiences. *Teaching Educational Psychology*, *7*(2), 3-16.

Marri, A. R. (2005). Educational technology as a tool for multicultural democratic education: The case of one US history teacher in an underresourced high school. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *4*(4), 395-409.

McCormick, K. K. (2008). Building and modeling how to build a community of learners. *IUMPST: The Journal*, *2*(Pedagogy). Retrieved from www.k12prep.math.ttu.edu

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J., & Associates. (1990). *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood: A guide to transformative and emancipatory learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(6), 1017-1054.

National Commission on Teaching & America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. New York, NY: Author.

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (n.d.). *NCATE glossary*. Retrieved from http://ncate.org/Standards/NCATEUnitStandards/NCATEGlossary/

Noddings, N. (2003). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education* (2nd ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Noddings, N. (2005a). Caring in education. *The encyclopedia of informal education*. Retrieved from www.infed.org/biblio/noddings_caring_in_education.htm

Noddings, N. (2005b). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. (n.d.). *Educational condition*. Retrieved from http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/natived/conditn.shtm

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. (2013). *2012-13 administrative & instructional personnel data in public schools* (Sec. D, Table 52). Retrieved from http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/resource/admin/2013/index.shtm

Pavel, D. M., Skinner, R. R., Farris, E., Cahalan, M., Tippeconnic, J., & Stein, W. (1998). *American Indians and Alaska Natives in postsecondary education* (NCES 98-291). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Pringle, R. M. (2002). Developing a community of learners: Potentials and possibilities in web mediated discourse. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *2*(2), 218-233.

Sadker, D. M., & Zittleman, K. R. (2010). *Teachers, schools, and society* (9th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Shulman, L. S. (1998). Theory, practice, and the education of professionals. *The Elementary School Journal*, *98*(5), 511-526.

Sinte Gleska University general catalog 2013-2015. (n.d.). Mission, SD: Sinte Gleska University.

Sparapani, E. F., Byung-In, S., & Smith, D. L. (2011). Crossing borders by "walking around" culture: Three ethnographic reflections on teacher preparation. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *20*(2), 53-66.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Stanford, P., Crowe, M. W., & Flice, H. (2010). Differentiating with technology. *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus*, *6*(4), Art. 2. Retrieved from http://escholarship.bc.edu/education/tecplus/vol6/iss4/art2

Subia BigFoot, D., & Schmidt, S. R. (2010). Honoring children, mending the circle: Cultural adaptation of trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy for American Indian and Alaska Native children. *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, *66*(8), 847-856. doi:10.1002/jclp.20707

Szasz, M. C. (Ed.). (2001). *Between Indian and White worlds: The cultural broker*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Tribal colleges and universities. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.ed/gov/edblogs/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities/

Vavrus, M. (2002). *Transforming the multicultural education of teachers: Theory, research, and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Rethinking the curriculum. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *53*(1), 20-31.

Vrasidas, C., & McIsaac, M. S. (2001). Integrating technology in teaching and teacher education: Implications for policy and curriculum reform. *Educational Media International*, *38*(2/3), 127-132.

Wentzel, K. R. (1997). Student motivation in middle school: The role of perceived pedagogical caring. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(3), 411-419.

Willis, J. W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Yin, R. K. (2012). *Applications of case study research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Zeichner, K. (2012). Rethinking the connections between campus courses and field experiences in college- and university-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *61*(1-2), 89-99.