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Self-Efficacy Of NACEP Accredited Concurrent-Enrollment Program Instructors In Rural Community Colleges

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SELF-EFFICACY OF NACEP ACCREDITED CONCURRENT-ENROLLMENT PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS IN RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Cecil Holland
March 9, 2020

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ABSTRACT

Across the United States, high schools and community colleges are collaborating to offer students non-traditional educational programs that allow them to gain college credit including those accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). Those teaching these classes must have high self-efficacy and enjoy their work if they are going to make a positive impact on the students they are educating. The theoretical framework for this research is based on Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory. The methodology for this qualitative research study utilized an integrated approach. Data collection consisted of one-on-one interviews with instructors who teach NACEP courses, administrators who supervise NACEP courses, and program documents. Data analysis was conducted to determine the self-efficacy level of the instructors who teach NACEP concurrent enrollment courses on high school campuses in Iowa rural community colleges. The findings from this research show that instructors enjoyed high levels of self-efficacy.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Concurrent-enrollment classes are classes and curricula identified as those, "that allow high school students to earn both secondary and postsecondary credits for the same course" (Karp, et al., 2004, p. 1; Farrell para. 1). Institutions of higher education and secondary education institutions provide concurrent-enrollment classes through varying beneficial agreements, including National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships accredited classes (NACEP), Advanced Placement Programs (AP), and International Baccalaureate Programs, to name a few throughout the United States. This research study focusses on NACEP accredited concurrent-enrollment classes that provide college credit to high school students through a rural Iowa community college.

A current educational trend utilizes concurrent-enrollment classes as an approach to increase college attendance. In his 2009 State of the Union Address, the President explained his desire that every United States citizen acquire one year of post-secondary education by 2020. President Obama challenged institutions of higher education to develop approaches to produce more graduates to meet the United States' goal to have "the highest proportion of college graduates in the world" (Obama, 2009; Farrell, 2017). He reiterated the need for every citizen to obtain education beyond the secondary level during the 2015 State of the Union Address, when he announced his

proposal to provide free tuition at the community college level (Obama, 2015; Farrell, 2017).

A few states have actively begun prioritizing post-secondary degree acquisition using concurrent-enrollment programs. Incentives, such as free tuition, encourage secondary students to acquire a one or two-year technical certificate that provides a path for gaining an industry-recognized credential by the time they graduate from high school.

> 1.4 million high school students took over 2 million college courses from postsecondary institutions nationwide in 2010-11. This represents 10% of high school students, higher in upper grades given the vast majority of students taking these classes are Juniors and Seniors. In Iowa, half of high school graduates complete at least one college course (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, 2018 para. 1).

Typically, potential students begin taking concurrent-enrollment classes in their junior year and complete the curricula by their senior year. Iowa has created and implemented the Senior Year Plus Program for secondary students. “Senior Year Plus” (SYP) serves as an umbrella for a variety of programs designed to provide high school students access to classes that have the potential to generate college credit, and include Advanced Placement classes, Postsecondary Enrollment Options, Concurrent Enrollment (Iowa Department of Education, 2016, para. 2). Iowa legislators have passed policies that allow free tuition for all high school students to enroll in postsecondary education through a concurrent enrollment program. To

bolster college completion rates, the State of Iowa offers these concurrent-enrollment classes through the District to Community College Sharing (DCCS) or Concurrent Enrollment Program (Iowa Code 2018, Chapter 260C).

Concurrent-Enrollment Education Initiatives in Iowa

In recognition that the state of Iowa must improve its college graduation rate if it is to remain competitive in the future jobs market, Iowa has initiated several programs under the umbrella of the Senior Year Plus. “By the year 2025, 68 percent of all jobs in the state of Iowa will require postsecondary training or education” (Carneville, et al., 2015 p. 8). According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 32 percent of Iowa jobs will require a high school diploma or less, 39 percent will require some college or an associate degree, 21 percent will require a bachelor’s degree and 8 percent will require a graduate degree. “Some colleges” include vocational certificates, occupational licenses, professional certificates, apprenticeship programs, and college credits that have market value. In anticipation of these future career demands, Governor Terry Branstad and Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds set a goal that 70 percent of Iowans in the workforce have education or training beyond high school by 2025. To achieve this goal, the Future Ready Iowa initiative was created to develop strategies to “better align education, workforce and economic development efforts” in Iowa (Iowa Workforce Division, 2014, para. 2). Iowa’s educational attainment goal is more ambitious than the goal set by the Lumina Foundation (an independent, private foundation that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all), that 60

percent of U.S. citizens have some postsecondary training by 2025 (Lumina Foundation, 2013).

Senior Year Plus

Senior Year Plus (SYP) is an umbrella program created in 2008 encompassing concurrent-enrollment, DCCS, Postsecondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEO), AP, Career Academies, Regional Academies, and Project Lead the Way (Education Commission of the States, 2018). DCCS allows 9th through 12th graders to enroll part-time in rigorous academic or technical classwork approved by the board of directors of a school district through a contractual agreement between a community college and the school district, during the regular school year, at or through community colleges (Education Commission of the States, 2018).

Eligibility requirements for students are minimal: they must be a student in grades 9-12, meet entrance requirements of the college, proficiency in reading, math, and science (based on the Iowa Assessments Proficiency score for the Iowa Assessment specific to the grade and content area determined by the school board governing the school district). The student's school district is primarily responsible for covering the cost of discounted tuition at the community college as well as the cost of books for classes taken under the DCCS program. However, if a student fails to complete a concurrent-enrollment class successfully the student or student's parent must reimburse the school district for the cost of the discounted tuition. Required class materials (e.g. calculators), that become the property of the student at the end of the class, are the only materials allowed to be charged directly to students (Senior

Year Plus Guide, 2009). Every year, Iowa's community colleges enroll numerous new students. In Fall of 2017 52.2 percent of that group participated in concurrent-enrollment classes through one of the 15 rural Iowa community colleges (Iowa Department of Education, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

Concurrent-enrollment classes have traditionally been [e.g., Math and English] taken on the community college campus. The courses have been taught by [traditional] college faculty and were transferable to the secondary degree programs, offered only to high-achieving high school students possessing commitment and the capacity to achieve in college-level academic work. However, based on a belief that an early start with college classwork will benefit low-achieving students and diminish the high school dropout rate, many states are now offering concurrent-enrollment classes to all high school students (Association for Career and Technical Education, 2007; Brand, et al., 2013; Pretlow & Wathington, 2014). Community colleges in rural areas provide many of these classes; as a result, students receive instruction on their high school campuses provided by adjunct college faculty, concurrently employed by the school district. In terms of concurrent-enrollment programs, secondary schools are effectively becoming a de facto extension of the traditional community college. Many community colleges serving rural communities have seized this chance to increase enrollment and receive additional funding through concurrent-enrollment offerings (Farrell, 2017).

Nonetheless, serious dissimilarities exist between high school and postsecondary expectations and philosophies (Fives & Looney, 2009). The level of

preparation required to succeed in college level classes is overwhelmingly different from the aptitude required to succeed in the high school environment (Conley, 2006). Community college professors are typically subject-area experts in their respective field, not formally trained pedagogues and have greater autonomy/freedom in their classes than is typical for high school teachers (Fives & Looney, 2009). College instructors have considerable liberty in class content, pedagogical methods, and class management strategies. Subsequently, high school and college classes may share the same sequence number and title, yet truly little else. College instructors teach the material at a quicker pace, typically in 15 weeks, and concurrent-enrollment instructors have 18 weeks, or more, to cover the same material. College instructors typically expect their students to solve complex problems about the curriculum rather than rote memorization and reiteration of facts from the textbook (Gollub, et al., 2002).

Concurrent-enrollment instructors are required to address state assessment requirements. Concurrent-enrollment instructors also, must often meet stringent district requirements, regarding grading and assessment, to which their college counterparts do not adhere.

The social assumptions differ between college and high school settings as well; Iowa secondary classes are highly planned, operating on the calendar year. The learning environments of high schools are nurturing and positive, with instructors providing note-taking aids, handouts, and study tools to aid students. Furthermore, students struggling in classes often receive extra credit opportunities to ensure they

pass the class (Martell, Navin, & Sullivan, 2006). Students typically interact with the same teachers throughout the calendar school year. High school teachers perform a parental role in the lives of their students that provides the chance for students to develop close relationships with teachers (Blum, 2007; Farrell, 2017).

In a much different way, Iowa community college classes follow a semester schedule and do not instruct the same group of students for an entire year. Moreover, college instructors are not responsible for Iowa State assessment requirements. Therefore, they are likely oblivious of the requirements of these examinations. Typically, college instructors do not exhibit a parental role with their students, rather they display a formal and professional demeanor. High school students unprepared for the comprehensive expectations of college instructors and the less fostering culture of college classrooms may experience them as amorphous and cold. Without the classroom's structure and support, high school students are accustomed to, they may struggle emotionally, intellectually, and academically; these are responses that can have a negative effect on the self-efficacy of community college instructors (Farrell, 2017).

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore faculty perceptions of self-efficacy as it relates to teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP accredited classes to high school students in rural Iowa community colleges. This study investigated how rural community college adjunct faculty (teaching in the high school) responded to students in their classrooms, how the student populace affected classroom environments, as

well as the teaching dynamics the concurrent-enrollment instructors found comfortable.

Although studies have examined the effectiveness of concurrent-enrollment classes from the perspectives of students and the college adjunct faculty (teaching in the high school), little research exists related to the perceptions of college adjunct faculty (in the high school) who teach NACEP accredited concurrent-enrollment classes to high school students. Because community college faculty are a critical factor in the implementation of these programs, this study contributes to the information base regarding community college teaching efficacy and provides significant information useful to the execution of future concurrent-enrollment programs.

Guiding Research Question

The overarching research question that guided this qualitative study was: What are the factors that affect the self-efficacy among adjunct community college faculty teaching in NACEP accredited concurrent-enrollment programs, and what level of awareness do administrators have concerning faculty self-efficacy teaching these courses?

Operational Definitions

Competency-based programs: a term used to describe programs that focus upon learner outcomes rather than time spent in the classroom and allow for flexibility in how the student earns credit.

Concurrent-enrollment: A term referring to an arrangement where students enroll in classes that count for both high school and college credit (Department of

Education, 2003).

District-To-Community College Sharing (DCCS): this is a program administered by the Department of Education permitting students in grades 9-12 to enroll part-time in rigorous academic classwork approved by the board of directors of a school district through a contractual agreement between a community college and the school district (Education Commission of the States, 2018).

National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP): The sole accrediting body for concurrent enrollment partnerships.

Rural community college: is a term used to describe postsecondary institutions of higher education that are Associate Colleges: physically located in areas other than the Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs) or Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), respectively, with populations exceeding 500,000 people according to the 2010 Census. Institutions located in PMSAs or MSAs with a lower total population, or not in a PMSA or MSA, are classified by the Carnegie Foundation as rural-serving. This shall include the 2010 Carnegie Basic Classification of Associate's Colleges defined as (a) "Rural-serving Small Colleges," with full-year unduplicated headcount enrollment below 2,500 students; (b) "Rural-serving Medium Colleges," with full-year unduplicated headcount enrollment between 2,500 and 7,500 students; (c) "Rural-Serving Large Colleges, with full-year unduplicated headcount enrollment above 7,500 students' and (d) Two-Year Colleges Under Four-Year Universities (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2013).

Senior Year Plus: is an umbrella program created in 2008 that encompassing

Concurrent Enrollment, (PSEO), Advanced Placement (AP), Career Academies, Regional Academies, and, most recently, Project Lead the Way. However, many of these programs were available to students in Iowa prior to 2008; implementation of the SYP legislation occurred to provide increased and more equivocal access to college credit and AP classes. SYP programs offer students an opportunity to enroll in college classwork and, in most cases, receive both high school and college credit simultaneously.

Table 1. Persons Referenced in Research Study.

Referenced in Study
NACEP Concurrent-Enrollment Instructor • Located on the high school campus • High school teacher teaching college credit courses for a local community college (in an adjunct capacity) to high school students
NACEP Concurrent-Enrollment Students • Located on the high school campus • High school students concurrently enrolled at a local community college who take courses that earn both college level credit and high school credit
Community College Administrators • Located on the community college campus • Supervise the NACEP Concurrent-Enrollment Instructors who teach on the high school campuses

Concurrent-Enrollment Students
• Located on the high school and community college campuses • High school students who travel to the community college to take non-NACEP courses

Note: This table is meant to assist in understanding the various individuals described throughout this research study.

Study Delimitation

1. The sample of interview participants included approximately 7 community college faculty members who teach NACEP accredited concurrent-enrollment classes and two administrators who supervise those faculty members.
2. Interview participants were limited to faculty from three rural Iowa community colleges who teach NACEP accredited concurrent-enrollment classes and five administrators who supervise those faculty members.
3. Other demographic variable considered were number of years teaching, number of years teaching NACEP accredited concurrent-enrollment classes, and the highest degree attained obtained during data collection.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the set of assumptions that support the research and provides boundaries for the study (Merriam, 2009, Farrell, 2017). Bandura's model of self-efficacy was the lens used in this study to view community college instructors' perceptions regarding the teaching of high school students enrolled in NACEP concurrent-enrollment classes. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief in one's ability to

accomplish a specific task (Bandura, 1986b). Self-efficacy differs from self-esteem. Self-esteem is a general concept that measures a person's overall evaluation of self; worthwhile self-efficacy is a task-oriented assessment of context for specific abilities (Marsh & Shavelson, 1985, Farrell, 2017). According to Bandura (1993b), perceived self-efficacy influences how individuals think, feel, motivate themselves, and ultimately behave in specific circumstances (Farrell, 2017). These actions are accomplished through several interrelated processes (Bandura, 1993b).

Cognitive Processes

Individuals' beliefs regarding their abilities affect their cognitive functioning and the types of goals they set for themselves (Bandura, 1993b; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1984, Farrell, 2017). Those with high levels of self-efficacy focus their energy towards finding solutions to problems, while those with low self-efficacy dwell on their deficiencies (Bandura & Jourden, 1991). Additionally, those with high levels of self-efficacy believe that intelligence is an acquirable skill that is increased through experience and the attainment of additional knowledge. Consequently, they seek out opportunities for professional and personal growth. However, those with low self-efficacy believe that intelligence is inherent and cannot be easily changed (Dweck & Leggett, 1988, Farrell, 2017). Instructors with increased levels of self-efficacy have better planning and organizing skills (Allinder, 1994). Efficacious instructors set higher standards for themselves and have more confidence in overcoming classroom challenges (Good & Brophy, 2003; Wood & Bandura, 1989; Farrell, 2017).

Self-efficacy also relates to mental effort and persistence. Efficacious individuals are more likely to overcome obstacles to successfully achieve their goals than those with lower levels of efficacy (Bandura, 1997, Farrell, 2017). Highly efficacious instructors have been shown to persist longer with low-achieving students (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Gibson & Dembo, 1984) and have more confidence in overcoming challenges within the classroom (Good & Brophy, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Farrell, 2017). Furthermore, Gibson and Dembo (1984) found that instructors who exhibit a high degree of teaching efficacy communicate higher expectations for students, provide less criticisms, and persist with students until they obtain the correct answer rather than quickly moving to another student.

Affective and Selection Processes

Self-efficacy attitudes also affect the emotional well-being of individuals, contributing to a psychological state that indirectly affects the decisions they make. Anxiety of failure is a strong inhibitor and inhibits less efficacious individuals from attempting difficult tasks that will increase their knowledge and experience (Farrell, 2017). These individuals view failure as a threat to their intelligence and, therefore, most often choose secure activities that minimize the risk of errors (Farrell, 2017). In contrast, people who think they can cope with stressors are better at controlling anxiety. They view failures as a part of the process of gaining knowledge and are not troubled by failure (Bandura, 1993b). Therefore, more often they choose difficult tasks that will improve their knowledge and broaden their range of competencies (Farrell,

2017).

The beliefs and judgements of instructors influence their sense of teaching efficacy and the types of classroom activities and learning environments they provide (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Clark, 1988; Goodman, 1988; Weinstein, 1989, Farrell, 2017). Instructors who believe in their teaching ability are more likely to believe in their students. Moreover, instructors with higher levels of efficacy use strategies that aid in the development of self-directed learners (Allinder, 1994; Lee et al., 2013). Guskey (1988) found that instructors with higher levels of teaching efficacy were more receptive to using multiple instructional techniques compared to instructors with lower levels of teaching efficacy. In contrast, instructors who believe that external factors control their teaching effectiveness were shown to spend less time on academic curriculum (Bandura, 1997, Farrell, 2017). Additionally, instructors with external loci of control were also found to rely on extrinsic rewards for students rather than use methods that increase students' internal motivation or create an environment that encourages student autonomy and self-discipline (Lee et al., 2013; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990; Farrell, 2017).

Contextual Factors of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is not universal. More Accurately, it is based upon a set of self-beliefs associated with distinct tasks or functions. Levels of self-efficacy for teaching are dependent on a variety of factors, including subject matter and student population (Raudenbush, et al., 1992). Faculty are more likely to exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy in an environment where they feel competent (Bitto & Butler, 2010; Farrell,

2017).

Therefore, instructors may have a high level of self-efficacy for teaching one subject or one group of students and lack self-efficacy for teaching another set of students or another subject area. Self-efficacy is related to specific domains (Bruning, et al., 1999). Education is a highly-specialized field. Each level of education whether elementary, secondary, or postsecondary has specific degree requirements. Instructors who are educated to teach students in one domain may not experience self-efficacy for teaching at another level. Ross, et al., (1999) found that teaching outside one's subject area or teaching different student populations can have a negative effect on teaching efficacy (Farrell, 2017).

Community College Context

Self-efficacy relates to an instructor's confidence in his or her capability to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task within a distinct context (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Community college instructors are accustomed to teaching adults. The average age of a community college student is 29 (American Association of Community Colleges, 2015). The differences between high school and college environments are significant. While high school students may be academically prepared for the content of college classes, they may not be emotionally mature enough to handle the stress and expectations of college classes (Ferguson, et al., 2015). Lynch, et al.,(2007) found that over half of dual-enrollment instructors in Georgia struggled with the immaturity level and lack of discipline of high school students enrolled in their college classes, and another quarter of the dual-enrollment

instructors identified classroom management problems and disrespectful students as ongoing issues. College instructors are accustomed to concentrating upon the content of the class and less upon the rules of the classroom (Farrell, 2017).

High school students may be too immature to manage the college environment and college material. Expectations exist that the college students desire to learn the material and do not need constant reminders to study the material outside of class or to submit assignments on time as do high school students (Edmunds, et al., 2010). If students are not mature enough to handle this level of freedom, they may struggle to succeed in college classes and force college instructors into the role of high school instructors, who must manage a higher level of classroom disciplinary issues than most college instructors (Dougan, 2005). Managing student discipline issues places a burden upon college instructors and prevents them from improving the content of the class and their teaching skills because they are forced to spend time mediating classroom disciplinary issues (Blase, 1986). Therefore, teaching immature high school students who are not emotionally prepared for college classes might possibly affect the self-efficacy of college instructors, who feel pressed into this unfamiliar role. Instructors who exhibit low levels of self-efficacy for teaching this student population may not only affect the achievement of these students, but also may affect the institution to meet its goals (Farrell, 2017).

Institutional Implications of Self-Efficacy

The success of any organization is dependent upon its ability to continually improve its operations (Alfred, et al., 1999). Academic institutional improvement is

highly focused upon student achievement. Because community colleges are public institutions dependent upon federal, state, and local funding, they are accountable to stakeholders. Therefore, community colleges must be conscientious in establishing Institutional Effectiveness for both internal and external stakeholders. Institutional Effectiveness does not have a standardized definition in the literature. However, for the purposes of this research study, it is defined as the ability for the academic institution to meet its mission and goals (Alfred, et al., 2007, Farrell, 2017). Therefore, the goal of Institutional Effectiveness is to gather quality information to make informed decisions. Institutional Effectiveness involves the collaboration of stakeholders to develop and obtain student learning goals and meet program review guidelines. The process of Institutional Effectiveness generates the data used for strategic planning and accreditation standards. It is a determining factor for the development of a healthy academic institution.

Because achieving Institutional Effectiveness is dependent upon student achievement, higher education institutions are dependent upon the motivation of faculty members to create the learning environments needed to foster student learning. Self-efficacy affects the motivation and performance of faculty and can affect the overall effectiveness of educational institutions. Self-efficacy relates to behavior change and the adoption of new techniques to improve student outcomes. Instructors may not implement new methods, if they doubt their ability to successfully implement the changes (Smylie, 1988). A correlation exists between the teacher's self-efficacy and student achievement. Students who were instructed by highly efficacious

instructors consistently scored better on standardized tests than those students taught by instructors with lower levels of self-efficacy (Gordon, 2001; Henson, 2001).

Furthermore, instructors with a low perception of teaching efficacy were shown to have a pessimistic attitude toward their students, exhibit burn-out, and have a weak commitment to the teaching profession (Bandura, 1993b). Evers, et al., (2002) found that instructors with lower levels of self-efficacy experience more job-related stress and are at a higher risk for leaving the teaching profession than instructors with high-self efficacy. High instructor turnover affects the cohesion and community of institutions. Cohesion is defined as the determination of a group or team to remain united to meet its goals (Carron, 1982) and is often viewed as a key indicator for institutional effectiveness (Ingersoll, 2001; Parsons, 1959; Rosenholtz, 1989; Farrell, 2017

Research Questions

The following questions will guide this study:

1. What are the perceptions of self-efficacy among college adjunct faculty (teaching in the high school) teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment high school students?
2. What factors influence self-efficacy among college adjunct faculty (teaching in the high school) teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment high school students?
3. What level of awareness do community college administrators have concerning the self-efficacy of faculty members teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment high school students?
4. How are community college administrators addressing self-efficacy of faculty

teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment high school students?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains a history of Iowa community colleges and their addition to secondary education. It also provides an organizational overview of Iowa concurrent-enrollment relevant community colleges. Additionally, review of the analysis of the benefits and issues associated with concurrent-enrollment programs and examination of the pertinent literature related to self-efficacy.

History of Iowa Community Colleges

In 1918, Iowa established the first junior college in Mason City. Fewer than 40 junior colleges existed nationwide, offering the first two years of general education courses required for a Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1927, the Iowa General Assembly authorized school districts to establish junior colleges with voter approval. School districts were given this task since they were the only locally organized education system in place at the time. Koos (1970) identified what are now widely recognized and accepted as major purposes of the junior colleges:

> (a) providing the first two years of four-year baccalaureate degree programs; (b) providing programs of occupational preparation which are completed in two years of college; (c) offering programs of continuing education for adults; and (d)

> offering a two-year general college program for those who will not continue on to a senior college (p. 46).

By 1930, 32 such colleges existed in Iowa. Thereafter, a story of vicissitudes began; The Great Depression and World War II affected enrollments, but with the availability of funding from the GI Bill when the war ended, the number of students increased, and stability developed (Andrews, 2000).

Mostly local students instituted the student body for the community colleges, attached to local high schools and drawing their instructors from the high school faculties. Casey (1963), found curricular offerings seriously restricted; there were 58 classes with less than 5 students, and instructors had master's degrees in education, rather than subject fields. He described two colleges with no full-time instructors. However, in 1957 when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik I, federal money became available to establish post–high school vocational-technical training through the National Defense Education Act. Post-high school vocational-technical schools did not have the authority to offer the first two years of university-level courses. Then in 1965, Senate File 550, championed by Senator John “Jack” Kibbie, passed the Iowa legislature, which allowed vocational-technical schools to unite with junior colleges and the two were combined to create the community college in Iowa. Thus, the Iowa community college system began and is still in use today (Andrews 2000, Iowa Department of Education, 2018).

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, the concept of a community college has changed. The Iowa Legislature created 15 community college districts, governed by

locally elected boards of directors consisting of five to nine members. Beyond transfer academic credit and vocational programs, adult and continuing education offerings, workforce development responsibilities, and concurrent-enrollment became part of the foci of community colleges. Each community college offers a comprehensive educational program, consisting of adult education, career programs of vocational and technical educational, and college-parallel curriculum. All Iowans of postsecondary school age are eligible to attend any of the community colleges. Community colleges also offer concurrent-enrollment programs for students who attend local secondary schools. All community colleges comply with approval standards adopted by the State Board of Education (Iowa Department of Education, 2018).

In this broadening context, the designation of "comprehensive" was added to the description of the institutions. One in four-college students in Iowa was enrolled in a community college by 2004; the ratio is even greater today (Iowa Department of Education, 2018) at one in three-college students. Students of all ages and abilities, including those undertaking remedial study, attend Iowa's Community Colleges, which generally admit all who apply for admission. Under the direction of the Iowa Department of Education, each community college coordinates statewide planning for existing and proposed postsecondary concurrent-enrollment education programs, reviews requests of new courses, develops benchmarks and indicators for programs, develops an annual policy agenda for postsecondary education, and conducts studies to locate methods for maximizing resources (Iowa Department of Education, 2018).

Moreover, fifty years of growth and achievement makes the integral role of community colleges in Iowa's educational network clear.

Small rural community colleges frequently have lower tax bases than community colleges located in urban areas (Phillips, 1975; Vineyard, 1979). Additionally, small rural community colleges often have trouble receiving grant funding, because they often do not have the staff to pursue these opportunities (Fluharty & Scaggs, 2007). Pennington, Williams, and Karovonen (2006) identified both funding and obtaining grants as challenges shared among small community colleges serving small rural secondary schools. Consequently, small community colleges might not have the funding to offer wide-ranging academic programs and support services (Hardy & Katsinas, 2007).

Although these establishments face financial issues, small community colleges serving small rural secondary schools are often expected to act as an economic engine for the community by offering both workforce development courses and support services, such as resume' writing and interviewing simulations for the community (Pennington et al., 2006). These expectations, along with funding challenges, provide strong motivation for small community colleges serving small rural secondary schools, wanting to offer NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses, to take advantage of the opportunities that state funding provided. Offering NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses not only provided additional funding for community colleges, they also provided a resource for meeting the mission of the college by creating relationships within the local area they served. This strong emphasis upon concurrent-enrollment programs makes small community colleges serving small rural secondary schools appropriate

research sites for this study of the self-efficacy of community college's instructors who taught these courses.

Community College Education

Community colleges offer many unique educational programs and opportunities. These include programs at two-year institutions in adjacent states through tuition reciprocity agreements; programs for imprisoned individuals in correctional facilities; evaluation and assessment centers; developmental education programs and services for underprepared students; special programs for the disabled, including sheltered workshops; customized training programs for business and industry; incubation centers to assist the development of small businesses; and the administration of service delivery areas for the Federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA, 2018). The JTPA ensures access to participants in each service delivery area to skills training and employment opportunities throughout the entire labor market and excludes access to liberal arts education.

Iowa Community Colleges

There are 15 locally governed community colleges playing vital roles in the economic development of their communities and the state. Working together and forming connections with local business and industry, community organizations, state agencies, and other key stakeholders tightly links Iowa's community colleges to regional economic development, and labor force needs, thus, positioning community colleges to deal with statewide challenges. Iowa community colleges vary in size and the student population varies as well. For example, one rural community college in Iowa has an

enrollment of only 395 students, while another community college has over 22,982 students (Iowa Department of Education, 2017). Some community colleges serve rural locations, while other community colleges serve urban areas. Students registered in Iowa community colleges come from different backgrounds. Some community colleges have a student body of non-traditional students, and others have a student body that is a more traditional college population. These differences among the community colleges affect concurrent-enrollment program's implementation at specific community college (Wallace, 2017).

High School and Higher Education Integration Programs

The grouping of college and high school coursework fits into three wide-ranging categories: Advanced Placement (AP courses), which are examination-based courses; course-based credit, such as concurrent-enrollment courses; and competency-based credit often awarded through agreements between local high schools and colleges.

Advanced Placement Programs

The College Board Advanced Placement (AP) platform is the oldest method of secondary and postsecondary curriculum integration. It was established by the College Board in 1952 to permit secondary students to access advanced curriculum. The College Board Advanced Placement coursework exists in numerous subjects and governs the annual AP exams. Students are required to pay a fee and earn a certain number of points on the exam to obtain college or university credit. Each institution of higher education sets a minimum test score for students to achieve transfer credit to institutions of higher education (College Board, 2014).

Course-Based College Credit

High school students have access to NACEP accredited course-based college credit through the high school in the forms of concurrent-enrollment courses, allowing qualified high school faculty to teach, as adjuncts, college-level courses at the high school or in the form of career and technical courses, usually offered on the college campus, by college faculty. While no studies have tracked students in concurrent-enrollment courses nationally, Karp, et al (2004) provided a comprehensive matrix of each states concurrent-enrollment policies and information on 40 state's concurrent-enrollment policies. The goal of the research was to report the different policies of state concurrent-enrollment programs. Thus, examination of the impact of these policies was limited.

A new sector within concurrent-enrollment is gaining traction; numerous community colleges offer online concurrent-enrollment opportunities from which students can choose. These courses are becoming useful to a variety of students, including rural students, home-schooled students, and those wanting to obtain a credit for a course not provided by their local high school (Brown, et al., 2003). Seventy percent of school districts specify that online classes are vital for offering advance placement or concurrent-enrollment courses to students (Farrell, 2017; Picciano, 2009).

Competency-Based Programs

Competency-based programs emphasize learner outcomes, instead of face-to-face time in the classroom. This practice permits the student to earn credit in different ways. The objective is to provide curriculum pertinent to the high school student

(United States Department of Education, 2014). A student-centered approach of organization is key in this type of course. Career and Technical Education (CTE) concurrent-enrollment curricula are many times competency-based, because students receive credit based on aptitude to perform tasks (e.g., welding, auto repair, or criminal justice) rather than based upon the amount of time the student spent in the classroom. Students earn credit through articulation agreements with local colleges and universities. The National Career Clusters Framework is a competency-based program that has organized career and technical education programs into specific pathways for the purpose of aligning high school and post-secondary career and technical programs (National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium, 2014).

Career and Technical Education and Concurrent-Enrollment Courses

The federal government has created a CTE financial grant programs that they promote as an indicator of economic development for the nation. Former U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan (2012), declared these new CTE initiatives will sustain the nation's recovery from the last recession. In the 2012 State of the Union Address, President Obama identified CTE as an important part of his economic plan for the country. Additionally, Duncan signed the *Blueprint for Transforming Career and Technical Education* in 2012, which called on Congress to reauthorize the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which was the basis of much of financial funding of CTE. The document also mandated secondary and higher education work together to allow

students to work on a postsecondary CTE certification or diploma, while still in high school (Duncan, 2012).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Concurrent-Enrollment Programs for Students

Concurrent-enrollment programs offer several benefits. Students save time and money by progressing through associate/undergraduate degree attainment during the secondary years (Andrews, 2000; Greenberg, 1989; Kruger, 2000; Pierce, 2001). Kruger studied U.S. Department of Education data and discovered a decline in the time it took for students who complete concurrent-enrollment courses to obtain a degree. Kruger's (2000) research deduced that the typical time to complete a bachelor's degree was one fifth-longer for students with no concurrent-enrollment courses, when compared to students with nine credit hours, or more, when they matriculate from high school to college (Kruger, 2000). The reduced time is important, because the student can save substantial money on tuition, housing, and other costs associated with the credits taken as concurrent-enrollment.

Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds gained access to college courses through concurrent-enrollment (Kruger, 2000), which was something they did not have before. Additionally, advocates of concurrent-enrollment programs assert that other students benefit, because of the improved opportunities presented by concurrent-enrollment curricula. Schools that serve rural areas or have a small school size often have limitation on their finances leading to a lack of qualified broad curriculum and choices. According to Bailey, et al., (2002), the combination of college

and high school resources allow small schools to provide CTE coursework and programs for students and may provide needed technical employees for those small communities.

Although research has determined definite benefits exist by offering concurrent-enrollment programs, concerns within these programs have been identified (Andrews, 2000; Barnett & Stamm, 2010; Catron, 2001; Ferguson et al., 2015; Johnston & Kristovich, 1999). Students are often unaware of the time and tuition savings that promote these programs and take them for granted. They waste the opportunity afforded them by state financial underwriting and often do not complete programs they have started. Students financially responsible for their own tuition and books for concurrent-enrollment courses in numerous states had a greater chance for achieving a degree according to Frazier (2000). Some states require students to pay for the tuition cost related to the practice of "double dipping," which suggests that the state ends up funding both high schools and colleges for the same concurrent-enrollment students (Bailey et al., 2002).

Advantages and Disadvantages of NACEP Concurrent-Enrollment Programs for Institutions

Benefits of these programs can be great; some colleges have seen increased admission and retention of students, since many students who complete concurrent-enrollment courses while in high school, continue in the same college after high school graduation. According to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2002), concurrent-enrollment programs aid in the recruitment of local high school

students, who may not have considered enrolling in courses at their local community college.

Faculty workload is another matter related to concurrent-enrollment programs. Community college professors are responsible for a heavy workload associated with teaching 15 credits per semester, selecting textbooks, participating in recruitment activities, serving on college committees, and overseeing NACEP concurrent-enrollment teaching faculty. Often faculty assist in a variety of roles at small community colleges, and assigning them the extra tasks associated with having to supervise concurrent-enrollment faculty (high school instructors) can become burdensome. Instructors assigned the extra tasks of site visits to the high schools, providing guidance and training to high school instructors who are teaching concurrent-enrollment courses, and coordinating courses with the high school receive no extra compensation or release time from their previous duties (Catron, 2001).

Institutions of Higher Education Additional Concerns

Additional concerns are that Institutions of higher education must recognize the differences in laws for secondary and postsecondary educational institutions. For example, disability accommodations in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) govern postsecondary education, while the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides the oversight of disabled students at the high school level. IDEA provides provisions for special education for students with disabilities, but colleges are not required to change academic standards or provide support, and students must self-report, and

many do not. Colleges only need to provide educational supports to support access to education. Also, at the core of the debate of concurrent-enrollment is the question: what is the purpose of a college education?

> Should students attend college to expand their learning and develop skills such as critical thinking, or is college expected to be an experience that is designed to bolster a student's future employment options? These are not mutually exclusive options, but properly balancing the mix of these two perspectives is critical. Public attitudes on this matter are different, depending on respondents' college experience. Nearly half of the public (47 percent) hold that "the main purpose of a college education is to teach work-related skills and knowledge," but among those with post-graduate education, just 26 percent say the same. Clearly, colleges and universities need to do a better job of advancing education as a public good with benefits broader than job training for individual students (NEA, 2017).

Self-Efficacy Theory

Of the numerous studies focused upon self-efficacy in teaching, the majority are quantitative. One of the earliest studies by Barfield and Burlingame (1974) who used the 5-item Political Efficacy Scale to measure the influence that a teacher's efficacy has upon their teaching practices. They found that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy demonstrated more sensitivity toward their students than those with low self-efficacy. Researchers from the RAND organization developed an instrument to measure teacher efficacy as the extent to which teachers believed they had

control of their actions, rather than the environment controlling them. The researchers grounded their study in the social learning theory developed by J.B. Rotter, who addressed the attribution of teacher control. Teachers indicated their level of agreement with two statements. The sum of the two statements was titled TE (teacher efficacy) Teacher efficacy was determined to mean the level of control of the learning process that instructors believed they possessed (Barfield and Burlingame 1974). Through the years, researchers built upon the work of the RAND researchers and refined the instruments used to measure self-efficacy.

Qualitative Self-Efficacy Studies

Ashton and Webb (1986) performed one of the first qualitative studies of self-efficacy, when they added interview questions to their mixed study. The researchers discovered that the concept of self-efficacy for instructors is an important construct in the understanding of how an instructor views his or her role within the classroom. They also found that this attitude affects not only their work but also their relationships with their students. The researchers concluded that self-efficacy is a valuable tool in the development of school improvement. They expressed a need for more research to be performed to understand how the tool of self-efficacy could be used to increase educational opportunities (Ashton, Doda, & Webb, 1982). Very few qualitative studies about the self-efficacy of teachers have been published since Ashton and Webb. No qualitative studies have measured the self-efficacy of community college instructors who teach NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology and data collection techniques used in this study are described. The researcher employed a qualitative approach, because it was believed to provide the most information to learn about the practices of faculty members who teach The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) concurrent-enrollment courses. Qualitative researchers study a phenomenon through an integrated approach, rather than the approach of specific variables. Using a wide-ranging approach for research analysis will assist in developing a thorough understanding of the interpretation, experiences, and culture of the participants (Ary, et al., 2013; Farrell, 2017). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explain that qualitative researchers view subjects in their natural surroundings and describe the meanings people assign to them. Studying NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors in their natural settings aided in the interpretation of their experiences and feelings of self-efficacy with teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses. A variety of approaches are available for use in qualitative research (Ary et al., 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Farrell, 2017; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2005), although an ethnographic research design was chosen, because it provided a holistic interpretation of a social group by using a rich, thick description of the participants' experiences (Marshall & Gretchen, 1999; Wolcott, 1990).

Guiding Questions

The following questions guided the study: What are the perceptions of self-efficacy among NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors teaching high school students? What factors influence self-efficacy among NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors teaching high school students? What level of awareness do community college administrators have concerning the self-efficacy of NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors teaching high school students? Finally, how are community college administrators addressing the self-efficacy of NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors teaching high school students?

Community Colleges as Research Locations

I chose Iowa community colleges as a research location, because the small community colleges provide NACEP concurrent-enrollment classes to secondary school students. Furthermore, these small size community colleges, with enrollments between 300 and 2,500 students, often rely upon the funding these NACEP concurrent-enrollment classes provide. Small rural community colleges face unique challenges as compared to institutions located within urban locations. Most individuals who attend NACEP concurrent-enrollment classes are part-time community college students. However, state funding is usually available only for full-time enrollments; NACEP concurrent-enrollment classes are being an exception (Farrell, 2017).

The Carnegie Classification System of Institutions of Higher Education classifies very small public rural-serving associate level institutions as those rural

community colleges residing outside of Urban Statistical Areas with an unduplicated student count of less than 300 students. Small public rural-serving associate level institutions are defined as those rural community colleges residing outside of Urban Statistical Areas with an unduplicated student count of at more than 300, yet less than 2000 Full Time Equivalency (FTE). Medium community colleges have an unduplicated student count of at least 2000, yet less than 5000 FTE, based upon the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data for 2014 (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). To locate Iowa community colleges meeting these conditions, the researcher followed these steps:

- Community colleges that met the enrollment criteria were identified on the Iowa Department of Education's Website. One community college was identified as having fewer than 300 full-time students. Five community colleges were identified as having at least 500 full-time students, yet less than 5000. Three community colleges were eliminated as a possible research location because administration indicated they would not be interested in participating. That left three community colleges as possible locations for the study (Farrell, 2017).
- The community colleges' locations were compared with the Census Bureau's listing of Urban Statistical Areas to find out if the colleges qualified as rural. All three qualified as rural-serving institutions, according to the Carnegie Classification System. The researcher contacted each college for the offerings of NACEP concurrent-

enrollment courses that qualify. According to the initial contact, all three community colleges offer NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses to high school students (Farrell, 2017).

- To determine which community colleges were heavily vested in NACEP concurrent-enrollment programs with college adjunct faculty (exclusively in the high school) teaching these courses and to locate which of these community colleges would be willing to participate in this study, The researcher contacted each community college's Chief Academic Officer by telephone. Out of the five possibilities, three community colleges agreed to participate in this study.

Description of Community College #1

Community College #1 is in rural Iowa, in a town which has a population of 9,320 (United States Census Bureau, 2018). The college is classified as an Associate's Public Rural-serving Small Institution (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). The college has an enrollment of 312 students (College #1 Admission Office, 2018). The college employs five full-time and 32 part-time adjunct faculty members (excluding college adjunct faculty who teach exclusively in the high schools) (College #1 Chief Academic Officer, 2018). The college grants Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), and Associate of General Studies (AGS) degrees. Additionally, the college offers certificates for the completion of technical education programs (United States Department of Education, 2014b).

Description of Community College #2

Community College #2 is in rural Iowa, in a town with a population of 27,068 (United States Census Bureau, 2018). The college is classified as an Associate's Public Rural-serving medium Institution (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010) with an enrollment of 1867 students (College #2 Admission Office, 2018). Community College #2 employs 46 full-time and 87 part-time faculty members, excluding college adjunct faculty who teach exclusively in the high schools (College #2 Chief Academic Officer, 2018). The college grants Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), and Associate of General Studies (AGS) degrees. Additionally, the college offers certificates for the completion of technical education programs (United States Department of Education, 2014b).

Description of Community College #3

Community College #3 is in rural Iowa, in a town with a population of 5,036 (United States Census Bureau, 2018). It is classified as an Associate's Public Rural-serving Small Institution (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010), with an enrollment of 967 students (College #3 Admission Office, 2018). The college employs 38 full-time and 72 part-time faculty members, excluding college adjunct faculty who teach exclusively in the high schools (College #2 Chief Academic Officer, 2018). The college grants Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Associate of General Studies (AGS) degrees, and certificate programs (United States Department of Education, 2014b).

Research Participants

In qualitative research, a population is defined as a group of people who share common characteristics and can provide specific information about the study (Cox & West, 1986). The cost of studying an entire population group would be prohibitive; thus, it is common to use a focused sample for a research study. Focused sampling identifies participants who represent attributes wanted for the study, are aligned with the research questions, have the greatest potential for generating insights, and an understanding about a specific phenomenon (deMarris, 2004; Farrell, 2017; Lincoln, 1985; Marshall & Rossman 1999; Patton, 2005).

The researcher's goal in this study was to examine the self-efficacy of NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors teaching high school students. Therefore, the researcher identified and selected a sample of college adjunct faculty who teach these courses, along with administrators who supervise the institutions' concurrent-enrollment programs. Eligibility criteria for participation in this study were full-time employment at the chosen research locations and are actively teaching or supervising the NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses during the 2019-2020 academic year.

The researcher selected each sample of participants with the help of the academic officer at each community college. The researcher shared the criteria with the proper academic officer at each college who contacted the eligible individuals at their institutions and placed me in contact with those who agreed to participate.

Data Collection

Qualitative research data was collected through a variety of techniques (e.g.,

interviews, observations, and document analysis). An assortment of data collection techniques were employed to attain a greater knowledge of the phenomena that were the focus of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this study, the researcher collected data through document analysis (a social research method that allows for the combination of methodologies in the study of a phenomenon), conducted faculty interviews of those who have instructed NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses during the 2019-2020 academic year and interviews of administrators at each institution who supervised the concurrent-enrollment programs at three rural community colleges in Iowa. Utilizing these wide-ranging techniques, the researcher was able to triangulate my data to provide a better understanding of this topic (Boeije, 2009).

Review of Documents and Artifacts

Reviewing documents and artifacts offers the history and context of a specific situation and enhances the data obtained through interviews and other qualitative methods (Marshall & Rossman 1999). A review of documents (e.g., program and class policies, syllabi, instruments) used by instructors to achieve student outcomes, tools used to effectively lead the course and institutional policies and procedures related to concurrent-enrollment courses, was conducted. The review of course documents provided a foundational background and understanding about the administration of concurrent-enrollment courses at each community college. This understanding assisted in the development of relevant questions for the individual interviews (Farrell, 2017).

According to Merriam (2009), an efficient procedure for organizing the content

of documents is content analysis through coding the information presented in the documents; the researcher will organize my notes from the review of documents.

NACEP Concurrent-Enrollment Instructors Interviews

The semi-structured interview format was used, including main guiding questions as well as potential follow-up questions to probe further into topics, which were detailed in the interview protocols (see Appendix C). These open-ended questions provided organization for the interview, allowing for the flexibility and flow that is inherent and desired during qualitative interviews (Roulston, 2010; Rubin & Rubin, 2011, Winger, 2017). In-person interviews were conducted.

Administrator Interview Design

According to Maxwell (2013), purposeful selection allows researchers to choose specific settings, persons, or activities that will provide information that cannot be easily acquired from other choices. Additionally, Patton (2002) identified the individuals chosen for purposeful selection as key informants. Key informants are people who have explicit knowledge about the topic and can offer understanding of a phenomenon. Interviews were chosen for the administrators because my goal was to collect in-depth data from the individuals who could provide expert knowledge and experience with NACEP concurrent-enrollment programs at the institutional level. Interviews provide rich detailed data by providing the researcher an opportunity to obtain additional information and capture individual perceptions about specific understandings (Creswell, 2012; Farrell, 2017; Hatch, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Rubin & Rubin, 2011). Purposeful selection was used to select two administrators at

two institutions and one administrator from one institution who supervised NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors.

Community college administrators' perceptions were collected through a face-to-face individual semi-structured interview format that, included main guiding questions as well as potential follow-up questions to probe further into topics, which were detailed in the interview protocols (see Appendix D). Five administrators were interviewed among the three rural community colleges. Each of the administrators supervised NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors at their specific college at the time of the interviews. Titles of the administrators interviewed included the Dean of Academic Affairs, College Dean, Dean of Academics & Student Services, NACEP Coordinator, and NACEP Faculty Liaison.

Pilot Study

According to Fink and Kosekoff (1985), one should field test the data collection instrument to reveal information about its reliability before employing it in a study. Additionally, the field test can prevent logistical problems in interviews by disclosing abstruse questions and providing evidence about the time needed for the interview process (Baker & Risley, 1994). Therefore, the researcher tested the interview procedures in a small pilot study with sample educators to disclose any ambiguities that might have existed within the interview protocols. The researcher organized a pilot interview sample with two educators who taught concurrent-enrollment courses and one pilot interview with an administrator not chosen as a part of this study. Based upon feedback from the pilot study, necessary changes

were made to the interview protocols.

Data Analysis

Locating commonalities among the immense quantity of data collected during research was a challenge (Hatch, 2002). Merriam (2009) stresses the favored data analysis method for qualitative research is to do it concomitantly with data collection, while the data are fresh in the mind of the investigator. According to Miles and Huberman (1984), three activities must occur simultaneously during data analysis: data reduction, data display and data conclusions.

Data Reduction and Display

Miles and Huberman (1984) state that, organizing essential data, and its reduction is a method of summarizing the data throughout a research study and is often performed parallel with data display. Coding data enables investigators to reduce the data and locate recurring words, phrases, and ideas within the larger collection of data (Farrell, 2017; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). This sorting of data allows the investigator to continually analyze the data for patterns and sort it through an academic context (Hoffman, 2005) This sorting process requires constant comparative scrutiny. Constant comparative scrutiny allows the investigator to compare data to determine its similarities and differences. The researcher utilized the data collected from a review of documents, NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructor's interviews, and administrator's interviews and entered it into a spreadsheet. The researcher chose valid, mutually exclusive, and exhaustive code titles to ensure the validity of the data. The researcher then used the code titles to label the data and locate the recurrences.

Locating recurrences within the data was the first step in discovering the major themes of the study (Creswell, 2003; Farrell, 2017; Merriam, 2009; Ryan & Bernard, 2000).

Research Quality

The quality of qualitative research is determined by the trustworthiness of the data collected. Trustworthiness refers to the balance, fairness, and completeness of the data. Trustworthiness is established through the credibility, transferability, and reliability of the research (Farrell, 2017; Lincoln, 1985; Merriam, 2009).

Credibility

Credibility denotes the methods used to gather and analyze data in research. Credibility safeguards that the findings of a study correctly reflect the subject realities of participants (Farrell, 2017; Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research generates vast quantities of information; to maintain the credibility of data, the researcher used a system to organize the data for retrieval, examination, and interpretation (Farrell, 2017; Merriam, 2009). The researcher used a visual matrix to assist in verifying relevance of findings prior to summarizing the concluding findings.

The use of interviews contributes to the credibility of data collection by providing data that is more accurate. According to Patton (1990), participants have less of a tendency to provide responses that are incorrect or extreme during an interview with a peer. Additionally, the use of individual interviews allows for the observance of non-verbal clues that occur during the sessions providing a more comprehensive understanding

of the participants' experiences. Member checks are the process of allowing interviewees to review the transcribed data for accuracy (Farrell, 2017; Merriam, 2009). The researcher used member checks for the interviews to keep the credibility of the information. The researcher provided each participant an opportunity to analyze the transcript of their interview to verify interpretations. The researchers emailed each participant a copy of the transcript, asked that he/she review it, and provide feedback within a week, so that things were fresh in their memory.

Transferability

Transferability is the capability of the results to relate to other circumstances (Lincoln, 1985; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The researcher hopes transferability was achieved in this study through the detailed account of the perceptions of college concurrent-enrollment instructors concerning their self-efficacy with teaching NACEP courses to high school students. The researcher developed a detailed description by gathering data at several rural community colleges in Iowa. Additionally, the researcher included a mix of individuals from differing sociocultural and teaching experiences providing diverse viewpoints and experiences of teaching NACEP courses.

Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the uniformity and trustworthiness of data; the results must align with the data collected (Farrell, 2017; Merriam, 2009). The researcher triangulated data using multiple methods and sources of data. Reviewing documents and conducting interviews at three rural community colleges to

add accuracy, scope, and richness to the study (Flick, 2004).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study explored the self-efficacy opinions of those teaching concurrent-enrollment National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) courses to high school students in rural Iowa community colleges. The researcher collected data through a variety of techniques for this study. Methods such as document analysis (a social research method that allows for the combination of methodologies in the study of a phenomenon), faculty interviews of those who have instructed NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses during the Fall Semester of the 2019 academic year, and interviews of administrators at each institution who supervised the concurrent-enrollment programs at three rural community colleges in Iowa. The researcher evaluated the information garnered from the sources and identified existing themes throughout all of the interviews. The findings of this research provide a holistic understanding presented in this chapter (Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009; Piantadida & Garman, 2009).

Instructor Views

When asking instructors of concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses about their perceptions, they gave both positive and negative responses. These responses, both positive and negative, related the instructors' self-efficacy regarding teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Negative experiences abated the self-efficacy

of those teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses; positive experiences intensified self-efficacy, thus instructors wanted to continue teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Positive responses included helping students save parent's money, gain college credit, and the gratification from teaching students that one day would go on to earn a college degree. As one instructor noted, "I love hearing about students that move forward with their education and graduate [college]. That is so gratifying." Negative aspects involved inconsistent policies and procedures between the high school and the community college, unavailability of the newest resources, and the fact that students too young can take college courses. The common themes and perceptions of instructors of concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses is presented herein.

Inconsistencies between High School and Community Colleges

Inconsistencies of policies and procedures across the high school and community college settings challenged instructors who taught concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. These challenges had a negative impact on self-efficacy by making instructors develop new curriculum delivery methods. Instructors of NACEP courses, unlike their college counterparts, had to have knowledge of Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) for students, placing them in the position of having to use different standards when educating students. Instructors found scheduling differences to be challenging, since they are using two different institutional schedules and calendars.

The schedule of meeting five days a week caused issues because, unlike the college courses that meet only two or three days per week, instructors often had to

change their instructional methods to accommodate the added time. Instructors had to add material in an effort to fill the additional time high school students were in the classroom. One instructor explained:

Look, they [NACEP students] come every day, five days a week, for the same amount of time. So, they're actually there extra time over the college. I have to adapt and add more material to my classes than the professors at the college since I see the kids five days a week.

Another instructor explained that the college uses a different Learning Management System (LMS) than the high school, "This is something that makes my job harder, because I have to learn, and teach, a different system."

Additional policies that differed between the two institutions included the use of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The issue of high school students not obtaining supplies or paying fees associated with courses was a problem. According to one instructor, "I can tell you the biggest asset is that students do not need as much money." Student success is bolstered by not needing to buy books. My book for my classes is $175 new. Some folks just can't afford that for a book, and they're relieved when they realize they ain't gotta pay it." High school students are used to everything being provided for them by the school, most Iowa NACEP programs provide the students books. This, though, comes with its own set of problems as one instructor explained, "My books are typically older than those that the college students buy for on campus classes. I have to read the newest additions and find the changes so that my students learn the material and are ready to move on." An Education instructor

stated that the cost of background checks was an issue. “The background checks they are required to get are not cheap. If they can’t get them, they can’t go and do field work. This limits what classes they can take.”

Instructors point out regulatory differences between the high schools and community colleges. One of the policies that is different from the college is the adherence to IEPs. This is something that college professors do not have to worry about on college campuses. One instructor told me, “We don’t get the IEP information until about six weeks into the school year and kids could be failing by then. Parents expect that their child receive all of the accommodations afforded them in the IEP from day one. I can’t do it if I do not have the info [IEP information].”

Dilatoriness of Concurrent-enrollment NACEP Courses

Extreme differences between the community college and the high school systems are the cause of instructors teaching NACEP courses devoting additional time not required of their colleagues. One-time factor noted by instructors was navigating the high school and community college LMS and organizational structures. Learning the logistics of two organizational systems adversely influenced the self-efficacy of concurrent-enrollment instructors due to the dissimilarities between the community college and high school structures. None of the community colleges of the interviewees provided guidance or training to the concurrent-enrollment instructors regarding the use of the community college’s LMS. Using an unfamiliar system to deliver instruction, report grades, and input attendance, as well as understanding whom to contact about technical issues added stress to this already foreign

undertaking for concurrent-enrollment instructors unaccustomed to this LMS. Instructors expounded that some colleges wanted daily attendance reported and other colleges wanted grades entered into yet another system at the community college further confusing them. This was in addition to the regular high school administrative duties that they had to undertake daily, at the high school. One instructor noted,

> There are so many different things that I have to remember each day; I'm talking about the management. For example, for attendance issues, I have to talk to several people here at the high school instead of just the student there on campus.

Another instructor stated the intricacies of trying to navigate two types of systems:

> The reporting and recording gets confusing. It is like concurrent reporting. Trying to do the grades on the high school side and then having to get into the community college system. We don't have access or I don't have access to the community college stuff when I need it and so that becomes a pain in the butt.

Instructors said classes required the same academic outcomes for both high school and college students. However, collaborating educationally with high school students frequently required additional time, because the high school population was less mature and often not ready for the material they were learning. "The main difference is maturity," one instructor exclaimed. "I have to stay on my students." A second instructor was having a similar experience:

> Maturity is frequently an issue with my students. You would not think there would be much of a difference between a 17 and 18-year-old but boy oh boy

> something happens during that summer just after high school graduation. They seem to undergo a metamorphosis of some kind and the maturity level of students who graduate from high school and take [regular community-college] courses the following fall versus taking concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses is completely different.

One more instructor discussed spending additional time with her high school students to help them keep up with their college assignments, "Not that I reduced the time I spent teaching them, but I did spend more time helping them keep up with the goal and expectations. There was a lot more out of class work than was expected."

The fact that any student from ninth grade forward are allowed to take concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses adversely influenced instructors' self-efficacy, because it not only added time to instructors' schedules, it also required instructors to stand by as students did poorly in their courses. "I wish students had to be in a higher grade before taking concurrent-enrollment classes," remarked an instructor. "I don't feel that a 14-year-old kid is ready to be in college. It takes a lot of time and work; it's not fair to put kids in a class where we know they will fail." Another instructor added, "The state changed the skills test this year so that might help with the student eligible for concurrent-enrollment in the years to come, we will have to wait and see." A third instructor further explained about the time and effort required to choose appropriate students,

> We counsel them [potential students] and clarify precisely what expectations are and how much work the classes have. We also work with their counselors

> to choose which students we think will succeed. We don't want to set anyone up to fail. Ultimately, the policy states we cannot turn anyone away if they want to take the class after being advised against it.

Regardless of the additional amount of work of concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses, instructors noted some advantageous characteristics of teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. The researcher describes these themes below.

Advantageous Characteristics.

Instructors discussed several advantageous characteristics of concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses that had a positive effect on their teaching self-efficacy. These facets provided the instructors with a sense of gratification and success for teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Other direct and indirect benefits included giving students chances to obtain college credit without debt, improving the future of students who will attend college, raising the level of appreciation for post-secondary education occurring because of concurrent-enrollment NACEP offerings, and delight of teaching a youthful student body. These positive themes encouraged instructors to continue teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses despite the downsides.

Several instructors agreed that concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs provided students a good opportunity to obtain college credit, college experience, and education without acquiring debt. Instructors felt immense pleasure teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs because they understood they were providing

lower income students the opportunity to attend college they would not have otherwise. They also found gratification in knowing they were providing initial opportunities for students who planned to continue on and complete a two- or four-year degree. They ardently discussed instances of students successfully completing their individual classes and either and continuing their education and receiving a post-secondary degree. One instructor explained,

> I feel most fulfilled about a kid I had, he came to me as a senior and graduated. He then went on to get his Associates Degree, now he is getting ready to finish his bachelor's degree. That's what makes me proud to do what I do. Another told of a student that stood out to her: One of the best scores on the PRAXIS I exam I have ever seen was from a high school student who scored high. I have never seen that, and it happened in the last year. It was exciting to see that it was a high school student.

Teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses has had an advantageous impact on the self-efficacy of some concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors because they found teaching college courses more enjoyable than teaching high school level courses. They felt concurrent-enrollment NACEP high school students displayed more inquisitiveness and curiosity in the topics they taught, which they found invigorating, in comparison to the inordinate reticence and disinterest of standard high school students. As one instructor detailed,

> [NACEP] students listen to me because they have not experienced the college-level history material I am delivering to them before. They pay attention to the

> stories whereas because they want to be there, other students have little to no interest because they are forced to be there. I love my [NACEP] students, they are excited to learn.

Another confirmed this sentiment: "My students [NACEP] keep me young. I like my high school students."

Some instructors viewed the new emphasis placed upon concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses as a valuable strategy that has helped students who would not otherwise attend college. An instructor explained, "Superintendents and principals are all behind concurrent-enrollment now. Everyone's attitude is completely positive. Concurrent-enrollment has forced the guidance counselors to help the kids they weren't necessarily helping before." Another instructor noted that concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs seemed to be motivating students who previously struggled with the high school curriculum. For example, one instructor observed, "Some of my students who struggled have done well in their [NACEP] college classes; they feel more motivated. They don't like high school but they like college." Another instructor described how completing concurrent-enrollment NACEP classes helped a student, facing numerous educational issues, to make positive modifications in life.

Summary of Instructor Perceptions

In summary, concurrent-enrollment NACEP faculty revealed both advantageous and negative characteristics about concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses that influenced teaching self-efficacy. A certain sense of pleasure from assisting students accomplish college level education, providing colleges with future

students, and teaching students enthusiastic to be enrolled in the courses heightened the self-efficacy of instructors teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Negative components of dual-enrollment programs that diminished self-efficacy of community college instructors included the challenges of maneuvering between different LMS, extreme differences between the two different administrative teams, having to come up with different methods of teaching (IEPs), and finally a lack of a clear admissions policy to screen out those too immature for college level courses.

Perceptions of Community College Administrators

The majority of comments were tremendously positive and acknowledged that concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses were valuable for both the development and continued success of community colleges and students, overall. Administrators believed the program motivated students to graduate from high school while providing them unconventional courses that allowed the college credit and even for some dedicated students the ability to graduate community college concurrently with a two-year associate degree. Administrators conveyed comparable concerns as instructors regarding complications caused by inconsistent policies between the high school and college settings. Administrators likewise described the challenge of offering concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses to numerous high schools within their region. Administrators diverged in their perspective concerning the amount of time instructors needed to invest teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. While faculty regarded concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses as being more time intensive than regular courses, administrators did not believe that concurrent-enrollment

courses required any more time to teach than regular courses. Described below you will find the themes related to administrator perceptions of concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs.

Differences between High Schools and Community Colleges

Administrators expressed worries concerning the contradictory policies and procedures between the high school and community college environments. Scheduling of classes was one of the main challenges noted, because the college and high school schedules differed greatly. These differences forced the community college to accommodate the high schools, which had markedly more scheduling rigidity. One administrator said,

> They [NACEP students] have to be in classes every day; we do not schedule class everyday so an entirely different calendar must be used. Scheduling become a headache and can cause some problems when trying to factor in full-time faculty supervisors of NACEP instructors.

Another administrator stated that the high school's bell schedules did not align with the community college's class schedule:

> Well, the high schools have wonky times. The weird minutes of the bell schedule is at times hard to plan classes if we wanted to offer a three-hour course during the same time kinda like we do on the main campus, it doesn't work. If it was just the college schedule Monday-Wednesday-Friday from 8:00am to 8:55am, which is our 55-minute class. There [high school] it might be 8:03 to 10:13 or some other odd thing.

Because of the scheduling conflicts between class start and end times, the high school administrators often asked community college administrators to allow them to make allowances for high school schedules and allow classes to be a bit shorter or longer when necessary.

A scheduling issue relevant to rural community college administrators was working within the schedules and properties of numerous high schools in their service area. Community colleges offered concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses to a number of high schools located within their service area, making scheduling lasses difficult. One administrator noted, “We serve 6 high schools in 3 different counties so the variances in the geographic locations, the scope, and assets of each high school makes a huge difference.” Another administrator said that individual high schools should work together to solve some of the scheduling problems for their respective institutions:

> We have multiple school districts attempting to schedule classes and it is difficult, because they all want to do what is best for their school and do not want to work together making it harder of us [community college].

Administrators also described the differences in policies, particularly the IEPs, The Family Educational Rights, and Privacy Act (FERPA) that are often difficult for students to comprehend. Students often do not comprehend that the rules and policies that apply to high school do not necessarily apply to college. They often assume the rules and policies are the same as one administrator described, “It takes getting used to for students, with the help of the high school counselors, to

understand that the IEP does not automatically transfer over to the college and that we [community college] do not always know what they are talking about here. They have to request services."

Administrators discussed how parental involvement could be difficult. Colleges must follow the exacting rules required by FERPA. FERPA guidelines prohibit colleges from sharing student information to individuals without the consent of the student (United States Department of Education, 2017). Just as students were confused about IEPs, parents rarely understand the differences between the high school and college environment in relation to privacy of their child's information. This lack of understanding intermittently creates confusion among parents and students. An administrator defined the privacy differences between high school and college this way:

> It is about things that happen in the classroom or things that pertain to the administrator usually. We normally tell the parent and student that we are following federal law [FERPA], 'Your child is in college and we will not violate the laws governing us.' But, we will direct them back to the high school counselor who is not governed by the same FERPA guidelines as the college and can legally give them the information they are requesting. This usually solves the problem.

Professional Development for Concurrent-enrollment NACEP Instructors

Asked about the availability of training or professional development for concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors, all administrators stated their institutions a

two-hour workshop each year that was mainly a motivational event. When pushed further most stated that these instructors were not included in training offered to faculty and adjuncts. However, concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors at one community college attended professional development activities hosted by the local high school. One administrator explained,

> The faculty who are teaching [concurrent-enrollment NACEP] these courses typically go to the high school in-services so they kind of belong to two different families so to speak. They go to the meetings and the in-service days when they can at the high school and they can come to ours, but our schedules usually prohibit their attendance.

None of the community colleges had an official process for training instructors who taught concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses.

Advantageous Characteristics

Like instructors, administrators spoke highly of concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs and felt they provided numerous benefits to high school students. Most importantly, the administrators believed the emphasis on college level work motivated high-risk students to stay in school and motivated all students to continue their education. Stated one administrator, “Superintendents and principals tell me some students would drop out of high school had they not had these courses to take as an alternative to our typical curriculum.” Another administrator stated that the availability of concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs often inspired students to explore specific subjects: “It opens their eyes to the vastness of certain subjects that

they were unaware existed. It is not just the high school level course, there is much, much more available to learn." Furthermore, administrators held that the concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs furnished benefits to the community colleges they would otherwise not have. As one administrator explained, "The program gives the college a better retention rate, since it is easier to keep students who began as our student when they were in high school."

Dilatoriness of Concurrent-enrollment NACEP Courses

Administrators' perceptions concerning the time involved to teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses as compared to regular high school courses were different from faculty perceptions. When asked if teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses differed from teaching normal courses, most administrators believed no difference existed. "I don't think it has made any difference in teaching," said one administrator. Another agreed with this assertion: "They [instructors] just have to report grades to the high school and the college, it is not a big deal. I don't think they have to teach anything differently." Yet a third administrator echoed this perspective when he stated, "They may get extra emails but I really can't see how that is more time-consuming than other [regular] courses, because they are teaching the same amount of time."

Summary of Administrator Perceptions

In summary, the bulk of administrator comments concerning the concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors were positive. Administrators believed the instructors and classes provided students an opportunity to obtain skills while completing high

school. They also believed the instructors while teaching the courses helped the community colleges by increasing enrollments. Some challenging issues included differences in scheduling between the high school and community college, offering concurrent-enrollment NACEP numerous high schools in the college's service area, and addressing parental concerns. The views of administrators about the time-intensity required to teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses were markedly dissimilar than the faculty members who actually taught the courses.

Review of Documents

The researcher collected and reviewed documents linked to concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses from each community college with the purpose of developing a greater understanding of each community colleges' methods as they related to concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. The researcher separated these documents into three categories: Institutional Documents, Instructor Documents, and Student Documents. Institutional documents from each of the community colleges included policies and procedures used to efficiently manage the concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs. To preserve academic uniformity, all three community colleges provided student handbooks and syllabi. Provided below an analysis of these documents.

Institutional Documents

My review of institutional documents comprised forms developed at the community college for the purposes of crafting policies and procedures used to manage the concurrent-enrollment NACEP program efficiently, ensuring excellence,

and uniformity within the program. Examples included academic policies and memorandums of understandings from high schools offering concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Community colleges that furnished the information had not developed separate academic documents for high school NACEP students and regular college students. Concurrent-enrollment NACEP students received the same student handbook and other information as regular college freshman. One administrator explained,

> We tell our high school students that when they enroll in a college course, they leave their high school status behind. They walk into a NACEP course, it is a college class and they even get a college ID. They are subject to the college's discipline policies and all that other stuff a regular college student is subject to. We don't really view them as a separate group. It is a college class.

Each community college had specific contracts or memorandums of understandings with the high schools where they provided concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. These contracts outlined the specific duties of each institution about providing faculty to teach the courses, providing equipment, financial arrangements about who would be responsible for student tuition, instructor pay rates, who would pay the instructors, how the program costs would be paid, and due dates for receipt of payments. One college created a Parental Information Brochure that delivered general information about concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses and an estimate of potential costs associated with specific courses, such as background checks required for classroom observations in education courses or the cost of course specific

supplies.

Instructor Documents

Instructor documents included information about student learning outcomes of the course, syllabi, and class policies. Instructors used syllabi containing common-course student learning outcomes and class policies for high school students enrolled in concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses are the same as those regular college students. As one administrator explained,

> You have a common course syllabus and expectations are the same for all students. Learning outcomes and policies like plagiarism, and conduct are all handled the same regardless if it is a class face-to-face, on campus or in a dual- enrollment fashion.

Student Documents

Some colleges had created marketing documents in the form of brochures and fliers to recruit students for concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Most of these marketing materials contained contact and website information where prospective applicants could obtain more information about the program.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of self-efficacy of instructors as they related to teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses to high school students in rural Iowa community colleges. Data collection occurred through individual interviews of faculty who taught in concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs and individual interviews of administrators who supervised concurrent-enrollment

NACEP programs at three rural Iowa community colleges. Through data analysis, the identification of themes occurred capturing both positive and negative effects on the self-efficacy of the instructors teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP (see Table 2).

Table 2. Analytic Schema.

Themes
Advantageous Characteristics • Theme 1: Participating instructors held a general satisfaction with helping students receive their education and providing their colleges with future students. • Theme 2: Participating administrators felt that instructors and courses provided students an opportunity to gain skills and knowledge prepping them for their future college career.
Disadvantageous Characteristics • Theme 3: Participating instructors felt that they must devote greater amounts of time in planning and managing NACEP courses that traditional high school courses.
Ambiguous Characteristics • Theme 4: The participating community colleges provided both the traditional college student and the NACEP student with the same handbook and orientation materials.
Conclusions
1. Participant instructors had high levels of self-efficacy and wanted their students to be successful.

2. Participant administrators wanted both instructors and students in NACEP courses to be successful.

Note. Constructive student interaction was the main reason faculty felt positive self-efficacy when teaching NACEP courses in the high school setting.

Positive themes identified in the instructor interview data included a general satisfaction with helping students receive their education and providing their colleges with future students. Negative themes included various issues produced by differences between the policies and procedures between the high school and the community college.

Administrator data revealed an overall positive view of concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs although administrators commented on some of the same challenges as the instructors. However, administrators and concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors viewed the time involved to teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses quite differently. Instructors viewed concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses as more time-intensive than regular high school courses while administrators felt concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses did not involve any more time than regular high school classes.

An analysis of documents connected to concurrent-enrollment NACEP at each school occurred with the purpose of developing a greater understanding of each school's processes as they related to concurrent-enrollment NACEP and course delivery. Document categorization was as follows: institutional, instructor, and student documents. Analysis of the documents showed that the Iowa rural community colleges, which the researcher collected data from, had not established separate

academic documents for high school students and regular college students. Concurrent-enrollment NACEP students received the same student handbook and other information as regular college freshman. Community colleges and high schools had developed memorandums of understanding that outlined responsibilities as they related to the delivery of concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses between the community college and the high school. Some community colleges had developed marketing material for high school students. Unitization of these findings occurred to both generate conclusions and implications about the self-efficacy of community college instructors who teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. In the next section, conclusions and implications based upon this study's guiding research questions and the findings are discussed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the self-efficacy opinions of those teaching concurrent-enrollment National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) courses to high school students in rural Iowa community colleges. This study investigated how the high-school population in NACEP college level courses affected teaching dynamics for those instructors used to teaching regular high school courses. Data was gathered from instructors and administrators who supervise these instructors across three rural Iowa community colleges. Analyzation of the data occurred through the theoretical framework of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory addressing the research questions posed in the study. First, the conclusions of the study are presented, followed by a discussion of the study's implications.

High Self-Efficacy for Course Curriculum

Those teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses had high self-efficacy for teaching their content specialty to high school students. They felt teaching the advanced content to high school students was more fun teaching it to NACEP students. As one instructor explained, "My self-confidence is higher, and I am more excited because I can go more in depth." Another reinforced the same sentiment, "I feel pretty confident about what I am teaching and the information I am sharing, I can walk around and see the faces of the students and know that they are interested in

what I am saying. If they are not interested, I try a different approach; change things up a bit."

Instructors at all three community colleges supplied a range of positive observations in response to teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. They excitedly described the satisfaction they got giving students the chance to obtain college credit without incurring debt. Some instructors also conveyed the enjoyment they got presenting their content matter to students who seemed genuinely interested in the material and the fun they had teaching this type of student. One instructor pointed out an unexpected bonus he received from teaching in the concurrent-enrollment NACEP classroom: "Teaching these kids makes me happy."

Additionally, instructors described tactics they created to surmount issues that had arisen from the execution of the concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. These strategies included accommodations for schedules, aiding some students ill-prepared for the rigor of college-level work, and allocating additional time to class preparation for concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. These acts align with Bandura's conclusions that self-efficacy relates to the cognitive processes of individuals. Individuals with high self-efficacy for teaching academic content overcome any challenges that occur in the delivery of that content, rather than dwelling on problems that may arise (Bandura & Jourden, 1991). Because the concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors in this study demonstrated high self-efficacy for their content areas, their faith in their capabilities to teach college level courses was enhanced. This strong belief in their capability to

teach, successfully, college content positively affected their actions (Bandura, 1993a) and inspired them to continue to teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses, even though there were challenges. Bandura (1993a) explained that individuals with strong self-efficacy for a particular task possess high motivation and can overcome obstacles rather than simply give up on said task.

Low Self-Efficacy for the High School Environment

Although, NACEP instructors had high self-efficacy for teaching in their content areas, they had low self-efficacy for functioning within the different educational environments. Instructors at each of the three community colleges expressed frustrations with the scheduling differences between the high school and community college. Also, they struggled with the fact that they had implement multiple teaching strategies to adhere to student's Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), and the inability of students to afford specialized fees for individual courses. Several instructors also described the problems associated with their general lack of knowledge about using college Learning Management Systems (LMS), specifically their frustration with the absence of training and added time they had to allocate to maintain the dual requirements LMS required by the colleges and high schools. One instructor explained, "I struggle with the college LMS because I hardly use it."

These findings correlate to contextual aspects of self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1986a), self-efficacy is not a universal trait but rather, based upon distinctive tasks and functions. For the NACEP instructors who participated in this study, self-efficacy depended on a myriad of factors, including how capable and prepared each

believed him or herself to be (Raudenbush et al., 1992). Instructors have a greater likelihood of having lower levels of self-efficacy in educational environments that make them feel incapable (Bitto & Butler, 2010).

The Failure of Administrators to Distinguish Concurrent-Enrollment NACEP Courses from Regular High School Courses

Administrators were unaware of differences existing between teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses and regular courses. Comments from the administrators, who supervised concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs, revealed a belief that the time involved to teach both modes of instruction were identical, since the content area was the same. Administrators at all three community colleges noted the academic documents provided to both high school students and college students were identical. It seemed that it was a point of pride that high school students and regular community college students were treated identically from the standpoint of college administration. Nonetheless, while the content and rules of the course might be identical, instructors described key differences between the college and high school administrative methods that expanded their workload and increased the time involved with delivering concurrent-enrollment courses. Some of these differences included reporting of grades, using the college's LMS, monitoring of students on Individualized Educational Plans and creating different methods of teaching, and the altering of curriculum to satisfy high school scheduling needs.

Because administrators were uninformed of the disparities between teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses compared to teaching regular high school

courses, administrators did not address the self-efficacy of instructors who were teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP high school students. Not one of the community colleges in this study offered formal professional development or training opportunities explicitly meant for instructors teaching concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. Interview statements from administrators revealed that because administrators did not view the courses differently other courses, they did not believe a need existed for additional training for these instructors. This point of view differed with that of a number of instructors who described at length the uncertainty that existed maneuvering between the high school and community college environments and the resulting disillusionment they experienced from their unfamiliarity with policies and systems. Disillusionment is a powerful negative emotional response. According to Bandura (1986a), strong emotional reactions such as disillusionment and stress about a specific task can lead to low self-efficacy with the task. NACEP instructors' lack of knowledge about regulatory systems in general and their disillusionment stemming from attempts to learn the complexities of system's logistics led to low self-efficacy and lower than necessary operation within the environment.

Inconsistencies between Policy and Practice

As a result of administrator's beliefs, the content of both NACEP concurrent-enrollment and regular courses were the same, it cogently followed that they similarly believed the courses were taught with the same approach and that concurrent-enrollment and college students were treated equally. This viewpoint contrasted with

instructors who provided several examples of how they altered courses to accommodate high school students. For example, instructors noted at length how they modified their curriculum to align with high school schedules. For example, instructors would add activities for students who had to remain on campus additional hours during the day. Instructors allowed students who had block scheduling at their respective high schools to arrive to class late or leave early to ensure they would be at the high school on the college campus for their next class (if it was located there).

The lack of an admissions criteria meant that there was not a screening process for high school students, Ill-equipped for the higher academic and behavioral demands of college level courses. Subsequently, instructors spent extra time with students making sure they kept up with their peers and the college-level course work. These accommodations provided to students altered the instructional delivery of the college courses. Therefore, while high school students received the same content as college students in NACEP courses, they often did not receive it in the same format as their college campus student counterparts.

Summary of Self-Efficacy Theory and NACEP Concurrent-enrollment

Bandura defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's own ability to accomplish a specific task (Bandura, 1986a). It influences how someone thinks, feels, and behaves through cognitive, motivational, and affective, processes (Bandura, 1993a). Bandura further explained sources of self-efficacy are developed through four main practices: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional reactions. Mastery experiences are the successful experiences an individual has with a

task and creates the strongest belief in one's self-efficacy.

Several of the instructors who participated in this study were veteran high school teachers. All but two had taught at the high school level for over five years. Furthermore, they were teaching at rural Iowa community colleges, whose institutions had an open enrollment concerning the admission of students. These teachers were accustomed to a diverse student population within their classrooms and experienced mastery experiences when teaching content to concurrent-enrollment students. According to Bandura (1993), it was the instructionally-based mastery experiences that were primarily accountable for affecting a sense of strong self-efficacy in the instructors.

Conversely, these same instructors did not have comparable mastery experiences with the tasks related to understanding the policies and procedures of the different environments. Additionally, many of the instructors expressed a lack of knowledge with the logistics of the community college environment. Administrators were decidedly unaware of significant differences between teaching regular courses and NACEP courses. Therefore, they did not identify nor think to address professional development or training requirements of the NACEP instructors. The lack of understanding and training among instructors created uncertainty about the use of the community college systems. The strong emotions of anxiety and annoyance coupled with the lack of mastery experiences for administrative and logistical tasks created low self-efficacy for instructors maneuvering within the community college environment (Bandura 1993).

Implications of the Study

In this section, the implications of the study are discussed. The implications were taken from empirical research, the findings, and the conclusions of this study. Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory was utilized to examine the perceptions of high school teachers who taught the concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. The implications are intended to guide community college administrators, instructors, policymakers, and researchers in the continuous application and support of concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses.

Seek Alignment Between Community College and High School Class Schedules

Class scheduling issues were a constant source of tension between the high schools and community colleges. Moreover, the diverse types of schedules were arduous for concurrent-enrollment instructors because these discrepancies required them to adapt curriculum and change lecture material for high school students, compared to those on the actual college campus. Guidelines should be established to ensure that both high school students and regular college students are following the same class schedule for concurrent-enrollment courses. Having high school students follow the community college class schedule would not only serve as a strategy for adapting students to the culture of college courses, but could lessen the burden for instructors to have to adapt things for the high school students. There is a direct correlation between students in high schools' understanding of the expectations of college courses and their perceived authenticity of their concurrent-enrollment courses, according to Karp and Hughes (2008). If differences exist between college

students and concurrent-enrollment students, with respect to expectations, class delivery, or college experience, high school students may form a false understanding of what is required of them to succeed in college courses. Therefore, high school students benefit from concurrent-enrollment courses that resemble college courses in both academic content and culture.

Create an Admissions Process for Concurrent-Enrollment Students

Concurrent-enrollment NACEP instructors conveyed the need for an admissions process specifically targeted at concurrent-enrollment students. Community colleges and high schools should collaborate to create a useful admission process to guarantee students expected to be successful can enroll and those expected to struggle are not allowed to enroll. Attending college while in high school is a major shift for high school students who might sever connections to friendships, traditional teachers, and their overall sense of security (Blum, 2007). The shift from the common surroundings and support of the typical high school environs could adversely affect the achievement of some students who are emotionally immature and lack the readiness for this transition. Furthermore, attempting to complete both a high school diploma and a college level courses (or diploma) simultaneously, could be taxing for high school students ill-equipped for the rigors of college courses. Enrolling high school students, who might not have the emotional maturity or the academic skill to succeed in college courses increases the amount of work of the instructors who teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses. An effective admissions process could guarantee that only students who fully understand the expectations of college courses

and possess the necessary academic skills to succeed in concurrent-enrollment courses would be allowed to enroll. Enrolling only competent students in these courses could not only positively affect the self-efficacy of the instructors who teach the courses, it could improve the outcomes of concurrent-enrollment NACEP programs.

Improve Communication between Community College and Concurrent-Enrollment NACEP Instructors

The lack of communication about policies and other items prevented the concurrent-enrollment instructors from teaching the courses as effectively as possible. Instructors were often unaware of which students might have benefitted from additional support from the college and several expressed frustrations with the inadequate information provided them concerning community college systems and policies. Cultivating a unified concurrent-enrollment system that spans institutional boundaries requires the partnership and integration of both institutions (Hoffman, 2005). The integration of systems would allow information to flow more easily between the institutions and between faculty and students (Karp & Hughes, 2008).

Developing strong memoranda of understandings to fully address all details of the concurrent-enrollment program and the obligations of each institution would assist in systems integration. This memorandum of understandings should outline more than the basic details regarding the provision of faculty to teach the courses, equipment needs, and financial arrangements for concurrent-enrollment courses. These contractual documents should also specifically address in what areas the two

institutions will collaborate and if a liaison will be used to communicate between the high school and the community college. If a liaison is going to be used, the duties of this position should also be made explicit. Having a principal leader to serve in a communication role for dual-enrollment instructors and students is a crucial element in the success of concurrent-enrollment programs (Andrews, 2000). Lastly, training, and professional development regarding community college systems and policies should be provided to concurrent-enrollment instructors. Providing access to community college email accounts, email updates, newsletters, and professional development meetings would increase the level of communication between the two institutions, collaboration between both institutions' faculty members, and instructor self-efficacy.

Summary of Conclusions and Implications

This study of the perceptions of self-efficacy of rural Iowa community college instructors who teach concurrent-enrollment NACEP courses in rural Iowa community colleges was analyzed through the lens of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory. The study revealed that the instructors who teach these courses enjoyed high self-efficacy for teaching content because of their previous mastery experiences with teaching their content and their experience with teaching a diverse student population. Nonetheless, they had low self-efficacy for functioning within the community college environment. Lower self-efficacy for this task stemmed from a lack of mastery experiences within the community college environment and the frustration that arose when attempting to work within an institutional environment whose system and policies were unfamiliar.

Instructors specifically addressed the frustration that stemmed from inadequate communication about student programs, networking systems, absence of an admissions policy for students, and unfamiliarity with the LMS. The community college administrators who supervised concurrent-enrollment programs were unaware of the time involved teaching concurrent-enrollment courses and therefore, did not provide additional training to these instructors.

Inconsistencies between the policies and assumptions for teaching concurrent-enrollment courses and the realities of the classroom were neither recognized nor addressed. For example, there was an assumption that because course content was the same for both regular courses and concurrent-enrollment courses, students receive the course in the same format. However, instructors identified many accommodations made for concurrent-enrollment students that made the delivery of these courses different from regular courses. These accommodations included curriculum modifications that provided additional activities for students remaining on campus additional hours during the day, allowance of late and early arrival to classes, and policy and procedural differences.

Recommendations

Recommendations for improving instructors' self-efficacy and program outcomes include aligning the high school and community college class schedules, creating a comprehensive admissions process for students, and improving communication between the high school staff and community college faculty.

Appendices

Appendix A

Participation Request Email

Dear (invited participant's name here),

My name Cecil Holland and I am conducting a research study in conjunction with completion of my doctoral degree. The purpose of this research study is to measure the self-efficacy of NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors in rural Iowa community colleges. Your NACEP supervisor has identified you as a possible candidate for this study.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study and sit for a face-to-face personal interview if you have time and are willing. I will be the person meeting with you and conducting the interview. Once we have completed the interview you will have the opportunity to review the transcripts that I came up with from the interviews and verify my interpretations and understandings. This will allow you to correct anything you feel that I might have misunderstood.

If you are willing and interested in participating in this research study, please read and sign your informed consent document in order to participate. I have attached a copy of the consent form document to this email. After you have read and signed the consent form, please email me a signed copy at cecil.holland@iavalley.edu.

Thank you for considering your consideration,

Cecil Holland
cecil.holland@iavalley.edu

Appendix B

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

TITLE:	*Self-Efficacy of NACEP Accredited Concurrent-Enrollment Program Instructors in Rural Community Colleges*
PROJECT DIRECTOR:	*Cecil Holland*
PHONE:	*641-844-5781*
DEPARTMENT:	*Teaching, Leadership, and Professional Practice*

WHAT I SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT THIS RESEARCH?

- Someone will explain this research to you.
- Taking part in this research is voluntary. Whether you take part is up to you.
- If you do not take part, it will not be held against you.
- You can take part now and later drop out, and it will not be held against you
- If you do not understand, ask questions.
- Ask all the questions you want before you decide.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS RESEARCH?

We expect that your taking part in this research will last 30-40 minutes.

WHY IS THIS RESEARCH BEING DONE?

The purpose of this research is to measure the self-efficacy of NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors in rural community colleges.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ME IF I AGREE TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

If you decide to take part in this research study, you will be interviewed face-to-face at the high school the participant teaches at, which should take approximately 30-40 minutes. During the interview, you can choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. Once the interview is transcribed, you will receive a transcript of the interview to verify that the interviewer correctly understood everything you said.

COULD BEING IN THIS RESEARCH HURT ME?

There are minimal emotional risks to participating in this research.

WILL BEING IN THIS RESEARCH BENEFIT ME?

The benefit to the subject is that they are given a forum to discuss their perceptions and attitudes regarding teaching concurrent-enrollment courses. The benefit to society is that this

study has the potential to focus attention on faculty perceptions of self-efficacy as it relates to teaching NACEP courses to high school students in rural Iowa community colleges.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH?
7-10 people will take part in this study at the University of North Dakota.

WILL IT COST ME MONEY TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?
You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR TAKING PART IN THIS RESEARCH?
You will not be paid for being in this **WHO IS FUNDING THIS RESEARCH?**
The University of North Dakota and the research team are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

WHAT HAPPENS TO INFORMATION COLLECTED FOR THIS RESEARCH?
Your private information may be shared with individuals and organizations that conduct or watch over this research, including:

- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) that reviewed this research

We may publish the results of this research. However, we will keep your name and other identifying information confidential. We protect your information from disclosure to others to the extent required by law. We cannot promise complete secrecy.

Data collected in this research will not be used or distributed for future research studies, even if identifiers are removed.

You should know, however, that there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require us to show your information to a court or to tell authorities if we believe you have abused a child, or you pose a danger to yourself or someone else.

WHAT IF I AGREE TO BE IN THE RESEARCH AND THEN CHANGE MY MIND?
If you decide to leave the study early, contact Cecil Holland and state that you no longer wish to be a part of the research.

WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS RESEARCH?
If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think this research has hurt you or made you sick, talk to the research team at the phone number listed above on the first page.

This research is being overseen by an Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). An IRB is a group of people who perform independent review of research studies. You may talk to them at 701.777.4279 or UND.irb@UND.edu if:

- You have questions, concerns, or complaints that are not being answered by the research team.
- You are not getting answers from the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone else about the research.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You may also visit the UND IRB website for more information about being a research subject: http://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/research-participants.html

Your signature documents your consent to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subject's Name: _____

_____ _____
Signature of Subject Date

I have discussed the above points with the subject or, where appropriate, with the subject's legally authorized representative.

_____ _____
Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent Date

Appendix C

NACEP CONCURRENT-ENROLLMENT FACULTY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What is your name, your title, how many years have you been teaching at the secondary level, number of years teaching in NACEP concurrent-enrollment programs.

2. What is your general view of teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses compared to teaching traditional (high school) courses?

3. How is teaching a NACEP concurrent-enrollment course different from teaching traditional (high school) courses?

4. How does your level of confidence with teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment (high school) students compare to teaching traditional (high school) students?

Probe Question: How is your confidence level the same between the two? How is your confidence level the same different between the two?

5. Could you explain a positive experience you have had teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment?

Probe Question: Please elaborate on the situation?

6. Could you explain an experience you have had teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment that you wish had gone differently?

Probe Question: If yes, could you please explain why?

7. How do NACEP concurrent-enrollment students' needs contrast from the needs a traditional (high school) student?

Probe Question: What do you do to address these needs?

8. How does teaching a NACEP concurrent-enrollment course affect your teaching methods? What changes do you make; does this put stress on you?

Probe Question: Does teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses affect your teaching preparation time? If so, how?

9. In what ways do your institutions support you in teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses? What types of professional development offerings do your institutions provide to you for teaching these (NACEP) courses?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add or say that you feel would be of value to this research?

Appendix D

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What is your name, your title, how many years have you been a community college administrator, and how many years you have supervised NACEP concurrent-enrollment programs.

2. What is your general view of teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses as compared to teaching traditional (college and high school) courses?

3. How is teaching a NACEP concurrent-enrollment course different from teaching traditional (college and high school) courses?

4. How has your institution addressed the differing needs of NACEP concurrent-enrollment students from those of traditional college students?

5. How does teaching a NACEP concurrent-enrollment course affect the pedagogical methods used by an instructor?

Probe Question: Does teaching NACEP concurrent-enrollment courses affect preparation time of instructors? If yes, how/ If no, why?

6. In what ways do you support NACEP instructors teaching concurrent-enrollment courses?

Probe Question: What types of professional development do NACEP concurrent-enrollment instructors have available to them from your institution?

7. Is there anything else you would like to add or say, that you feel would be of value to this research?

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