AFFECTIVE PEDAGOGY: A CASE STUDY DESCRIBING THE IMPACT OF AFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONS IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMPOSITION COURSE

by

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my beautiful wife, Paloma, who inspires me in life, and to our daughters, Olivia, April, and Valentina.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

AFFECTIVE PEDAGOGY: A CASE STUDY DESCRIBING THE IMPACT OF AFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONS IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMPOSTION COURSE

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This dissertation describes how student classroom experiences along with their approaches to learning and perceptions of themselves as writers were impacted when affective instructional interventions emphasizing emotional intelligence were part of a community college English course's pedagogy. Failure by faculty, as well as policy-making administrators, to address the whole student by neglecting to adequately value issues of affect in higher education has consequences for students in the classroom and beyond. This study, therefore, gathered and analyzed data through case study to describe the classroom experience of students in an introductory composition course by illuminating not only how their experience was impacted but also how their approaches to learning along with their perceptions of themselves as writers were impacted when implementing explicit affective teaching practices. The results of the study may help other instructors not only become more aware of the value associated with affective-

related issues, but also to integrate elements of affect into their own unique teaching

practices to positively impact student development.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

The affective domain, having to do primarily with emotions, feelings, and moods, is widely recognized as a major educational learning sphere alongside the cognitive, or thinking, and psychomotor, or kinesthetic, domains. Several decades ago, Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia (1964) helped fortify the critical relevance of affect as a gateway to deep learning with the publication of *A Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: The Affective Domain* and the creation of an affective domain taxonomy. This came several years after Bloom's publication of *Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain* (Bloom, with Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956). Nevertheless, despite its recognition and relevance, the affective domain is overlooked and its impact on learning is often ignored (Oughton & Pierre, 2007; Rompelman, 2002). In higher education in particular, the cognitive domain takes precedence (Greenfield, 2005; Popham, 2014) and most variables of affect are rarely acknowledged (Beard, Clegg, & Smith, 2007).

Referencing the affective variable of emotion, Beard et al. (2007) argued that "the role of emotions in terms of the practicalities of learning and teaching receives little or no attention in the contemporary popular texts of higher education" (p. 237-238). Such a situation appears to be the case even though, as Popham (2014) posited, "Affective variables are often more significant than cognitive variables" (p. 250). There are several

fields of study in which affect is overlooked, and there are some fields in which this is the case more than others. Edbauer (2005) argued that within the field of composition in higher education many writing models fail to account for affect even though "the body-of-sensation is always stubbornly present in scenes of writing, [and thus] there can be no affectless compositions" (p. 133). With affect, and my study in particular, the focus was on describing the impact of affective instructional interventions on community college student classroom experiences in an English composition course as well as the impact on their approaches to learning and perceptions of themselves as writers. Indirectly, this study included a focus on process more so than product. A focus on process has to do more with improving the writer as a whole over the long term while a focus on product has more to do with writing directly over the short term only.

When discussing affect, different schools of thought need to be identified for clarification purposes and an understanding of the overall background. Olatunji (2014) pointed out that one of the affective domain schools of thought is the absolutist school which is related to realism, idealism, and religion. For the absolutists, affective content is found in sources external to human experience. In religion, a source external to human experience may involve divine inspiration or, in other related cases, the wisdom of elders passed along over the years (Olatunji, 2014). The absolutist school is often associated with indoctrination and thus arguably contributes in ways to the fact that affect in general is neglected in education. This seems to be the case even if the absolutist concept is only one particular and independent school of thought and does not represent affect as a whole. I think of the absolutists when, for example, Bloom, Hastings, and Madaus (1971)

mentioned that educators tend to avoid being excessively overt about affective objectives due to possible charges of indoctrination or brainwashing.

A more mainstream affective domain school of thought is associated not with realism, idealism, or religion but rather with the philosophy of pragmatism promoted by John Dewey (1939). Olatunji (2014) explained how this group posited the idea that the content of affect should come mainly from the analysis of human experience. This is to say that as an individual or group goes through a process, values are developed. The stages of this process, as suggested by Dewey (1939), involve the following: interacting with the environment; reflective thinking on the meaning of the interaction; based on the reflective thought, formulating values or beliefs; and applying the formulated values to new situations (Olatunji, 2014). As reflective thought occurs in relation to a new situation, the original values or beliefs will be either reconfirmed or changed. This pragmatist school thus guides learners to come up with values or beliefs based on such reflective thought while also encouraging learners to support fundamental values like that of the right to human dignity (Olatunji, 2014).

Yet another affective domain school of thought to be considered, as Olatunji (2014) pointed out, is the psychological or humanistic school associated with the psychological theories of Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow (1943), Earl Kelley, and Arthur Combs (1962). These theorists focused on the principal role of personality and perception in learning and "recommend that priority attention be given to self-concept, interpersonal relations and the discovery of personal meaning in the curriculum" (Olatunji, 2014, p. 104). This is often referred to a humanistic education. Although there are similarities

between the pragmatist and psychological schools of thought, Olatunji (2014) commented that one of the main differences is that the pragmatists tend to put more emphasis on social development whereas the psychological or humanistic group places emphasis on personal growth. For the purposes of clarity, when discussing the affective domain in higher education I refer to it only in association with the pragmatist and psychological schools of thought and do not include the absolutists since this latter group involves separate and/or unique situations to which my particular focus is unrelated.

Statement of the Problem

The renowned psychologist Piaget (1962), famous for the theory of cognitive development, exclaimed, "at no level, at no state, even in the adult, can we find a behavior or a state which is purely cognitive without affect nor a purely affective state without a cognitive element involved" (p. 130). Hlynka (1998) similarly argued that deconstructing affect would show how the affective is cognitive and the cognitive is affective. Vygotsky (1986) commented that the attempt to separate affect from cognition

> is a major weakness of traditional psychology, since it makes the thought process appear as an autonomous flow of "thoughts thinking themselves," segregated from the fullness of life, from the personal needs and interests, the inclinations and impulses, of the thinker. (p. 10)

Krathwohl et al. (1964) also pointed out that research (including Barker, Dembo, & Lewin, 1941; Bloom & Broder, 1950; Johnson, 1955; Russell, 1956; Thistlethwaite, 1950; Wertheimer, 1945) exists which shows that cognition and affect can never be fully separated. Despite this, Beard et al. (2007) noted not only is emotion rarely

acknowledged in higher education, but it also is "under or mis-theorised" (p. 236). The

literature is alarmingly limited and consists largely of research that theorizes both

generally and sharply about affect in learning along with a few studies that are

specifically data-supported. The fact that affect is underemphasized and overshadowed

by a disproportional emphasis on the cognitive domain in education, and that the research

studies are limited and often generally theoretical, clearly presents a problem when

considering that the learning process involves both affect and cognition.

Much of the research that does exist has focused on the lack of attention affect

receives in education in contrast to cognition. Nuhfer (2005) of the Center for Teaching

and Learning at Idaho State University posited that educators should examine the

assumptions often made by those in higher education, including the fallacy that the

effects of the affective domain can be separated from cognitive thinking and involve

nothing more than emotional issues that should be dismissed in the area of content

learning and objective inquiry. Griffith and Nguyen (2006) suggested that when the

cognitive domain is the sole focus of the curriculum at the expense of the affective

domain, it is analogous to a skeleton without the skin. Nevertheless, such a focus on an

affectless curriculum in colleges and universities has been the norm for years (Popham,

2014). According to Stenberg (2011), there has been a lack of attention given to the

schooling of affective variables such as emotion by educational scholarship and educators

thus need to "engage emotions as part of intellectual, rhetorical work, such that the

teacher's role is not to snuff out or smooth over emotion but to help students consider

how emotion is necessarily engaged in our classrooms, overtly or not" (p. 349). In some

ways, the emotional intelligence movement over the past decade or so that has taken place primarily in grade school but also to a lesser extent in higher education, and the even more recent emphasis on mindfulness in higher education has been an acknowledgement and response to the neglect of the affective domain. Even if, as Micciche (2007) argued, the emotional intelligence movement may tend to harness particular emotions rather than valuing them since "cognitivism remains a dominant cultural pedagogy of emotion" (p. 151-152), the fact that such a movement has arisen indicates recognition of the need for change.

Examples of the separation of affect from cognition abound across the disciplines, including composition. Brand (1987), one of the major researchers who first argued for more emphasis on affect in education and within the field of composition in particular after completing several data-supported studies, commented that "a realistic and complete psychology of writing must include affective as well as cognitive phenomena" (p. 436). McLeod (1997) also argued, based on research dealing with sharply focused theory and qualitative studies, that in composition studies "we need to come to terms with affect, viewing the affect/cognition split not as a dichotomy but as a dialectic" (p. 7). Focusing on the affective area of emotions and writing as well, Richmond (2002) suggested that emotions are more than just threads in the social fabric. In relation to this, Williams (1998) similarly argued that "not only do emotions, as embodied, relational modes of being, underpin our most intimate thoughts and actions in the social world, they are also, as we have seen, central to the very process of rational thought itself" (p. 761). Richmond (2002) also noted that "an examination of cognitive or social processes in the writing

classroom would not be complete without considering how the emotions are involved in every thought, decision, and related action" (p. 75).

The question pertaining to why educators have attempted to separate the affective from the cognitive is a valid one, and yet the answer is complex. Reasons include how some directly associate the implementation of affect in the classroom as a form of therapy, while others fear that it involves indoctrination. Even more prominent is the fact that instructors often have difficulty finding ways to incorporate affect adequately into their pedagogy and then to later accurately partake in assessment due to the abstract nature of affect. Krathwohl et al. (1964) pointed out that the affective domain is often not part of course objectives precisely due to the challenges of assessment. Oughton and Pierre (2007) suggested that "outcomes which emphasize a feeling tone, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection may be difficult to teach or measure" (p. 3) and while plenty of material exists in order to evaluate achievement in the cognitive domain, the same is not necessarily true of the affective domain. As far as higher education in particular is concerned, some have even argued that by the time students enter college the bulk of their value system has already been firmly established (Oughton & Pierre, 2007).

As Hyland (2014) noted, "Affective education, with its links to the subjective 'soft' sphere of emotions, feelings and values, has, arguably, always been considered inferior to the 'hard' objective domain of intellectual/academic activity" (p. 284). In relation to this, Micciche (2007) argued how there

is the tendency within intellectual as well as popular thought to collapse emotion with all things feminine, a marker that, at least in the history of academic

7

discourse, has signaled a tendency to be weak, shallow, petty, vain and

narcissistic. (p. 2)

Boler (1999) similarly

explores the taboos of emotion in education, considers their roots in social control

through the "mental hygiene movement" centered on emotional engineering . . .

and considers how emotions are largely ignored in pedagogy through the

dominance of a male-paternal hegemony. (as cited in Beard et al., 2007, p. 237)

Sexism is yet another possible reason for the lack of deserved attention to affect. Despite

the more recent attention to emotional intelligence and mindfulness, affect has been

underemphasized in higher education and education in general.

Significance of the Problem

As Shelton (2003) reminded us, "Cognitive learning and emotional learning

cannot be separated; they work in tandem" (p. 62); yet, students are very infrequently

subjected to possibilities in the classroom to work on their affective skills. Greenfield

(2005) referenced earlier researchers such as Heron in 1992 and Dwinnel and Higbee in

1989 who suggested that by understanding the emotional or individual states of students

simply as so-called roadblocks to learning, educators fail to fully comprehend the key

role, alongside the cognitive domain, that emotions play regarding learners' ways of

knowing and on their overall performance in the classroom. Such reasons as these

suggest that it is essential for educators to acknowledge that emotional and other affective

variables are "integral rather than incidental to learning" (Raggozzino, Resnik, Utne-

O'Brien, & Weissberg, 2003, p. 169) and should be emphasized in the classroom

8

adequately. In sum, the significance of the problem of affect being separated from cognition in education is that it results in an incomplete student learning experience and subsequently undermines overall student learning.

As the literature suggests, for the sake of educating the whole student, teachers must go beyond emphasizing the cognitive domain alone to also include the affective. Evans, Ziaian, Sawyer, and Gillham (2013) pointed to research (including Birbeck and Andre in 2009, Sonnier in 1989, and Zhang and Lti in 2009) theorizing that "affective teaching can be used to optimise the cognitive domain" (p. 25) and "when basic mechanisms of emotion are missing in the brain, intelligent functioning is hindered" (Picard et al., 2004, p. 253). In general, an equal balance of emphasis with both the affective and cognitive domains is considered as the best method (Huk & Ludwig, 2009; Tait-McCutcheon, 2008; Zhang & Lu, 2009). In relation to this, Evans et al. (2013) mentioned research (including Littledyke in 2008, More and Malinowsky in 2008, and Thompson and Mintzes in 2002) positing that "empathy, responsibility, affective responses and resultant attitude can be transformed when the cognitive and affective domains are interrelated" (p. 25). In a study by Russell (2004) results suggested that learning is improved when affect is considered and that students learn when in a positive learning environment and that learning is harmed in the opposite situation. In particular, students of the study expressed how learning was aided with such elements as laughter, praise, encouragement, a supportive peer group and by high quality teaching. Contrary to this, they expressed that their learning suffered if they were uncomfortable or felt humiliated in some way, by uncooperative peers and by poor quality teaching.

Understandably, as Evans et al. (2013) pointed out, it is "important that the educator reflects on the methods of communication and convey the subject knowledge by combining cognitive and affective experiences" (p. 26).

It is critical to note that when pointing out how student learning is harmed due to the neglect of affect, both affective and cognitive skills themselves are harmed. Griffith and Nguyen (2006) argued that "learning is essential for students to master skills but if the affective domain is ignored, the cognitive areas are greatly affected [in a negative sense]" for, in reference to affect, "if one feels threatened, sad, stressed, etc., the learning process can break down" (p. 4). Greenfield (2005) similarly suggested that students "who are negatively affected by affective concerns are limited in accessing their cognitive capabilities" (p. 91) and identified research by Evertson, Emmer, and Worsham in 2003, and Wang et al. in 1997, that suggested "when students can experience engaging and inclusive relationship-centered classrooms, they end up feeling safer in taking intellectual risks and exposing themselves to new points of view" (p. 91). Thus, the improvement of learning in the cognitive domain when affect is emphasized is yet another powerful reason for teachers to implement affect in the classroom. Olatunji (2014) argued that "it is extremely difficult, if not totally impossible to attain maximally in the cognitive domain unless the complementary skills in the affective domain are not only taught well but carefully developed and consistently assessed" (p. 109). This suggests that teachers need to realize that addressing issues of the affective domain in the classroom goes beyond affect for affect's sake alone.

Looking specifically at the field of composition, Brand (1987) contended how it is important that [students] should become familiar with the emotional as well as intellectual cues that tell them they are ready to write, ready to stop, and ready to do a number of things in between . . . . It is in cognition that ideas make sense. But it is in emotion that this sense finds value. (p. 441-442)

In other words, as Brand (1987) suggested, there is more to affect and composition than anxiety or writer's block. Indirectly referring to writing, Micciche (2007) additionally argued that

without a framework for understanding emotion's legitimate role in the making of meaning and in the creation of value in our culture, we impoverish our own and our students' understanding of how we come to orient ourselves to one another and to the world around us (p. 1)

Although both Brand (1987) and Micciche (2007) have focused on affect and writing in the classroom, the stakes for the implementation of affect in education in general are high and tend to go beyond the classroom.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do affective instructional interventions impact student experiences in an introductory community college English course?

2. How do affective instructional interventions impact student approaches to learning in an introductory community college English course?

11

3. How do affective instructional interventions impact student perceptions of themselves as writers in an introductory community college English course?

When focusing on the neglect of affect in higher education and its impact on the student learning process in combination with cognition as addressed by both the limited theoretical and data-supported studies, it is also important to place this study in the context of the overall quantitative picture of student attainment within the community college system. Recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) shows that only 20% percent of first-time, full-time students who began their pursuit of a certificate or associate's degree at a public two-year institution completed it within three years (2014). This is not to argue that completing a degree in a timely manner is the only measure of success. However, such low percentage rates do raise numerous questions such as whether the low rates of completing a degree within the expected time period are associated with annual full-time student retention levels that are only 58% at public two-year institutions (NCES, 2014). Considering the above data and research on the lack of affect in higher education in general, there is a need to bring attention to this area with additional studies.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Even though the literature emphasizes how infrequently the affective domain is integrated into the classroom, again, the reasons for this lack of attention vary with examples including fears of indoctrination, associating affect with therapy, or even sexism by labeling affect "feminine" in an attempt to belittle its worth. However, the fact that affect is so abstract and difficult to assess or measure is likely the most prominent reason for its neglect. Whatever the reason may be for a lack of attention given to affect, the literature suggests that neither affective skills nor the specific cognitive skills associated with one's field develop adequately if affect is not adequately addressed. With writing and affect, for example, Wellington (2010) argued that research shows how writing, whether the focus of the course or not, "cannot be simply left to itself to somehow develop autonomously . . . a consideration of the affective aspect of writing needs to be centrally included" (p. 147).

With literature suggesting that affect needs to be involved in the learning process, a somewhat recent focus on the affective domain, although still rather limited, has been gaining traction. There have been a number of studies conducted, mostly sharply focused theoretical studies, that demonstrate a push over the last two decades in higher education to address the affective domain in student learning. This renewed emphasis on affect comes after several decades in which "higher education's role in moral development has

been greatly diminished by increasingly secularism, scientific objectivism, separation of students' 'inner life' from academic and intellectual priorities, increasing fragmentation of educational roles and services on campus, and concerns about indoctrination" (Dalton & Crosby, 2010, p. 8). Dalton and Crosby (2010) suggested that, despite the past, an emphasis on the affective domain is a responsibility for colleges and universities of today. In sum, it is thus important to be aware of the studies associated with this recent renewed emphasis, as well as the work that built up to it, before engaging in a critique of the literature. It is important to distinguish in general between the majority of research such as that of Wellington (2010) and Dalton and Crosby (2010) that tends to theorize or posit, and other, less frequent data-supported studies. Nevertheless, prior to delving into a review and critique of the literature, it is necessary to clarify the use of the term affect in this study.

Definition

The use of the term affect can be somewhat abstract and thus having a clear understanding of its meaning is necessary to help avoid confusion. Krathwohl et al. (1964) helped to pioneer and solidly establish the importance of the affective domain with their taxonomy; however, the authors noted the challenge involved in clearly defining the affective domain due to "a lack of clarity in the statements of affective objectives that was found in the literature" (p. 13). Despite this fact, they did define the affective domain as having "objectives which emphasize a feeling tone, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection" (p. 7). The authors noted, "We found a large number of such objectives in the literature expressed as interests, attitudes, appreciations, values,

and emotional sets or biases" (p. 7). The five categories of their affective domain taxonomy include a hierarchal order from lowest to highest consisting of receiving, responding, valuing, organization, and, at the top, characterization by a value or value complex (Krathwohl et al., 1964, p. 95).

Buissink-Smith, Mann, and Shephard (2011) attempted to clarify the categories associated with Krathwohl et al.'s (1964) taxonomy by listing them as an ability to listen, to respond in interactions with others, to consider attitudes or values appropriate to particular situations, to organize values so as to demonstrate balance and consideration, and to display a commitment to principled practice on a day-to-day basis. Additionally, Buissink-Smith et al. (2011) established characteristics for each of the five different affective attributes. They noted:

> [For receiving], learners are open to new experiences and willing to listen . . . .
> [For responding], learners react and participate actively . . . . [For valuing],
> learners attach values and express personal opinions . . . . [For organization],
> learners begin to develop a values system . . . . [For characterization or
> internalization], learners adopt a belief system and behave consistently with it. (p.
> 105)

The taxonomy and definition established by Krathwohl et al. (1964) of what the affective domain involves has served as a framework followed by revised classification schemes. For example, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs was the groundwork for Brandhorst's (1978) reconceptualization of the affective domain in which effectance, efficacy, competence, and analytical-coping abilities are emphasized. Martin and Briggs

(1986) constructed a taxonomy that included 132 affective conditions from which

attitudes and values are understood to be the most crucial. McLeod (1991), as well as

Fleckenstein (1991), both known for their work within the field of composition, created

affective domain models differently. For example, in an attempt to present a revised

understanding of affect in an educational context, McLeod (1991) acknowledged

Krathwohl et al.'s (1964) earlier work but noted how such work "is now limited in its

usefulness for researches and teachers, since it was written at a time . . . when

psychologists saw learners as passive recipients of knowledge and viewed learning in

terms of teaching outcomes" (p. 102). Relating to the general time period of the

publication Krathwohl et al.'s *The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* in the 1960s,

Wellington (2010) explained that the original aim was to provide a classification of the

goals associated with the educational system of the era and for teachers to rely on the

taxonomy in order to create a curriculum. He added that "it was very much a product of

its era, a time when behaviorist psychology was prevalent and learning objectives had to

be specified in terms of what students could actually do as a measurable end-product of

the learning process" (p. 135).

McLeod (1991) argued that those involved in education need to understand the

affective domain as dynamic states of being as opposed to Krathwohl et al.'s (1964)

earlier taxonomy that is based on products or outcomes. Such dynamic states of being,

McLeod (1991) added, can be viewed across the dimensions of intensity and stability.

For example, in the case of emotions, most are intense but not stable in the sense that

they do not last very long. Regarding the term "emotion" and using it interchangeably

with affect, McLeod (1991) suggested that affective phenomena is broader in its scope and can generically be described as including not only emotions but also attitudes, beliefs, moods, and conation (motivation). McLeod (1991) also noted that "affect is not a synonym for emotion; an emotion is an affective state, but not all affective states are emotions" (p. 97). In the case of attitudes and beliefs, intensity and stability differ from emotions. Attitudes are less intense than emotions but more stable while beliefs are less intense and more stable than attitudes since attitudes can more easily be changed than beliefs (McLeod, 1991). In the case of motivation, McLeod (1991) explained that "motivational phenomena would, under this classification system, be considered separately—not as affective states, but as combinatory phenomena that link affect and cognition" (p. 102). This overall classification system would be useful for research in such fields as composition "since it helps to identify particular features of the affective domain in terms of process, an approach which is compatible with the present process-orientation to both research and teaching in composition" (McLeod, 1991, p. 102).

Fleckenstein (1991) built on McLeod's classification system and definition of affect by adding an additional perspective that interweaves both cognition and affect together due to "the relative influence of cognition within affect and, concomitantly, of affect with cognition" (p. 451). In other words, despite the differences, affect and cognition cannot be discussed completely independently of each other. Thus, the classification of affect based on intensity and stability, Fleckenstein (1991) argued, needs

to go beyond its focus on affect alone and involve a sort of cognitive-affective dance.[1]

Fleckenstein (1991) created a clear visual (see Figure 1) related to this cognitive-affective

dance between cognition and affect by creating a continuum that "serves to show how an

individual's focus reduces the intensity and density of affective experiences while

simultaneously increasing the density of cognitive operations" (p. 451). Not only did

Fleckenstein (1991) focus on the interplay of cognition and affect, but she also grouped

emotions, feelings, moods, and preferences into one cluster and included the concept of

evaluations whereas McLeod's discussion of affect did not. Despite these somewhat

minor differences between McLeod's and Fleckenstein's classification schemes and

definition of affect, both offered a revised and useful understanding that differs from that

of Krathwohl et al.'s (1964) and others. This is particularly useful to be aware of,

especially when focusing on issues of writing as in this study.

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[1] Although Krathwohl et al. (1964) also stress an overlap between the affective and cognitive domains, one key difference is that they do so by emphasizing an overlap of dissonance that is also ultimately based on outcomes rather than states of being.
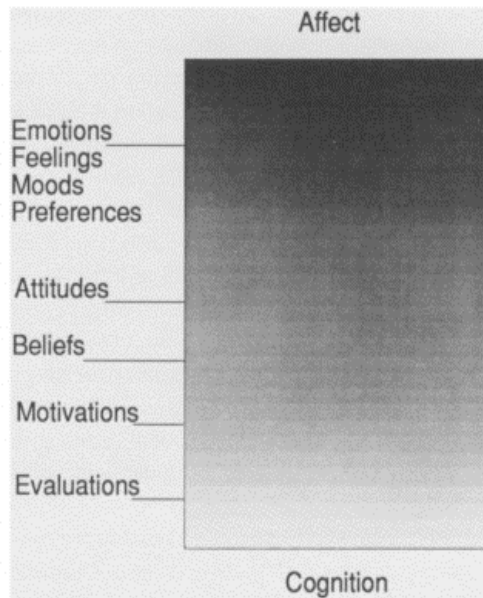
Figure 1. Affective continuum. (Fleckenstein, 1991, p. 449)

Both continuums are related as Fleckenstein's continuum built or expanded on McLeod's and did so without dismissing it; thus, it would seem best to ultimately conceptualize affect by acknowledging both. For the sake of meaning and a working definition to be used in this study, *affect* can then be said to involve dynamic states of being while classified not solely on the intensity and stability of each area, but also with an understanding of the cognitive-affective dance, or interplay, that exists. Once having established a working definition of affect, it is vitally important to consider the question of how the implementation of affect into pedagogy in higher education impacts or influences students' experiences and their overall approach to learning as well as their perceptions of themselves as writers. To help better understand what research may still need to be done regarding this and other related questions, a general review and critique of the literature is necessary.

Overview of Affect

General Content Areas

Keeling (2009), similarly to Wellington (2010) and Dalton and Crosby (2010), specifically theorized about affect and argued that deeply engrained in the overall idea of college as a learning experience is the belief that the student who graduates should be different from when he or she first enrolled in ways that go beyond cognitive development and earning a degree. Learning, Keeling suggested, may or may not simply correlate with grades, academic continuation, and graduation. If the cognitive alone is the focus when it comes to student learning, then a college degree in and of itself would be enough; however, in relation to Keeling's (2009) claims, the complete value of a college degree is its representation of a student having developed holistically in ways that include the affective domain as well. Keeling (2009) exclaimed that "we can no longer imagine learning as the vaporous infusion of something called knowledge into the unkempt clouds of consciousness; it is hard work, learning, and it engages real tissue in a real organism" (p. 2). For deep learning involving both cognitive and noncognitive variables to take place, the literature suggests that it is important for teachers in higher education and education in general to address affect in the classroom.

The development of a student's whole self that includes affective change or growth as opposed to simply focusing on cognitive growth is also part of what is often referred to as transformative education. According to Keeling (2009), the idea of transformation is what differentiates the meaning of liberal education from a more mundane education based largely on the cognitive with time-pressed students engaging in

20

memorization and cramming to pass tests. Transformative education changes a student's mind time and time again while "introducing new patterns of thought and action, forcing the reconsideration and revision of beliefs held tenuously or tentatively, inviting the parallel intellectual sensations of wonder and uncertainty" (Keeling, 2009, p. 2). Put simply, it could be said that transformative education has to do with complete, holistic learning. Keeling (2009) posited that "transformative education engages the whole student, and, given the processes through which it occurs, it produces both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes" (p. 3). Contrary to critics' claims, proponents of a transformative liberal education such as Keeling do not view it as indoctrination but rather as something freeing and liberating. By incorporating both the mind and body into learning, students go through a process of liberating change as they learn.

Additionally, in a similar theoretical manner, Popham (2014) argued that "affect is every bit as important as cognitive ability" (p. 250). It is important to acknowledge and thus continue to build on any gains that have been made through renewed concerns of incorporating affect into student learning. For one thing, Popham (2014) argued, it is important because students who have positive attitudes about learning today will likely be inclined to want to pursue learning in the future. Such is also the essence of the affective notion of lifelong learning that involves embracing opportunities to learn with the idea that learning continues not only throughout higher education but far beyond the college experience itself. Arguably, in relation to Popham's (2014) suggestions, giving attention to affect could possibly also help play a role in long-term personal growth, helping better prepare students for life beyond college. An emphasis on affect in education, I believe,

21

has the potential to result in both short- and long-term benefits, but there is still plenty of

need for further exploration and research to add to the relatively little that has been done.

A rather recent focus involving such further exploration in the area of affect in

education is the concept of mindfulness. Mindfulness is engaging fully in the task at hand

as opposed to mindlessly going through the motions. Hyland (2014) explained that

"mindfulness simply means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the

present moment and non-judgmentally [thus] nurtur[ing] greater awareness, clarity, and

acceptance of present-moment reality" (p. 278). Although, for Hyland (2014), affective

education as a whole involves a broader perspective than mindfulness in particular,

overlap clearly exists. Schoeberlein and Sheth (2009) suggested educational benefits of

mindfulness for teachers that are related to affect such as improved responsiveness—as

well as added benefits for students including improved attention and concentration.

Schoeberlein and Sheth (2009) also argued the following: "When teachers are fully

present, they teach better. When students are fully present, the quality of their learning is

better" (p. xi). Regarding teachers specifically, Evans et al. (2013) noted that "the

wellbeing and affective awareness (mindfulness) of the lecturer is . . . an important aspect

of affective teaching and learning" (p. 28). I believe the intentional use of affect on a

teacher's behalf in the classroom, such as with mindfulness or in my study which

involves similar affective instructional interventions, can assist with the student learning

process.

English Composition

As with other content areas, literature focusing on the affective domain in English composition is not abundant. Many early researchers and studies tended to largely concentrate on issues such as writing anxiety or writer's block rather than the affective domain as a whole. Murray (2009) explained how in the case of the well-known composition expressivist Peter Elbow, for example, he "limits his analysis on writing problems due to anxiety and frustration" (p. 93) when dealing with affect. Murray (2005) also explained how although some early composition theorists emphasized affect they did so more as something independent or opposite of cognition. Murray noted, "Though Muffet, Murray, and Elbow are loosely connected to [an expanded] view of [student writing that includes] emotion because of their interests in the affective," other more recent researchers, such as Brand and McLeod, are more "directly interested in looking at emotion as a cognitive concept rather than as part of the emotion/reason split" (p. 95). As composition studies began to deal more with the social act of writing generally in the 1980s, the importance and focus on affect increased since affect is argued to be naturally a part of this social act. Beyond the focus on writing as a social act primarily in the 1980s, Brand (1991) pointed how "when we are poised with a reflective stance with our ideas[,] . . . when we sit at our desk, when we write on our computers, we are in the end alone" (p. 40). McLeod (1997) similarly noted that "one does not have to watch freshmen at work to know that writing is an emotional as well as a cognitive activity—we feel as we think when we write" (p. 426). McLeod (1997) also commented more specifically and directly addressed "the well-known cognitive-process model proposed by Flower and

Hayes" (p. 18) and how as a result of such work "writing teachers are generally familiar

with a cognitive approach to writing" (p. 24). However, this cognitive-process model

exists alongside social construction theory in composition. McLeod (1997) explained that

"the cognitive theory of writing examines how the mind represents knowledge to itself;

social construction theory examines how those representations are shaped by context, by

the conventions and expectations of particular social and cultural groups" (p. 34).

McLeod (1997) also pointed out that "we can also think of emotional states as socially

determined constructions, shaped by particular contexts and cultures" (p. 36). Thus, if

emotions are social constructs, as Richmond noted, "then examining emotions in the

writing classroom would mesh well with the goals of the (current) dominant paradigm in

composition studies (social construction, with an emphasis on cognitive processing or

critical thinking)" (2002, p. 74). Affect, involving emotions, can arguably said to be part

of the cognitive writing process which involves engaging in a social act—or, again, as

Edbauer (2005) exclaimed, "there can be no affectless compositions" (p. 133).

Edbauer (2005) continued to add to the literature on affect in composition and

pointed out that although "many models of composition focus on the signifying

dimensions of writing, they often fail to account for writing's experiential aspect. They

fail to account for . . . affect" (p. 133). Edbauer argued that it is such an emphasis on

affect that is lacking in discussions on writing. Focusing on a particular example of her

encounter with graffiti on a public "Venting Wall" set up on a college campus after the

September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, Edbauer (2005) noted, both

echoing and referencing Fleckenstein's work, that what writing does is "[exist] in the

strange doubleness of rhetoric—*between* and simultaneously *within* signification and

affect" (p. 155). It was added that "disciplinary models that cast writing primarily in

terms of articulatable meaning . . . risk overlooking the operation of affect in their own

work, as well as their students' works" (Edbauer, 2005, p. 155). She posited that there is

still a need for greater awareness of and emphasis on affect in education, and as she

pointed out, particularly in relation to writing.

Micciche (2006) largely agreed with Edbauer (2005) about how affect exists in

addition to signification in writing. Micciche commented that in the field of composition

there is sometimes a hesitancy to consider innovative ideas, especially ones coming from

studies involving emotion and affect in general, and that there is a need to consider these

ideas as actual opportunities for thinking about how one teaches, performs, assesses, and

talks about writing (2006). Micciche (2006) referenced Edbauer's (2005) essay directly

and how instructors often have trouble connecting research on affect with its abstract

discussions to actual writing instruction in the classroom. The bulk of the essay centered

on the concept of so-called "trouble." Micciche noted that

> this framing point allows me to draw out some implications of Edbauer's study so
>
> as to get a grip on the durable, present, nameable quality of affect and to make a
>
> case for affect as trouble in the domain of writing instruction—good trouble,
>
> trouble that opens questions and moves theory and practice. (p. 267)

As this and other works dealing with affect and student learning bring to light, too often

the case is that affect results in trouble, or complications connecting research and theory

with practice for the instructor and thus instead of, again, "open[ing] questions and mov[ing] theory and practice" (p. 267), affect is not adequately emphasized.

Albrecht-Crane (2006) also responded to Edbauer's (2005) work and agreed that in composition studies affect has not yet been fully accounted for. Similarly commenting on claims that theories of affect in writing need more practical relevance, a case was made that these theories of affect are actually more present in a practical sense with student writing than is often understood. In Albrecht-Crane's study (2006), a particular case of student writing in an undergraduate course was focused on in which the author noted that, contrary to what is assumed, the feeling and social aspects tend to exist with writing assignments on a regular basis. Students include feeling and address structural issues in their writing while instructors give feedback that expresses feeling and comment on structure. Albrecht-Crane wrote that "*no* marginal comment we make as teachers (or, not even the absence of comments) is ever devoid of an affective component that involves students; and no paper or student writing ever functions without an affective element" (p. 260). This suggests that affect is implicitly present in a practical sense in writing assignments in both the composition and other classrooms than is typically realized.

Critique of Literature

Within the literature dealing with affect in education, many studies have concluded that affect is a vital component of learning in general. Many of these studies have tended to focus largely on the actual presence of affect that is involved in the learning process rather than focusing on explicitly integrating affect into the learning

process. Other studies that differ by focusing on direct or explicit pedagogical interventions or student requirements that involve affect have done so each in their own particularly different contextual way. Whatever the focus, the fact is that the number of studies, whether explicit or not, that deal with affect in education in new and unique ways is limited.

A significant amount of past research has dealt with theorizing about affect and learning rather than data-driven studies, and thus the conclusions about causality are lacking. Many studies focusing on affect and learning that involve data-supported conclusions tend to be doctoral dissertations such as those by Loudermilk (1997), Kim (2003), and Rahilly (2004) rather than published research studies in peer-reviewed journals. Yet another reason for the need for future studies, beyond the fact of the limited and small number of data-supported studies, is due to the continuing shift in the understanding of learning in education away from emphasizing learners as passive recipients of knowledge to more proactive participants. Even more recently, the rise of the use of technology in education such as with university online courses and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) means that content as a whole is more readily available, thus opening up possibilities for new dynamic pedagogies, including those that involve affective instructional interventions, within the classroom itself.

Research Studies on Affect in General Content Areas

There are several content areas in which studies related to the affective domain have been completed albeit the number is less extensive than cognitive-related studies. One content area in which there has been some research completed on the issue of affect

and learning is language learning. A quantitative study by Kim (2003) of English language learners in Korea, for example, posed several questions centering on the relationship between affect and language learning and found that such affective variables as motivation and culture are important factors bound up in the student learning process. This nonexplicit study, or study that did not include direct teaching interventions, consisted of 437 Korean college students enrolled in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course who responded to quantitative instruments consisting of versions of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), and the Background Information Questionnaire (BIQ). The AMS "estimates the total of seven dimensions of motivational constructs . . . that are based on self-determination theory" (Kim, 2003, p. 53). The ISS involved interaction engagement, respect for cultural difference, interaction confidence, and interaction attentiveness (Kim, 2003). The BIQ asked about participants' background information, "such as gender, age, academic majors, classification, overall GPA, travel abroad experience, and reasons for taking an English [language] course" (Kim, 2003, p. 57).

Kim (2003) noted that the study "explored two aspects of the affective domain in the language learning process: motivation and intercultural sensitivity in relation to L2 [second language] achievement" (p. 148) while proposing the following research questions:

i.) Why do Korean college students learn English (Motivation profiles)?; ii.) What are the levels of intercultural sensitivity shown by the Korean college students in EFL classrooms?; iii.) What are the relationships between the motivational

profiles and intercultural sensitivity in Korean college students learning English?;

iv.) What are the relationships among the motivational profiles, intercultural

sensitivity, and English achievement for Korean college students?; v.) Are there

gender influences on students' motivation, intercultural sensitivity, and

achievement scores in English?; vi.) Does academic major influence students'

motivation, intercultural sensitivity, and achievement scores in English. (p. 6-7)

Kim (2003) commented that the overall results of the study "provided clear evidence to

show that motivation and culture are important factors in learning a second/foreign

language (L2) and that there are causal relationships among intercultural sensitivity,

motivation, and English achievement" (p. iv). Additionally, and more specifically, the

study showed "students' active engagement, confidence, enjoyment, and attentiveness in

cross-cultural interactions as well as their intrinsic motivation toward learning English

predicted their English achievement" (p. 148-149).

In relation to this study dealing with the affective domain variables of Korean

college English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, other explicit studies would help

to build on the findings. In fact, as far as affect directly involved in pedagogical practice

is concerned, Kim (2003) noted implications for practice that include acknowledging the

role of culture, helping students promote intrinsic motivation, creating a flexible

classroom environment with opportunities for cooperative learning, and embracing a

holistic approach to teaching.

Another language learning study by Rahilly (2004) focusing on writing in a

second language found that certain affective factors, including writing anxiety, writer's

block, and writing resistance, had significant influence on students' English writing skills. The study involved three research questions that focused on how ESL learners perceived and felt about learning to write academic English, the difficulties experienced in the learning process, and the influences prior literary and sociocultural factors have on such writing (Rahilly, 2004). Rahilly noted that "from the interviews I conducted with each of the 21 participants, I learned that feelings and emotions were of primary concern for the majority of the participants in their academic English writing development" (p. 277). More specifically, it was noted that the affective findings revealed how the participants differed in intensity or in the type of affective responses to college writing, and that the adult ESL learners expressed some sort of causal negative emotional response, such as writing anxiety, writing resistance, low self-efficacy and writer's block, that interfered with their development in college English writing (Rahilly, 2004). Rahilly pointed out that the findings indicated that cultural influences themselves, such as the students' expectations of the student–teacher relationship, or the participants' preferences for working alone or in cooperative groups, played an important positive or negative role in the development of the participants' college English writing depending on whether student expectations met with the reality of a typical American college classroom environment.

Similar to the previous studies mentioned earlier, Rahilly (2004) commented on how the results of this study show that it is important to continue to build on the research concerning the affective domain. In particular, a nonexplicit approach was taken in that it acknowledged the existence of affective factors as being influential on learners in an

30

English as a Second Language (ESL) course as opposed to involving affect explicitly within the lesson plans. Rahilly (2004) noted that

> the main purpose of this qualitative study was to explore some of the significant affective, literacy and cultural influences on academic English writing development by investigating the experiences and personal perspectives of a small group of adult ESL learners enrolled in intermediate and high ESL composition courses. (p. 5)

Once again, as Rahilly (2004) interviewed 21 participants focusing on issues related to emotions, feelings, and other affective variables, it was concluded "that a number of affective, literacy and cultural issues play important roles in adult ELS learners' acquisition of academic English writing" (p. 272). Such a conclusion that helps support the argument regarding the importance of affect in learning also presents the possibility for other studies, most notably one that engages in explicitly incorporating affective variables into the learning process.

Meyer, Cronje, and Eloff (2007) completed a study involving online learners and focused on the role of affect with students of a master's degree program in computer-assisted education in South Africa. They proposed the following question: "What categories of feelings are experienced by learners in a highly stressful online course?" (Meyer et al., 2007, p. 430). Twenty-four participants engaged in a competitive online game mimicking the popular television show *Survivor* with the goal of outperforming the others and voting against group members who were more engaged in "freeloading." Data collection of the six-week course involved emails sent by the participants to each other

and the instructor as well as information gathered from two focus groups of 12 and 13 students. This data was compared to Krathwohl et al.'s (1964) taxonomy and Kort and Reilly's (2004, as cited in Meyer et al., 2007) model on the integration of affect into the learning cycle. Ultimately, results were discussed within three constructed categories of meaning: curative factors, process of affective development, and inhibiting factors. The first category contained three clusters of altruism versus individualism, communication, and internal drive or value system (Meyer et al., 2007). The second category contained different phases including the initial phrase of responding to requirements; the second phase of valuing, commitment, and organizing; and the third phase of internalization (Meyer et al., 2007). Although in the end, only 15 out of the 24 original participants completed the course, the researchers commented on the students' desire to succeed along with other related factors such as determination and perseverance. The research from Meyers et al. (2007) showed that students "decided to remain in the course due to their positive affective experiences, and despite their negative affective experiences" (p. 440). In the conclusion, it was suggested that if online students were given the chance to verbalize their learning and personal difficulties associated with their online experience in general, and they were aware that these comments were being considered by instructors, it would result in the online experience being affectively less intimidating overall. Finally, the researchers explained that it "is therefore important that lecturers should consider the online student as a holistic human being, and plan for online learning events and student–lecturer interaction, to accommodate the holistic nature of the student" (Meyer et al., 2007, p. 440).

It was pointed out at the end of Meyer et al.'s study that "research on affective factors in online learning proved to be limited" (p. 440). In relation to this, although Meyer et al.'s (2007) study added to the overall research, they also argued that additional studies involving affect in online courses need to be conducted. In the work by Meyer et al. (2007), the design was a case study and the purpose was "to explore and interpret the participants' affective experiences in an online learning environment and to discover important categories of meaning about their affective experiences" (p. 440). As the study did not directly involve affect in the learning process, an opportunity exists for yet further follow-up studies in an online or traditional setting in which affect is more explicitly integrated into the learning process.

The study by Beard et al. (2007), albeit not necessarily within any one specific content area, serves as a recent example of the growing emphasis on affect in higher education. This in-depth, extensive qualitative case study involved 431 students and addressed the role emotions play as part of students' learning process during their first year of college. The focus was on the role that a safe learning environment has on improving student learning in general by using four different data collection methods although only data from the first method is reported on. The first data collection method included

> positive and negative emotions at specific intervals in the two semesters in the
> form of "blank sheets" . . . [in which students] were invited to write down on one
> side of the paper their positive feelings regarding their university experiences and
> negative feelings on the other. (Beard et al., 2007, p. 241-242)

Beard et al.'s research found that affect is very much an important part of the learning

process and when influenced by a positive learning environment, students were better

able to cope and excel during their first year at college. Beard et al. (2007) wrote that

> rather than the opposite of engagement with ideas, emotional and bodily states are
>
> engaged within the learning experience, so positive emotions were described in
>
> relationship to the feelings that they were beginning to cope with, the learning
>
> itself and, conversely, the lack of ability to cope was described in terms of
>
> negative affect. (p. 249)

> Still, it was pointed out in the study that there "are real challenges for [the

implementation of a] practical pedagogy" (Beard et al., 2007, p. 250) regarding affect.

The study did not include an explicit practical pedagogy involving aspects of affect thus

leaving an opportunity available for others to build upon this work. Commenting on

affective variables in students' lives, Beard et al. (2007) noted that

> if students can recognise [*sic*] the ways in which these aspects of their lives
>
> impact on their engagement in pedagogical spaces, and if they have a language to
>
> think through them and describe them, it seems likely that students can develop a
>
> better understanding of the energies and challenges involved in coming to terms
>
> with studying. (p. 250)

The study left room for further studies to be conducted albeit with a different approach.

Beard et al. (2007) indirectly touched on this point when concluding that

> the data we have presented remain largely descriptive and we do not have any
>
> evidential warrant from the analysis of the single data set to claim that being

given the opportunity to think about the full range of their response to the new

academic environment contributed to the learning. (p. 249)

The results of this study indirectly involving emotional intelligence can be related to

Popham's (2014) comments about lifelong learning since those students who benefited

affectively through a positive learning environment will indeed likely be inclined to want

to continue to pursue learning in the future

One particular study by Harper (2007) that focused explicitly emphasizing affect

in higher education involved a group of online nursing students. In this study of online

associate nursing degree participants, pre- and post-tests (the Fraboni Scale of Ageism

and Kogan's Attitudes Toward Old People Scale) were given to a control group and a

treatment group of 21 students each, with the scores measuring changes that occurred

during the semester in order to answer the following question: "What is the effect of

instruction designed with emphases on affective domain components of ageism on

learner beliefs and attitudes about older people?" (p. 5). The independent variable was the

course instruction while the dependent variable was the learning as seen through the

differences in the pre- and post-scores. The actual affective instructional intervention, or

independent variable, included the pebble-in-the-pond (PiP) instructional design model

with the following steps: affective problem, progression, analysis, strategy, and interface

design (Harper, 2007). Furthermore, the treatment course "emphasized the effects of

attitudes and beliefs of ageism in a decision-making or critical thinking process by taking

the initial complex task for learners from attitudes about aging, a component of the

affective domain" (p. 43).

The study showed how the experimental group that was given explicit instruction demonstrated significantly greater signs of affective learning as was indicated by signs of decreased ageism compared to the control group which was not given explicit instruction associated with affect (Harper, 2007). It was pointed out specifically by Harper (2007) that not only did the study emphasize "the effectiveness of instruction specifically design[ed] to facilitate learning in the affective domain" (p. i) and showed that no affective learning occurred in the control group due to the absence of decreased ageism, the study also "provides evidence that instruction [about the emotional components of the content] specifically designed to facilitate affective learning is part of the solution" (p. ii). Although this study did show significant results regarding the number of students from the experimental group compared to the control group, the somewhat small number of participants for a quasi-experimental quantitative study calls for further research. In other words, further similar studies would help add to the significance of the results of Harper's (2007) study. As the study focused on online learning, other explicit affective studies in a different context such as a traditional course would also be beneficial.

Addressing the literature of affect in education in general, Miller (2010) focused on the need for growth in the affective domain among nursing students and introduced a step-by-step process of assessment due to the difficulty involved in assessing the affective domain. The first step mentioned was presentation, which has to do with the way students present themselves, visually or attitudinally, to the others whom they will be working with. The second step was preparedness, which is about commitment to practice and having knowledge to be able to carry that practice out. Finally, the last step

was interaction which has to do with how a student interacts with others. All of the steps also have demonstrable objectives (Miller, 2010). In reference to this three-step process, Miller (2010) noted, "Since the affective domain is part of the implicit curriculum there is a need to make explicit the requirements of students" (p. 14). Such a reference to the need for explicitness in relation to the affective domain in nursing also relates, at least indirectly, to my study in that I made affect an explicit part of pedagogy. In each respective field, whether it is an explicit emphasis on affect in the pedagogy itself and/or as part of the course objectives, I believe such an emphasis is important to help with the student learning process.

In addition to Miller's (2010) study, Roche's (2013) study involving students and faculty in an online bachelor of radiography program at a religious institution investigated whether the affective domain can be effectively promoted in an explicit manner in an online environment at a public mission-driven educational institution. In particular, the participants included 10 students along with 4 faculty members who were interviewed over the bulk of a semester. One of the research questions that inquired about the types of online practices that might have an influence on student affect resulted in the identification of four different types of these practices. These four major types of online practices were causally associated to the understanding and experiencing of the values and mission of the university and included the following: consistency of instructor email communication with students, synchronous online chat, intense instructor outreach to struggling students, and overtly starting each chat session with some sort of prayer or prayer request (Roche, 2013). Indirectly, this last practice is related to the practice of

mindfulness in the classroom that often involves beginning and ending a class with some sort of meditation, or as Hyland (2014) mentioned, "a technique which helps us to still the restless and wandering mind" (p. 280). In any case, it was explained that the categories of synchronous encounter, instructor persistence, and integrated institutional mission "emerged as being the causal influential components when working together provid[ing] the opportunity for the affective domain to be encouraged and influenced in the online learning environment" (Roche, 2013, p. 103).

> Ultimately, Roche (2013) noted that through the study
>
> it was established that the affective domain was being influenced, impacted, and
>
> established in the lives of the [university] students . . . [and that] the strong
>
> overarching implication of this study is that a mission-driven, or faith-based
>
> institution does have the ability to impact the affective domain within an online
>
> learning environment. (p. 111)

Although focused on a small mission-driven institution, Roche (2103) commented that this study could also be beneficial to other, more populous colleges and universities by providing affective domain research that might improve the online education they offer. Nevertheless, despite results to support the argument of how affect can be part of the online learning process, other studies in a different context involving more overt or explicit affective pedagogical interventions could build on this work. Roche (2013) himself pointed out that additional quantitative research is necessary to test the theory from the study and to set up a baseline of the best pedagogy possible for pushing affect in an online course.

In an explicit study concerned with writing albeit not directly within an English composition course itself, Wellington (2010) focused on the issue of affect in writing during guided teaching sessions involving postgraduate students working on their theses. In these sessions, students' views were collected through 15 focus groups between 8 and 15 students in which 4 areas were explored that included students' positive and negative attitudes to writing, factors motivating students to write, the writing "barriers" students perceive, and possible ways that students could improve their own writing (Wellington, 2010). The use of focus groups that reflected on and discussed issues of affect in relation to writing was one intervention that took place. These groups were part of a teaching session on thesis writing in which several questions were explored about their emotions and feelings toward writing. An additional intervention also took place in which Wellington (2010) shared excerpts with the graduate students from experienced writers in which they expressed their struggles with writing in general. The views and attitudes of more experienced authors were discussed as a means of comparing and contrasting the information with postgraduate students' views and feelings and to demonstrate, via the sharing of the information with the postgraduate students, that they were not alone in their feelings.

Results from Wellington's (2010) qualitative study showed how not only is it important for instructors to address student writing issues across the curriculum, but also to do so by focusing on affect in general. The several findings drawn by Wellington (2010), while not causally proving that attention to affect directly improved student performance, included the following:

Firstly, the affective domain in writing is extremely important to them . . . .

Secondly, [students] have many positive attitudes and feelings towards writing

. . . . Thirdly, the activity of opening up the affective domain . . . is a vitally

important one not only to make [students] "feel better" about writing but also as a

starting point to help them develop and improve their own writing . . . . Fourthly,

although [there was a] variety of positive comments made about writing, a similar

number and range were found in [students'] negative attitudes and feelings. (p.

146)

Ultimately, Wellington (2010) concluded that

in addition to promoting [a] "knowledge development" model of writing, we

should also focus, in all interactions with students, on the affective domain I

suggest that we should fully recognise it [*sic*], explore it with students, invite

them to reflect on and discuss it, and take cognisance [*sic*] of it as supervisors. (p.

149)

Wellington's (2010) suggestion needs to be heeded with additional research involving

similar explicit approaches. The study I conducted, for example, incorporated affect into

the learning process albeit in a different manner and a different context.

Research Studies on Affect in English Composition

In addition to the general scholarship considering affect in composition, several

in-depth classroom studies have been conducted on affect in composition as well. It is

important to first acknowledge studies further back in the past as more recent studies built

upon them. For example, in the foundational study by Brand and Powell (1986),

important differentiation was discovered regarding positive emotions, negative-passive emotions, and negative-active emotions of 87 skilled and unskilled student writers over a two-week period in the middle of the semester. The study involved an "effort to describe the emotions involved in writing" (Brand & Powell, 1986, p. 280). Students were given the 1984 Brand Emotion Scale for Writers (BESW) that measures emotions involved in writing. Brand and Powell (1986) found that positive emotions increased while negative-passive emotions decreased for the students in general during writing. Brand and Powell (1986) explained, based on the measures of both instructor-rated and students' self-rated skill, the difference of unskilled and skilled writers. It was discovered that with unskilled writers there was more change with positive emotions while writing and there were stronger negative-passive emotions than with the skilled writers. Also, both the skilled and unskilled writers experienced a greater amount of negative-active emotions when writing for their own personal purpose compared to required writing.

Brand and Powell (1986) also researched the way students felt about themselves as writers by having students respond in writing to specific questions and compared this to how instructors rated them as skilled and unskilled which showed "that the way students feel about themselves as writers, accurate or not, is more personally meaningful than that information from their instructors" (p. 284). Ultimately, the overall study showed that "different types of writers and writing conditions may be associated with higher levels of emotional intensity [and that] they may even mediate the quality of emotion as well as the extent of emotional change during the process" (Brand & Powell, 1986, p. 284). This study has shed light on the importance of acknowledging how

41

emotions and writing are interwoven, yet it is also important to build on this by emphasizing the affective variable of emotion explicitly in a writing classroom as my study has done. In fact, it was noted that even though the importance of emotion to cognition and cognition to written discourse has been clearly acknowledged, "Surprisingly little research has been carried out on writers' affective experiences during composing" (Brand & Powell, 1986, p. 280). When emotion actually is studied, the researchers point out, it has only been studied as "disruptive of the [writing] process" (Brand & Powell, 1986, p. 280).

In a similar important study, Brand and House (1987) focused on expository student writing in which the 1984 Brand Emotion Scale for Writers (BESW) was again used. In this particular study, rather than administering it during the middle of the semester, students were either given the BESW before and after a particular writing task or before, during, and after the writing task. The following was concluded: Emotions were influenced by the type of writing assignment; the intensity and frequency of all emotional factors lessened during each writing task and during the semester in general; the attitudes of the students about the class were an important component; and unskilled writers had more intense emotions than skilled writers (Brand & House, 1987). It was noted that "these findings . . . suggest that complex interactions occur during the writing process, which are at once cognitive and affective" (Brand & House, 1987, p. 31). The study supports the literature that explains that affect and cognition are intertwined in general, and in this case, they are intertwined in writing. In this nonexplicit study, the focus was on acknowledging or examining the involvement of affect, or emotions, in the

student writing process. Such studies as this have helped create a foundation upon which future studies can be (and have been, albeit sparingly) added to or built upon, including those explicitly involving affect.

In a later study by Loudermilk (1997) involving the collection of qualitative data from two freshman composition courses that included a total of 16 students, it was explained that "because writing is always a social act to which the writer brings his or her beliefs and fears, there is need to study the writing process in terms of both the cognitive and the affective dimensions" (p. vii). In particular, the study dealt with how emotions and attitudes influence the writing process and was based on class session observations as well as interviews and the personal histories of students and teachers involved. Loudermilk (1997) addressed the affective issues that students bring to the activity of writing and how these affective issues play out in a social context. A total of eight observations took place and the entire experience was noted. With the student interviews, two sessions took place at different points in the semester. The first interview questions focused primarily on what students were experiencing during the semester. The latter interview questions "were designed to measure changes over the course of the semester: changes in the students' writing processes and change in their emotions and attitudes about writing" (Loudermilk, 1997, p. 31). The teacher interviews were conducted between the student interviews and contained questions "regarding the teachers' assumptions about the writing process and their teaching methodologies" (Loudermilk, 1997, p. 31). Four main conclusions surfaced from the study:

i.) Choice of topic is very important; ii.) A sense of ownership for their writing is also very important to students; iii.) Most freshmen students do not have a clear understanding of the writing process; iv.) The affective dimension is a very important part of the composing process that is often overlooked, but is very important in the development of beginning college writers. (Loudermilk, 1997, p. viii)

Loudermilk (1997) commented how others, such as Brand, focused on both positive and negative emotions involved in student writing, and that this study has expanded on the research by also examining how social context plays a role in students' attitude about writing. Even though the study did present results showing that affect is an important factor in the learning process of developing writers, and that the intention was "to expand even further our understanding of affect in the writing process" (Loudermilk, 1997, p. 89), it was noted that "other aspects which fall into the realm of affect warrant further study" (p. 90). For example, it was specifically mentioned that although student participants' final grades were part of the study, this particular area could be explored in other larger, purely quantitative studies to determine if there is a relationship between final student grades and affective responses. As the approach that was taken in the study did not directly involve affective instructional interventions, further studies such as those that do indeed include an explicit approach are still needed.

One explicit study by Welch (1996) specifically dealt with affect in English composition and addressed the need for instructors to focus their attention on issues

beyond the cognitive to include affective issues involving students' emotions. Welch

(1996) commented that

> although there exists a wealth of evidence that we can't separate writing from the
>
> person doing the writing . . . it still appears more responsible to shift our attention
>
> away from students and familiarization with their stories to some other emphasis:
>
> craft, rhetorical strategies, academic discourses. (p. 43-44)

The focus of the study was on how

> reading in the composition classroom can do more than encourage attachment
>
> between student and one particular model: it can work to disrupt limiting,
>
> dualistic attachments and set into motion a process of *re-modeling*, of addressing
>
> the restlessness we experience—or ought to experience—when we try to identify
>
> with, imitate, *be just like* another. (Welch, 1996, p. 43)

From this work, a narrative was developed in which a student learned to break free of

modeling the instructor and started to re-model herself in how she learns in order to

improve her reading and writing skills, and this was done largely through a unique

approach to reading that "highlights the limits of modeling" (Welch, 1996, p. 49).

Through a semester-long interaction with students in which attention was given to affect

during the learning process, the students in general, with one particular student

highlighted, ultimately did engage in re-modeling as opposed to modeling as was

evidenced in the end-of-semester writing portfolios.

Welch (1996) was concerned with affective variables and mentioned how in

Writing Relationships Lab Tobin argued in 1993 that the process of creating and working

through relationships in the classroom setting, and the general affective variables, "are not peripheral or secondary to the writing process or the teaching of writing—they are central" (as cited in Welch, 1996, p. 43). The issue or question Welch (1996) proposed was: "How do we facilitate the recognition and revision of what we're identifying with, who we are imitating—and what's being denied, suppressed, or perpetuated in the process?" (p. 42). Welch (1996) ultimately concluded

> that when we reconceptualize the place of reading in a classroom from a means of modeling to one of re-modeling, reading not only highlights disturbance and restlessness, it promotes revision and can provide students with the support and perspectives they need to re-envision the meanings, the identifications of a text and of their lives. (p. 55)

Affective variables, such as "restlessness" related to emotions in general, are critical in that they aid in enriching the student learning process. Still, as the work was somewhat blended in that the narrative was a mix of both a discussion of related research and a study of the attention given to affective variables throughout the teacher–student interactions, opportunities exist for additional studies focusing more in-depth and involving an even more explicit affective pedagogy.

In a similar study that also somewhat mixed the narrative with both a discussion of related research and a study of the attention given to affective variables with teacher–student interactions, McLeod (1997) conflated, in collaboration with two other researchers, a year and a half into a single semester for the narrative's sake. It was noted:

The narrative of the semester is not an ethnography—rather it is a story that

provides illustrations of theory being played out in a particular context [with the]

hope that by presenting a classroom context with illustrative vignettes, the

research on affect will be more accessible to teachers . . . who want to understand

[their] students better so that [they] can better help them with their writing. (xiii)

The approach was more explicit than not, as the researcher instructor attempted to

implement an "affective climate" throughout the semester for the sake of both

"nurture[ing] that disposition sufficiently so that it will last . . . [and] help[ing] build

[students'] sense of efficacy as writers" (p. 123) as well as "helping them think of

themselves as writers" (p. 121). McLeod (1997) wrote at the very start of the narrative

that part of her job was "to also reassure [the students] about the nature of the class, to

create a positive and supportive atmosphere" (p. 2) and acknowledged that "through the

coming semester we will hit various affective bumps together" (p. 4). There was indeed

an intervention on the researcher instructor's behalf even though the intervention itself

involved creating a general concept of affective awareness by both the students and

instructor throughout the semester in a somewhat subtle manner rather than intervening

aggressively with activities or assignments overtly targeting affective variables.

Ultimately, the results derived at the end of the semester were favorable as far as

the overall goals of the study are concerned even if McLeod (1997) herself

acknowledged: "I have not reached everyone" (p. 122). McLeod (1997) clearly pointed

out that in a broad sense the students showed signs of having been impacted by

integrating affective issues into the class lessons even if there was not necessarily

definitive results across the board. Through the narrative, we get a sense of how affective concerns play a role in the classroom and how the goals, including helping the students think of themselves as writers, are generally realized. McLeod (1997) had made research on affect more accessible to teachers through the narrative approach. Nevertheless, as the narrative tended to focus largely on McLeod's (1997) hope of making the research of affect more accessible to teachers in general without focusing in-depth on the study itself, and as the affective instructional practices were only mildly explicit, additional studies that include more explicit affective instructional interventions would help add to this renowned work. In sum, in addition to this and other studies already conducted, opportunities exist to build on the overall work of affect and higher education in a contextual sense such as with my study that focused specifically on student experiences and their approaches to learning along with how they perceive their own writing when affect is implemented into the lesson plans in an introductory English composition course at a community college.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This research study utilized mixed methods that included both quantitative and qualitative data. According to Creswell (2012), "mixed methods research is a good design to use if you seek to build on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data" (p. 535).

Regarding quantitative research that includes, among other data, "scores on instruments," (Creswell, 2012, p. 535) this study included both pre- and post-intervention survey scores and essay scores. In addition, as Creswell (2012) also explained, in the case of quantitative research the researcher addresses a problem based on trends in the field. For example, when focusing on the problem of difficulties and challenges that students face in the community college composition classroom, this study investigated why those students that have difficulties tend to struggle. By implementing affective instructional interventions and including such quantitative data instruments as pre- and post-intervention survey and essay scores, an attempt was made to better understand whether or not affect is a factor when it comes to the issue of struggling students. Finally, the literature shows that there continues to be a problem in higher education as the trend is a lack of emphasis on issues related to the affective domain. As such, the literature highlights the issue and justifies this study. In relation to this, Creswell (2012) noted,

"justifying the research problem means that you use the literature to document the importance of the issues examined in the study" (p. 13).

In addition to quantitative data, this study also heavily relied on qualitative data as qualitative research offers the potential for penetrating lived experiences and thus lends itself directly to the study's objective having to do with capturing and analyzing such lived student classroom experiences as well as student approaches to learning and student perceptions of themselves as writers. As variables of affect and such student experiences in relation to these variables are vague and not easily understood, qualitative research is ideal to probe deeply and capture the underlying ideas and themes. Stake (1995) argued that "qualitative researchers have pressed for understanding the complex interrelationships among all that exists" (p. 37) and that qualitative research ultimately is "inquiry for promoting understanding" (p. 37). Affective variables and student course experiences are intertwined and related to the learning process in a somewhat intangible manner, and are thus complex interrelationships that exist.

It is important to be aware that Stake (1995), referencing qualitative work, also wrote that "the function of research is not necessarily to map and conquer the world but to sophisticate the beholding of it" (p. 43). As my study's goal was not about "conquering" or proving a large-scale singular truth, but rather to probe and unearth a deeper understanding through description, a qualitative research approach was also appropriate. As my intent was to deeply explore the impact of affective instructional interventions and to focus more on the long-term process related to improving the writer than the short-term product related to improving writing alone, qualitative research

50

provided the means to address this intent. This relates to Creswell's (2012) claim that "in qualitative inquiry, the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central problem" (p. 206).

A major focus of what I pursued in my study involved a broad and in-depth look into a phenomenon, and qualitative research "seems to require continuous attention, an attention seldom sustained when the dominant instruments of data gathering are objectively interpretable checklists or survey items" (Stake, 1995, p. 43). In other words, although the quantitative research involved in my study was useful—in particular the scores on pre- and post-intervention surveys and essays—it focused less on addressing sustained and continuous attention than the qualitative research. The quantitative data alone from the study was valuable, but extending the study with a focus on more in-depth qualitative data was critical in order to reach a better understanding as a whole. In particular, this mixed methods study involved what Creswell (2012) called an embedded design: "the purpose of the embedded design is to collect quantitative data simultaneously or sequentially, but to have one form of data play a supportive role to the other form of data" (p. 544). In my particular study, the quantitative data played a supportive role to the primary qualitative data. As Creswell (2012) explained, "the reason for collecting the second form of data is that it augments or supports the primary form of data" (p. 544). The supportive data, Creswell (2012) also explained, can be either qualitative or quantitative.

Ultimately, when considering the characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative data, using both together in mixed methods research provided more

comprehensive perspectives and insights. Creswell (2012), for example, explained the following regarding mixed methods studies such as the study I conducted:

> You conduct a mixed methods study when you have both quantitative and qualitative data and both types of data, together, provide a better understanding of your research problem than either type by itself. Mixed methods research is a good design to use if you seek to build on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data. (p. 535)

In sum, by elaborating on and extending the focus to include a mixed methods design, this study attempted to probe into the complexities of the phenomena within a community college composition course.

Methodological Approach

Case study is the methodological approach I used for my research. Creswell (2005) defines a case study as "an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection" (p. 439). Case studies are often understood and argued to be associated with a constructivist paradigm in that constructivists argue that truth is relative and relies on each individual's perspective. Miller and Crabtree (1999) pointed out that such a paradigm "recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but doesn't reject outright some notion of objectivity [and that] pluralism, not relativism, is stressed with focus on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object" (p. 10). Yin (2003) explained that there is a particular need for case studies when the researcher's desire is to understand complex

social phenomena and that a case study design should be considered when any of the following four elements are involved:

(a) the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; (b) a researcher cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study; (c) a researcher want to cover contextual conditions because they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. (as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545)

My particular case study was an examination and analysis of individuals and their different experiences and involved the elements of case study that Yin (2003) mentioned. The actual case itself is best described in detail as lived student experiences in an introductory community college English course. The core focus is not only on student experiences themselves but on students' approaches to learning along with their perceptions of themselves as writers that develop in the process while receiving affective instructional interventions. It is a case study that did not involve multiple cases, and thus it is a "single holistic case study" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 549). This case study also fits the explanation of a case study by Yin (2003) since it focused on a contemporary event and did not require control over behavioral events. As the examination and analysis of student experiences with affect is a "complex social phenomena" (Yin, 2003, p. 2) and my research involved describing the holistic events, it also fits in with Yin's explanation about when the use of case study is needed.

As far as the types of case studies are concerned, various researchers have described them differently. Stake (1995) and Creswell (2012) both described the types of

case studies as either intrinsic, instrumental, or collective. In an intrinsic case study, a case is studied as it has interest in and of itself and is not primarily concerned with obtaining a general understanding or insight through studying the case. Stake (1995) explained that in an intrinsic study "we are interested in it, not because by studying it we learn about other cases or about some general problem, but because we need to learn about that particular case" (p. 3). Contrary to an intrinsic case study, an instrumental case study focuses on obtaining a general understanding or insight as "this use of case study is to understand something else" (Stake, 1995, p. 3). Finally, as Stake (1995) concluded, when there is some sort of coordination between different independent studies, the work is called a collective case study.

Other researchers use different terminology in relation to the types of case studies. Yin (1994), for example, explained that "there may be exploratory case studies, descriptive case studies, or explanatory case studies" (p. 4). As the names suggest, an exploratory case study primarily involves an initial exploration, a descriptive case an attempt at obtaining a general understanding through description, and an explanatory case a causal explanation. In the past, researchers argued that case studies were appropriate mostly for the exploration phase of a study only; however, case studies are now used in the descriptive and explanatory phases as well (Yin, 1994).

My mixed methods case study was an instrumental or, to use Yin's (1994) term directly, a descriptive case study. It is considered either one (or both) of these two since my focus was neither on simply exploring the case itself out of intrinsic interest, nor was its primary focus on conducting an experiment with the goal of proving and explaining a

causal relationship. My study involved an intervention and pedagogical practice while focusing on gaining insight into an issue through description. Related to the purpose or focus of my study which was not the case itself, Baxter and Jack (2008) noted that an instrumental case study not only provides insight into an issue, but "the case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else" (p. 549). Yin (2003) noted that descriptive case study is used when describing an intervention or phenomena as well as the real-life context in which it occurred. As my case study largely described the experiences of students in relation to affective interventions taking place in an actual classroom, it also fits with Yin's (2003) explanation mentioned above.

Research Questions

In reference to the types of research questions, again, Yin (1994) explained that "'how' and 'why' questions are likely to favor the use of case studies" (p. 7). The overall purpose of this study was to use affective interventions, focusing on emotional intelligence in particular, with the idea that it would impact student classroom experiences along with their approaches to learning and their perceptions of themselves as writers. The study was guided by the following primary research questions:

- How do affective instructional interventions impact student experiences in an introductory community college English course?
- How do affective instructional interventions impact student approaches to learning in an introductory community college English course?

- How do affective instructional interventions impact student perceptions of themselves as writers in an introductory community college English course?

Through an adequate site and participant selection, as well as a focused method for data collection and analysis, I addressed the above research questions.

Site and Participant Selection

Approval for this study in the form of official written permission was received from both George Mason University's and the site's Institutional Review Boards. The site selection for this particular study was a community college campus on the outskirts of a large metropolitan area. The campus itself is the largest and main campus of large community college system offering a variety of associate degrees, certificate programs, and a large number of workforce development courses. A wide range of course sections are offered such as 8-week, 12-week, and 16-week face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. A diverse study body of approximately 23,000 students attends this particular campus annually with the vast majority attending in person while others attend online. In my study, the format was a condensed 12-week spring semester course which, despite having the same amount of contact hours as a regular 16-week course, may have had an impact on the overall depth of the study due to the shortened duration in comparison with other studies.

As part of my site and participant selection, the purposeful sampling method was used. Creswell (2012) noted that with purposeful sampling "researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon" (p. 206). Through both the actual community college campus site and the College Composition I

course selected, the research questions were intentionally, or purposefully, addressed.

Also, such site and participant selection helped bind my study in time and place. Creswell

(2005) explained that the term bounded means "that the case is separated out for research

in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries" (p. 439). As my study involved my

place of employment and students from my College Composition I course during spring

semester 2016, it was thus clearly bounded by time and place.

This study used convenience sampling, and to a lesser extent, criterion sampling.

According to Creswell (2012), with convenience sampling "the researcher selects

participants because they are willing and available to be studied" (p. 145). Selecting

participants from the English course that I typically teach was convenient; the

participants were immediately available and willing to participate after signing the

Informed Consent forms regarding the study's safety and how identities would remain

anonymous. Finally, criterion sampling was another strategy involved, albeit in a more

indirect manner. As criterion sampling simply has to do with selecting individuals who

meet a certain criterion, my College Composition I students met the criterion of being

both students enrolled in a course focusing on writing and community college students in

general. Overall, the students who participated in the study were of mixed race, ethnicity,

sex, and age.

The number of participants for this study was 20 students. The enrollment cap for

the College Composition I course is 25 students even though the course can run with as

few as 12. As this study was a mixed methods case study not requiring large numbers, the

quantity of students who ultimately agreed to participate was sufficient. An added

convenience in the study was having a high number of students enrolled in the course since College Composition I is required for most degree-seeking students at this college and at most 4-year universities that many students likely plan to transfer to in the future. Many of the participants either placed into the course through a placement test or by some other means such as having completed a lower-level course previously. The types of lower-level courses that must have been completed prior include either one of the two course sections of Developmental English, or the final course section out of five of English as a Second Language (ESL). In all of these cases, in order to be eligible to take College Composition I, students must ultimately be approved by the instructor of the lower-level course.

Assurances were given through detailed written and oral explanations to the students of my College Composition I course about anonymity and students signed the Informed Consent forms. I explained the overview of the study and noted that their participation was completely voluntary and that they could choose to opt out if they preferred. It was made clear that the decision to participate would have no direct connection with their course grade nor would participation involve any extra course work. I also pointed out that by choosing to participate they were contributing to educational research that may have not only a direct impact on them during the process but may also help both instructors and other students in general in the long term. Despite all of this, the fact that students provided data directly to me and I was simultaneously both instructor and researcher, limitations exist in that the students may have communicated to me through the data what they thought I would want to read or hear.

It is important to mention as well that possible predispositions might have influenced both the data gathered and analyzed. For example, as the researcher, my own predisposition based on past experiences and the fact that I was teaching an entry-level community college course was to assume that the students would eagerly and thoroughly respond to the affective interventions. Such a predisposition led me to gather data that might have been limited in its depth or scope and also might have caused me to analyze the data with an influential or overly subjective preconceived perspective. Additionally, student predispositions might have had an influence on the data as well as the students might have assumed simply because they were in an introductory community college course that they needed or would benefit from affective interventions. Contrary to this, as the study did not involve composition affective intervention materials in a composition-specific course, students might have been predisposed to reject or question the need for the interventions. As a result, all these types of predispositions might have compromised the data collected and analyzed in general.

Propositions and Framework

Whereas Yin (2003) used the term "propositions" to guide research in a case study, Stake (1995) applied the term "issues." Similar to a hypothesis in a purely quantitative approach to experimental studies, propositions involve educated guesses about the possible outcomes of the research study and "may come from the literature, personal/professional experience, theories, and/or generalizations based on empirical data" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 553). In this case study, the following propositions were considered:

59

- Community college student classroom experiences are positively impacted when affective instructional interventions are part of the lesson plans in College Composition I.

- Community college student approaches to learning are positively impacted when affective instructional interventions are part of the lesson plans in College Composition I.

- Community college student perceptions of themselves as writers are positively impacted when affective instructional interventions are part of the lesson plans in College Composition I.

To follow up, it is important to explain that propositions help create a conceptual framework for a study. In relation to this, Baxter and Jack (2008) explained that "propositions . . . are necessary elements in case study research in that both lead to the development of a framework that guides the research" (p. 552). The conceptual framework for this study, like the propositions that led to it, was based on both the literature and my personal experience and can be visualized in the manner presented in Figure 2. The major constructs within the overall framework (see Figure 2) involved affective instructional interventions impacting student classroom experience along with student approaches to learning and their perceptions of themselves as writers.
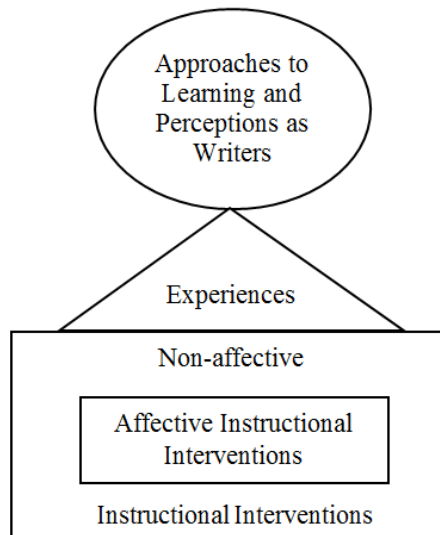
Figure 2. Conceptual framework.

Data Collection

Yin (1994) explained that an overriding principle to case study research is the use

of multiple data sources for evidence that may come from such sources as documents,

archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical

artifacts. For this study, I collected documents and interviews. The documents included

three different sets of student-written prompt responses, student and instructor journals,

and student responses to their results on an affective domain self-assessment survey. Of

these documents, the sets of student written responses and interviews were the core

pieces of data analyzed. The interviews were one-on-one conferences that took place at

the very end of the course after the affective instructional interventions focusing on

student experiences during the interventions, and the ways these interventions may have

influenced their approaches to learning as well as their perceptions of themselves as

writers. As the course was broken primarily into two main parts with roughly the second

part involving four weeks of affective instructional interventions, the lesson plans during the portion of the course that included the affective teaching interventions were based on Downing's (2011) *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life* text including the material for the affective domain self-assessment survey and journals (Appendix A). This text was not specifically designed for a composition course; however, materials came from the *On Course* text as it directly addresses affective concerns in the college classroom while "focus[ing] on empowering students from the inside out" (Downing, 2011, p. xxi). In addition to providing sections that focus on affective issues such as emotional intelligence, *On Course* also provides a self-assessment survey and focused student journal prompts dealing with affect. Since emotions are a core element of affect, this study built on previous work by other researchers that focused on emotions and writing by explicitly emphasizing through teaching interventions the affective variable of emotional intelligence as presented in Downing's (2011) text. Regarding emotional intelligence directly, Downing (2011) noted how although it is still being defined, Goleman (1995) identified four components that are involved: i.) emotional self-awareness; ii.) emotional self-management; iii.) social awareness; iv.) relationship management. The first two, Downing (2011) explained, are more personal involving recognition and management of one's own emotions whereas the latter two are more social involving recognition and management of the emotions of others.

Finally, although emotional intelligence was the focused on in the study, affective learning served as the overarching purpose with other less-defined affective variables included as well. For example, the study also included some work about the importance

of personal responsibility language and the importance of choosing to use personally positive creator language as opposed to negative between victim language. Regarding the use of creator language, mention was made about the need to avoid both the inner critic, or our inner voice that criticizes who we are and what we do, and the inner defender, or our inner voice that deflects individual blame and redirects it to other factors. In place of both the inner critic and inner defender, a focus was given to the inner guide, our inner voice that seeks to reflect on and make the best of any situation.

The written responses, journals, and student responses based on survey results allowed for rich data that helped illuminate the impact affective teaching interventions had on student experiences in the classroom as well as their approaches to learning and their perceptions of themselves as writers. In relation to student perceptions of themselves as writers, during the affective intervention period students wrote an expository compare/contrast essay that was assessed with a standard rubric and indirectly related to the post-intervention responses. Student essay writing in general served as important data, but the overall study itself was focused primarily on process having to do with improving the writer over the long term rather than on product directly involving writing itself over the short term. The context for the overall data collection involved a step-by-step process. Again, after an initial first period of the course in which no affective interventions occurred, a subsequent period integrated affective interventions into daily and weekly activities and assignments. The former period, indirectly, served the purpose of providing a contrast to the latter period based on affect and also allowed students to more clearly understand the latter period as being independently unique.

More specifically, students composed three separate sets of written responses involving pre- and post-affective interventions for the sake of comparing and thus capturing the impact of such interventions in an analytically robust manner. The first set included pre- and post-intervention written responses with students reflecting prior to the interventions in the pre-intervention responses on what a typical course experience is for them (Appendix B) while the post-intervention written responses of this group included in-depth student reflections on their course experiences with the affective interventions that took place (Appendix C). The second set of written responses first involved students reflecting on their approaches to learning in general prior to the interventions and later on how their approaches to learning were impacted during the process involving the affective interventions. The third set of written responses included student reflections on how they perceive themselves as writers, and this also took place at the beginning and the end of the affective intervention period. It needs to be noted that although there were parallel pre- and post-intervention questions for students, the wording for the first, second, and third set of the pre-intervention questions was not exactly the same as the wording for the first, second, and third set of the post-intervention questions. This is important regarding limitations in that the pre- and post-intervention student responses indicate or measure slightly different material.

Students also composed journal entries related to issues of affect during the interventions. The journal prompts came directly from Downing's (2011) *On Course* and served the purpose of helping guide students to engage directly with questions concerning their personal selves in relation to affect. This also allowed students to become more

familiar with the general concept of affective skills, particularly emotional intelligence. A weekly journal that I completed as an instructor during the intervention period of the course involving the affective interventions was also a part of the data collection. This journal included not only a written record of what was taking place but also thoughts and ideas in relation to the teaching sessions themselves. A particular focus was on both my experiences as well as what I perceived the student experiences to be along with how I believed student approaches to learning and their writing, and perceptions of themselves as writers, were, if at all, being impacted. McLeod (1995) interestingly noted, in relation to how teachers perceive their students' learning, that researchers in the past

> concluded that [high] teacher expectancies for their students . . . were in fact self-fulfilling prophesies; . . . christened . . . the "Pygmalion Effect," [whereas] a teacher's low expectations can have what researchers have termed a "Golem Effect," lowering students' own expectations for themselves. (p. 371-372)

This journal captured additional information from the instructor's perspective (keeping in mind the "Pygmalion Effect" and "Golem Effect") to supplement that of the students' perspective. Such a journal also added to the assessment of whether adjustments were necessary to improve the class sessions themselves.

Despite the benefits of the instructor journal, it also has limitations in that the content that I captured is material from both the researcher and the instructor. In this sense, some observations may lack objectivity. Elements of what I wanted to see as an instructor may have been blended in with what I was actually seeing as a researcher. As a result, I may have been overlooking phenomena that needed to be included, and thus it is

important to also understand post-intervention student responses and interviews as helping to fill in likely gaps.

The affective domain self-assessment survey (Appendix D), also based on Downing's (2011) *On Course* text, was completed by students twice: prior to the start of the period of affective instructional interventions and at the end of the intervention period. Both at the beginning and end of the intervention period students responded in writing to the results of this survey that focuses on the area of emotional intelligence. The survey consisted of a low category score of 0 - 39 which "indicates an area where your choices will seldom keep you on course" (Downing, 2013, p. 8), a middle category score of 40 – 63 which "indicates an area where your choices will sometimes keep you on course" (Downing, 2013, p. 8) and a high category score of 64 – 80 which "indicates an area where your choices will usually keep you on course" (Downing, 2013, p. 8). Furthermore, regarding the concern for capturing the interventions' impact in an analytically robust manner, results from students' affective domain self-assessment surveys were indirectly correlated to the student written responses. At the same time, although the surveys and both student written and interview responses identify parallel items in that the two types of data involve measuring student affective growth, they do not necessarily predict one another. For example, the surveys focus more on general affective issues including emotional intelligence whereas the written and interview responses focus on specific affective issues related to the College Composition I course. The data from the surveys, therefore, is interesting additional information gathered from

the students but it is also limited as direct support for the student written and interview responses.

Finally, following the affective teaching interventions, I met with each of the 20 student participants individually for interviews. The interviews reinforced and assisted in understanding at greater depths the impact the affective interventions had on each student's course experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers. The questions were open-ended and a total of three questions were asked (Appendix E). Creswell (2012) pointed out that with interviews probes are often required, and he defined probes as "subquestions . . . that the researcher asks to elicit more information . . . [that] vary from exploring the content in more depth (elaborating) to asking the interviewee to explain the answer in more detail (clarifying)" (p. 221). Post-intervention period interviews addressed the impact the interventions might have had on each student in relation to the three research questions, subquestions, or interview probes were used.

Regarding the wording of the questions for both the post-intervention written responses and interviews, specific and direct language was used addressing the course more so than inquiring generally about students' experiences, approaches to learning, and their perceptions of themselves as writers. The strategy in framing the questions in this manner was to attempt to ensure the students responded to the question being asked rather than digressing, but the approach might have led to student answers being more positive overall. Students may have experienced some struggles that they did not have

exact language for and with more open-ended questions the responses might have been even more accurate.

By using the varied data collection sources such as three different sets of written responses, interviews, surveys, journals, and a set of student essays, I was better able to describe and understand student experiences and other student particulars as a process that develops over time. In relation to McLeod's (1991) comment that rather than "[seeing] learners as passive recipients of knowledge and [viewing] learning in terms of teaching outcomes" (p. 102), the data sources for this study involved seeing learners as active recipients of knowledge with learning viewed in terms of a process as opposed to a product.

Data Analysis

From an overall perspective, this study used the analytical strategy of relying on the theoretical propositions that focused on student classroom experiences, student approaches to learning, and student perceptions of themselves as writers being positively impacted by affective interventions. The propositions involved capturing quantitative and qualitative data related to pre- and post-affective interventions in order to strengthen the study's analytical goals and add to the overall description itself. Yin (1994) explained that with data analysis

> the preferred strategy is to follow the theoretical propositions that led to the case study . . . [and that] the propositions would have shaped the data collection plan and therefore would have given priorities to the relevant analytical strategies. (p. 104)

In addition to this general analytical strategy, analysis included analyzing the data with the goal of understanding the case as a whole rather than analyzing each source independently. Baxter and Jack (2008) argued, for example, that "one danger associated with the analysis phase is that each data source would be treated independently and the findings reported separately. This is not the purpose of case study" (p. 555). Also, as is typical in a mixed methods study, the data analysis took place concurrently with the data collection.

As for the specific analytical procedures, Yin (1994) pointed out that the overall general analytical strategy "underlie(s) the specific analytical procedures" (p. 106). The actual types of analytical procedures, or techniques, are sometimes described differently by those involved in educational research. For example, Stake (1995) listed categorical aggregation or direct interpretation as types of analytical techniques that exist. Stake (1995) explained that "two strategic ways that researchers reach new meanings about cases are through direct interpretation of the individual instance and through aggregation of instances . . . [and that] case study relies on both of these methods" (p. 74). In other words, categorical aggregation has to do with collecting individual instances and massing or aggregating them together "until something can be said about them as a class" (Stake, 1995, p. 74). Direct interpretation deals more with singling out a specific instance or episode and analyzing its meaning. For example, Stake (1995) explained that direct interpretation involves "attach[ing] meaning to a small collection of impressions within a single episode" (p. 74). In this case study, as instructor journal entry observations were used as a data source, both categorical aggregation and direct interpretation were types of

specific analytical techniques employed; however, the study focused predominantly on categorical aggregation. This study's analytical technique was ongoing throughout the study to support Stake's (1995) claim that "analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (p. 71).

In contrast to Stake (1995), the specific analytical procedures, or techniques, that Yin (2003) described include pattern matching, linking data to propositions, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case synthesis. In case studies, these techniques are considered "Dominant Modes of Analysis" and intended to help develop validity (Yin, 1994). Although each technique has its unique value, each also has its own purposes; thus, each individual study's focus determines the best type of technique to be used. In this study, the main type of analytical techniques used was pattern-matching.

When it comes to case study analysis, pattern-matching is often used as it "compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one" (Yin, 1994, p. 106). Pattern matching tends to be used more in explanatory case studies; however, as Yin (1994) pointed out, "If the case study is a descriptive one, pattern-matching is still relevant, as long as the predicted pattern of specific variables is defined prior to data collection" (p. 106). It is important to note that there are also different kinds of pattern matching such as using nonequivalent dependent variables as a pattern that help strengthen a case study's internal validity when patterns coincide (Yin, 1994). This study was most closely aligned with the pattern of nonequivalent dependent variables as the descriptive focus was largely on the dependent variables, or affected events of impacted student classroom experiences,

approaches to learning, and their perceptions of themselves as writers, as opposed to the independent variables associated with the affective instructional interventions themselves.

Again, Yin (1994) argued that pattern matching can be relevant with descriptive case studies such as this study, but it is necessary to establish the predicted pattern of the specific dependent variables or outcomes. These outcomes, according to Yin (1994) are specified "based on [the researcher's] propositions" (p. 107) and represent different dependent variables. In relation to the propositions established for this study, the specific outcomes dealing with student experiences, approaches to learning, and their perceptions of themselves as writers when implementing affective interventions were that the major themes from the data would be positive. As each outcome representing a different dependent variable, Yin (1994) suggested to "assess each with different measures and instruments" (p. 107). The first predicted outcome was assessed not only by focusing on the major themes that emerged from the analysis of the first set of pre- and post-intervention written responses and part one of the post-intervention period interviews, but also by focusing on data from the instructor journal, surveys, and student writing in general. Similar to the first predicted outcome, the second predicted outcome was assessed by focusing on the major themes that emerged from the second set of written responses and interviews as well as the data from the material mentioned above. Finally, the third predicted outcome was assessed by focusing on the major themes that emerged from the third set of written responses and interviews in addition to the data from the material mentioned above.

The data analysis involved what Creswell (2012) called the "coding process" which is a step-by-step process in order to "make sense out of text data, divide it into text or image segments, label the segments with codes, examine codes for overlap and redundancy, and collapse these codes into broad themes" (p. 243). Along with themes, or "similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea in the database" (p. 245), the analysis involved description, or "a detailed rendering of people, places, or events in a setting in qualitative research" (p. 245). In direct reference to description and themes, Creswell (2012) explained that "describing and developing themes from the data consists of answering the major research questions and forming an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon through description and thematic development" (p. 247). Ultimately, the idea with this case was that after having engaged in analysis that involved the coding process of description and then coming up with themes, findings would show how I "have predicted an overall pattern of outcomes covering each of the [specified nonequivalent dependent] variables" (Yin, 1994, p. 107) involving student classroom experience, student approaches to learning, and student perceptions of themselves as writers as being positively impacted by affective instructional interventions, thus establishing clear conclusions.

More specifically, the coding process for this study involved parts. For example, Spinuzzi (2013) noted that there are typically three types of codes to use: starter codes, for "things you expect to find" (p. 138); open codes, for "things you find along the way" (p. 138); and axial codes, for "connections you find across the codes" (p. 138). These three types of codes were used for the written responses and interviews in order to "build

up an understanding of the relationship among data points" (Spinuzzi, 2013, p. 138) and come up with themes.

Based on the research questions about the impact of affective instructional interventions on student experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers, three general categories were set up: Category 1 "Student Experiences," Category 2 "Student Approaches to Learning," and Category 3 "Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers." Each of these categories also had subcategories of positive, mixed/neutral (neutral meaning neither positive nor negative responses involved), or negative. Starter codes were then created in association with these subcategories. Following the creation of the starter codes, open coding, or what Spinuzzi (2013) also called "free form tagging" (p. 140), was used when going through the core data from the written responses and interviews. Data that did not fit with the starter codes was labeled with open code descriptors. These open code descriptors, like the starter code descriptors, also fell within the subcategories of positive, mixed/neutral, or negative. Finally, after reviewing the data and establishing starter and open codes, axial coding took place in relation to each research question. Spinuzzi (2013) noted that "typically, you'll develop axial codes only after applying starter and open codes across most or all of your data" (p. 141). When reviewing the codes across the different data I collected for each research question, and noticing relationships or connections, I would code each connection and ultimately established major and minor themes. Still, although less objective than starter or axial coding, open coding was predominant and largely based on interpretation or judgement decisions related to my own understandings of the data as a

researcher. Even though the widespread use of this coding strategy was required since much of the data was rough or messy, it also led to limitations in the data analysis due to its emphasis on interpretation in general.

In addition to the coding process and beyond the major and minor themes that emerged, a final layer of evaluation was implemented in the data analysis process specifically with the post-intervention responses. With this final layer of evaluation, the coded student post-intervention responses were re-reviewed in an attempt to distinguish more thoroughly between the positive responses which tended to be dominant. For example, with the post-intervention data related to each research question, individual student examples within the overall case study were analyzed. As this evaluation procedure also included interpretation there are limitations involved.

Indirectly relating to this study's reporting of student written responses and interviews as captured in the data, Creswell (2012) noted, "State the dialogue in the participants' native language or in the regional or ethnic dialect" (p. 257). He also explained the following: "Report quotes from interview data or from observations of individuals. These quotes can capture feelings, emotions, and ways people talk about their experiences" (p. 257). As this study dealt with affect directly, capturing such data is valuable. Creswell (2012) explained that it is important to be sensitive to labels when working with individuals or groups and noted, "This means calling people names they prefer and acknowledging that preferences for names change over time" (p. 278). In reference to this need to use language that is sensitive to individuals, and for the sake of

maintaining study anonymity, student participants were labeled as male or female and assigned an alphabetical letter for identification purposes.

Finally, it must be mentioned for clarity's sake that this study's focus was not on directly comparing or contrasting the intervention period of the course with the first period of the course in which interventions did not occur. Rather, the intervention period was indirectly compared to the first period merely for the sake of highlighting or singling out the time period in which affective issues were explicitly part of the lesson plans and course. As a result, this study was a descriptive case study that primarily focused on the affective intervention period itself. The focus was primarily on process, which increases the validity of the study and has to do with improving the writer as a whole for long-term purposes, rather than on product that has to do with improving writing alone for short-term purposes. Having said this, one particular limitation to the data collected is that it involved only an approximate four-week period, or about one-third of the course, within a condensed twelve-week semester. Despite the practical reasons behind the structure of the study that included an introduction period as well as a conclusion period in which I collected much of the data, such a short amount of time involving the interventions is limiting as deep learning requires more time to solidify.

Trustworthiness

Referencing the issue of trustworthiness or fidelity, Russell et al. noted that a basic cornerstone for achieving this in case study includes the following:

> (a) the case study research question is clearly written, propositions (if appropriate to the case study type) are provided, and the question is substantiated; (b) case

study design is appropriate for the research question; (c) purposeful sampling

strategies appropriate for case study have been applied; (d) data are collected and

managed systematically; and (e) the data are analyzed correctly. (2005, as cited in

Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 556).

This process guided this study, thus enhancing credibility; furthermore, I used a number

of other approaches as well.

Triangulation was used throughout to enhance accuracy in general. Creswell

(2012) explained that triangulation means the following: "that investigators [can]

improve their inquiries by collecting and converging (or integrating) different kinds of

data bearing on the same phenomenon. The three points to the triangle are the two

sources of the data and the phenomenon" (p. 536). Yin (1994) explained that "a major

strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of

evidence" (p. 91). With the collection and analysis of student written responses,

interviews, student and instructor journals, surveys, and essays that involved 20 students

in this study, multiple sources of data were involved in an attempt to support a theme, and

thus triangulation existed. As a result of such triangulation, bias was reduced and

credibility strengthened.

Stake (1995) noted that "our problem in case study is to establish meaning rather

than location, but the approach is the same. We assume the meaning of an observation is

one thing, but additional observations give us grounds for revising our interpretation" (p.

110). In relation to this concept of reliability, it is important to add that throughout this

study raw data and emerging themes were consistently checked, reviewed, and rechecked

against the study's overall data analysis procedure. In sum, trustworthiness is present in this study overall through triangulation.

Complications associated with trustworthiness also exist in this study in a number of different ways. First, as the wording of the pre- and post-intervention questions that students responded to were not exactly the same but the results from each were still compared to one another, the analysis ultimately involves an indirect connection. It is true that as the focus of the post-intervention prompts for both the written and interview responses dealt specifically with the interventions and thus the wording would be different, it is still important to point this out so as not to make a completely direct comparison between the two periods. Second, as the specific language that was used in the post-intervention questions for the written responses as well the interviews was based directly on the course curriculum and was not open-ended, students may have been influenced toward particular answers. For example, in the case of not having the language to clearly respond to a prompt, students may have borrowed words from the prompts themselves. Finally, the open coding method that was used relied heavily on interpretation and thus raises questions as to the objectively involved in the data analysis. After the coding of data, the data was thoroughly analyzed as discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The core data for this descriptive case study consists of post-affective intervention data from student written responses and student interviews in which students were prompted to respond to questions relating directly to the study's three research questions. In addition to the core data, I analyzed post-affective instructional intervention surveys, an instructor journal, and student writing. I also collected pre-affective intervention student written responses and analyzed and compared them to the core post-intervention core data. Finally, I compared pre-intervention survey scores to post-intervention survey scores. In addition to strengthening triangulation and validity, the pre-data provides a point of reference and evidence of change.

Analysis of the data suggests that a slight majority of the 20 student participants were impacted in slightly favorable ways by the interventions. Despite these results, the most common and interesting result was that a vast majority of the positive responses within the post-intervention data lacked clear definiteness, thus suggesting that many students were in the process of recognizing or comprehending elements of the affective domain and how these issues play a part in their role as students. Based on a number of factors such as research, past experience, and analysis of the data provided by the participants, what might have been happening to produce these semi positive results includes students struggling to understand the concept of affect and its relevance or value

in their lives as students. Ultimately, the trends that stood out with many of the post-intervention responses were that the vast majority were lightly positive, but that they lacked strong language and/or clear conviction in that regard.

Research Question One Data Analysis: Interventions' Impact on Student Experiences

Pre-Intervention Data

The pre-affective intervention written response requesting students to describe their overall typical student experience in any standard course was derived from research question one and the results were later compared to data collected from post-intervention responses about student experiences. Again, research question one was: How do affective instructional interventions impact student experiences in an introductory community college English course? Assigning codes, or descriptors, to the data from all 20 students during the coding process resulted in groups of positive, negative, and mixed/neutral descriptors. Only a few descriptors were solely positive such as "liked," and only a few were solely negative such as "stressful." Although there were more cases of descriptors in the negative group than descriptors in the positive group overall, the majority of the descriptors were in the group of mixed/neutral. For example, the bulk of the data dealing with student experiences in the pre-intervention written responses included descriptors such as "uninteresting except for major courses," "bad when stressful," or similar mixed/neutral responses.

The major theme or pattern that emerged overall from the pre-intervention written response part one about student experiences was labeled as "negative when course overly challenging or not personally interesting." There were several additional minor themes

labeled in the following order of importance: "stressful and discouraging," "stressful

along with satisfaction of sorts," "enjoyable and encouraging," and "unimpactful" (see

Appendix F for a list of all major and minor themes relating to research question one).

Post-Intervention Data

The post-affective intervention written response part one and interview question

part one data that prompted students to comment on the impact the interventions had on

their overall student experience in the College Composition I course also derived directly

from research question one. The result of this post-intervention data was that there were

both positive and mixed/neutral group descriptors; however, more descriptors were

associated with positive student experiences than with mixed/neutral experiences. For

example, there were a few descriptors that were in the mixed/neutral group such as

"review but good refresher," "stressful and helpful," "review and nothing more," or

"personal reflection mentally difficult." Examples of the majority of the descriptors that

were associated with positive student experiences included "liked," "helpful," "reduced

stress," or "eye-opening." There were no descriptors associated solely with negative

student experiences. Ultimately, when focusing solely on the post-intervention data that

includes 20 student responses there were 13 (65%) positive responses, 7 (35%)

mixed/neutral responses, and no negative responses.

The themes that emerged were based on the descriptors in relation to how the

affective instructional interventions impacted the student experiences of the 20

participants. The major themes that emerged involved students expressing benefits or

feelings of empowerment, how the overall writing intervention experience was insightful,

or that they had enjoyed the experience. In particular, the specific major themes that emerged were: "empowering or beneficial," "personally insightful," and "enjoyable." The minor themes involved students expressing their experience with the interventions as review, limited, or somewhat personally distressing. More specifically, the minor themes included: "mostly review or limited" and "somewhat personally distressing." The written responses and oral interviews were involved and analyzed together, so some mixed/neutral student responses are associated with both major and minor themes.

It is important to note that data gathered from my instructor journal indirectly is associated with the major themes from the post-affective intervention written response part one and part one of the interviews. It also is indirectly associated with the predicted outcome that the affective interventions would have a positive impact, although student data that ultimately emerged for research question one was less clearly positive in general. Notes from the instructor journal regarding student experiences during the interventions largely comment on positive student experiences although there were also examples that were more mixed. For examples, the following was noted:

> I am not sure if the students themselves understood the interventions as being realistically applicable directly to themselves as students. In other words, I feel that many of the students have learned for so long that the work they do in a course can be interesting but that it is odd and not the norm to actually think of the coursework as having a more direct or personal impact on them as students or beyond.

Regarding comments relating more to the positive experiences during the 4-week intervention period, as the instructor I wrote: "Students were quick to respond to the affective interventions excitedly." I followed this with an example:

One student exclaimed in an email that this is what true teaching is all about and thanked me personally for introducing the affective domain material that was helping her personally grow in new ways and was leading her to self-realizations about her future.

Elaborating on what I perceived, I noted that "students responded energetically to the case study discussion from the beginning of the emotional intelligence packet" and that "a number of students, in eager anticipation, asked me if we were going to be able to focus on the journal and discuss it in groups." Addressing the group work in particular, I observed that "when working in pairs, small groups, or as a class, students consistently wanted to share their thoughts and ideas." As noted in the instructor journal, the attendance rate remained strong and consistent instead of dropping off following the initial session of the affective instructional interventions which somewhat supports my observations about students generally having positive experiences.

Regarding the surveys that were not directly associated with any one specific research question but were part of student responses as a whole, the pre-intervention results showed the following: 6 students scored in the low category which "indicates an area where your choices will seldom keep you on course" (Downing, 2013, p. 8); 12 students scored in the medium category which "indicates an area where your choices will sometimes keep you on course" (Downing, 2013, p. 8); 2 students scored in the high

category which "indicates an area where your choices will usually keep you on course" (Downing, 2013, p. 8). For the post-intervention survey, the results showed the following: 2 students scored in the low category; 15 students scored in the medium category; 3 students scored in the high category. There were a total of 15 students whose survey scores increased between the pre-intervention and post-intervention period, 4 students whose scores decreased, and 1 student whose score remained the same. Overall, the survey results indirectly measured student awareness of their personal affective skills including emotional intelligence, and any positive change suggests a possible influence of the affective interventions (see Figure 3).
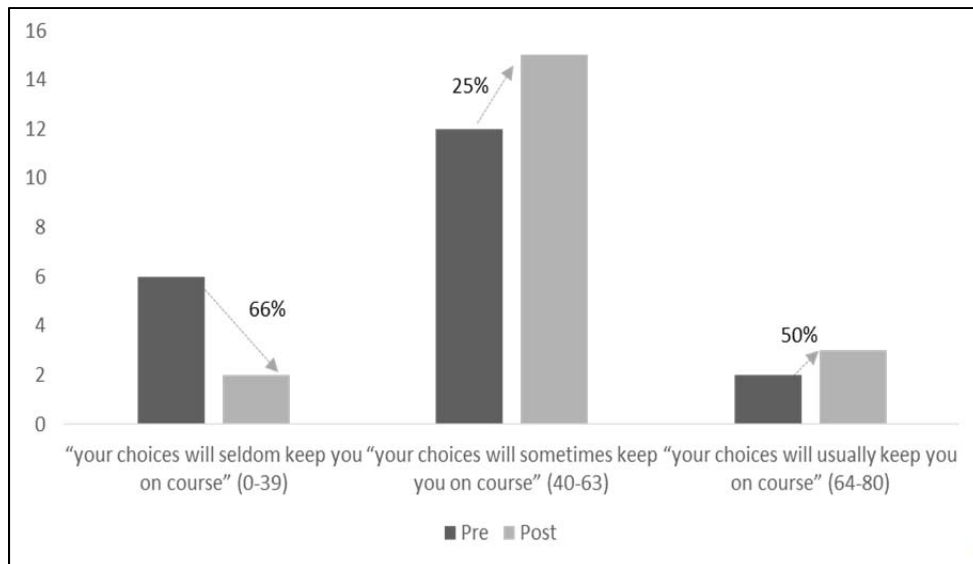
Figure 3. Pre- and post-intervention survey comparisons.

Having said this, a positive change on the survey results does not necessarily equate with the interventions having had an impact. The simple fact that the second

survey was given later on in the semester, for example, needs to be considered. For this reason, it is important to understand the surveys as support only in relation to the data from the pre- and post-intervention student responses.

Post-Intervention Positive Responses (Research Question One)

Focusing in even more on the data for research question one, an additional layer of analysis of the post-intervention positive responses helped to clarify how the vast amount were interestingly not strongly positive, suggesting that students were mostly in the process of grasping the full meaning of the interventions and how elements of affect play a role in their lives as students. This added layer of analysis that delved even deeper into the positive responses of the learners, as opposed to the mixed/neutral or negative responses which were more obvious, resulted in the emergence of a high positive impact tier and a low positive impact tier. For research question one, out of the 13 positive responses from the 20 student participants there were 10 (50%) low positives and 3 (15%) high positives. For not only research question one, but also for research questions two and three as well, the high positive responses contained a response with strongly positive language and/or a clear sense of personal conviction about the impact of the interventions. In contrast, the low positive responses contained more mild content, or rather a response with lightly positive language and/or a rough sense of conviction about the impact of the interventions. Sample high positive and sample low positive post-interventions responses help to clarify the difference between the two.

Sample high positive post-intervention response (research question one):
Student B. In the case of Student B, a female student, with the post-intervention response

for research question one, her use of strongly positive language and a clear sense of conviction in the content about the impact of the interventions show how her positive response is a high positive response. For example, using strongly positive language which helps in understanding Student B's response as high positive, she exclaimed: "In general I am motivated, inspired, and more confident that I can do better." The terms "motivated," "inspired," and "confident" are specific examples that suggest the interventions had an important impact even if Student B does not directly reference the interventions themselves, and tends to use language associated with the interventions or prompts.

Associated with the major theme "empowering or beneficial," Student B explained how she was impacted by the interventions beyond the classroom: "The affective domain activities presented information in my everyday live [*sic*], in a well-organized manner." She emphasized the personal impact the interventions had and she wrote that the interventions "help me in identify [sic] different aspect of my life more clearly." She elaborated by noting: "For example, when unexpected events happens [*sic*], expect the best of the situation. It may just be a blessing. Trust the outcomes." At another point in her written response, Student B also emphasized the personal impact and explained that "the information present created such awareness." She then added that "it refresh [*sic*] my mind on how strong, and loving I am." Student B went so far as to mention the depth of the personal impact and exclaimed, "I saw myself in this class." She concluded about how the interventions personally impacted her by noting the following: "I now am more capable than I had imagine [*sic*]. I offer this information to other

students as well as my love [*sic*] ones, because it helped me." What is of particular interest in Student B's written response comments is how she noted that the interventions helped with awareness. This is interesting since it is more measured as opposed to many of the other comments that tended to be somewhat extreme with the perception that the interventions had major long-term benefits which raises some questions since such an impact usually takes much more time and practice.

Finally, Student B was positive about the affective skills materials in the interview: "They were very informative and they presented information even though you had a slight idea, it presented it that [*sic*] was so easy to understand and easy to relate to." She continued: "And providing that it was easy to relate to, you were able to pinpoint little things in your daily life in association with that." She also commented on how she learned about issues of stress: "I found the different ideas of stress and the different ways that stress effects our lives. That was interesting."

Student B's comments in the interview were positive in general but it was more the strongly positive language and the conviction about the impact of the interventions expressed in her written response that prompted understanding her post-intervention response in relation to her student experiences in the course as high positive. Her comments did relate to the major theme of research question one of "personally insightful" and "enjoyable," but the positive major theme categorized as "empowering or beneficial" was more pronounced in her overall post-intervention response. In sum, despite the questions raised regarding an overemphasis, Student B's post-intervention

response about her student experience suggests that the impact of the interventions added a new level of confidence and support.

Sample low positive post-intervention response (research question one): Student F. In the case of Student F, a female student, the post-intervention response about her student experience in the course is a low positive response due to the lightly positive language about the impact of the interventions and the low sense of personal conviction about the impact of the interventions. Despite Student F's comments being associated with the major themes that emerged for research question one such as "enjoyable," they do not contain particularly strong language or represent content that displays a clear sense of conviction about the impact of the interventions. As a result, the post-intervention response by Student F is labeled a low positive response.

Mildly positive language is common in Student F's responses such as when she began by noting, "I have had an overall pleasant experience with the 'On Course' affective domain activities." Still, initially in her written response after noting that the interventions were a "pleasant experience," Student F does respond positively with less questionable language that is associated with the major theme of "personally insightful" for research question one:

> It has made me reflect on who I am, not only as a student but as a regular person. It's helped me step back and look at the times I acted improperly, and it gave me guidelines on how to avoid a situation like that from occurring again. It was an eye-opening read, and helped me acknowledge some points in my life where I am doing well as well as where I am struggling.

Although some comments do contain strongly positive language, the majority of her comments made throughout raise questions about the degree to which the impact of the interventions was positive. For example, the reading material dealing with emotional intelligence included information about the concept of "flow" by explaining that it is "one of those extraordinary moments when you [lose] yourself . . . maybe while conversing with a challenging thinker or playing a sport you love with a well-matched opponent. In flow, participation in the activity is its own reward" (Downing, 2013, p. 330). Student F noted indirectly on the impact the reading had on her by writing how "this semester I'm taking 5 courses and feel very motivated and busy, so I've created a flow in my life and keeping up with all my responsibilities." Beyond what the student states on the surface with the indirect reference to flow, this comment raises the question as to whether her "keeping up with all [her] responsibilities" was a result of the influence of the interventions or if it was simply because she was busy in general and thus had to focus and organize her efforts.

Student F also commented in other instances about the positive impact of the interventions but similarly they lacked strong conviction. In the interview, for example, she explained: "So my overall experience I thought it was kind of fun because it was classwork that we all got to discuss together. It was fun figuring out what everyone thought of themselves." This lightly positive response that focuses on how the intervention classwork was "fun" was reiterated three times. She explained, in particular, how the case studies that were explored in class were appealing: "It's interesting to see how everyone has a different perspective about what's right and what's wrong . . . I

thought [the case studies] were fun to read. The first one we read was funny." When

asked about other material completed during the intervention period such as the journals,

Student F's response was also positive yet lacking in strength:

> the journals were nice to reflect on how I can do better and one time I would react
>
> badly and then I'd have to reflect on it and see, like, how I shouldn't because, you
>
> know, like the packet gives you like step-by-step advice on how to like avoid
>
> situations like that so it's like you really have to reflect on the times that you
>
> messed up. So that was nice too, I guess.

Despite being associated with the major theme of "empowering or beneficial," a lack of

strong language, content, and a clear sense of conviction about the impact of the

interventions communicates that the interventions had a low positive impact in relation to

Student F's experiences in the course.

Representative Student Responses for Research Question One

Beyond the positive post-intervention responses alone and the differing layers of

analysis that seek to illuminate the lack of clarity, an analysis of all post-intervention data

about student experiences in comparison with the pre-intervention data of the 20 student

responses demonstrates more fully the impact associated with the affective interventions

that occurred and resulted in the following categories: "extremely helpful" (a three-tier

level change from negative to high positive); "very helpful" (a two-tier level change from

mixed/neutral to high positive or negative to low positive), "moderately helpful" (a one-

tier level change from negative to mixed/neutral, or a change from mixed/neutral to low

positive); "minimally helpful" (no tier level change including low positive to high

positive but examples of at least a minimal impact of the interventions); and "not helpful" (no tier level change and examples of a negative impact or no impact at all). It must be pointed out that as there were no interventions involved with the pre-intervention responses there were no high positive and low positive levels but rather just a positive level. Subsequently, when comparing the pre- and post-intervention responses, no level change was recorded between a positive pre-intervention response and either a low positive or high positive post-intervention response.

In sum, when comparing the pre- and post-intervention data for research questions one no responses were categorized as "extremely helpful," 2 (10%) responses were categorized as "very helpful," 10 (50%) responses were categorized as "moderately helpful," 7 (35%) responses were categorized as "minimally helpful," and 1 (5%) response was categorized as "not helpful." As mentioned in Chapter 3, the particular wording of the questions, or subquestions, that were given for research question one may have influenced student responses in an indirect way. Nevertheless, representative pre- and post-intervention student responses associated with research question one indicate how they fall into the separate categories as well as how the major and minor themes emerged.

"Very helpful" representative samples. The "very helpful" category for research question one is defined by student responses that changed two tier levels between the pre- and post-intervention period from negative to low positive, or mixed/neutral to high positive.

Student D. A female student, Student D, had a mixed pre-intervention response and a high positive post-intervention response about her experiences expressing how the affective interventions helped her reduce anxiety. Interestingly, however, the pre-intervention survey score that dealt with indirectly measuring awareness of personal affective skills for Student D was 68 out of 80 and the post-intervention was 70 out of 80 which shows almost no change at all and does not reflect the differences found between her other responses thus raising some questions.

During the first week of the semester Student D, whose first language is not English, verbally communicated to me when she completed the pre-intervention response that she had profound concerns about her ability to succeed in the course. In her written pre-intervention comments (the research question-related prompt), she noted, "I have always tried to do my best." She then added, "I don't have any extra free time to lose it [*sic*], so before taking a class I set my schedule to work and study simultaneously." However, she mentioned to me directly at the start of the semester and included in her written response that, "I have taken some classes which have which have [*sic*] made me nervous." From her brief pre-intervention response, Student D expresses a sense of focused determination as well as a sense of anxiety.

In the post-intervention interview related to the major theme of "empowered or beneficial," Student D stated the following about her comfort level: "I've had a very good experience in this course because I feel that I have to remove all my anxiety about turning in the writing and everything." She added: "I really feel comfortable with you especially because I participated in another class and I dropped it because I don't [*sic*] feel

comfortable in that class." This sense of comfort expressed is associated with the interventions as she references their impact in other comments. For example, she wrote that, "I really like the on course activities in this class" and how it "helps me to interact with my classmates and also helps me to think how to manage my stress and take control of some emotions when I participate in some social activities in class." She continued about the impact of the interventions: "It over all helps me a lot in recognizing my feelings and overcome [*sic*] some of my feeling that I had before." This student also explained how the interventions increased her self-confidence, which further relates to the major theme of "empowering or beneficial" that emerged from research question one: "Reading these packets it gives me a bit of a feeling about myself. I feel more self-confidence to expressing [*sic*] my feelings and not afraid of judgement."

As a result of the strongly positive language and conviction expressed in the content involving the personal impact that the interventions appear to have had on Student D, her post-intervention response about her experiences with the interventions is a high positive response. Having said this, and taking into consideration both the undertone of the overall response and the lack of change from her pre- and post-intervention survey results, Student D more likely improved in "recognizing," as she noted, the role affect plays in her life as a student rather than having been permanently impacted.

"Moderately helpful" representative samples. The "moderately helpful" category for research question one is defined by student responses that changed one tier

level between the pre- and post-intervention period from negative to mixed/neutral, or from mixed/neutral to low positive.

Student A. The pre-intervention response for student A, a female student, was mixed/neutral focusing on challenges and frustration whereas the post-intervention response was low positive focusing on benefits from the intervention such as learning to reduce stress. As a result, the impact of the interventions on Student A was considered "moderately helpful." The survey scores for Student A were 34 with the pre-intervention survey and 43 for the post-intervention survey which slightly reflects the shift between the pre- and post-intervention responses.

When Student A described mixed experiences in the pre-intervention response, she focused on the difficulty level of specific courses. She wrote: "My overall student experience has its ups and downs. For example, Math is difficult to understand because of how much work it takes to complete just one question." She then added: "But, History is easy because all I have to do is study the material and not have to do work to get an answer." She described her frustration by elaborating on the subject of math: "When I do math and I believe I got the answer right, most of the time I end up getting it wrong. And, that's what makes me hate math because even when I try I do it wrong." Taking into consideration her comments about the experiences she mentioned in different courses, her response is mixed/neutral.

Student A's post-intervention response was low positive however, and it was associated with the major themes of "empowering or beneficial" and "personally insightful." For example, regarding the theme of "empowering or beneficial," this student

commented in the written response that the affective domain material used during the intervention period "kind of impacted me" and that it "has taught me how to make the right choices in life." These two comments taken together help with interpreting the latter since if the interventions only "kind of" had an impact then it is more likely than not that they did not have a life-changing impact but rather an impact that suggests a certain but limited awareness. Additionally, she noted the following: "The Emotional Intelligence packet has taught me how to control my emotions. For example, it says that instead of getting stressed out about something we should find solutions to our problems." Student A added that the material provided "helpful tips on how to live a better life." Although she may be overstating the impact of the interventions on her experiences as it is unlikely that what she refers to as "tips" would so easily lead to a "a better life," her post-intervention response is a low positive response as she did comment that the affective interventions helped with taking steps to reduce stress, in and out of the class, through a better approach for controlling her emotions.

Regarding the major theme of "personally insightful" related to research question one, Student A explained that she liked the work on emotional intelligence because she gained knowledge about herself. She referenced how the affective domain material linked procrastination with stress, and commented on this in relation to herself during her interview: "I liked it—because most of it was true—especially it [*sic*] said about stress like try to not—something about procrastination I think. I do that a lot. So it's true." There is a sense of uncertainty in her response but still examples exist to suggest that the

94

interventions impacted her by at least making her more conscious of the role of affect in her life as a student.

Student G. The pre-intervention response of Student G, a male student, was mixed whereas the post-intervention response was low positive and associated with the major themes for research question one. In addition, his pre-intervention survey score was only 10 whereas his post-intervention score was 64. These results suggest a change; however, this is a dramatic change more so than his pre- and post-intervention responses which do not suggest such a dramatic change but rather a "moderately helpful" change.

In the pre-intervention response about student experiences, Student G noted how his experiences depended on the type of course and the content of the course. For example, he explained, "The more interesting the course is to me the more I tend to engage myself and benefit from the class." He elaborated on this point by noting, "As a student, the experience for me tends to vary based upon the level of the course." Student G later added: "For example, if I tend to slack and not do work, I pretty much get nothing out of the class other than interacting with other students who interest me." He concluded, "If the teacher is engaging and utilizes visual aids in their lectures then I tend to do much better in the course."

As far as the low positive impact of the affective interventions and student experience, Student G commented in his post-intervention remarks: "Overall I have really enjoyed the 'On Course' activities. For me the impact was simply upon emotionally how I handle certain situations." In addition to Student G's comments being associated with the major theme of research question one of "enjoyable," they are also associated with

the other major theme of "empowering or beneficial." For example, he noted, "I have learned to really be more calm and slow down the information that I have been processing in order to fully understand it." This student also referenced the affective instructional work, or package, directly and explained in the interview, "I think the package really sort of reinforced good habits and good ways to emotionally approach writing and just learning in general." He built on this by adding:

> I guess the way in which I've approached writing has sort of changed. You know if it's something I don't really particularly like to write about, I think I approach that differently and sort of said you know "I'm going to have to get this assignment done" but emotionally how can I make myself feel better about the assignment.

Student G's post-intervention response was rather balanced throughout. Although his post-intervention response borders between a high positive and a low positive response regarding his experiences with the interventions, in the end the subdued language in general and content that lacks clear conviction is an example of a more low positive response.

   Student J. The pre-intervention response about student experiences from Student J, a male student, was negative while the post-intervention response was mixed/neutral. When compared, the difference is that the pre-intervention response focused predominantly on anxiety while the post-intervention response did not. Additionally, Student J's pre-intervention survey score was 34 and the post score 51 which corresponds

to and supports his change between the pre- and post-intervention period even if it is somewhat more extreme.

When Student J described his past negative student experiences in the pre-intervention response, his first comment in the written response was the following: "Almost every course I have ever taken has one commonality . . . anxiety." In particular, he pointed out that "all of my stress and trepidation rests with homework." Elaborating on the topic of homework, he noted: "My attention wanders far and wide, but never on where it should reside. I will complete any number of tasks instead of completing homework." He explained that he has a variety of strategies and tools to address this issue he has with homework, but that the problem remains. He concluded: "All of these tools and more are used to conquer my nemesis homework; maybe one day they may even quell my associated anxiety."

The post-intervention response from Student J was mixed/neutral and did not emphasize his anxiety with homework or other areas. Instead, he expressed how the interventions mostly served as a refresher of what he had already encountered on an individual level in the past, and thus his comments relate to the minor theme for research question one of "review." For example, mentioning the affective domain work indirectly, this student explained, "Years ago I went to a life-coach and dealt with many of the issues mentioned in the packet, but of late I have forgotten and ignored my hard learned lessons." Indirectly referencing the affective interventions, he also wrote, "I have been refocusing and choosing to double up on my wants, my goals, my life." This comment

about making the choice to refocus on his goals is important since it supposedly surfaced as a result of the interventions.

Student J commented in the interview how the work on affect was a review for him, but that it was a review that was helpful: "So this information was that—I'd gone through the process before much more in depth and everything." He continued: "But I haven't been back for a year or a year and a half and everything, so it started to slip a little bit so then it was actually nice—like a refresher course. It got me back." What Student J's comments involve is not necessarily an awareness of affect since he had already had some exposure to and understanding of this from the past, but rather a sort of renewed energy or motivation to reimplement what he has learned both from the past and the interventions in order to help him succeed as a student in College Composition I and, possibly, in future courses.

"Minimally helpful" representative samples. The category "minimally helpful" is defined by minimal change in that the student tier level did not change between the pre- and post-intervention period but there were still signs that the interventions had at least some sort of impact on the student.

Student E. In both the pre- and post-intervention data, Student E, a male student, had mixed/neutral responses. He commented on feeling uncertain about his ability to succeed at the start of certain courses but noted that his confidence grew as the courses progressed. The pre-intervention survey score for student E was 51 and the post-intervention score 52 and thus the mere single point difference is not great enough, which

raises some questions and does not clearly reflect the minimal impact result derived from the other data.

In the pre-intervention written response, Student E explained how in a particular college course he had initial fears, but he later overcame them. He noted: "I had some fears of not doing well on [*sic*] this course and not to understand as well. After we got half way in this course, I realized that it seemed tougher than it really is." From this student's response, there may be an issue involving a lack of confidence as he expressed anxiety at the start of a course that later subsides once he realizes that he is capable of succeeding.

The post-intervention response was mixed as well, but it is marked by the impact of the affective interventions. For example, the post-intervention response is associated with the major themes that emerged for research question one, most particularly the major theme of "empowering or beneficial." As in his pre-intervention comments, Student E expressed that he had doubts about his ability to pass the course, but that he was able to confront these feelings with the help of the interventions. He commented, "I once felt that I'm not able to pass this course and that is it." However, he then added that the work related to affective skills impacted him: "It changed my feelings toward the course. I started believing in myself." Building on this response, he explained: "I've learned from Emotional Intelligence Packet is [*sic*] to separate my emotions and feelings, and not to be prisoner to these obstacles." He then added, "I used to be a student that when he faced a work [*sic*] that is kind of difficult to him or makes him feel anxious, what he does is only to avoid doing it." Although from such comments it would be

extreme to conclude that he has established a solid foundation as a higher education student, the comments do at least suggest that there is a sense of growing awareness of the value of affect in his learning.

Finally, Student E mentioned in the post-intervention response his past struggles as a student compared to his current student experiences. He explained in the interview:

> Last semester I got expelled from [University] and I didn't know anything about being in college. Before I thought that the professor is being picky, and the professor is giving us hard questions. He's not understanding that I am international student.

Addressing the affective instructional interventions directly, he commented, "After reading the packet, I just realized that me myself—I just create my own things, not other things create [*sic*] me." These comments also emphasize a sense of awareness about the value of affect to him as a student; however, as the pre-intervention response similarly emphasizes an improvement in confidence and perspective from the beginning of a course to the end of a course and does not mention anything related to affect, questions remain about whether Student E was impacted similarly in the post-intervention period as a result of simply engaging in the course and staying involved or by the actual interventions themselves.

Student H. Student H, a male student, had a positive response in the pre-intervention written response and a high positive response after the post-intervention period, thus, the impact of the interventions was analyzed as being minimally helpful since both responses were in the general positive level. The pre-intervention score on the

100

survey was 35 and the post-intervention score was 42, which somewhat relates to and reflects the minimal change suggested with the pre- and post-intervention responses.

In the pre-intervention response, Student H explained how his typical student experiences were positive by noting the following: "Educational courses have the possibility to impact me in big ways. I think the biggest impact an educational course can have on a student is inspiration." He added, "Many courses have inspired me and truly sparked new interests for me." Additionally, he emphasized his positive student experiences by noting how, "Classroom learning can really affect me personally—in more ways than just an increased knowledge for the subject." Throughout his pre-intervention response, Student H was consistently positive about his past experiences as a student.

In the post-intervention responses, Student H referred to the affective interventions when commenting on his student experiences, and his responses are particularly associated with the major themes of "empowering or beneficial" and "personally insightful." For example, he directly mentioned the intervention packet in his written response by noting, "The packet has taught me about myself and how to handle my emotions in a more positive way when it comes to decision making." This comment indicates how the interventions helped Student H become more aware and open to the content associated with affect. He added to this by commenting during the interview about how he might actually apply what he learned from the interventions: "The packet has also made me more aware that I am responsible for my own actions. For example, if I am late to class it is my own fault and my own responsibility." He continued in his

response during the interview to positively elaborate on the affective domain packet work:

> With the packets, especially the emotional intelligence one, that kind of like really relates to me a lot because I've always been the kind of person who like lets my emotions like affect my work and my decision making and all that stuff so I think just reading over those two packets was very like informative and like actually helped myself to realize what was going on and like that I can't allow my emotions to affect my decision making and my schoolwork.

Directly related to research question one's major theme of "personally insightful," he concluded by explaining, "So I think that in itself it was just a big eye opener for me." In the end, Student H's language is consistently strong and the content displays examples of conviction about the impact of the interventions even if the impact on his student experience was not always directly related to the classroom itself. Due to this, the post-intervention response about his student experiences, despite the ambiguity, is somewhat more of a high positive than a low positive.

   Student I. For Student I, a male student, the impact of the interventions was somewhat mild as he had mixed/neutral results equally for both the pre- and post-intervention responses. In addition, the pre-intervention and post-intervention survey scores for Student I were both 46 which does not clearly support and relates to the minimal shift between the pre- and post-intervention responses.

   In the pre-intervention response about typical student experiences, Student I touched upon challenges and rewards. For example, in reference to challenges, he noted,

"How a course impacts me on different levels is, additional stress trying to meet specific due dates, and gauging the level of difficulty in any specific course to determine the amount of effort required in the course." Countering his focus on challenges, he mentioned the positives by stating: "It gives me a sense of accomplishment towards my goals and I enjoy taking courses because the amount of knowledge I feel I am obtaining." He added that "there's a feeling of pride when you turn in work and I think of my courses as beneficial." The response combines the idea of struggle and stress along with the idea of reward at the end, thus it is a mixed response.

Regarding the post-intervention data, Student I's response is associated with the major themes of "empowering or beneficial" and "personally insightful" for research question one; however, the responses were also mixed as the student alluded to stress as he similarly did in the pre-intervention response. For example, Student I noted in the written response, "It's been a really stressful journey but this packet has really helped motivate me, and gave me a better sense of my emotions." Later he added, "I will better apply what I learned from this packet." He also mentioned, regarding his status in the class, "I almost dropped" and explained that "this class was mostly a mental battle for me I feel like I won." In relation to the major theme of "personally insightful," he described his general experience in the following vague manner in the interview: "The overall experience was pretty good. I learned a few things. I mean, just it was more of an eye-opening experience more than a learning experience. It was just like, oh, that's a perspective that I wasn't thinking about." Similarly to the pre-intervention response, the post-intervention response touched on the challenges along the way in the course but

103

how, ultimately, there were positives in the end, and the positives in this case, however mild, were related to the interventions.

"Not helpful" representative sample. The category of "not helpful" for research question one can be described as representing students whose responses did not change, or decreased, between the pre- and post-intervention period and did not contain any signs of an impact by the interventions.

Student T. In the case of Student T, a male student, both the pre-intervention response and the post-intervention response were mixed/neutral without an example of even a minimal impact. Interestingly however, the pre-intervention survey score for Student T was 29 while the post-intervention score was 60. Such a dramatic positive shift, however, does not at all correspond to the pre- and post-intervention responses from Student T and, in this particular case, raises obvious questions about the accuracy of scores in relation the other data.

In the pre-intervention response, Student T commented on his typical student experience in a general sense and pointed out his daily routine. For example, he began his response by stating: "My typical course at college starts in the morning. So I have to wake up early and get ready." Focusing more on college classes themselves, he noted, "During class I have to focus, and then do my work. I have trouble focusing." He concluded by explaining how "after class I do my homework but sometimes I procrastinate." His comments indicate rather standard experiences even if there is a negative element involved.

Student T pointed out in the post-intervention response that he was not impacted by the affective domain work. For example, he directly wrote the following: "The 'On course' packet hasn't really affected me. From the start of class neither my mentality nor work ethic has changed." He simply noted, "I pretty much just did the things that I needed to do." There are not necessarily any negative signs in Student T's response as the response is more neutral, but nor are there any positive signs that would indicate that he was impacted by the interventions.

Conclusions About Interventions' Impact on Students' Experiences

The aggregated major themes that emerged from an analysis of the pre-affective intervention data for research question one emphasized the group of mixed/neutral student experiences. The post-affective intervention data for the aggregated major themes or patterns emphasized the group of low positive as well as mixed/neutral student experiences. When comparing the pre-intervention data with the post-intervention data, 17 of the 20 participants were somewhere in the middle in that they were impacted either moderately or minimally as opposed to the extreme positive or negative. It also important to note that the vast majority of the post-intervention positive responses were labeled as low positive responses, thus raising some questions as to the intensity of the intervention's impact even when positive. In summary, the specific predicted outcome for research question one about the affective instructional interventions having a predominantly positive impact on student experiences somewhat indirectly aligned with the main outcome that involved the intervention having a positive and mixed impact while also being associated with the major themes.

Research Question Two Data Analysis: Interventions' Impact on Student Approaches to Learning

Pre-Intervention Data

The pre-affective intervention written response part two asked students to note their overall approaches to learning, and this data was later compared to the data from the post-intervention data about student approaches to learning. Again, research question two was the following: How do affective instructional interventions impact student approaches to learning in an introductory community college English course? The coding process for the student participants resulted in groups of positive, negative, and mixed/neutral descriptors. There were several examples of student responses that were coded with positive group descriptors such as "devoted," "works hard," or "partakes in a process." Although fewer, there were also several examples of student responses with the mixed or neutral group descriptors such as "focused on getting a good grade only and finishing," "unenthusiastic unless degree-related work," or "good intentions but not consistently enthused." Finally, the least common type of descriptors were the negative group descriptors such as "standoffish/skeptical" or "uncommitted."

Overall, the major themes that emerged from the pre-intervention written response part two about student approaches to learning were, in order of importance, "engaged," "enthusiastic," "apathetic or unenthusiastic," and "occasional attempt made but consistent effort lacking." The minor theme that emerged was "disengaged and uncommitted" (see Appendix G for a list of major and minor themes related to research question two).

Post-Intervention Data

The post-affective intervention data for written response part two and the interview question asking students to comment on the impact that the interventions had on their overall approaches to learning in the College Composition I course related directly to research question two. Regarding the positive, mixed/neutral, or negative group descriptors associated with the student responses, the result was that there were fewer mixed/neutral group descriptors than positive group descriptors. There were no responses with descriptors that were purely associated with the interventions having had a negative impact on a student's approach to learning. Examples of some positive group descriptors included "looks for solutions to problems," "takes initiative," or "focused to succeed." Examples of the mixed/neutral group descriptors included "unenthusiastic and interested," "good intentions," "capable of commitment but not convinced," or "no impact." Ultimately, when focusing on the post-intervention data from the 20 students and related to research question two about student approaches to learning, results show that there were 15 (75%) positive student responses, 5 (25%) mixed or neutral responses, and no negative responses.

The major themes from the 20 students that emerged from the descriptors about how the interventions impacted student approaches to learning involved students emphasizing engagement or determination and also expressing having felt enthusiasm. In particular, the post-intervention major themes were "engaged or determined" and "enthusiastic." The minor themes that emerged included students explaining that they had learned how to better manage their time, or that they were aware of their individual

challenges but struggled with implementing actions for change. More specifically, the post-intervention minor themes that emerged consisted of "conscious of weaknesses but lacking implementation" and "improved time management." The data on student approaches to learning was analyzed as a whole, including the written responses and interviews focusing on the impact of the interventions.

Regarding the instructor journal in relation to student approaches to learning, the data collected aligns with the major themes that emerged from the post-intervention written response part two and the second part of the interview and somewhat with the overall predicted outcome. Notes were included on a weekly basis. For example, at the beginning of the intervention period I noted: "Students enthusiastically participated in both small group and class discussion and were fully engaged." I added that "students also fully engaged in the work on compare and contrast writing." Later on during the interventions I wrote that

> the majority of the student work completed throughout the week, including both the in-class work on the short compare and contrast paper as well as the student journal from the emotional intelligent packet, was thoroughly and adequately completed by the majority of students.

Other similar positive comments continued. For example, I wrote that "the journal work even exceeded my expectations as far as the amount of material provided." I also pointed out that "every single student except one passed the quiz based on the reading at the end of the week." The observations mostly aligned with the propositions for research question two that were established prior to the study regarding how the interventions would have a

positive impact; however, as the final data analysis demonstrated the impact was both

mixed and lightly positive, what I perceived did not fully reflect the end results.

Post-Intervention Positive Responses (Research Question Two)

As mentioned previously, a layered analysis of the post-intervention positive

responses for research question two contributed to the understanding of how the vast

majority were somewhat unclear, suggesting that student participants were more in the

process of grasping the full significance of the interventions and how aspects of affect are

a part of their lives as students. This additional layer of analysis that probed beyond the

surface into the positive responses of the students, as opposed to the mixed/neutral or

negative responses which were clearer overall, resulted in the existence of a high positive

impact tier and a low positive impact tier. For research question two, out of the 15

positive responses from the 20 student participants there were 12 (60%) low positives and

3 (15%) high positives. While maintaining the same criteria mentioned previously of

what constitutes a high positive and a low positive response, sample high positive and

sample low positive post-interventions responses help to clarify and differentiate between

the two.

Sample of post-intervention high positive response (research question two).

Student N. In the case of Student N, a female student, her post-intervention

response about her approaches to learning is associated mostly with the major theme of

"engaged or determined" and represents a high positive impact as there is strong

language and content that displays personal conviction of the impact of the interventions.

It is a high positive response that is clearly positive since, for example, there are instances

of strong language that stand out and suggest the solid impact the interventions had on the student. Examples of such language include "definitely brought inspiration and insight," and "more determination."

Secondly, bound up with the strong language, Student N's response suggests that there is also a sense of conviction regarding the impact of the interventions. She explained, for example, that she is not only more determined to complete school work, but now also does not "just see it as work" and she views her investment in her schoolwork "as something that will benefit me in the future." Associated with this new view about and determination with education, she gave an example about how she would take full advantage of her time and notes how "now I try to look for any free time I may have in order to get done any work." For example, she mentioned that even during a five-minute break during College Composition I she would focus on studying. Such a comment as this by Student N helps to demonstrate how she took the concept of affect from the interventions and was able to apply it in a specific context.

Student N also expressed a strong sense of conviction of the impact of the interventions by claiming that "I can take on more courses next semester and manage to do fine while following the packets advices [*sic*]." Such a comment does not illustrate the ability to actually enact this action, but it does show a desire to do so which relates to the impact of the interventions. An additional comment related to Student N's sense of conviction about the impact of the interventions and which helps to show how her response is labeled a high positive includes her mentioning that her approach to learning changed. She exclaimed: "An example of a change of my approach to learning that was

110

influenced by the packets is that I am seeking for solutions to a problem." Despite the vagueness of this comment, it does suggest that either some sort of actions have been taken to improve her approach to learning or, as with the example above, there is a clear desire to do so. Still, in both cases, the impact of the interventions is clear.

Finally, indirectly referencing a particular focus of the interventions, Student N commented in the interview about the need to personally separate noncourse and course-related emotional concerns to maximize student success. When asked if her approach to learning was impacted by engaging with the affective material in the course, she replied by giving general advice based on her new experiences: "Don't bring [the outside sources] in the classroom, just leave it out and focus in the classroom basically." She followed this was what she personally does now after the interventions: "Before it'd be, like, I'm thinking about what am I going to do later and stuff in the classroom and that would stay with me at school. That's why I leave it out and don't think about it." Although this comment does not mean that Student N has been impacted in such a way that she will undoubtedly use the strategy she mentioned on a regular basis beyond the College Composition I course, it is a specific example of how she is aware of the strategy derived from the interventions and is able to connect it to her personal approach to learning.

The clearly positive post-intervention response about her approaches to learning coupled with both strong language and content that contains a sense of conviction of the impact of the interventions gives a fairly strong sense of the high positive impact of the

affective instructional interventions during the course even if it may not extend into the future.

Sample of low positive post-intervention response (research question two).

Student R. In relation to research question two about approaches to learning, Student R, a female student, mentioned in the post-intervention response that she was positively impacted by the affective interventions; however, the response is representative of a low positive impact response as the language is lightly positive as opposed to strong and there is only a mild sense of personal conviction about its impact. The responses did include some examples of the positive influence of the affective domain work on her approach to learning such as her comment that "it got me a little more motivated;" however, this comment with its vague tone of hesitation lacks strength and conviction.

Additional comments in Student R's post-intervention response are similar in that they are positive but rough or not strongly positive. A particular comment that makes me question the level of the impact due to its lack of both strong language and clear conviction was the following: "since the whole packet was talking about the motivation stuff—so it just changed a lit bit but not so much because I'm already motivated." In other post-intervention comments about her approach to learning, Student R did not directly address the interventions but rather focused on her approach to learning overall. She explained: "My learning approach throughout my life has been the most positive thing my life. I've never been determined about anything more than being in a college and getting my degrees that I need in life." Associated with the post-intervention major

theme of "engaged or determined," Student R noted, "Determination and excitement about learning made me more optimistic and confident about what I'm doing." However, this positive remark does not directly address the intervention and thus does not clearly use strong language or express conviction about the impact of the interventions. In many cases, the bulk of her post-intervention responses focused on her positive approach to learning from her past, in particular her "high school years" in which she pointed out: "I was determined about finishing high school with a maximum of 3.0 GPA and I didn't stop thinking about that until I get my job done and finished with a 3.6 GPA."

At one point, Student R did indirectly reference the material from the interventions about using "creator language" as opposed to "victim language" to achieve student and personal success as she commented in relation to past work she did to help children: "Creators in life are the ones who are determined to show all their abilities and use them effectively on [*sic*] their lives and others too." This indirect reference suggests that the she was impacted positively by the interventions but, simultaneously, the strength of the impact is questionable since the reference is only indirect. A more noticeable presence of a personal impact of the interventions was expressed in the interview as she explained how the interventions influenced her, as opposed to the past, to take the initiative more independently and seek extra help when necessary. For example, she pointed out in the interview the difference between her previous English course and College Composition I:

> The difference between this semester and last semester, because I was in ENF 2
>
> [Preparing for College English II]—the teacher was always telling us to go to the

writing center, like regularly. But since this, you know transition from ENF 2 to

ENG 111 [College Composition I] directly—you know you don't tell us to go—

like it has to come from us. So the packet actually—and some of the readings—it

motivated me to do this on my own without anyone telling me to.

This example is indirectly associated with the major theme of "engaged or determined"

for research question two as it suggests that the student took the initiative to approach her

learning in a more proactive manner as a result of the interventions. Despite it being a

fairly clear example of the positive impact of the interventions, the majority of the other

comments are positive but with less clarity. In sum, the absence of the trends involving

strongly positive language and clear conviction in the content with Student R's post-

intervention response leads to questioning the positive impact overall thus resulting in it

being labeled low positive.

Representative Student Responses for Research Question Two

An analysis focusing on more than just the positive post-intervention responses

alone did reveal different layers that showed the lack of clarity involved; however, a

more complete analysis included all post-intervention data about student approaches to

learning in comparison with the pre-intervention data of the 20 student responses. When

focusing on the impact of the affective interventions on student approaches to learning by

comparing the pre-intervention data with the post-intervention data, results showed no

responses categorized as "extremely helpful," 2 (10%) responses categorized as "very

helpful," 9 (45%) responses categorized as "moderately helpful," and 8 (40%) responses

categorized as "minimally helpful," and 1 (5%) response categorized as "not helpful." As

mentioned in Chapter 3, the particular wording of the questions, or subquestions, that were given for research question two may have indirectly influenced student responses in some way. Also, regarding the positive responses, it is important to note that four different students expressed positive approaches to learning in both the pre- and post-intervention responses; nevertheless, whether or not student pre- and post-interventions changed levels, several students expressed that the interventions themselves did indeed have an impact. A closer look at representative pre- and post-intervention student responses related to research question two illustrates how the responses fall within these different categories as well as how the major and minor themes emerged for research question two.

"Very helpful" representative samples. As mentioned previously, the "very helpful" category for research question two is defined by student responses that changed two tier levels between the pre- and post-intervention period from negative to low positive, or mixed/neutral to high positive.

Student P. The pre- and post-intervention responses about approaches to learning for Student P, a male student, had marked differences which resulted in the impact of the interventions on Student P being labeled "very helpful." For example, in the pre-intervention response he mentioned a lack of enthusiasm whereas in the post-intervention response he used strong language with a sense of conviction and there were examples about the interventions having had an impact as far as helping him to understand how he can take control of his academic situation by the choices he makes. The pre-intervention survey score for Student P was 48 while the post-intervention score was 56 which is not a

big shift and thus does not clearly support the change captured when comparing the pre- and post-intervention responses.

In Student P's pre-intervention response, there is a sense that his approach to learning is not proactive. He noted that "the overall experience I'm usually subject to is very stagnant and passive." He also commented how he is not very enthusiastic, but does attempt to interact with others: "Considering the lack of enthusiasm I try to spark some type of conversation or discussion that classmates can partake in." He added that "the enthusiasm isn't in the class itself, but it's in the people in the class and the perspectives you learn from everyone else." As far as actual practices, Student P noted that "while at school I try to figure out exactly what I need to do homework/project wise, and spend the evenings where I know I have a large amount of time to devote on academia."

On the post-intervention response, Student P noted that the interventions influenced his choices. For example, he pointed out that "this packet has given me a chance to realize that I make my choices, and I have to be smart about the choices I make, and not let emotions get the better of me." He further explained that "an example would be how I prioritize getting to the campus early every class day." These comments are examples of Student P not only being aware of the issues of affect from the interventions but also of how he actually is able to apply them.

Additionally, he pointed out in the interview that the "On Course" work "emphasized making choices" and how

> that was a key thing because now I'm getting to the point where I'm not really
>
> watched or monitored to where I am an adult—and I need to make my own

choices and by seeing how that is affecting my school and how it's affecting my

time and how I use it when doing any type of work.

This comment is another example of Student P's clear sense of awareness relating to the

issues of affect. He continues by emphasizing the idea of choice that he associated with

the affective domain work and expressed a determination to make the choice to do his

best to succeed in school by also noting in the interview: "I can either go back to working

crap jobs or I can choose to go to school and do what I want to do." He also added how

he was personally impacted by the interventions because of their focus on choices: "And

so I made the choice [to go to school], I'm sticking by the choice and I'm making sure

it's worth the choice." Similar to before, making the choice to persevere on a regular

basis with school is another example of Student P's awareness of applying concepts of

affect. It is clear that the topic of choices in the interventions impacted Student P on a

personal level regarding approaches to learning. Although the language could be a bit

stronger, the post-intervention response is more of a high positive response because of the

conviction of the impact of the interventions expressed in the content.

"Moderately helpful" representative samples. The "moderately helpful"

category for research question two represents student responses that changed between the

pre- and post-intervention period from negative to mixed/neutral, or from mixed/neutral

to low positive.

Student C. In the pre-intervention response, Student C, a male student, noted a

lack of determination in his approach to learning in general. In the post-intervention

response, he expressed that following the affective interventions he experienced an

increase in his determination and enthusiasm. Regarding the survey scores for Student C that dealt with indirectly measuring personal awareness of individual affective skills, his pre-intervention score was 48 while his post-intervention score was 52 which is not much of a shift and thus does directly support the pre- and post-intervention response but only indirectly.

In the pre-intervention response about his approach to learning, Student C's comments were mixed. He indirectly pointed out that he allows himself to get distracted easily by explaining how "it is sometimes hard for me to concentrate especially with all the situations that happen in life or even just with modern day technology side tracking [*sic*] me." He continued by more directly addressing the topic of his approach to learning and commented on his lack of determination: "If I was more determined to work even harder then [*sic*] how I am as of right now I would probably be a better student." He later concluded that, "I need to be more productive and get assignments done on time with better quality."

Through the low positive post-intervention response of Student C about approaches to learning, there are examples that show how the major themes for research question two of "engaged or determined" and "enthusiastic" emerged. For example, after noting that "my overall approach to learning has effected a good change to my learning," Student C added: "I have a stronger determination and enthusiasm to learning [*sic*] more even in English in which [*sic*] I think is one of my weakest subjects." Relating to the theme of being engaged and determined, he also pointed out some specifics about the actions he takes following the interventions. For example, as far as the effect the

intervention had on his actions, he responded in the interview that the interventions helped reduce stress and he is now more engaged in "prioritizing what I needed to do first and then down with the highest responsibility to the lowest." Such action does suggest both awareness and application of the material from the interventions. Still, despite the response being positive, strong language is not used enough and there is not necessarily a sense of conviction throughout his responses. Thus, as a result, Student C's post-intervention response is a low positive response and falls into the "moderately helpful" tier when compared to the mixed pre-intervention response.

     Student J. Between the pre- and post-intervention responses about student approaches to learning for Student J, there was a difference in that the pre-intervention response focused on losing motivation whereas the post-intervention response focused on the need to follow through to the end with work. The result was a mixed response.

     Regarding the pre-intervention response, Student J commented that in his approach to learning he often starts out enthused but does not finish this way. For example, he explained that "depending on the project, I will be enthusiastic at first;" however, he continued to explain that "after this initial enthusiasm I begin to procrastinate at an ever growing [*sic*] rate." In the end, he mentioned how he will desperately throw himself into his work to try and get it all completed simultaneously. In relation to this, he noted how "this is fueled less by enthusiasm and more by pure pressure of the due date." Elaborating on the specific practices that he engages in, Student J explained that he does typically plan to do the work, but "after a few weeks however, I usually begin to slide in my approach to scholastic work."

In the post-intervention response, Student J's response was associated mostly with the major theme of "engaged or determined." He focused on strategies presented in the "On Course" packet having to do with not merely understanding the importance of affective domain skills, but also the need to follow up and make sure that the affective skills are being used by assessing oneself regularly. For example, he explained in the interview that he had had exposure to similar material in the past but that the interventions "also reminded me of the overall process of it all—that it's a full process that you have to keep going back, especially the part about going back and reevaluating your progress." In addition to this focus on assessing his progress with the use of affective skills, Student J noted that "basically it's just a constant loop of doing it over and over again," and that "I have to not only be aware of it but I have to be able to make sure I'm doing it." He commented that the interventions "got me back on to doing that."

The comments by Student J indicate that there is a sense of both awareness of affective issues as well as an application of this awareness in his role as a student even if it is not clear if such awareness will remain and continue to be applied. Still, although Student J's post-intervention response is positive, much of the response emphasized the past or pointed out how the interventions helped to remind him of what he had already been aware of regarding the need to have a focused approach to learning. The content lacks conviction and there is not particularly strong language used throughout. As a result, the response is a low positive response and categorized as "moderately helpful" when compared with the pre-intervention mixed response.

Student M. The difference between the pre-intervention response and the post-intervention response about approaches to learning for Student M, a female student, consists of a mixed pre-intervention response that mentioned a lack of motivation and a low positive post-intervention response that mentioned optimism and responsibility. However, completely contradictory to the pre- and post-intervention responses, Student M's pre-intervention survey score was 62 whereas her post-intervention score dropped significantly to 35 which raises questions about the scores or interventions' impact captured in the responses.

Student M focused on how her learning involves a lack of motivation and determination in her pre-intervention response. For example, she directly noted that, "I am not motivated as student [*sic*] to do more than try and pass with the best grade possible." She continued by noting how the usual trend is that when any possible motivation exists it typically "becomes only good intentions." Focusing on a specific example of a past chemistry class, Student M reflected how "I saw this class as a chore rather than a new way to learn a hard subject and didn't necessarily try to come up with a better study habit for this class." She later explained that "after the first week I was just as negative and unenthused like the rest of the class and didn't keep up my motivation."

Student M's post-intervention response was low positive and corresponds to the major themes that emerged in relation to research question two. For example, this student pointed out how the interventions impacted her by commenting in her written response that "my learning approach is varying, but the 'on course' packets have helped improve and steady my approach with more of an optimistic and successful encounter than I have

previously had." Focusing more on particulars, Student M noted that the affective interventions "have allowed me to reflect on my approach and how I view my work." She added to this by explaining that, "I catch myself in the act of repeating old flaws but I have started to correct them." Related to this comment, she noted that the intervention work "helped me to realize where I'm burning out and where I need to step it up." These comments indicate, albeit indirectly, both awareness through her reference about reflection and application as she mentioned she has begun to take action to improve her approach to learning.

As far as being more determined, Student M also made the claim that, "my personal changes have affected my success because I have become more personally responsible." There is also an emphasis that the interventions had on her outside of school as she explained that "the packet was very successful in helping me and I can see it in my work and outlook on my school work." Specifically addressing her work, she noted that she has "been able to apply this packet to my outside life at work." She added, "I can handle coworkers better than before" and that "I have removed myself from unwanted situations, resulting in a happier work day." The language that Student M used for much of her post-intervention response tends to be somewhat vague or general instead of focusing on specifics. The result is that this is a low positive response as there is not a clear sense of conviction in Student M's comments about the impact of the interventions and there are some questions regarding whether she may be overstating the impact in terms of changing her life. Still, when compared to her mixed pre-intervention response

Student M falls into the category of "moderately helpful" regarding the impact the interventions had as a whole.

"Minimally helpful" representative samples. The category "minimally helpful" for research question two relates to minimal change in that student responses did not change between the pre- and post-intervention period but there were still signs that the interventions had an impact.

Student B. Student B noted a positive approach to learning in both the pre- and post-intervention responses; however, in the high positive post-intervention response she commented that her approach to learning had improved and was indeed impacted as a result of the affective domain work.

In her positive pre-intervention response, Student B commented that "knowledge is priceless" and that "today I am excited when it comes on [*sic*] to learning something new." She also noted that "learning is my awareness mechanism." Additionally, she claimed that "sometimes it even feels like fun." The language used and the consistency throughout are what resulted in Student B's pre-intervention response being labeled positive.

In the post-intervention response about her approaches to learning, Student B's comments are associated with research question two's major theme of "engaged or determined." Student B explained how the interventions impacted her approach to learning on a practical level. She noted: "The affective domain activities, have impacted some of [my] daily actions." She gave the following example: "When I am angry I remind myself not made [*sic*] any decision until I am calm." She explained in response to

the question about how the interventions impacted her approach to learning by noting the following: "I am more engaged, determined, and excited [about] my daily activities. I choose what I do more carefully, so I can be happy." Although Student B does indirectly mention that the interventions provided a sense of awareness regarding affective issues and that she has made efforts to apply what she has become aware of, the language used tends to overlap the language used in the prompts and the interventions as well which thus raises questions regarding the extent of the interventions' impact.

In the interview, Student B commented that the work related to the affective domain "has definitely impacted my approach to learning." She explained:

It has somehow helped me to be more effective in terms of writing my papers. You know I tend to find time and I realize that when I put time aside to do things and that is one of the concepts I think the affective domain did—create time so you can you know do your work or whatever.

This is another example of how she applied what she become aware of from the affective interventions. Student B emphasized her awareness of issues related to the interventions as she also added that

somehow this course has helped me to understand that just time organizing things, getting them done ahead of time, stuff like that, can help you drastically to improve with [*sic*] your grade, not making excuses for anything just finding a way to get things done.

Indirectly, Student B's response about the impact of the interventions on her approaches to learning overlaps into research question three about the impact of the

interventions of the students' perceptions of themselves as writers. Student B elaborated: "It's best to find that kind of option so you know I'm doing that and I realized that I can write better. I can write more. And, you know, my papers are better." This comment by the student indirectly suggests that as a result of her approach to learning having been impacted by the interventions her perception of herself as a writer has benefited as well. In relation to this, she also added: "You know when I put time aside to have it done rather than do it in a hurry, you know, stuff like that. And that helps me to realize that I can write." This comment relates to her previous comment about how the interventions helped her develop a strategy to improve her writing process. In sum, despite using language that somewhat overlaps with the prompts and interventions in places, there was a sense of conviction about the impact of the interventions in Student B's post-intervention response. She also gave examples about how she applied what she took from the interventions to her approach to learning. In the end, although borderline in ways, Student B's positive post-intervention response is high positive.

Student D. The pre-intervention response from Student D about her approaches to learning was positive, focusing on how learning can be exciting. Her post-intervention response was low positive as well, but also showed how the interventions had an impact on her approaches to learning in general thus showing how they were at least minimally helpful.

In the pre-intervention response, Student D expressed how her approach to learning is positive and noted that "learning a new things [*sic*] in any areas makes me happy." She added that, "I am really excited when I face to a new things [*sic*] that I don't

125

know before." Despite how "academic learning and writing in college is a big challenge for me," this student's emphasis was on the how her approach to learning is positive and noted, "We have many opportunities in college to help me to do better in my assignment such as tutors and computers."

The post-intervention low positive response by Student D was somewhat similar but did express the influence that the interventions had on her approaches to learning. For example, this student noted that "the on course reading helps me to recognize my fears when I hand in some of my assignments which are poor in grammar and content." By noting how she recognizes emotions such as fear, this comment indicates that there is awareness of affective issues by the student as a result of the interventions. Student D continued to emphasize this awareness and also how she applies it as she focused on the impact of the affective domain interventions by adding, "Now I feel more powerful and not afraid to express my self [*sic*] when I hand in my assignments or when I work with my classmates on activities." Student D's response is also associated with the major theme of "engaged or determined" for research question two as she directly commented in the interview: "I feel more engagement [*sic*] to participate, and I feel more comfortable, you know. I want to do very well in class."

Student D's post-intervention response is clearly positive; however, as the response is somewhat lacking in depth and is rather repetitive at times, the response is more representative of a low positive response than a high positive response.

Student E. As both the pre- and post-intervention responses for Student E, a male student, were positive, the impact was categorized as minimally helpful; nevertheless, the

post-intervention response emphasized the impact of the affective domain work even if it was a low positive response.

In the pre-intervention response, Student E commented that he is enthusiastic in his approach to learning overall. For example, he noted, "Being an international student make [*sic*] me enthusiastic in every single part I learn." He added that "every part I learn is a new thing" and "it fill [*sic*] me up with knowledge." Regarding his approach to learning with the English language specifically, he noted: "As English is my second language, it require [*sic*] me to work hard and learn and memorise [*sic*] new things. I usually try to read things few time [*sic*] to have it stick on [*sic*] my head." Through his comments in the pre-intervention response, there is clearly a positive tone regarding his approaches to learning.

In the post-intervention response, Student E discussed his past approach to learning and his approach to learning following the work with the affective domain activities. He explained, "I used to be a student that when he faced a difficult work, he just try [*sic*] to get rid of it, or try to avoid doing it, or to blame other people." He then added: "When I have read the Emotional intelligence packet I realized that having these feelings is acting like a victim. I've learned that I have to be a creator and try to find solutions." In this comment, there is a vague indication of awareness of the ideas associated with the interventions but it is very general and the language used is mostly from the interventions as opposed to being original. In the interview, Student E commented that, "Actually, at the beginning of this course I thought it was just teaching me how to write an essay but day after day I just realized that this course is giving me

advice for college life." He also wrote in the written response: "Now when I have a writing assignment, I separate my emotions and I focus on work." In this comment, also vague and general similarly to others, there is a slight indication of how he has attempted to apply the concepts from the interventions into his approaches to learning.

In sum, Student E's comments are representative of the major theme "engaged or determined" for research question two and his post-intervention response about his approach to learning is also a low positive response as there are signs of awareness of the content of the interventions but the language used tends to be overstated and borrowed from the interventions.

"Not helpful" sample. The category of "not helpful" for research question two represents student responses that did not change, or decreased, between the pre- and post-intervention period, and that there were no signs of any beneficial impact.

Student T. The pre-intervention response from Student T was mostly mixed as the student commented on his approach to learning in somewhat standard terms. Student T's post-intervention response was also mixed albeit it was more negative or neutral than the pre-intervention response.

Student T began his pre-intervention response about his approach to learning by commenting, "Lately I've been trying a different approach to college, the past approach wasn't successful." He then mentioned the steps directly: "The first step in my college process is success is choosing the right class." Adding to the steps, he noted, "Two is that passing the school has a lot to do with the teacher." In relation to this, he explained that "if I don't like the teacher I'm more likely to fail." As far as his approach to learning

within the class itself, he explained, "In class I try to focus, but I have trouble focusing."

He continued: "I should be taking notes but I never do." He concluded by directly

addressing the issue of homework: "Next I try to do the homework immently [*sic*] after

the class, because I know myself and I procrastinate. However often times after class I

will be too exhausted to do my homework."

In the case of the post-intervention response, Student T commented on the

affective domain coursework in relation to his approach to learning and directly

explained that there was no impact. He noted in the written response: "The "On Course"

packet did not change my approach to learning. It was just formality to me, and most of

the things it said I already do anyways." This random comment is somewhat neutral as

the student expressed that the interventions had no impact. He more negatively added,

however, that "people who do this it won't help, because they have to change on their

own." Despite the neutral and negative comments, Student T did also comment that as a

result of the interventions, "I tried to make less excuses." He also explained in the

interview that "just like anything—instead of saying like 'this is somebody's fault' I'll be

like, 'okay, this is what happened.'" As a result of the positive comment about how the

interventions helped him become more aware of being personally responsible, Student

T's post-intervention response was ultimately mixed.

Conclusions About Interventions' Impact on Students' Approaches to Learning

The final major themes that emerged regarding the pre-intervention data for

research question two about student approaches to learning varied with positive,

mixed/neutral, and negative responses. Still, the final major themes that emerged for the

post-intervention data were mostly positive. A final comparative analysis of the pre-intervention data with the post-intervention data shows how the themes that emerged from the post-intervention data are more positive. Despite the post-intervention positive responses, it is still necessary to be aware that the vast majority of the post-intervention positive responses were labeled as low positive responses, which raises some questions as to the intensity of the interventions' impact. When focusing on the initial predicted outcome for research question two about the affective instructional interventions having a positive impact on student approaches to learning, results show that the predicted outcome aligns but only indirectly with the final outcome as the final outcome shows that the interventions widely impacted students in roughly positive and mixed ways that are somewhat inconclusive.

Research Question Three Data Analysis: Interventions' Impact on Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers

Pre-Intervention Data

The pre-affective intervention data from the 20 student participants about their perceptions of themselves as writers was later compared to the post-intervention data. From the pre-intervention data, there were several instances of student responses that were labeled with mixed/neutral descriptors as well as negative descriptors, albeit there were fewer negative descriptors overall. An example of a negative descriptors included "self-sabotaging thoughts." Examples of the mixed or neutral descriptors included "good at some things, bad at others" or "confidence with creative writing but struggling when academic." Also, there were even fewer positive descriptors such as "cautiously optimistic about self as writer" or "adequately skilled." In general, the specific major

130

themes that emerged from the pre-affective intervention written responses about student

perceptions of themselves as writers were, in order of importance, "struggling/challenged

and adequate," "stressed/anxious," and "confident with some reservations." The minor

theme that emerged was "skilled or capable" (see Appendix H for a list of major and

minor themes that relate to research question three).

Post-Intervention Data

The post-affective intervention data of the written response part three and

interview question about the impact the interventions had on student perceptions of

themselves as writers in College Composition I came directly from research question

three. The result of assigning codes for the data that came from the 20 students shows

that the group consisting of mixed/neutral descriptors was more dominant than the

positive group regarding student perceptions of themselves as writers. For example, there

were several positive descriptors such as "more self-assured," "more capable," or

"calmer"; nevertheless, there were slightly more mixed/neutral descriptors such as

"challenged" or "still struggling but also capable." It is important to note that a few of the

mixed/neutral descriptors included signs of a positive impact, but due to an additional

focus on continued problems they were ultimately more mixed than positive. Overall, a

focus on the post-intervention data alone from the 20 students resulted in 9 (45%)

positive student responses, 11 (65%) mixed/neutral responses, and no negative responses.

Table 1 shows how these results were more mixed than positive and contrary to results

from research questions one and two.

Table 1

Grouping of Post-Intervention Responses (N = 20)

Research Question and Interventions' Area of Outcome	Positive	Mixed/ Neutral	Negative
One: Student Experiences	13 (65%)	7 (35%)	0
Two: Student Approaches to Learning	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	0
Three: Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers	9 (45%)	11 (65%)	0

The major themes that emerged in the post-intervention data related to the

descriptors about how the interventions impacted student perceptions of themselves as

writers involved students seeing themselves as challenged yet still capable and also as

having somewhat gained confidence compared to the data prior to the interventions.

Specifically, the major themes were: "still challenged," "somewhat more capable," and

"somewhat gained confidence." The minor themes that emerged dealt with students

seeing themselves as less anxious or stressed and also a bit more skilled than before the

interventions. In particular, the minor themes were: "reduced stress/anxiety" and "skills

somewhat improved."

In regards to the instructor journal entries about student perceptions of themselves

as writers, the data that was gathered and analyzed aligns with the major themes that

emerged from both the post-intervention responses and the final part of the interview. For

example, I noted at the start of the interventions the following: "During this first week of

the interventions, one thing that I did notice had to do with the apparent need of students

to get feedback or confirmation that they were indeed adequate or capable writers." I also

added,

I have to deduce that they generally see themselves as rather capable writers as almost all of the students completed the journal writing assignment, including those students who received a poor grade on the expository essay from the beginning of the semester.

Later on during the intervention period, I wrote,

About half of the students expressed that this week's compare and contrast essay was difficult or more challenging than previous essays, but all students progressed with their writing related work and moved towards completing the assignment thus giving me the perception that they had confident in themselves as writers.

Elaborating on what I was observing regarding students and issues related to writing, I noted the following:

Some students who did not do very well on the first essay of the semester engaged even more intensely than many of the other students as they were very determined to improve their writing. Having said that, a small number of students whose writing was generally average or worse, and coincidentally those who also were lacking as far as class engagement is concerned, seemed to remain in more or the less the same state of mind when it came to how they perceived themselves as writers in the course.

A final observation regarding student writing-related issues was that students seemed positive overall even if there were some who were struggling in ways. I wrote:

It seemed as if the bulk of the students were confident about their ability to succeed with their compare and contrast essay. A few students who were a bit

confused either as a result of having missed past classes or simply because of the

difficulty level of the essay itself, did remain somewhat anxious.

In general, the instructor notes were representative of the student reflections made as a

whole regarding student perceptions of themselves as writers.

Finally, regarding the pre- and post-intervention student expository essays, the

results differed. For example, for the pre-intervention cause/effect expository essay,

results showed the following: 5 students received a letter grade of "A," or excellent; 3

students received a letter grade of "B," or good; 8 students received a letter grade of "C,"

or average; 4 students received a letter grade of "D," or below average. For the post-

intervention compare/contrast expository essay results showed the following: 12 students

received a letter grade of "A," or excellent; 5 students received a letter grade of "B," or

good; 1 student received a letter grade of "C," or average; 2 students received a letter

grade of "D," or below average. Overall, when focusing on exact scores beyond the letter

grades, 15 students' scores increased, 3 students' scores decreased, and 2 students' scores

remained the same (see Figure 4).
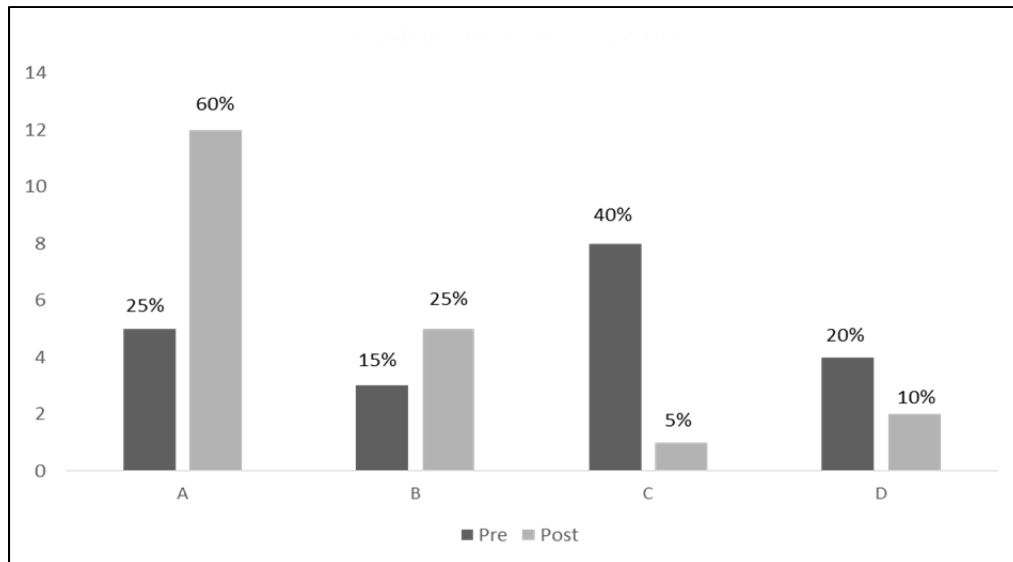
Figure 4. Pre- and post-affective intervention essay scores.

Still, although this study compared pre- and post-intervention essays, the focus was predominantly only on the post-intervention essays in general, mainly due to the fact that the two expository essay assignments were different essays and other factors likely played a role in the change between the pre- and post-intervention scores.

Post-Intervention Positive Responses (Research Question Three)

Mentioned previously, an added layer of analysis of the post-intervention positive responses for research question three helped to better comprehend how all of the student participants were more in the process of grasping the full scale of the interventions and how the issues of affect are a part of their lives as students. This additional layer of analysis that went beyond the surface of the positive responses of the students, as opposed to the mixed/neutral or negative responses which were clearer as a whole, resulted in the emergence of a low positive impact tier and a high positive impact tier for

research question three. For research question three, out of the 9 positive responses from the 20 student participants there were 8 (40%) low positive responses and 1 (5%) high positive response. An overview of the breakdown of the post-intervention positive responses for all three research questions in Table 2 shows how, for example, the high positive impact result was least common in relation to research question three.

Table 2

*Breakdown of Post-Intervention Positive Responses (*N = 20*)*

Research Question and Interventions' Area of Outcome	Total Positive Responses	Low Positive Impact	High Positive Impact
One: Student Experiences	13	10	3
Two: Student Approaches to Learning	15	12	3
Three: Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers	9	8	1

In sum, making sure to continue to use the same criteria mentioned previously that establishes the differences between low and high positive, sample high positive and low positive post-intervention responses help to distinguish between the two levels in specific detail.

Sample of high positive post-intervention response (research question three).

Student A. The post-intervention response from Student A, a female student, was a high positive response, albeit somewhat borderline, as her language was consistent and focused and she expressed a fairly clear sense of personal conviction of the impact of the interventions. Student A's post-intervention response is also associated with the research question's major theme of "somewhat gained confidence." She directly commented in the

opening of her written response, "The On Course activities has [*sic*] helped me gain

confidence in my writing." She continued to elaborate about her gained confidence which

indicates an awareness of the issues related to the interventions: "I have gained

confidence in writing by learning not to stress out too much." Consistent language is used

in the first two lines of her response as she mentioned the word "confidence" twice even

though it is language used in association with the interventions. Elaborating more on her

awareness of impact of the interventions, she noted: "I learned not to stress out and to

take my time. And, I have learned not to procrastinate because that is what causes me

stress." Having awareness of and positively addressing both stress as well as

procrastination that leads to stress in the context of the course is positive even if it does

not necessarily indicate that she will maintain such awareness and use these strategies

regularly. Finally, she concluded in the post-intervention written response, "The On

Course activities has [*sic*] impacted me as writer because of the emotional intelligence

packet and I have learned how to be more emotionally intelligent to stay focused on my

writing." These comments about using her emotions in a positive way as a result of the

interventions again suggest awareness even if they tend to continue to include language

associated with the interventions.

In Student A's post-intervention response from the interview the positive trend of

awareness continues. In particular, Student A focused on how the interventions impacted

her in the sense that now she is more aware of her anxiety related to writing and is able to

take action to reduce or eliminate negative feelings. For example, she explained that as

opposed to suffering from anxiety with writing as she had in the past before the

interventions, "now I've been dealing with the procrastination a little" and that "instead of doing [a particular College Composition I assignment] last minute I wrote it out and I went back and looked at it before it was due and made a couple of changes." From this comment she not only indicates awareness but also application or a specific action that she does as a result of her awareness of the intervention material. She later added to this example of action by stating:

> So, I think that's better instead of doing it all last minute and then being like, oh, I made so many mistakes and it's too late. So, it's like I'll do it earlier and then go back and change it if I think I need and then turn it in.

In sum, a thorough analysis of Student A's post-intervention response overall contains some language that is associated with the intervention materials; however, as a whole, due to the consistency and conviction displayed in the content, her response represents a borderline high positive response rather than a low positive response.

Sample of low positive post-intervention response (research question three).

Student H. The post-intervention response from Student H, a male student, about his perception of himself as a writer was positive but did not clearly use strong language or contain personal conviction and was thus labeled as a low positive response. Still, the post-intervention response was positive as it focused on confidence and the way the affective domain work had had an impact.

In Student H's post-intervention response, he explained that he already had a positive perception of himself as a writer prior to the interventions, which was a factor regarding the impact of the interventions. For example, he pointed at the very start of his

138

written response: "I've always been a pretty confident writer, so I don't think the activities have affected me as a writer." He also added how, emotionally, he is typically a solid writer: "I don't typically feel nervous or anxious while writing. I'm usually able to sit down, gather my thoughts, and put it all on to paper." Clearly, with these comments, strong language and conviction are lacking largely due to his perception of himself already have a strong perception of himself as a writer.

Despite the above comments, Student H did note when asked about how the interventions impacted his perception of himself as a writer that he was impacted positively in that he is more aware of his responsibilities as a student. In particular, and indirectly in response to research question three, the student noted, "I think that, as a writer and English student, the activities may have affected me in the sense that I am more aware of deadlines and taking responsibility to finish my work." Student H elaborated on the issue of procrastination and explained:

> I love writing and I am confident in my abilities, but I often save it for the last minute or even miss the deadline completely. I think the activities taught me to prioritize my writing and school work in order to make deadlines.

This comment indicates that not only is there an awareness but that he has also taken steps to try to apply what the interventions have helped him become aware of, or serve as reminders.

In the interview, Student H commented very similarly to the written response and emphasized how since he has always had a fairly positive perception of himself as writer,

the interventions impacted him as a writer mostly by helping him to learn to avoid procrastination with his writing work. For example, he stated the following:

I can say that I mean I've tried definitely to turn stuff in on time . . . . Again with the writing and like any assignments in your school work, I'm like very bad at turning stuff in on time and taking responsibility for my own actions. So in regards to writing, I guess just it would affect me in the sense that I realize I need to turn it in on time and really like engage myself and like get the work done and become a better writer.

In sum, despite Student H's post-intervention response is lacking strong language and a clear sense of conviction as he noted how the interventions were mostly review, it is important to note that the response is a low positive response in that he also pointed out how he was affected by the interventions in terms of being aware anew of affect-related issues and how this awareness helps him avoid procrastination "as a writer and English student." By this student understanding the interventions as having had an impact on him in this manner, it indirectly contributes to his positive perception of himself as a writer in that he now holds the belief that he is able to finish his work and believes he is more of complete writer as a whole.

Representative Student Responses for Research Question Three

As with the analysis of research questions one and two, an analysis beyond the different layers of intensity present in the positive post-intervention responses alone that helps to bring more clarity in general, an analysis of the post-intervention data about student perceptions of themselves as writers in comparison with the pre-intervention data

of the 20 student responses shows more fully the impact associated with the affective

interventions that occurred. When focusing specifically on the impact the interventions

had on student perceptions of themselves as writers by comparing the pre-intervention

data with the post-intervention data, an analysis resulted in no responses categorized as

"extremely helpful," 2 (10%) responses categorized as "very helpful," 5 (25%)

categorized as "moderately helpful," 12 (60%) categorized as "minimally helpful, and 1

(5%) categorized as "not helpful." As pointed out in Chapter 3, the specific wording of

the questions, or subquestions, that were given for research question three may have

influenced student responses in an indirect way. These results show how beyond a focus

on the high positive and low positive post-intervention responses, when focusing on a

more complete picture of the data the vast majority of students were either impacted

moderately or minimally, and that more than twice as many students were impacted

minimally rather than moderately in relation to the interventions. Table 3 shows that in

comparison with the results from research questions one and two, there were also more

minimally helpful responses than moderately helpful responses.

Table 3

Categories of Intervention Impact from Pre- to Post-Intervention Period (N = 20)

Research Question and Interventions' Area of Outcome	Extremely Helpful	Very Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Minimally Helpful	Not Helpful
One: Student Experiences	0	2 (10%)	10 (50%)	7 (35%)	1 (5%)
Two: Student Approaches to Learning	0	2 (10%)	9 (45%)	8 (40%)	1 (5%)
Three: Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers	0	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	12 (60%)	1 (5%)

Focusing on a variety of different representative student responses related to research question three shows both how the major and minor themes emerged as well as the way in which the responses fall within the categories of "moderately helpful" and "minimally helpful."

"Very helpful" sample. The "very helpful" category for research question three is defined by student responses that changed two tier levels between the pre- and post-intervention period from negative to low positive, or mixed/neutral to high positive.

Student K. There are clear differences between the pre- and post-intervention responses regarding how Student K, a female student, described the perception she has of herself as a writer. The pre-intervention response was primarily negative while the post-intervention response was low positive. The pre- and post-intervention survey scores that indirectly measured students' awareness of their own personal affective domain skills showed a minimal positive change for Student K with a score of 38 on her pre-intervention survey and 39 on her post-intervention survey. The almost identical score on the survey does not relate to her pre- and post-intervention responses and thus raises some questions in relation to her responses. Finally, Student K's pre-intervention essay score was 75 out of 100 while her post-intervention essay score was 81 out of 100. This score of 81 on the post-intervention essay also raises some questions as it only somewhat aligns with her other post-intervention data.

In the case of the pre-intervention response, Student K's comments were negative as she noted directly: "As a writer, I don't see myself as it being my strong point." She continued by adding: "I think that due to myself thinking I'm not a good writer puts my

142

mind frame [so that] when it comes time [to] write that I won't do very well." She continued: "My self-perception not only aids in my motivation but also aids in explaining the failures I've had with some papers I've written." As far as the theme of stress and anxiety, Student K explained, "When I get an assignment to write I often get really stressed and sometimes anxiety." She added, "It's not that I am [a] horrible writer it's the fact that I tell myself I'm not good and I believe it." Finally, she concluded, "So overall I'm not typically a good English writer."

The post-intervention response from Student K was low positive and mostly associated with the major theme that emerged of "somewhat gained confidence" for research question three. The response was a low positive response due to somewhat light language and lack of clear conviction in the content regarding her perception of herself as a writer. Still, she positively noted in her written response, indirectly referencing the interventions that had recently taken place: "While taking this course throughout the past few weeks I have noticed my skills have improved." She then added, "Although I still have my struggles with how to start a paper and what to exactly write about I believe I have had a stronger action to how I write." There is a sense of awareness here and an indirect reference to taking specific action. She continued with another comment that is a further example of awareness: "This course really has helped me figure out what type of writer I am."

As the bulk of the affective domain interventions were centered on emotional intelligence, Student K commented on issues of managing anxiety or doubts about her writing capability: "The course has helped a little with me not getting so anxious while

writing." She commented that the work in the course "has really helped me think more clearly and not doubt myself as much." She concluded, "I will always have some doubt but the last compare and contrast paper I wasn't as stressed and anxious as it was something I am interested in writing about." Although there is not much emphasis on application, Student K's comments indicate that the interventions have helped her to become aware, at least within the context of the course, of the issues related to affect.

"Moderately helpful" representative samples. The "moderately helpful" category for research question three represents student responses that changed between the pre- and post-intervention period from negative to mixed/neutral, or from mixed/neutral to low positive.

Student E. In the case of Student E, the pre- and post-intervention responses about how he perceives himself as a writer are different in that the pre-intervention response was mixed and focused somewhat on his struggles and anxieties whereas the post-intervention response was low positive and focused on confidence gained and reduced anxiety. Also, Student E's score of 67 on his pre-intervention essay along with a 94 on his post-intervention essay reflects and supports his post-intervention data.

Regarding how Student E sees himself as a writer, his response was mixed. He noted directly in the pre-intervention response the following: "I see my self [*sic*] [as a] struggling type of writer, but it depends on the topic that I'm writing about." He pointed out that although he sees himself as a struggling writer in English, in his native language he noted that he is confident: "Honestly, I feel anxiety, since I'm a capable and confident writer in Arabic, and a struggling type of writer in English." The different perspectives of

144

himself as a writer in his native language compared to when he writes in English are responsible for his response being considered mixed.

Contrary to the pre-intervention response, Student E's post-intervention response about his perception of himself as a writer was more positive than the pre-intervention response and is associated with research question three's major theme of "somewhat gained confidence." For example, he explained the following: "I used to be a struggling type of writer. After reading the Emotional Intelligence Packet I became a challenged and confident type of writer." He then added, "I started being creator, and to be confident of my self [*sic*]." As far as this student's use of the term "challenged" he elaborated: "I mean like when you feel that you cannot write an essay and after that you feel that you can do it, that's challenging." This comment tends to use the language from the interventions, but the student's explanation indicates that there is a vague awareness of the issues of affect and an attempt at acquiring a new perception of himself as writer.

Regarding the minor theme of "reduced stress/anxiety," Student E pointed out the following:

In the begging [*sic*] of this course I was feeling anxious and bored every time I want to write an essay. However, the Emotional Intelligence packet has released me of [*sic*] feeling anxious. I still feel bored, but the good thing [is] that I don't feel anxious anymore.

This comment about reduced stress or anxiety relates to previous comments about gained confidence, although there is little indication of this impact extending beyond the context of the composition course itself. However, despite the large difference, his post-

intervention response is a low positive response as his comments lack strong language and content that displays a sense of conviction.

Student O. In the case of Student O, the pre-intervention response about her perception of herself as a writer was negative, focusing on her limitations, whereas the post-intervention response was mixed dealing with improvement in general. Student O's pre-intervention survey score was 40 and the post-intervention survey score was 50 which indirectly support, albeit not strongly, the results of her pre- and post-intervention responses. The pre-intervention essay score for Student O was 79 while the post-intervention essay score was 92, and this improvement also somewhat supports her pre- and post-intervention responses.

In the pre-intervention data, Student O's response expressed how she perceives herself negatively as a writer. For example, she commented that, "In my opinion, I am really bad at English." She continued by noting, "When writing I feel that elaborating and trying to think outside the box is very important, which is something I lack." She also noted, "In my opinion if I feel that I was a better writer I might enjoy it at least a little, but overall English has been a subject I strongly disliked ever since writing got involved." She concluded, "Writing and I simply just do not get along when it comes to essays."

With the post-intervention response, Student O's response was more mixed and she commented about herself as a writer in a way that is associated primarily with the major theme of "still challenged" and "somewhat more capable" for research question three. She first explained in the interview, "I feel like I'm not good at it—or not as good

as I wish I could be." However, following this, she also spoke about some improvements that were made in relation to the interventions:

> One thing that did help me as a writer or changed a lot is my diction. I tend to basically be straight forward [*sic*] instead of elaborating on my sentences and I feel like the On Course journals helped a lot because you had to do a lot of elaborating.

This comment tends to emphasize only a vague sense of awareness regarding the issues of affect even as the student mentions a way in which she has been able to somewhat apply what she learned in relation to her perception of herself as a writer. Building on this, Student O also noted that the journals in particular allowed her to be creative. She concluded in the written response: "At the beginning, I hated writing and thought I was really bad at it. Now I still don't like it, but I think being creative has made me enjoy at least a little more than I did before." There is a sense of gained confidence in this comment regarding how she sees herself as a writer in that following the interventions she is less focused on how "bad" of a writer she is.

"Minimally helpful" representative samples. The category "minimally helpful" for research question three relates to minimal change in that student responses did not change between the pre- and post-intervention period, but there were still signs that the interventions had an impact.

Student F. For Student F, the pre- and post-intervention responses are both mixed regarding her perception of herself as a writer with the pre-intervention data expressing confidence along with occasional struggles and the post-intervention data mentioning

both confidence and a lack of confidence in relation to the impact of the interventions. Regarding the survey scores, her pre-intervention score was 41 and the post-intervention score 57, which supports the pre- and post-intervention responses as the fairly solid increased score is an indirect sign of the interventions having had an impact. Finally, there was no change with her essay scores as she received a 95 on both her pre- and post-intervention essays and although there was not much room for change, the lack of change does not support the minimal impact result from her pre- and post-intervention surveys and raises some questions.

In the pre-intervention response, Student F initially noted that, "I occasionally feel anxious when it comes to certain types of writing, especially argumentative essays." Despite this comment, the pre-intervention response was mixed overall. For example, Student F explained the following: "When it comes to writing essays, I think of myself as a confident writer. I struggle here and there but I have no trouble getting my ideas and thoughts onto paper in an organized way." She later added, emphasizing the positive perception she has of herself as a writer, "I love to read and I feel as if it has helped me become a stronger writer."

In the mixed/neutral post-intervention response, Student F focused on the impact of the interventions on her role as a student by noting in her written response, "After finishing the 'On Course' affective domain activities packet, I see myself as a strong successful student." Relating to the major theme of "somewhat gained confidence" for research question three, she added: "I feel as if I am a strong and confident student, who prioritized their time well." The language used in this comment is related to the

interventions rather than being original, but it does express an impact. As far as directly

responding to the prompt about her perception of herself as a writer, Student F explained:

"As an English student, I used to struggle with writing papers. I was unable to finish my

work and often felt unmotivated to do so." She then added: "Now I feel very confident

with my work, and I actually enjoy writing for my class, whether it is a cause and effect,

compare and contrast, or argument essay." It is unclear how valid the comment about

how she perceived herself as a writer prior to the interventions is since the pre-

intervention response is somewhat contradictory; however, commenting on how she now

sees herself in a more positive manner than in the past suggests that the interventions had

some sort of impact.

Interestingly, however, in the post-intervention interview Student F remarked how

she was impacted as a student but her perception of herself as a writer was not necessarily

impacted. She pointed out that in general, "I think I usually see myself as a pretty

confident writer." Regarding the interventions in the course directly in response to the

question about how, if at all, her perception of herself as a writer has changed as a result

of the affective domain work she noted, "I don't really know if this packet has helped

me." She explained in more detail: "I'm already kind of confident. I mean I've always

been like a fan of English and it's one of my favorite classes." She then added how the

interventions had more of a broad impact rather than a specific impact on how she

perceives herself as a writer: "I feel the packets were more about helping me reflect on

who I was a student before and after but I'm not really sure if it's helped me with the

writing though." When her mixed/neutral comments about her perceptions of herself as a

writer are combined with the post-intervention written response in which Student F explains that the interventions have somewhat made her a better student, and thus she now feels more confident and does not struggle with papers so much, the post-intervention response as a whole is representative of a mixed/neutral response.

Student I. For Student I, both the pre- and post-intervention responses about how he sees himself as a writer were positive with the pre-intervention response touching on confidence and the post-intervention response touching on competence and improvement. Regarding Student I's essays, the scores dropped slightly from the pre- and post-intervention periods as he scored 82 on the pre-intervention response and 78 on the post-intervention essay. The slight drop in his writing scores brings into question if indeed the interventions had an impact.

An example of Student I's positive perception of himself as a writer in the pre-intervention response is the following: "I feel confident as a writer, the way I think is very impulsive so writing is just a matter of putting my thoughts down on paper." To this comment he added, "English has always been an interesting subject for me, writing can be a task but it's a task I enjoy doing especially when I am really passionate about the subjects I write about." The pre-intervention response does not necessarily indicate that the student has a solid perception of himself as a writer but it is still generally positive.

Student I's post-intervention response about his perception of himself as a writer was low positive and thus, as a result, the impact of the intervention was categorized as minimally helpful. It was also a low positive response due to its lightly positive language and the details of the content that displayed a mild sense of conviction. Associated mostly

with the major theme of "somewhat gained confidence" for research question three, Student I noted in his post-intervention response how his perception of himself as a writer changed with the affective domain activity work: "I feel like I was a competent writer, I spilled all my thoughts on paper pretty well with a few grammar mistakes." He then added: "But the On Course activities helped me to change perspective on certain situations. I feel like I now look at all the options too but out more factual un-bias [*sic*] works." His comment attempts to express that he was impacted by the interventions but he does not seem to have the language to adequately capture his thoughts. He added more information about how interventions impacted him: "After the activities I felt, like, more understanding toward writing even though I never really felt anxiety towards writing." Finally, he noted, "I do want to participate more and these reflections really helped me learn a lot more about myself." These comments, although positive, are somewhat vague. The language is not very strong and there is a bit of a lack of conviction in his remarks. Having said this, the student's comments do indicate a sense of awareness regarding the material from the interventions and the response is thus ultimately low positive.

Student N. Student N responded in both the pre-intervention response and the post- intervention response about her perception of herself as a writer in a mixed/neutral manner, although the post-intervention response did include comments that the interventions had an impact on helping her complete the assignments as required. Student N received a score of 92 on both the pre- and post-intervention essays which raises questions as it does not support the "minimally helpful" data from her pre- and post-intervention responses.

The pre-intervention response was direct and to the point, focusing on problems that exist but with the belief that growth is possible. For example, Student N noted in her written response, "My perception of myself as a writer would be a struggling writer, yet I am gaining confidence along the way." She elaborated by commenting, "I am struggling as a writer, but with writing more essays, I am gaining confidence and having a better understanding of writing essays." She concluded, "So when it comes to writing I do feel like anxiety towards its [*sic*] due to not being confident in my writing skills."

Similarly, the post-intervention response by Student N was mixed. It is also associated mostly with research question three's major theme of "still challenged" and "somewhat more capable." For example, this student wrote, "I still see myself as a struggling but more capable writer." As far as the packets are concerned, she expressed that they had an impact albeit not necessarily regarding being more capable or how she perceives herself as a writer. She noted that it was the writing activities themselves more so than the intervention that likely impacted her perception of herself as a writer: "With this change of opinion of myself as a writer is more due to writing more papers." However, she also noted that "the packets did play a role on getting those papers done and me managing my tasks." Indirectly, this comment does suggest an impact in that the student sees herself as a more capable writer as she mentions that she is more likely to complete her writing assignments following the interventions.

Student N also pointed out the ways in which she was somewhat directly impacted by the interventions themselves: "I continue criticizing myself, but the packets taught me that instead of beating myself down, it is best to build myself up and improve

next time." Acknowledging this indicates a sense of awareness in relation to the issues of the interventions. Finally, Student N also indirectly referenced the impact of the intervention work in the interview: "I've never been good at English writing and I had anxiety writing essays so I think like reading the essays brought me a little bit more confidence." Although lacking in strength, there is a sense of awareness of the role of the interventions displayed in her comment as she alludes to improvement in confidence following her interaction with the intervention materials.

Student R. While both the pre- and post-intervention responses about student perceptions of themselves as writers were mixed for Student R, the post-intervention response mentioned how the interventions had an impact while the interview response mentioned that the interventions did not have an impact. Also, despite falling within the minimally helpful category, Student R's pre-intervention essay score was 68 while the post-intervention essay score was 90. Such a vast change does not correspond to the minimal change in the pre- and post-intervention responses but does correspond to the presence of an impact.

Student R's pre-intervention response stated, "My overall perception of myself as a writer tends to change based upon how well I understand the information provided to me in the prompt." In other words, his response was mixed as far as how he perceives himself as a writer. In the case of a creative writing assignment, he noted that, "I find myself extremely confident and able to churn out page after page of vibrant, colorful material." However, he added: "If the paper needs to be factual I find it much harder to

get started and continue writing at a solid pace. I would definitely describe myself as a struggling writer in the previous situation."

Student R commented in the post-intervention response: "I have always seen myself as a confident writer when I am presented a prompt which I am knowledgeable about. On the contrary, I am a challenged writer when I know very little about what I am writing about." This response does not address the interventions; however, directly in relation to the interventions themselves and associated with the major theme of "gained confidence" for research question three, Student R also noted, "After participating in the 'On Course' activities I see myself as a much more confident writer than I was before." Explaining the meaning of this comment in more detail, Student R commented about the writing assignments and indirectly referenced the interventions: "I have realized that my approach to writing these assignments can be drastically changed if I simply change the language with which I address the assignments that I typically dread." This comment does not indicate any specific action the student took, but it does suggest that he is aware of the issues related to affect at least in relation to the context of the course. Still, interestingly, at another occasion, Student R made a contrary comment about how the interventions did not impact his perception of himself as a writer: "I can't really say it changed much just because I was always very confident with my writing. I can say that I mean I've tried definitely to turn stuff in on time." The overall comments that waiver throughout make it clear that Student R's post-intervention response is mixed.

"Not helpful" sample. The category of "not helpful" for research question three represents student responses that did not change, or decreased, between the pre- and post-intervention period, and that there were no signs of any beneficial impact.

Student T. In the case of Student T, both his pre- and post-intervention responses fall into the group of mixed/neutral; however, his pre-intervention response was more mixed whereas his post-intervention response was more neutral. Also, differing from his pre- and post-intervention responses, Student T scored 65 on the pre-intervention essay and 89 on the post-intervention essay. The change in the essay scores does not reflect and correspond to the other data, thus raising questions about the impact of the interventions overall.

The pre-intervention response from Student T varied with both positive and negative comments about how he perceives himself as a writer. For example, he initially noted, "I generally do pretty well and enjoy English classes, and love writing although I'm not the best at it." He elaborated: "Because of that I get anxiety about my writing, which cause[s] me to give up easily, and not have a whole lot of patients [*sic*]." Specifically commenting on his actual writing itself, he noted, "I also have problems in spelling and grammar, but I'm pretty good at consteps [*sic*] and organizing my thoughts." He concluded with a mixed comment by noting, "All together I'm pretty good at writing in some ways but also could use a lot of improvement and practice."

Student T's post-intervention response was neutral and very direct and to the point. He addressed the affective domain work and wrote the following: "The 'On Course' packet did not change or impact the way I view writing nor my ability to write.

The packet did not change me in any way shape or form." Although noted as neutral, the content in this brief and uninterested response borders on being negative.

Conclusions About Interventions' Impact on Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers

After analyzing the pre-intervention data related to research question three about student perceptions of themselves as writers, the major themes that emerged were mostly mixed/neutral or negative rather than positive. As far as the post-intervention data is concerned, the major themes that emerged differed somewhat from the pre-intervention period in that they were slightly more mixed/neutral than positive. A final analytical comparison of pre-intervention data with the post-intervention data shows that although the themes that emerged from the post-intervention data indicate a slight impact occurred as a result of the interventions, it must be kept in mind that when compared, not only were more than half of the post-intervention responses categorized as mixed/neutral, but the student post-intervention positive responses for research question three were almost all labeled as low positive responses except for two. These results raise questions as to the degree of the interventions' impact overall in relation to students' perceptions of themselves as writers. Finally, when focusing on the predicted outcome for research question three about the affective instructional interventions having a positive impact on how students perceive themselves as writers, the results show that the data does not directly align with the overall final outcome, but rather indirectly in that many of the students were impacted but with results that are not definitively positive.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whereas prior to this chapter a detailed focus on and close analysis of the data took place, Chapter 5 involves a broader perspective about the findings and serves as a conclusion. After a brief summary, I discuss the findings by first comparing the study to previous studies which is then followed by a focus on the causes and meaning of the results. Central to this section is a focus on the key findings of the study as a whole which involves what was learned and how it contributes to the existing literature. The findings section leads into a section on implications, before finishing with a section on suggestions for further research. The implications sections addresses ideas for faculty and staff in community colleges and beyond to collaborate on and promote issues associated with the affective domain to a greater extent. Finally, the section focusing on suggestions for future research reviews the strengths and weaknesses of the study and offers ideas for instructors interested in adapting or revising what has been done in an effort to address the particular needs of the students they work with.

Summary of Study

The primary aim of this case study was to engage in an in-depth exploration involving the impact of explicit affective instructional interventions on student experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers. Inquiring about and penetrating such complex abstract questions, I chose to pursue a mixed methods approach, and by focusing on a descriptive case study I was better able to gain

157

an overall understanding of the situation. The messiness of the results was the result of engaging with what was actually happening with the students from the affective instructional interventions. Ultimately, this research study succeed in that its focus went beyond a narrow or confined approach and delved deeply into what actually happened when students were directly exposed to affective instructional interventions.

To guide the research process of this case study, propositions were established prior to the study's start. The propositions derived from the following research questions:

1. How do affective instructional interventions impact student experiences in an introductory community college English course?

2. How do affective instructional interventions impact student approaches to learning in an introductory community college English course?

3. How do affective instructional interventions impact student perceptions of themselves as writers in an introductory community college English course?

Based primarily on personal professional experience but also on scholarship, the propositions were that affective interventions would have a positive impact in relation to all three research questions. The data analyzed consisted of student pre- and post-intervention written responses and interviews based on prompts as well as pre- and post-intervention surveys, student and instructor journals, and student essays.

Discussion of Findings

As students were asked with the post-intervention written response prompts and in the interviews about the impact that the interventions had on their experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers, results from this study's

data revealed that when compared to the pre-intervention responses a "majority middle" arose as either a moderate or minimal impact occurred in post written response prompts and interviews in the vast majority of cases. In general, from the 20 student participants a bit less than half of the post-intervention responses were mixed while a large bulk of the other half were lightly positive and lacking in language and/or personal conviction and were thus labeled low positive as opposed to high positive responses.

One of the key findings involved how the vast majority of students showed weak or no significant signs of having had exposure to affective domain course content in their past classroom experiences. Another key finding was that the affective interventions mostly had an unclear favorable impact on student experiences, student approaches to learning, and student perceptions of themselves as writers. First and foremost the interventions impacted the students in provoking a sense of awareness of the implications of affect on their role as students. Finally, of the three areas, the impact was most prevalent with student experiences, followed by student approaches to learning, and least prevalent with student perceptions of themselves as writers, which suggests that when it comes to students and their relationship to writing the barriers are deep and entrenched and require more time to be strongly impacted.

Comparison of Study

Relating this study's characteristics and its results with the studies from the literature review reveals there are both differences and similarities, but despite possible overlap my study contributes to the literature in new ways. The studies referenced in the literature review that had been previously completed and are more noticeably different

159

include the following: Brand and Powell (1986), Brand and House (1987), Loudermilk (1997), Kim (2003), Rahilly (2004), Beard et al. (2007), Meyer et al. (2007), and Miller (2010). The studies that are more similar, but still have differences, include Welch (1996), McLeod (1997), Harper (2007), Wellington (2010), and Roche (2013). In addition, and of specific importance, is how despite the similarities between the study I conducted and a handful of those from the literature review, the characteristics of my study are different in a number of ways including not only the nature of the study itself in that it involves case study and particular research questions, but also how the study took place in a first-year 12-week format introductory community college composition course.

It is also important to point out how this study dealt with both theory that argued how the affective domain is an essential component in the learning process and cannot be ignored, as well as on studies that suggested that when the affective domain is addressed with students it has a beneficial influence on them within the context of the course. Regarding theory in particular, there is both theory focusing on affect in general as well as affect in relation to particular disciplines such as composition. For example, it is important to emphasize how Popham (2014) pointed out that in general learning affect is at least equally important to cognitive ability (p. 250). As far as affect and writing are concerned, it is important to emphasize such claims as Edbauer's (2005) about how "the body-of-sensation is always stubbornly present in scenes of writing, [and thus] there can be no affectless compositions" (p. 133).

The theory on affect in education is clear and there are a numerous studies that used it as a guide. Although many studies involved implicit approaches to affect in

education settings, other studies, as mentioned previously, were similar to my study and explicitly addressed affect in a higher education setting. These explicit studies were guided by and complemented affect theory with results that suggested how addressing affect is an important part of student development. My study in particular acknowledged affect theory and the studies associated with affect, and focused on providing a contextually different study that produced interestingly rough results.

Interpretations of Findings

The area of the study that provided the most opportunity to capture and understand the impact of the interventions on student experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers were the post-intervention written responses and interviews. As opposed to the surveys, essays, or guided journal entries based on the readings that were more for the sake of personal introspection and reflection, the post-intervention written and interview prompts provided insights into the key overarching finding of how students were in the process of gaining awareness of affective issues, or the influence of affect to student learning. After first engaging in reading, collaborative in-class work, and conducting reflection in journal entries, the post-intervention student responses were the culmination of the work done during the intervention period and represented students' comprehension and internalization of affective domain characteristics.

Based on previous scholarship, experience working both with past introductory English composition students as well as with the students of the study, and a close analysis of the data provided by the participants, I will provide interpretations of the data

results. Regarding the majority middle, or the "moderately helpful" and "minimally helpful" categories which constituted the bulk of the results, I found that the specific affective domain content of the interventions which directly involved having students reflect on and assess themselves on a personal level contributed to content captured in the student responses and ultimately to the themes that emerged for the three research questions. For example, because the major themes were somewhat positive on a personal level, this suggests that the personal content of the intervention activities had at least a partially influential role on the outcomes. This is not wholly surprising as the bulk of the material from Downing's (2013) *On Course* text that was chosen for the interventions involved activities that had a direct connection to students reflecting on and assessing themselves. The surveys serve as an example as they involved several personal questions related to emotional intelligence, the readings contained material directly relating to personal issues such as reducing stress and creating flow, the student journal prompted students to reflect on past emotions and future goals, and the discussions that took place during these activities were also specifically related.

Beyond the causes involved and central to the study regarding what was learned are the key findings. One of the key findings from the study was actually what was not found: clear signs that the vast majority of student participants had had exposure to and worked with issues of affect in past classroom experiences. Related to what much of the literature shows (Beard et al., 2007; Greenfield, 2005; Oughton & Pierre, 2007; Popham, 2014; Rompelman, 2002), the results from this study involving the impact of affective instructional interventions of student experiences, approaches to learning, and

perceptions of themselves as writers suggest that there is a deficit in addressing the affective domain in relation to the particular population of the study involving first year composition students in a community college and, indirectly, in higher education in general. When taking into consideration issues including that student exposure in the study to elements of affect was over a limited time period, and that most showed no signs of having had exposure to affect in the classroom in the past and lacked the skills and language necessary to truly address how the interventions impacted them, this result becomes clearer. The consequence of this past lack of exposure to affect in the classroom appeared to roll over into both the pre- and post-intervention responses.

More particularly, in my study, other than a few student examples in the post-intervention responses mentioning that they had dealt in the past with some sort of affective issues similar to those in the interventions, students not only gave little or no signs of having been exposed to affective issues in the past in the pre-intervention responses, but even the post-intervention responses suggest that the interventions constituted the first time most students had worked directly with issues of the affective domain. The few students that vaguely mentioned having been exposed in some way to issues of affect in the pat highlighted the absence of exposure with the other students. Regarding both the pre- and post-intervention responses, students as a whole did not consciously or purposely address issues of affect in relation to their past student experiences, approaches to learning, or perceptions of themselves as writers. Consequentially, any vague or indirect examples of affective domain concerns expressed by students in the pre- and post-intervention responses would have been done so

unconsciously. This is a valuable finding in that it exposes a deficit in past exposure to affect and thus shows a lack of attention paid to whole student development. It also relates to or feeds into the finding that emerged from a comparison of the pre- and post-intervention responses which suggests that the vast majority of the students were impacted by the interventions in that an initial awareness of the issues of affect was generated.

Another key finding that the results from my study indicated was that although the students were somewhat impacted by the affective instructional interventions, the vast majority tended to display an initial awareness of the issues of affect. This suggests that most students had been impacted but mostly in the sense of starting a process of understanding the issues of affect along with occasional examples of application rather than having solidly or permanently grasped them as a whole. For example, there were a range of varying post-intervention responses that showed clear signs of awareness, even with some comments about how the interventions had changed the student's life—which seems extreme and overstated when considering, among other things, that deep, long-lasting learning typically develops over a long period of time as opposed to the intervention period that lasted for half of the course. Still, similar to other studies (Beard et al., 2007; Kim, 2003; McLeod, 1997; Myer et al., 2007; Rahilly, 2004; Roche, 2013; Welch, 1996; Wellington, 2010) discussed in Chapter 2, awareness of the issues of affect benefits students in that it is the indirectly associated with application or student achievement in general. In this sense, initial student awareness in and of itself of affective domain issues rather than mere application or reaction alone, that may at times lack a

164

foundational awareness, is an essentially valuable goal that needs to exist when considering student learning.

Not including the few more extreme cases in which students commented that the impact of the interventions was life changing, or, as in the case of one particular student, that the impact of the interventions was nonexistent, the data showed that most of the students were predominantly displaying awareness of and engagement with the issues of affect contained in the interventions. According the specific details provided in Chapter 4, the trend that was most common and consistent was that there were clear signs of students starting to reflect on and comprehend the affective domain material that was contained in the interventions and how it relates to them personally. Although this trend involved examples mostly showing an initial awareness of the issues of affect rather than the student participants having established a solid or permanent foundational understanding, signs of awareness undoubtedly arose as a result of the intervention period. In several examples there were also signs of initial efforts involving students attempting to utilize or apply what they had been exposed to in the interventions. The strategic efforts of several of the student participants to immediately put into practice what was internalized from the interventions reinforces the conclusion that students had gained some sort of awareness about issues of the affective domain and that such awareness, again, is a necessary and thus valuable element regarding student learning.

In comparison with the impact of the interventions on student experiences and student approaches to learning, a third key finding was that the results focusing on the impact of the interventions on student perceptions of themselves as writers were less

solid. For example, the impact of the affective interventions on student perceptions of themselves as writers was the least prevalent out of the three areas, and the results suggest that barriers students experience regarding their relationship with writing run deep and are complicated to address while requiring more time in general. Although it may be the case that the interventions as a whole were simply not adequate enough to have an impact to the same degree as in the case of student experiences and student approaches to learning, the more likely factor, since there were still signs of students having been impacted by the interventions, was that student perceptions of themselves as writers are entrenched to such an extent that development in this regard requires more extensive work than what the students were exposed to in the study.

Achieving results in which students significantly change their perception of themselves as writers takes time and is unlikely to happen over a limited time period during a single semester. Still, even though the impact of the interventions on the student participants' perceptions of themselves as writers was, for the most part, less prevalent than in the other two areas, what my study does indicate is that over a certain period of time in a single semester students can be impacted by affective interventions. Such an impact includes at least an initial awareness of affective issues and, in this case, a slight improvement in student perceptions of themselves as writers, at least within the context of the course. Whether or not such an awareness has the possibility to continue to improve student perceptions of themselves as writers over time is inconclusive and requires further research.

Finally, it is worthwhile to acknowledge the evidence of integration of affective learning on a personal level. In most cases, as mentioned previously, students who made comments that were deeply personal expressing a life-changing situation were more than likely overstating the impact as it typically requires more time for such impacts to occur and the language used in their comments tended to somewhat come from the interventions. Nevertheless, as the vast majority of students were impacted by the interventions in a way that suggests an initial awareness of the issues of affect in connection to themselves as students, some students having been impacted on a more long-term personal level cannot be discarded. In the exceptional cases of some students having been significantly impacted on a deep personal level, there exists the possibility of such an impact extending beyond the course itself. As Keeling (2009) pointed out that an education that transforms is one involving the complete student through a process and "produces both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes" (p. 3), the results in this study that include noncognitive outcomes indirectly open the door or set the tone to help start the process for possible future ramifications involving transformative student development. Ultimately, as Popham (2014) argued about the importance of students having positive attitudes about learning today because they will then likely be inclined to pursue learning in the future. A few exceptional cases of the results from this study can arguably be indirectly tied to possible wide-ranging student development and therefore increased potential success at community college and beyond.

Implications for Policy and Practice

With the role of the affective learning domain in community college and higher education in general still lacking support despite the recent attention that has been given to mindfulness that involves elements of affect, now is a time for action. Since both my study and past studies indicate that students have the potential to at least somewhat benefit from exposure to issues of affect, it is important to address the affective domain and make it more a part of the ongoing conversation by faculty and staff when focusing on college learning outcomes. Based on the research and even more so on personal experience, this ongoing conversation about how to educate students in community college is not centered enough on the affective domain. After focusing on the key findings in this study, it becomes clearer how, as part of this conversation, there is a need to be aware of the results and how they have a number of different implications for both faculty and staff at community colleges and beyond. In particular, there are implications for curriculum, professional development, as well as pedagogy in the classroom.

As a follow-up to my study and studies previously, it would be beneficial on a policy level if faculty in community colleges or other higher education institutions who directly work with students in the classroom on a regular basis considered working more closely together to support each other in an effort to integrate issues associated with the affective domain in the curriculum. Simultaneously, support from staff to also promote the need for the affective domain to be more fully addressed within the college curriculum and to work alongside faculty efforts in the process would be helpful. Still, although support from staff would be helpful, ultimately, establishing a foundation within

the curriculum that includes the affective domain would be best if it came from the ground up with faculty, while being supported from the bottom down with staff. This grassroots approach would help ensure to a greater degree that affective issues would actually be implemented, and implemented in an effective way, in the classroom since faculty would be directly engaged in the core of the process. Still, overall, with a joint effort by both faculty and staff the likelihood of a successful integration would be more viable.

One way having the affective domain addressed and integrated more directly into the community college curriculum in particular would be to establish or involve college-wide teaching and learning centers or development to champion the initiative. By placing the effort into the hands of a faculty-driven and staff-supported teaching and learning center, it could be solidly grounded within a recognized college area, and all of the necessary participants required to make such an effort a success could more easily be integrated into the process. For example, a center would have the capacity to branch out to various experienced faculty and establish working groups within different college departments and also would be able to assist both new incoming faculty as well as adjuncts on ideas of how to integrate affective learning into the classroom. Without a center focal point from which to house the effort of integrating issues of affect into the curriculum there is a risk that the process would be too scattered without solid grounding.

Associated with the integration of affective learning into the curriculum, another implication of my study has to do with actual implementation of specific teaching practices within in the classroom. My results indicate how the implementation of

169

affective interventions can lead to student awareness of affective issues in relation to their role as students, implies that revised or adapted teaching approaches by community college faculty could be beneficial. For example, since many students are not typically exposed to affective domain-related issues in the classroom, faculty may need of ideas and support to actually implement affective teaching approaches. Regarding such a faculty need, the strategies used in my study that resulted in having an impact on student experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers are valuable in that they could be used as suggestions to be adapted and revised in order to fit a particular situation for faculty across the disciplines. Any adaption or revision that took place would need to occur within the context of each specific course, and results from my study pertaining to student experiences and approaches to learning would likely be more relevant than results about student perceptions of themselves as writers unless in the case of another composition course.

In the case of composition courses in particular, the results from research question three in my study are directly relevant. Such common issues as student writing anxiety or students lacking confidence in writing are issues that faculty of introductory composition courses must at times directly address, and the results from my study apply to faculty needs to find a variety of ways to approach the problem. For example, the possibility of reducing writing anxiety or building up writing confidence are possible outcomes through adapting or revising teaching approaches relating to my study as student participants showed that although their perceptions of themselves as writers are not easily changed in a significant way over a limited time during the course of a single semester, some

changes are still possible. By faculty of community college composition courses adapting or revising the approaches in my study involving the interventions by acknowledging the dynamics of a particular course, common student writing issues could be addressed.

Finally, in relation to the policy implications having to do with integrating issues of affect into the college curriculum, as well as practice implications having to do with implementing adapted and revised versions of my study into the classroom, it is important to note that both are indirectly associated with professional development. For example, a teaching and learning center could initiate professional development teaching and learning efforts aimed at integrating affective learning into the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). At community college where focusing on and improving teaching and learning is central to the role of faculty, SoTL has a unique relevance. As the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning involves recognizing a problem in the classroom, researching it, addressing it with some sort of action plan, and then, ultimately, reporting on the results, by adapting and revising this study there is an opportunity for faculty professional development through work relating directly to SoTL. In sum, such action would have a multifaceted benefit in that efforts would likely prompt faculty collaboration and improve student development through improved pedagogy as well as impact the institution as a whole by improving student connection to learning and hence student success.

Limitations

My study was driven by the propositions that predicted student experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers would be positively

171

impacted by affective instructional interventions. The primary concern of this study has thus been to answer the research questions directly related to the propositions. My mixed methods case study allowed for a deep and thorough inquiry into student data in order to better capture major underlying themes. Overall, the study dealt with the affective learning process relating to the development of the first-year community college composition student in general rather than focusing on the product of student writing in particular. More of a specific focus on writing products from students may have allowed for more dependable or consistent results with less risk of fluctuation. As far as validity is concerned, this study was fairly strong in internal validity; however, external validity that involves generalizability of the study's results was present but was clearly not definitive due to the nature of the study.

An additional limitation of the study involves the fact that I was simultaneously the instructor of the course and the researcher. For example, student interaction and communication with me while knowing that I was not only collecting data from them but also simultaneously grading them might have had an influence on the students, thus raising some concerns about the authenticity of the participants' results. Another concern pertaining to me being both instructor and researcher of the same study may have to do with the objectivity or accuracy of the results. In order to minimize this limitation, triangulation was accomplished by having a number of different forms of data that complemented and checked one another.

Context-specific limitations also exist including the geographical location, time period, and student population. For example, since the geographical location was limited

to a larger metropolitan area, the results are less representative of more rural areas. Regarding the time period, as the study took place during the spring semester alone, it does not necessarily represent other academic semesters during the year. In particular, when discussing first-year community college students, or students in an introductory college composition course, chances are greater that the majority of the student participants were not first-semester students since the study took place during the spring semester as opposed to the fall. It is also important to remember that the study took place in an intensive 12-week course rather than a standard 16-week course and the interventions only occurred roughly over a four-week period. The amount of contact hours was not reduced as a whole, but the reduced number of weeks may have influenced the results of the study. Finally, regarding the population, although the study's participants were a mix of race, ethnicity, age, and sex, they were students of an introductory-level composition course and thus were not necessarily representative of students in other nonintroductory courses.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should be conducted to complement or expand this study's scope. This study, for example, focused on the impact that affective instructional interventions have on student experiences, approaches to learning, and perceptions of themselves as writers with results showing a mixed and somewhat beneficial impact in all three areas. First off, one possibility for future studies, particularly in relation to composition courses, would be research that included more of a specific focus on the impact of affective instructional interventions in relation to specific writing assignments. Although my study

173

did include collection and analysis of student writing, it was done so in relation to the research question on student perceptions of themselves as writers. A more specific focus such as this would add more of a vigorous element to the results of research question three from my study. Secondly, future research into the area of affect might focus specifically on the impact of explicit affective instructional interventions on students in other contexts including other courses within the community college. Such additional studies would help to broaden the scope of the impact that affective interventions could have on students. Finally, as the results from this study suggest, the affective instructional interventions had an unclear and somewhat beneficial impact on student awareness of the issues of affect, mostly within the context of the course itself. This warrants the need for a more in-depth, follow-up longitudinal study to better understand the long-term significance, and results could ultimately aid in directly helping address broader college-wide issues of student success and retention.

In general, one of the elements of the study that worked well was combining a collaborative approach with an individual approach throughout the intervention period. For example, by addressing different areas of the material focusing on affect as a class and in small groups prior to then having students engage more in-depth by doing individual reflection, it made the concepts associated with the affective interventions more directly and immediately accessible for the students. As a result, not only did the two approaches improve the efficacy of one another since each fed into the other, but this also indirectly aided in ultimately enriching the data collected, especially the post-intervention written and interview responses. By engaging with other students and the

class as well as reflecting individually, students were guided in a way that helped them make more sense of the interventions and the impact that they had had.

Focusing specifically on adaptation and revision of my study by others, and taking into consideration that students are seldom exposed directly to elements of affect in the classroom, it would be beneficial for any instructor to expand on the time period involving the implementation of affect into the course. In this study, the course was broken roughly into two parts with only the second part emphasizing affect in order to attempt to help students become more aware of and more clearly acknowledge the concepts of the affective domain in general. However, as the pre-intervention responses clearly showed, thus supporting the literature, the students had not had direct exposure to affective issues in courses in the past. In the case of integrating issues of affect throughout the entire course, it would also be beneficial to first focus on establishing a base of what affect involves at the very start of the course before engaging in affective-related activities. By faculty revising the integration of affective instructional interventions in the manner described above, some of the problems associated with this study could be addressed.

The results from my study also persuaded me that not only should affective instructional interventions exist throughout the entire course, but that the content of the interventions must be integrated into the fabric of the course more thoroughly than in the study I conducted. The need to integrate the affective domain content into the fabric of the course is true not only of a College Composition I course but also of any other course. For example, in my study it would have been more beneficial if more of the actual

reading and writing assignments were more directly part of the major essay assignments of the course. Instead of addressing learning of the affective domain as something apart of the major assignments, actually integrating them into the major assignments would make them have more relevance. In a College Composition I course that focuses on expository writing, the essay assignment topics could fairly easily be related to or focused on an affective domain element such as emotional intelligence and its connection to the role of a student.

Clearly, integrating the material into the fabric of a course would be more challenging in some disciplines than others, and some changes either in content or structure might be required in such cases. In a Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) course, for example, the content or structure could be adapted to better fit in with the major assignments that may be more technical in general. One possible option is that affective domain-focused case study assignments with a focus on problem solving could be used as part of the major assignments in the course to address the more technical nature of such courses. In fact, a number of forms of integration are possible without jeopardizing the essential elements of such a course.

While taking into consideration the above recommendations, it is important to also consider the need not to force student acceptance or interest in affective instructional interventions. The affective content could be integrated into the whole of the course, but the dynamic of each particular course section should dictate the intensity or emphasis of the interventions. Adjustment and adaptation according to not only the type of course but also according to external factors is necessary. It would be an oversimplification and

risky to assume that integrating affective instructional interventions, for example based on the *On Course* activities, into the course fabric over the entire semester would easily result in favorable results and contribute to student success. However, the mixed and somewhat beneficial results from my study suggest that whether a composition course, or any other type of course, integrating affective domain material in with the core assignments over the entire course as a whole could be a beneficial modification.

Conclusion

Direct exposure to affective instructional interventions had a mixed and unclear favorable impact on the bulk of the vast majority the 20 student participants in an introductory community college English course. Propositions regarding possible outcomes were tested by explicitly integrating affective domain activities into several class sessions and collecting both pre- and post-intervention data from which major and minor themes emerged. In the case of the post-intervention data, the major themes that emerged were more roughly positive than mixed while the minor themes that emerged were more mixed. Somewhat in alignment with the propositions for research questions one and two, the student participants provided data that suggests their student experiences and approaches to learning were partially enhanced, or somewhat impacted positively, as a result of the affective interventions. The results from the data of research question three inquiring about student perceptions of themselves as writers were less favorable as the impact of the interventions were not as pronounced as a whole and only vaguely aligned with the initial proposition.

The overall results from this study do not indicate permanent change on students, but rather a sense of student awareness, or initial efforts to utilize or engage with the issues related to affect in the interventions. The results suggest that first-year community college students were impacted from exposure to elements of affect but that the vast majority appeared to be in the process of comprehending the issues of affect and how affect relates to them as students. Such results contribute to the existing literature and move the needle forward even if they do not clearly provide specific definitive conclusions. In sum, the findings from this study fit into and validate the larger conversation scholars are having that focuses on the importance of affect and student learning but they also must be supported with additional research.

This study and its findings also served as a new starting point for me in a personal way as an English instructor. Originating from my experience working with community college students over the years, I established the propositions for this study that led to the research questions and ultimately the results suggesting that when affective instructional interventions are implemented in the classroom they have, albeit rough, a somewhat beneficial impact on students. Since I have too often witnessed students who had the practical skills and cognitive ability necessary to succeed in the classroom, and yet simply failed to succeed as a result of lacking affective skills, in particular those involving emotional skills, the findings are not only interesting from a scholarly perspective but are also personally valuable. Hopefully, such cases of student failure as a result of the absence of affective skills that I have witnessed in the past can be reduced

and even become cases of student success and lead to more of a focus on whole student

development with the help of this study's key findings.

APPENDIX A. OUTLINE OF AFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTION PROCEDURE

I. Focus on Chapter 1 "Getting On Course to Your Success" and Chapter 2 "Accepting Personal Responsibility" from Downing's (2011) *On Course*

  a. First Set of Written Responses (Pre-Affective Instructional Interventions)

    i. Student reflections on overall experiences in any standard course

  b. Second Set of Written Responses (Pre-Affective Instructional Interventions)

    i. Student reflections on approaches to learning

  c. Third Set of Written Responses (Pre-Affective Instructional Interventions)

    i. Student reflections on their perceptions of themselves as writers

  d. Student Responses to Affective Domain Self-Assessment Survey (Pre-Affective Instructional Interventions)

    i. Students respond to initial results of the self-assessment survey focusing on emotional intelligence from *On Course*

II. Focus on Chapter 8 "Emotional Intelligence" from Downing's (2011) *On Course*

  a. Student Journals from *On Course* Chapter 8 Journal Activities #'s 28, 29, & 30

i. Journal entry # 28: i.) write about an experience when you experienced frustration/anger, fear/anxiety, sadness/depression; ii.) write about an experience when you felt happiness/joy; iii.) write about any emotional changes you experienced when describing the previous emotions thinking about how you can affect your emotions.

ii. Journal entry #29: i.) write about a more recent time when you experienced overwhelm, anger/resentment, sadness/depression, or fear/anxiety; ii.) identify three or more strategies that you could use when you experience this emotion

iii. Journal entry #30: i.) write about a specific past event when you experienced flow in your life; ii.) write about your perfect work for the future that involves flow

b. First Set of Written Responses (Post-Affective Instructional Interventions)

i. Student reflections on overall student experience with affect during intervention period

c. Second Set of Written Responses (Post-Affective Instructional Interventions)

i. Student reflections on approaches to learning

d. Third Set of Written Responses (Post-Affective Instructional Interventions)

i. Student reflections on their perceptions of themselves as writers

e. Student Responses to Affective Domain Self-Assessment Survey (Post-

   Affective Instructional Interventions)

   i. Students respond to final results of the self-assessment survey

      focusing on emotional intelligence from *On Course*

APPENDIX B. QUESTIONS FOR PRE-AFFECTIVE INTERVENTION WRITTEN RESPONSES

Written Response Part One

1.) Describe what your overall typical student experience is in any standard course. For example, when a student of a course at any level, how would you describe the impact that the course normally has on you as a student in general?

Written Response Part Two

1.) Describe what you consider your overall approach to learning to be like in a typical college course. For example, you may want to think about how, or to what extent, if in any way at all, you engage in or are enthusiastic and determined about your learning in general.

2.) Additionally, describe in detail some specific, concrete examples of the particular ways, if any at all, in which you personally approach learning in a typical college course. For example, you may want to consider any individual processes or routines that you partake in when it comes to learning.

Written Response Part Three

1.) Describe your overall perception of yourself as a writer as far as how you typically see yourself as a writer in an English course. For example, you may want to ask whether

you see yourself as either a struggling, challenged, capable, confident or any other type of writer.

2.) Additionally, describe in the clearest way possible your feelings about writing as an English student such as whether you typically feel anxiety, boredom, enjoyment, or anything else in general.

APPENDIX C. QUESTIONS FOR POST-AFFECTIVE INTERVENTION WRITTEN RESPONSES

Written Response Part One

1.) What has been *your overall student experience* during these last few weeks in relation to the "On Course" affective domain activities? For example, how would you describe the overall impact, if at all, that the "On Course" affective domain activities have had on you as a student in general during these last several weeks?

2.) In addition to commenting on your overall student experience, describe in detail what some of *your specific particular student experiences* have been like in relation to the class sessions involving the "On Course" affective domain activities. In other words, *give some specific examples* of what you experienced in relation to the "On Course" activities.

Written Response Part Two

1.) Describe how, if at all, *your overall approach to learning* (such as your enthusiasm engagement, determination, etc.) has been impacted or changed as a result of your participation in the "On Course" affective domain activities.

2.) Additionally, describe some *specific examples* of the particular ways (such as any individual processes or routines) in which your personal approach to learning has been impacted or changed, if at all, by your participation with the "On Course" affective domain activities.

Written Response Part Three

1.) Describe how, if at all, *your overall perception of yourself as a writer* has been impacted or changed by your participation with the "On Course" affective domain activities. In other words, if you saw yourself as either a struggling, challenged, capable, confident or any other type of writer prior to the "On Course" affective domain activities, how do you see yourself now after having participated in the "On Course" activities?

2.) How, if at all, has *the way you feel about writing as an English student*, such as whether you typically feel anxiety, boredom, enjoyment, or anything else in general, been impacted or changed in any way as a result of your participation with the "On Course" affective domain activities?

3.) In what ways, if any at all, *do you believe your actual course writing itself has been impacted* by how you now see yourself as a writer in an English course following your participation with the "On Course" affective domain activities?

APPENDIX D. SURVEY QUESTIONS

1.) Whether I'm happy or not depends mostly on me.

2.) When I get angry, sad, or afraid, I do or say things that create a problem for me.

3.) When choosing between doing an important school assignment or something really fun, I do the school assignment.

4.) I often feel bored, anxious, or depressed.

5.) My happiness depends mostly on what's happened to me lately.

6.) When I'm very angry, sad, or afraid, I know how to manage my emotions so I don't do anything I'll regret later.

7.) I often feel happy and fully alive.

8.) When choosing between doing an important school assignment or something really fun, I usually do something fun (Downing, 2013, p. 7).

APPENDIX E. QUESTIONS FOR POST-AFFECTIVE INTERVENTION INTERVIEWS

1.) Describe your general overall student experience in relation to the class sessions involving the *On Course* affective domain activities. As a follow-up, describe and give some specific examples of the particular student experiences you had in relation to the class sessions involving the *On Course* affective domain activities.

2.) How, if at all, has your overall approach to learning been impacted or changed by your participation with the *On Course* affective domain activities? As a follow-up describe a few specific examples, if any at all, in which some of your particular personal approaches to learning were impacted or changed by your participation with the *On Course* affective domain activities.

3.) How, if at all, has your overall perception of yourself as a writer been impacted or changed by your participation with the *On Course* affective domain activities? In other words, how, if at all, has the overall way you feel about writing in general as well as how you see yourself as a writer in particular been impacted or changed as a result of your participation with the *On Course* activities? As a follow-up, in what ways, if any at all, do you believe your actual writing itself has been impacted by how you now see yourself as a writer following your participation with the *On Course* affective domain activities?

APPENDIX F. LIST OF MAJOR AND MINOR THEMES FOR RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

A.) Pre-Intervention Data (Student Experiences)

Major themes: negative when course overly challenging or not personally

interesting

Minor themes: stressful and discouraging; stressful along with satisfaction of

sorts;

enjoyable and encouraging; unimpactful

B.) Post-Intervention Data (Student Experiences)

Major themes: empowering or beneficial; personally insightful; enjoyable

Minor themes: mostly review or limited; somewhat personally distressing

APPENDIX G. LIST OF MAJOR AND MINOR THEMES FOR RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

A.) Pre-Intervention Data (Student Approaches to Learning)

Major themes: engaged or committed; excited or enthusiastic; apathetic or

unenthusiastic; attempts made to be proactive but consistent effort lacking overall

Minor themes: disengaged and uncommitted

B.) Post-Intervention Data (Student Approaches to Learning)

Major themes: engaged or determined; enthusiastic

Minor themes: conscious of weaknesses but lacking implementation; improved

time management

APPENDIX H. LIST OF MAJOR AND MINOR THEMES FOR RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

A.) Pre-Intervention Data (Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers)

Major themes: struggling/challenged and adequate; stressed/anxious; confident with some reservations

Minor themes: skilled or capable

B.) Post-Intervention Data (Student Perceptions of Themselves as Writers)

Major themes: still challenged; somewhat more capable; somewhat gained confidence

Minor themes: reduced stress/anxiety; skills somewhat improved

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