What’s Different Under the Gown?

New Professors’ Development as University Teachers


Department of Graduate and Undergraduate
Studies in Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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Abstract

This study explores how new university teachers develop a teaching identity. Despite the significance of teaching, which usually comprises 40% of a Canadian academic’s workload, few new professors have any formal preparation for that aspect of their role. Discipline-specific education for postsecondary professors is a well-defined path; graduates applying for faculty positions will have the terminal degree to attest to their knowledge and skill conducting research in the discipline. While teaching is usually given the same workload balance as research, it is not clear how professors create themselves as teaching professionals.

Drawing on Kelly’s (1955) personal construct theory and Kegan’s (1982, 1994) model of developmental constructivism through differentiation and integration, this study used a phenomenographic framework (Marton, 1986, 1994; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996) to investigate the question of how new faculty members construe their identity as university teachers. Further, my own role development as researcher was used as an additional lens through which to view the study results.

The study focused particularly on the challenges and supports to teaching role development and outlines recommendations the participants made for supporting other newcomers. In addition, the variations and similarities in the results suggest a developmental model to conceptions of teaching roles, one in which teaching, research, and service roles are viewed as more integrated over time. Developing a teacher identity was seen as a progression on a hierarchical model similar to Maslow’s (1968) hierarchy of needs.
Guiding Thoughts

There are, clearly, multiple visions, multiple readings; and we who are striving to be teachers ought to take several perspectives as we construct what we think of as an educational reality. Integrating them if we can, orchestrating the various themes, we need to confront the darkness as well as the light, the radiance of the always receding dream. Situating ourselves in the interlude ‘between past and future’, we may be able to make meanings where there were few meanings before. (Greene, 1995, p. 67)

The universities do not teach all things, so a doctor must seek out old wives, gypsies, sorcerers, wandering tribes, old robbers, and such outlaws and take lessons from them...

Experiment is not sufficient. Experience must verify what can be accepted or not accepted. Knowledge is experience. (Paracelsus, 16th century)

The process should be enjoyed as well as the destined goal. (Draper, 1988, p. 246)
Gratitude

*Gratitude*, according to my *Oxford English dictionary* (Fowler & Fowler, 1958, p. 527) refers to “being thankful; appreciation of and inclination to return kindness,” which I most certainly feel towards all participants, committee members, colleagues, readers, family, friends, and my advisor for their extraordinary support during my doctoral path.

Other words from the same page also shed light on the dissertation journey. While *grateful*, a related word, means “thankful, feeling or showing gratitude,” *grate* can mean to “sound harshly or discordantly,” which I hope will not refer to the writing herein. Rather, I hope the *-graphy* or “forming, denoting, styles of writing” will be pleasing.

Yet other words referred to the research process. *Graphology*, for example, means the “art of inferring character from handwriting,” which I extend to both my own interpretations of the transcript and others’ interpretations of this document. *Grasp* was something I tried to avoid in conceptualizing my work, as it means to “seize, accept with avidity, clutch at.” I have certainly *grappled* with my research problem; that is, I have tried to “take hold of, grip, with the hands, come to close quarters with...try to overcome, accomplish, or deal with” it. In particular, I have struggled to represent models *graphically*, “as in a picture.” At the end of this process, I might feel that I am at *grass*, referring to being “out of work, making holiday.” I should be so lucky!

Most importantly, I hope the work will *gratify* or “please, satisfy, oblige, delight” others, particularly my advisor, just as he did “give free course to or indulge” me along the way. On a final note, in consulting Skeat’s (1993) *Concise Dictionary of English Etymology*, I am reminded that gratitude and grace share the same etymological root.
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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

The assumption seems to be that, once graduate students (with or without experience as teaching assistants) join a campus as faculty members, they already know how to teach (or else can figure it out on their own) (Boice, 1992, p. 52).

This study explores how new university teachers construe their development as teachers, and addresses a central question: How do new faculty members learn to be university teachers? Doctoral graduates applying to Canadian university faculty positions can usually expect teaching to comprise 40% of their workload, and yet few may have any formal preparation for that aspect of their role. In contract positions the teaching portion of the job may be as high as 80%. On what do new academics draw to construct a professorial role? Are there patterns and variations in that role development? How closely do their constructs fit with the reality in which they find themselves?

By role development, I mean the process by which university teachers come to understand who they are as teachers or develop a teaching identity. Identity as teachers refers to how they define themselves in their professional professorial role, and what they construe as comprising teaching, both inside and outside the classroom. I use role and identity interchangeably, referring to role not as the formal position of faculty member, but rather as how the participants see themselves as university teachers.

At a time of significant levels of retirement and increased student enrollment (Rae, 2005), universities can anticipate an influx of new university teachers in all areas. It is unlikely, unless these new hires have previously been schoolteachers or have taken

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1 Workload ratios vary somewhat, but a Canadian university faculty member can anticipate a workload of roughly 40% research, 40% teaching, and 20% service.
training programs for other teaching purposes, that they will have received formal instruction on how to teach. While some may have attended workshops or courses on university teaching issues, particularly if they have been teaching assistants, formal courses in teaching at the postsecondary level are not mandatory in all graduate studies programs, and few take those courses and workshops that are offered (Bellows, 2004).

To a certain extent, teaching skills are assumed in new university hires. While some institutions may require teaching dossiers or teaching courses as part of a job application process, one need only scan the job advertisements in any given Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Bulletin or University Affairs to see that for many positions, there are no such requirements. Instead, new academics must draw on other life experiences and self-directed learning to support their development as university teachers.

Discipline-specific research training for postsecondary teachers is a well-defined path; graduates who apply for such positions will have the terminal degree to attest to their knowledge and skill in this regard. Teaching, in many of these positions, carries the same workload as research but with little if any preparation for this part of the academic role. This raises the question: How do new university teachers learn how to teach?

Background of the Problem

Between 2010 and 2015, significant faculty turnover is expected throughout Ontario postsecondary education institutions. In Ontario, in 2005, 31% of full professors were over 60 years old, a statistic that has been rising fairly steadily since 1990, when it
was 10% (Canadian Association of University Teachers [CAUT], 2006). Rae’s (2005) report on Ontario postsecondary education confirms the magnitude of the situation:

College and university faculties are composed of significant numbers of people who are on the verge of retiring. It is estimated that by the end of the decade [2010] there will be a need for 7,000 new college faculty and 11,000 new university faculty. (p. 10)

While the rejection of mandatory retirement may delay some of this turnover, an expected rise in student enrolment will increase the need for new university teachers as an “additional 90,000 students are expected to hit the system by 2010, the biggest increase in four decades” (Rushowy, 2001, p. 1).

Although Rae (2005) exhorts the province to “invest in graduate education immediately” (p. 10) to prepare graduate students to become teaching faculty, there is no emphasis on how these graduates will be prepared for the teaching aspect of their roles. This is despite the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education’s (2004) recommendation to the Rae report that “every doctoral program has at least one course in teaching and learning open to every student” (p. 2). Instead, all that can currently be claimed in Canada is that “at least one Canadian graduate program requires its Ph.D. students to take a course on pedagogical theory and practice” (Christensen Hughes, 2006, p. 4).

Ontario universities (for example, Guelph, Laurier, McMaster, Queen’s, Toronto, York, and possibly others) now offer optional graduate courses in university teaching (see Appendix A for list of courses at selected Ontario institutions). Queen’s School of Business offers a mandatory noncredit course entitled *Teaching and Learning in*
University of Toronto psychology students hoping to teach in summer session courses must take the *Teaching Practicum* course (M. Wall, personal communication, March 9, 2006). However, although there is movement towards mandatory courses in teaching and learning for doctoral programs\(^2\), it is not clear whether these courses will provide the most effective development support for new university teachers, nor how widespread such training will be.

According to Austin (2002b), Dunne and Menzefricke (2006), Gaff (2002), and Nyquist et al. (1999), the aim of most doctoral programs has been to prepare students for life as members in the academy. These programs have traditionally focused on preparation for research responsibilities rather than teaching expertise. As a result, new faculty, Gaff says, find life stressful with heavy teaching loads, new course preparation, getting to know colleagues, adjusting to a new organization, and handling requests to serve on committees or assist with departmental tasks. These conditions seemed to be a surprise to Gaff’s participants rather than something they had anticipated and prepared for. Confusion and stress for new faculty members abound as they move from the understood role of graduate student to the new one of faculty member (Whitt, 1991). This shift involves a struggle to decipher their new roles and the messages of the department’s culture in the absence of explicit expectations (Austin, 2002a, 2002b; Gaff, 2002).

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\(^2\) This has been a focus at the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education’s conference the past few years. I see a strong direction towards mandatory courses, paralleling the Preparing Future Faculty movement in the United States.
Statement of the Problem

To summarize, there is an anticipated need for an increasing number of new faculty members and an absence of formal preparation for university teaching. This, coupled with the noted stresses in the early career years, suggests an urgent need for understanding ways in which new faculty’s teaching development needs can best be supported.

The problem in this study is therefore how new university teachers construe their development as teachers. By construe, I mean the ways in which these educators construct their role as university teachers, on what prior life experiences they draw to form a conception of self as teacher, and the meanings they give to these events. In short, I refer to their processes of developing an identity as university teachers.

The etymology of the words conception and construe form a delightful image for me, as conception, from Latin, means “to hold” (Skeat, 1983, p. 65) and construe means “to heap together, build, to construe a passage” (p. 476). This study is thus about how new university teachers build and hold together their identity as teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop and describe an understanding of the ways new, untenured university teachers develop their identity as teachers. There are several parts to my primary purpose. First, the study explores similarities and variations in development of university teachers’ conceptions of self as teacher in order to anticipate the professional development needs of future graduate students and new faculty. This exploration occurred within their specific context. Not all university teachers are likely to
have the same background experiences or describe the same development. This perspective draws from developmental constructivism and the idea that persons construct their identity in interaction with their environment, according to their particular life experiences, and in view of the context in which they find themselves (Baxter Magolda, 1999; Kelly, 1955; Raskin, 2002, von Glaserfeld, 1995; Vygotsky, 1986). Second, I identify supports and challenges to university teachers’ role development. For example, what are the barriers and supports to forming a sense of self as teacher? Do mentoring and collegiality play a role? Do these teachers seek courses, read books, discuss their development with others, or engage in reflective practice? These two subproblems, the similarities and variations in new university teachers’ development and the supports and challenges to their developmental path, generated the study questions.

I also hope that the accounts of the participants, particularly as they discuss challenges they have faced and how they have overcome them, will be of use to those entering the academy and may shed light on their paths. An additional hope, while ancillary to the primary purpose of the study, was that engaging in the study served as a form of reflective practice for the participants, assisting them in consolidating their perspectives.

Further, I acknowledge the role of this dissertation as not only reporting on the study results but also as serving as a teaching document. I hope that it may provide a useful starting template for other doctoral students undertaking qualitative research studies, but particularly those using phenomenography.

Finally, during the process of the study, the questions I was asking took on a personal imperative. Concurrently with exploring new professors’ development as
teachers, I was exploring my own development as researcher. The study questions have become my questions too as I anticipate entering the academy and have thus highlighted a new purpose: that of using the study as a lens for my own professional development and that development as a lens for the study. I see understanding that interaction as central to my role as qualitative researcher.

Study Questions

The study focused on how new untenured university teachers construe their development as teachers and addressed the following questions:

1. How are university teacher roles developed?
2. What are the central features of these roles?
3. What challenges and supports affect role development?

Additional questions served as the basis for participant interviews and are discussed in the data collection section of Chapter Four.

Rationale

_The experiences of new faculty...are characterized by stress, pressure, and uncertainty_ (Austin, 2002b, pp. 94-95).

There seems to have been little research conducted on how new university teachers construe their development in the early years or, in other words, how they learn to become teachers. My own background as a faculty developer supports what I find in the literature: The early period of coming to understand one’s new role and context can be a period of both excitement and anxiety. Stresses may reflect Kelly’s (1955) idea of
the distinction between role-taking and role-making. That is, while newcomers may have taken on the role of academic, they may not yet have constructed that role in a way that is either personally meaningful or comfortable.

According to Gaff (2002), the early years are a time of stress, upheaval, and self-doubt and a time when conceptions of the academy are being formed. As Boice (1992) comments, “what overshadows the experience of many newcomers is the despair of isolation, insecurity, and busyness” (p. 2). Austin (2002b) echoes that “studies of new faculty also consistently report that faculty newcomers are isolated, perceiving a lack of collegiality that contradicts their expectations of faculty life” (p. 99). In a recent CAUT editorial, Allain (2006) points to the particular difficulty of the pretenure years. He emphasizes findings from one French study conducted in Quebec that found “most people surveyed said the first five years were tough, with the sheer demand of work coupled with other simultaneous pressures…taking a toll on physical and mental well-being” (p. A5). While this may not be the experience of every new university teacher, clearly, for some, the early years in the academy are a stressful time. At the same time, there may be those who find a less onerous beginning to their university teaching careers, and whose accounts may have a positive impact on others.

This study looks specifically at new professors and how they reconcile their own constructs of the role of teaching in the postsecondary institution with the culture in which they find themselves. Elbaz-Luwisch’s (2004) study on teachers’ conceptions of their work takes a contextual view of role identity: “What we lack is a sense of the teacher in a place – a specific location that holds meaning, that matters to those who inhabit it” (p. 387). This sense of meaning-making relates it not only to personal
perspectives but also to the ways in which a particular setting or context are part of those meanings. In the case of this study, that contextual knowledge relates to how new professors reconcile their personal constructs of teaching in the postsecondary setting with the specific academic culture in which they find themselves.

When professors enter the academy, they also enter an enculturation process. Over time, sociocultural factors of the specific institution and department will likely contribute to the individual teachers' meaning-making. Although some new university teachers may have been students or instructors at the same institution, those in the early years of a new position may not yet have been socialized into the academic culture of the department vis-à-vis their new roles (Austin & Wulff, 2004; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004). Although much of the work of university teachers is done in relative isolation (Seldin, 1987), discussions with colleagues, department meetings, feedback from students, comments from administrators, and, for some, the process for promotion and tenure, may influence role development. While clearly not all university teachers become the same, D’eon, Overgaard, and Rutledge Harding (2000) point out that “the prevailing social norms of faculty at particular institutions of higher education have a large role to play in shaping the practice of teaching” (p. 151). The focus in this study is on university teachers who are still becoming socialized.

Literature around new university teachers’ development is sparse, which I find particularly significant at a time when there is an anticipated influx of new hires. While there are studies of role construction, beliefs, and values of teachers and faculty members over the career life-span (D.L. Robertson, 1999; Seldin, 2004, 2006), there are few that specifically investigate new faculty members, and thus far work is primarily being done
in the United States. At this time of an increase in academic positions in Canada, resulting from significant levels of retirement, we once again will face an influx of new faculty members across all institutions. A Canadian perspective is needed. Further, a strong movement towards mandatory training in teaching at the university level in Canada (Christensen Hughes, 2006) makes it imperative that research is done in this area.

This study therefore focused on Canadian university teachers' conceptions of role development in the pretenure years, drawing on their prior life experiences, the challenges to role development these new academics have encountered, and the supports that have helped them through. The research addressed relevant and compelling questions: How do new, untenured university teachers develop their roles as teachers, what are the central features of those roles, and what might support role development in the early years? In short, and to reiterate my study focus: How do new university teachers develop identity as teachers?

Theoretical Framework: Constructivism and Personal Construct Psychology (PCP)

*In their attempts to make sense of the chaos they confront on a daily basis, college teachers must evolve meaning schemes and perspectives for the sake of survival.*

(Brookfield, 1995, p. xv)

Constructivism is built on four primary principles (Doolittle & Hicks, 2003). First, the process is one of knowledge being actively built, or constructed, by each individual. Second, the process is an adaptive one, allowing individuals to respond to particular contexts. Third, the process is one of organizing and making sense of one’s experiences rather than mirroring an external reality. Fourth, the process combines
biological and neurological constructions with “social, cultural, and language-based interactions” (p. 77).

My approach to this study draws strongly on constructivism and, in particular, on radical constructivism (von Glaserfeld, 1995, 1996), social constructivism (Doolittle & Hicks, 2003; Vygotsky, 1986), and personal construct psychology (Kelly, 1955). In this section, I will briefly outline how each of these has contributed to the theoretical framework for the study.

*Radical Constructivism*

Radical constructivism draws particularly on the first three of these principles, “emphasizing the internal nature of knowledge” (Doolittle & Hicks, 2003, p. 77). Radical constructivists believe that truth is subjectively, actively, and individually constructed, based on the accumulated life experiences of the individual (Doolittle & Hicks). As von Glaserfeld (1995) describes, radical constructivism is about the construction of adaptive structures towards effective thought and behaviour for a particular purpose. Predominantly, while the role of others is acknowledged, the radical constructivist looks to the internal meaning-making processes of the individual. I acknowledge that my interest in variations and self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 1999) of teaching roles draws on radical constructivism and that I ascribe to Szasz’s (1973) view that “the self is not something that one finds. It is something that one creates” (p. 49).

*Social Constructivism*

At the same time, I admit to a strong belief in a socially constructed reality, wherein meanings are made in conjunction with others. Social constructivists see knowledge as contextual, “negotiated between people within a given context and time
frame" (Raskin, 2002, p. 9). I see qualitative research in which dialogic interviews are used for data collection as drawing strongly on this perspective. As Kompf (1993b) states, “co-determination of processes and procedures emphasises the collaborative spirit between research and study participants. Imposition of meaning on research protocols becomes a shared responsibility between co-scientists” (p. 519).

Personal Construct Psychology

Kelly’s (1955) personal construct psychology (PCP) could be said to draw on each of these constructivist perspectives. According to Kelly, constructs develop in a cyclical manner, experience leading to patterns of beliefs, which in turn frame future experience. Expressed in Kelly’s words, PCP asserts that “a person’s processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he [sic] anticipates events” (p. 46). Events can only be understood according to the constructs available for their interpretation, and existing constructs will frame the interpretation of events.

What does this mean for new professors? In the case where a person has pre-existing constructs for teaching, that is, has taught university level courses before, new teaching experiences can be understood against the backdrop of an existing framework of understanding. In instances where the new faculty member has no prior teaching experience, he or she may experience what Kelly refers to as being caught with one’s constructs down, or finding oneself without a meaning-making structure.

As experience accumulates, so too does construct development, in the form of testing and re-testing goodness of fit of existing constructs. Kelly (1955) notes, “the succession of events in the course of time continually subjects a person’s construction system to a validation process. The constructions one places upon events are working
hypotheses, which are about to be put to the test of experience” (p. 72). Constructs for future anticipations undergo revision, and meanings assigned to previous events may also undergo transformation. “It is not what happens around him that makes a man [sic] experienced; it is the successive construing and reconstruing of what happens, as it happens, that enriches the experience of his life” (p. 73).

As Kelly describes it, “man [sic] seeks to improve his constructs by increasing his repertory, by altering them to provide better fits, and by subsuming them with superordinate constructs or systems” (p. 9). In this way, according to both Kelly and Piaget (1971), people test their constructs against life events and rehypothesize in anticipation of future events. There is thus a Janus-like framework to PCP, both a looking-backward and looking-forward. “A person’s construction system varies as he [sic] successively construes the replication of events” (Kelly, p. 72). As Morgan, Ponticell, and Gordon (1998) summarize,

From a gestalt point of view, the primary difference between the novice and the expert learner is considered to be in their learned perceptual templates, which create learning expectancies and which in turn differentially effect stimulus input and memory organization. (p. 21)

Construing is thus a constant process of refining cognitive categories, and one which incorporates both reflecting back and looking forward. Constructs develop over time and in response to experience.

In a more recent report, Kane, Sandretto, and Heath (2002) assert that the two separate factors that underpin teaching practice are teacher knowledge and teacher beliefs (p. 179). Practical knowledge, they say, encompasses both subject knowledge and
pedagogical skill, or teaching craft, knowledge. A practitioner's philosophy towards teaching, or beliefs system, on the other hand, determines the starting point for teaching practices. "Research into teachers' beliefs...is grounded in the understanding that these concepts drive teachers' practices" (p. 204). Again, this alludes to a cyclical pattern of role construction, such as that represented by Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory.

An individual's personal constructs can lead to freedom or imprisonment. "The man [sic] whose prior convictions encompass a broad perspective, and are cast in terms of principles rather than rules has a much better chance of discovering those alternatives which will eventually lead to his emancipation" (Kelly, 1955, p. 22). Thus not only the experiences that have gone into forming the constructs but also the very organization of those constructs will affect future experiences.

Each person construes reality based on his or her own unique experiences. As Kelly (1955) notes in his commonality corollary, "to the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his psychological processes are similar to those of the other person" (p. 90). Shared experience can thus lead to cognitive connection with others. At the same time, PCP also provides a framework that acknowledges individual variation, as acknowledged in the individuality corollary that "persons differ from each other in their construction of events" (Kelly, p. 55). That is, persons encountering the same experience will give different meaning to it, according to their existing schema and personal perspectives. Bell (2000) contrasts PCP with "traditional survey research...[which] assumes respondents construe the material presented in a similar fashion. In contrast, Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) espouses the cause of, and celebrates, the individuality of the person"
In other words, persons with the same or similar experiences will construe some things similarly, but at the same time, individual variations are to be expected.

While PCP thus provides a strong framework for examining similarities and variations of new professors' role construction, I must be aware of potential limitations with PCP as a theoretical framework. If, as Palmer (1998) asserts, we teach who we are, then I must also take into account the university teachers' individual and congenital nature as having an impact on their life paths. Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory discusses at length the social constructivist effects of interaction with the environment and others, but says little about radical constructivist consideration of ways in which people might be inherently different independent of their life experiences.

Still, personal construct psychology, with its framework of drawing together past events, their impact, and future anticipations in a lifelong cycle of personal development, provided a useful theoretical framework against which to examine the role conceptions of new university teachers. It was a good match with my constructive developmental ontology, and I present it as a useful lens for understanding others' constructions and self-authorship, or the construction of an "interpersonal, internally generated belief system" (Baxter Magolda, 1999, p. 12). The theory allowed for pattern analysis as well as the uncovering of individual variations and thus was directly tied to the problem being studied: How do new, untenured university teachers construe their development as teachers?
Scope and Limitations

This study examined new untenured university teachers' conceptions of their development as teachers. The study is about the personal rather than the political context. That is, the study does not examine policy creation and administrative decisions around new faculty development but rather looks at the new academics' conceptions of personal engagement in role development.

I specifically focused on university teachers' claims or personal perceptions of their role development, and I made no effort to substantiate these claims (for example, through interviewing other informants, such as students or colleagues). Rather, I accepted them as personal accounts of conceptions of lived experience and the meaning made from that experience. Further, the study did not look at teaching practices. No attempt was made to determine if participants were skilled at their teaching craft; no value judgements about the quality of their teaching were explored.

If it follows that perceptions are related to context (Baxter Magolda, 1999; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996) then I must be cautious as to whether, with a small participant group of 7, the accounts represent variations in development as opposed to variations in context. From a purely practical perspective, the study was limited to two universities in southern Ontario. Assumptions can not be made without further study that the findings will be equally true in other institutions. In addition, only new, untenured university teachers were considered as participants, and extrapolations can not be made across the career span.

Perhaps of greatest relevance to the study results is the fact that the participant group was self-limiting. That is, participants volunteered to take part, making it likely
that they already had an interest in addressing the study questions around teaching. Different participants would have been expected to generate different individual accounts of entry into the academy, but at the same time, there are enough trends in the data to make some cautious and perhaps preliminary interpretations that could be pursued in a further study.

Practitioners must decide for themselves, after reading the description of the study context and the individual participants' accounts, whether the results pertain to their own setting. As Vidich and Lyman (2003) write, “each is free to judge the work of others and accept it or reject it if it does not communicate something meaningful about the world, and what is meaningful for one person is not necessarily meaningful for another” (p. 58).

Outline of Chapters

In this chapter, I have described the background and rationale that led to the study particulars. I have outlined the problem and the study questions and have explained the ways in which constructivism, and in particular personal construct psychology, provides a useful theoretical framework for the study. I have discussed the scope and limitations so the reader will be able to determine whether this study is of relevance to his or her own setting.

In Chapter Two, I turn to the background literature of relevance to the study in the area of developmental psychology. I outline several models of constructive development psychology and discuss their usefulness as lenses for the study purpose.

In Chapter Three, I present relevant studies on schoolteacher development, university teacher preparation and development, and finish with work on career span.
development in the academy. In each case, I outline the ways in which the research informs the study purpose.

In Chapter Four, I present the methodology used in the study, including the rationale for using a phenomenographic lens, and the participant selection process. I explain data collection methods and procedures for data analysis in detail, and I discuss the credibility of the work as well as its limitations.

In Chapter Five, I present the study findings. I describe the participants’ accounts of their development as university teachers. I highlight, in their own words, the paths their development has taken, including the particular obstacles they have overcome, and what has supported them in doing so.

In Chapter Six, I outline the variations and similarities in the participants’ experiences and map some of the similarities in challenges and supports participants face in their role development. I demonstrate how the participants’ path towards consolidating a university teacher identity follows a developmental progression.

In Chapter Seven, I discuss some broad conclusions based on the study findings, and I outline implications for practice, theory, and further research. I further discuss how my own development paralleled that of my participants’ experiences.
CHAPTER TWO: DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY LITERATURE

As we seek for definitions of identity, we must remember that these definitions and concepts are not now existing in some hidden place, waiting patiently for us to find them. Only partly do we discover them; partly also we create them. Partly identity is whatever we say it is. Prior to this of course should come our sensitivity and receptivity to the various meanings the world already has. (Maslow, 1951, p. 103)

This study describes ways 7 new, untenured university teachers construe their development as teachers. The central questions addressed by the study were,

1. How do they develop their roles as university teachers?
2. What are the central features of their roles?
3. What challenges and supports have affected their role development?

The purpose of this literature review is to provide background to these questions and indicate the ways in which this study continues conversations about how new university academics develop their teaching roles.

In Chapter One I introduced constructivism and personal construct psychology as theoretical frameworks for my work. In this chapter, I describe some models of constructivist developmental psychology. Constructive developmentalists are interested in individual contexts and the process of meaning making. As Kompf (1993a) defines, "constructive developmentalism attends to integration of processes of personal construing...rather than attending to the products... as these are evaluated by the construer (p. 169). According to Kegan (1982), constructivism refers to the idea "that
persons...constitute or construct reality” (p. 8), and developmentalism refers to the idea “that organic systems evolve through eras according to regular principles of stability and change” (p. 8). This chapter thus serves as background to understanding how role identities are developed.

Individual Developmental Psychology

Piaget (1971) viewed human cognitive development as an active process. His assimilation-accommodation model, in which assimilation is applying existing constructs, or what you already know, when encountering new things, and accommodation is adjusting your knowledge (constructs) when faced with the new, assumes a significant level of interaction with the environment. Piaget’s view of learning is that schematic representations of knowledge are developed as the person matures and gains experience. When a new problem arises, a state of disequilibrium results as the new situation is compared against existing structures (assimilation) and gaps are found in these structures. The person then derives a solution and adjusts personal schema (accommodation). This leads to the development of new schema or constructs (Kelly, 1955).

Flavell, Miller, and Miller (2002) represent the Piagetian mind as one that “always reconstrues and reinterprets [the] environment to make it fit in with its own existing mental framework” (p. 5). Past experience and existing knowledge serve as constraints on what assimilations and accommodations can be made. According to Flavell et al., “you interpret or construe external objects and events in terms of your own presently available and favored ways of thinking about things” (p. 5).
Piaget's (1971) work is well known for its contribution to understanding child development and learning. Piaget defines four stages of cognitive development in the young: sensorimotor (up to 2 years), pre-operational (2 to 7 years), concrete operational (7 to 11 years), and formal operational (11 to 15 years). I suggest Piaget's stages are not just about child development but also development when encountering any new circumstances. The stages describe a person acquiring complex concepts and schema about the real world. Ideas are tested through direct interaction with the environment, and a pattern of relationships is discovered. To these patterns is added the ability to use representations of reality, although the focus is still mostly concrete and thinking is mostly about one's own context. The person is becoming more comfortable thinking about the concepts created. In the third stage, systems of thinking are further developed and perspectives mature that allow the inclusion of others into concept creation. In Piaget's final stage, the person shows the ability to think abstractly, and to consider future as well as present applications.

In essence, the learner in Piaget's (1971) model is going through miniature experiential learning cycles. Each time he or she encounters something new, the learner moves through assimilation-accommodation, in a series of four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, resulting in experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). As Kolb summarizes, "Piaget's theory describes how intelligence is shaped by experience. Intelligence is not an innate internal characteristic of the individual but arises as a product of the interaction between the person and his or her environment" (p. 12).
Still, there may be inherent limitations with Piaget’s model, which is about individual progress through learning stages and primarily one of individual biological development. Piagetian theory may be seen as making little allowance for sociocultural interactions in learning; one person alone constructing concepts of the world takes little account of the opportunities for collaborative learning.

Development Through Social Constructivism

Vygotskian (1986) theory begins where Piagetian theory is seen to end: Flavell et al. (2002) report that “developmentalists were attracted to Vygotsky’s theory and other accounts of the sociocultural context of thinking, and of concepts of the social world” (p. 9). Like Piaget, Vygotsky saw the learner’s interaction with the environment as an important piece of the developmental process; what he added was the idea of interaction with others. As Kolb (1984) summarizes Vygotsky’s theory, “Through experiences of imitation and communication with others and interaction with the physical environment, internal development potentialities are enacted and practiced until they are internalized as an independent development achievement” (p. 133).

This model of using others to support the learner’s process, or scaffolding, can help move students into what Vygotsky (1986) called the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Kolb, 1984, p. 133). While this implies that such support can be provided only by a more experienced colleague, it acknowledges that interaction with others may support
learners in achieving higher goals than they would have on their own. This suggests the relevance of some form of mentoring or collegial rapport for new faculty development.

Developmental Models: Applications and Extensions

Huberman’s (1995) model of the schoolteacher career cycle builds on Piaget’s (1971) stage model. Like Piaget, Huberman considers a longitudinal progression through the stages and represents them as significant benchmarks in life-span cognitive development. Huberman characterized the first few years of teaching as survival and discovery, leading to a short period of stabilization. This is followed by experimentation or reassessment, and then after a few years by serenity/relational distance or conservatism, and in final career stages, the teacher moves into disengagement. Piaget’s sensorimotor stage could thus well apply to the experience of new teachers or faculty members. They engage actively with their surroundings, building a repertoire of workable strategies, and at the end of the initiation period “can form mental representations of reality” (Flavell et al., 2002, p. 4). Aspects of Piaget’s preoperational stage coincide with Huberman’s experimentation/reassessment stage: “Thinking now is faster, more flexible and efficient, and more socially shared” (Flavell et al., p. 4). One can imagine a new professor settling into his or her role, presenting at conferences, and developing a network of colleagues. The use of representations allows the educator to draw on other contexts and disciplines to enhance his or her own teaching and research. During the concrete-operational stage, the acquisition of “reversible, organized operations allow... [professors] to overcome the limitations of pre-operational thought....Class-inclusion, perspective taking...are acquired” (p. 4). This speaks of a
midcareer practitioner, settling into the role, and comfortable with workable concepts that allow a certain amount of flexibility, much like Huberman’s serenity/conservatism stage.

Erikson (1959) proposes eight stages of adult personal development, characterizing each as a dichotomous continuum of crises experienced at that stage. As Kompf (1991) relates, “the crises faced at each progressive stage must be brought into a favourable ratio by sorting out associated conflicts” to allow a reframed worldview. Erikson describes the stages as Infancy: Trust versus Mistrust; Early Childhood: Autonomy versus Shame/Doubt; Play Age: Industry versus Inferiority; Adolescence: Identity versus Conflict; Young Adulthood: Intimacy versus Isolation; Adulthood: Generativity versus Stagnation; Old Age: Integrity versus Despair. The latter three stages of his model are typically viewed as those relevant to adult development, at which point they may be viewed as concurrent rather than chronological stages (McKeracher, n.d.).

If Erikson’s (1959) stages are about becoming an adult and growing old within a given society, then perhaps they can also be seen as a generic model for becoming adult when entering new milieus. Viewed in this way, and considering new faculty entering the academy, newcomers may pass through a period of resolving the balance between trust versus mistrust—with their colleagues and with administration. Next might come a period of autonomy versus shame or doubt, perhaps representing finding one’s own place as an individual within the society and, in the case of new faculty, learning how things are done in the new context. Industry versus inferiority seems a fitting analogy to the period of pretenure productivity, when one is building one’s curriculum vitae and expects to have it judged by peers. Next might come a time of relative calm and an opportunity to develop networks with colleagues in one’s institution and internationally, perhaps through
conferences. This might well equate to a time of intimacy versus isolation. In the midcareer time, the challenge may be to continue one’s research and publishing, or generativity versus stagnation, and towards the end of the career, reflecting on contributions to the discipline and graduate students set on their own path, one might reflect with integrity versus despair.

Kegan (1982) also positions development as a stage-related process (and makes connections between his model and that of Piaget, Erikson, and others). He comments, however, that his view of constructivist development involves a “move from the dichotomous choice to the dialectical context which brings the poles into being in the first place” (p. ix). In Kegan’s view, meaning-making is an outdated concept and should be replaced with the idea of organizing meaning.

Kegan (1982) views growth as a “process of differentiation, of emergence from embeddedness” (p. 31). He expresses this in the analogy of the birth of a baby, who in an emergence from embeddedness with the mother moves to a new and heightened opportunity for growth. He notes that persons must come to see themselves as separate from their “actions sensations” (p. 31). That is, instead of being these sensations, a person must move to having these sensations in order to be able to see them clearly.

In Kegan’s (1982) six-stage model, the young move through the incorporative stage where they are embedded in reflexes, sensing and moving, then the impulsive stage, which focuses on impulse and perception. The subsequent imperial stage is concerned with personal needs, interest, and competence. The next stage, interpersonal, is one of embeddedness in mutuality and shared subjective feelings. After this comes institutional, with its focus on personal autonomy and self-definition, and finally, interindividual,
which is about relationships amongst various systems and intimacy. These latter four (becoming adult and adult) stages may reflect the experience of entering the academy: One develops competence (obtains a Ph.D.), then connects to a specific setting and colleagues. The subsequent focus is on developing personal identity, and only then, on complex interconnections to the larger context and persons within it.

Periods of life stress are viewed as phases between stages of development. By this Kegan (1982) means that the process of emergence from embeddedness may create uncertainty and anxiety as the old self is left behind and the person is not yet firmly embedded in the new self. In essence, development is a process of loss of self, to be replaced by a new self, with newly organized meanings constructed through a process of assimilation and accommodation. Development is brought about by immersion in new circumstances. Development is thus seen, in Kegan’s view, as a “lifelong process...of increasingly organizing the relationship of the self to the environment. The relationship gets better organized by increasing differentiations of the self from the environment and thus by increasing integration of the environment” (p. 113).

Maslow (1968) describes human development as a progression up a hierarchy of needs. The stages of this hierarchy are physiological needs, safety needs (including a sense of structure and predictability), love and belonging (seen as both being loved and being loving to others), self-esteem, and finally, self-actualization, or becoming fulfilled.

In Maslow’s (1968) model, the requirements of each stage must be satisfied before the person can move to the next stage. He sees resolution of the needs of each stage as a support to moving on to the next level. Maslow describes this process as “the gratification of one need and its consequent removal from the center of the stage brings
about not a state of rest or stoic apathy, but rather the emergence into consciousness of another ‘higher’ need” (p. 30). Although this frames Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as a deficiency model, Maslow (1951) describes “self-actualization as a development of personality which frees the person from the deficiency problems of youth...so he [sic] is able to face ...the ‘real’ problems of life” (p. 115).

Self-actualization is relevant to developing integrated personal and professional roles. It is not clear what percentage of people achieve this level, but regression is likely. Cook-Greuter (2004) notes that “under pressure and rapid change conditions, people often resort to behaviour patterns from earlier [development] stages” (p. 278). As Maslow (1951) agrees, “anxiety kills curiosity and exploration, and that they are mutually incompatible, especially when anxiety is extreme” (p. 67). This last point may be particularly relevant in university settings, where newcomers experience high levels of stress and work overload.

Stage Models Versus Developmental Models

Developmental theory seems to fall into one of two perspectives. As Christensen and Fessler (1992) observe, “the literature is divided between theorists who stress a developmental approach and those who stress stages of development” (p. 3). Piaget is one classic example of a stage/phase theorist, tying development to age. Stage theory seems to explain development against a “social ‘time clock’” (Huberman, 1995, p. 195), irrespective of other variables. Another constructive-developmentalist approach sees development as occurring along a progression, noting that persons do not necessarily pass through stages as a normative and linear path. As Reeves (1999) notes, life development
can also be viewed “in terms of life events and transitions” (p. 22) or significant events serving as catalysts for learning and development. Huberman points out that “teachers do not ‘mature’ in the course of their profession in the same ways as do ducklings” (p. 194).

Huberman (1995) notes that regardless of whether one sees development in terms of stages with periods of transition in between or in terms of “a progression through a career” (p. 196), individual variations must be anticipated: developmental paths are “filled with plateaus, discontinuities, regressions, spurts, and dead ends” (p. 196). As Boulton-Lewis, Wilss, and Mutch (1996) argue,

Constructive-developmental theorists suggest that qualitative differences in the ways that individuals make sense of their experiences are not exclusively linked to matters of age, life, phase, or gender. Instead, these theorists describe developmental differences in terms of individuals’ meaning-making abilities. (p. 163)

Expectations of developmental stages tied to chronological age rely on an outdated expectation wherein adulthood, becoming a parent, getting a job (and staying in it for the duration of one’s career), and retiring at 65 are considered norms. These are no longer reasonable parameters for understanding of adult development, nor have they been for some time (Chistensen & Fessler, 1992). On the other hand, if one views developmental stages as more generic models of learning and growth, then they may still serve as useful frameworks for understanding development paths in particular contexts.
Developing Conceptions of Teaching

Teaching develops as the “first-hand experience of students’ learning styles, interests, needs, strengths and difficulties, and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills” (Elbaz, 1983, p. 5). The notable focus here is the reliance on the educator’s own experience. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that teaching is a combination of past experiences, present context, and future plans “found in the teacher’s practice” (p. 1), and experiential knowledge “embodied and reconstructed out of the narrative of a teacher’s life” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987, p. 490). Each of these brings a practical perspective and alludes to the accumulation of this knowledge over time, linking to Schön’s (1983) model of reflective practice and the longitudinal development of theory-in-action.

Kane et al. (2002) recommend that any attempts at professional development supports must take into account both existing knowledge as well as beliefs about teaching. McAlpine and Weston (2000) assert “fundamental changes to the quality of university teaching … are unlikely to happen without changes to professors’ conceptions of teaching” (p. 377). Fundamental change is dependent on being able to make explicit existing constructs.

Calderhead (1988) suggests “an awareness of the processes of learning to teach might enable them to analyze their own experiences … [and] to identify those areas of knowledge and skill that must be built up” (p. 63). As Hunt (1988) proposes, a practical setting for application of the theory is critical; without that setting, the theory will have no impact on practice. Taken together, practical knowledge and the beliefs that are generated from the application of that experience, or beliefs and the practical experience
that is generated through them, are at the core of Kelly’s (1955) personal construct theory.

**Reflective Practice**

Schön’s (1987) and Hunt’s (1988) discussions of reflective practice incorporate others in the reflective cycle. Schön (1983, 1987) identifies reflective practice as a form of critical problem solving that provides a framework for practitioners to critically examine their professional practice. It addresses how practitioners identify areas of focus for improvement as well as how that planned change will be achieved. In Schön’s model, practitioners move through four stages of plan-act-observe-reflect towards improved practice.

In reflective practice there cannot, Schön (1983) maintains, be reflection without accompanying action upon which to reflect, and practitioners cannot test the results of their reflection without applying them in new action. Reflection-on-practice sees practitioners thinking about events afterwards and reflecting back on ways to improve the outcome for the next iteration. Reflection-in-action, wherein practitioners are able to make quick decisions predicated on their accumulated skills and knowledge in an area of practice, resulting in a fairly immediate adjustment to a given situation to improve the outcome, comes only after experience (Schön).

Hunt (1992) describes experienced knowledge as self-perception, or knowledge of personal learning style and response to stimuli; implicit theories, or understanding of how things work; and personal images, or emotional response to stimuli. He, like Schön (1983), positions this self-evaluation as something that happens in conjunction with
others and describes a double and connected experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984) to illustrate this social constructivism. He labels this model as “Reflexing (bringing out your inner wisdom), Responsiveness (listening to another person bring out their inner wisdom) and Reciprocality (forming a relationship for co-creation)” (Hunt, 1988, p. 5). As I have previously noted, “collaborative partnerships may provide an ideal framework for co-construction of knowledge. The symbiotic nature of these relationships may help overcome practitioner isolation, while at the same time facilitate the achievement of individual and mutual goals” (Simmons, 2004, p. 33). Hunt’s (1988) model suggests perspectives that develop over time.

Austin (2002b) points out that graduate student teaching assistants seldom get “regular feedback about teaching and in-depth conversations with faculty about teaching practices” (p. 105). She found that participants in her study commented that the study interviews “were the only occasions where they had a serious conversation about their goals, how they thought about careers, or how they were developing as teachers, researchers, and prospective scholars” (p. 106). And yet, without reflection, how can practitioners develop conceptions of teaching? As Kompf and Bond (1995) note, “the acquisition of reflective abilities…relates to developmental maturity but also to the definition of self” (p. 16). An ability to reflect in some form or other is central to construing and reconstruing one’s own development.

Summary

The idea for this study began from my personal experience of teaching, learning, and faculty development. I have discussed my constructivist approach to the research and
how it relates to the theoretical framework of personal construct psychology (PCP), and have shown how several of these models provide useful lenses for considering teacher development.

In the Chapter Three, I outline literature about university teacher perceptions and development, including preparation for teaching and development over the career span, with a focus on development specific to the early career years.
CHAPTER THREE: TEACHER ROLE DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE REVIEW

Until very recently, many faculty told similar stories about their induction to teaching. Fresh from doctoral studies (or perhaps during their studies if they were a teaching assistant), they were given a textbook and simply told to teach a given topic. (Chism, Lees, & Evenbeck, 2002, p. 34)

In this chapter I continue with the literature review and introduce research that informs my study purpose of exploring university teachers’ development of their teaching roles. The postsecondary literature is somewhat sparse in this regard, and Kane et al. (2002) point out that research on primary and secondary teacher development has “been used infrequently to inform research in tertiary settings” (p. 177). I have therefore drawn also on studies on schoolteacher development where they directly inform my study purpose.

Preparing Future Academics

As Chism et al. (2002) report, new faculty members may have little preparation for their teaching role. While some may have taken doctoral level courses on university teaching, many have not, and have to rely instead on the experience of being a student themselves, self-directed study, or teaching assistant (TA) training. In this section I outline some the opportunities each of these may afford in preparing future academics.

Experience as Students

New faculty members have significant experience of the teaching and learning process; they have been process observers themselves for a period of approximately 20
years. During that internship, they will have formed some opinions of what to do and be as teachers and what not to do and be (Bellows, 2004; Pajares, 1992; Shulman, 2004). As Shulman points out, adults (in North America) have spent “nearly 20,000 hours as observers of teaching and they’ve learned an enormous amount about it” (p. 119). This experience may allow them to form an impression of an ideal teacher role.

For example, Lortie (1975) notes that teaching beliefs originate in the apprenticeship of observation, which as Pajares (1992) defines “takes place during the many years students spend at school. They include ideas about what it takes to be an effective teacher and how students ought to behave” (p. 322). This is echoed by Austin (2002b), who suggests that this apprenticeship, “well understood by those who prepare K-12 teachers, is also a powerful influence on graduate students aspiring to the professoriate” (p. 104).

While participants may have little opportunity for teaching practice during these years, the learner is still, as Pratt (1998) describes in his apprenticeship model, involved in “an actual, physical context of practice” (p. 83). Thus, grade school and postsecondary students, if they are attending to their instructors, have many opportunities to observe what works and does not work in specific classroom settings. Nespor (1987) goes as far as to suggest that this experience may provide “a richly detailed episodic memory which later serves the student as an inspiration and a template for his or her own teaching practices” (p. 320). The episodic memory may thus feed the student’s views about teaching and become the model for teaching in the future.

On the other hand, Ginsburg and Newman (1985) worry about the part this familiarity plays in the political process of reproducing society. In education, for
example, they found that most students who choose education as a career have had a positive identification with teaching, and this leads to continuity of conventional practice and reaffirmation rather than challenge of the past (Lortie, 1975). It does not occur to most preservice teachers, for example, that one of their future functions might be, should be, as agents for societal change (Pajares, 1992). Students become teachers unable, and subconsciously unwilling, to affect a system in need of reform (Pajares). As Briscoe (1993) points out, “as a result of their experiences as teachers and learners, [practitioners] construct beliefs and images regarding the nature of their roles as teachers....these cognitive constructs...may affect their ability to change” (p. 971). This is echoed by Morgan et al. (1998):

In the process of learning, we develop memories and our memories set up expectancies, stereotypes, and biases that affect the way in which we perceive environmental events. These learned perceptual templates (expectancies) have a great deal to do with stimulus input, and they may facilitate or retard learning. (p. 21)

This will have a profound impact on the very people who are going to be the leaders of the future academy. Calderhead (1988) notes that teachers rely on practical experience rather than theoretical models, describing their constructions of their roles as images. New teachers may have significant subject matter knowledge and knowledge about theories of learning, “but these knowledge bases are not readily translated into classroom action” (p. 57). Rather, teachers will draw on their images of teaching and have been found “to draw upon the observed practices of their supervising teacher rather than their own store of subject matter knowledge” (p. 57). This may very well be true in
the academy as well; it is not clear whether professors draw on theoretical foundations to build their teaching practice.

If the original model of teaching was of high quality, learning by observation may work well. On the other hand, poor teaching may be equally well modeled. Another challenge is that there may be little critical reflection on the learning process, which may result in accepting practices without question. This can lead to acceptance of existing practices without reflection on whether they are indeed exemplars (Pajares, 1992). In addition, without encouragement to reflect on the process of what they are learning, students may have created few constructs about the teaching process (Austin, 2002a).

Graduate Student Training

While some new faculty may have had teaching assistant (TA) experience, it is not clear how well that experience will have prepared them for their role as a teaching professor. For example, Austin (2002b) points out that “these assistantship roles sometimes are structured more to serve institutional or faculty needs than to ensure a high quality learning experience for graduate students” (p. 95).

Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) is a relatively new initiative in the United States, which grew from recommendations to address the gap between graduate student preparation and the realities of the academic role for which they were being prepared. Gaff (2002) recommends there is a need for further education in teaching at the postsecondary level as well as academic citizenship, noting “professors, like other professionals, share responsibility for governing their organizations” (p. 6). He also notes the mixed messages that graduate students receive.
At a time in their lives when they are particularly vulnerable, graduate students are confronted with multiple, sometimes conflicting, explicit and implicit images .... At the research universities, the most contradictory or ambiguous message concerns the relative value of the teaching and research dimensions of academic life. (p. 10)

This results in confusion for new members of the academy as they struggle to understand their roles and responsibilities and to determine the messages of the department's culture. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of explicit support and information. For example, results from the very large survey by The National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (2001) indicate the following doctoral student concerns:

1. Lack of systematic, comprehensive programs to help them learn to teach;
2. Little feedback and mentoring;
3. Little attention to understanding the range of possible careers; and
4. Discrepancies between doctoral education and realities of faculty work.

Preparing Future Faculty programs, which focus on addressing these particular issues, have been successful. Gaff (2002) notes that students in these programs are more interested in faculty careers, that they were likely to have more than one faculty mentor, and that they were more likely to have positive experiences with their advisor and other faculty members.

In other work, Nyquist et al. (1999) focus on the preparation of graduate students for professorial roles. Their study explores the ways in which graduate students experience their education and how their anticipations about becoming faculty members
changed during that education. Participants identify barriers and supports to their development as graduate students. For example, one student compared his path to mountain climbing, where he had to dodge rocks thrown from above by committee members, and described the mountain climbing rope as thin, "because that's all [the] grant could afford" (p. 19). Another described "swimming through rough waters" (p. 21) and passing through the "valley of uncertainty" (p. 21).

In addition to their discussion of challenges, Nyquist et al. (1999) conclude that few of the students interviewed had an accurate conception of life in the academy. For example, one student claimed, "I have no idea what it's like to be a faculty member....I guess it's about playing the game and making sure everyone likes you until you get tenure; then you can alienate everybody" (p. 25). In my cynical moments, I would argue that while this student's sense of the academy may be accurate for some, it may not represent the full range of perceptions!

Teaching was perceived by their participants to be both time-consuming and undervalued. One participant commented, "It's belittled...I have professors telling me, 'Spend as little time as possible on your teaching, and make sure you're a good researcher'" (Nyquist et al., 1999, p. 24). The authors note that graduate programs lack an emphasis on preparation for teaching, and they recommend mentoring and teaching role development as supports to all aspects of academic careers.

It may be true that doctoral education acknowledges the rush to get published early in one's career, resulting in a focus on research and dissemination in scholarly journals and peer-reviewed conferences rather than on teaching. In addition, the early
years are perhaps underrepresented in the research literature. As Wulff, Austin, Nyquist, and Sprague (2004) suggest,

Limited attention had been paid to what has been called a period of “anticipatory socialization,” a time when graduate students begin the process of acquiring the values, norms, attitudes and beliefs associated with a particular discipline and with being a professor. (p. 48)

Supporting New Academics

Willcoxson (1998) outlines pedagogical influences on new faculty. Her interviews of 15 academics suggest that most (11) drew on their own experience or recollection of others’ teaching. Four used student feedback to improve their teaching, 2 had attended faculty development workshops, 1 had taken a course in pedagogy, 1 read literature on teaching, and 1 had observed peers. Participants noted their learning was primarily independent. I next describe two commonly recommended supports for new academics: being mentored and participating in faculty learning communities. I also discuss the pedagogical literature available to new faculty members who may engage in self-directed study about teaching at the university.

Mentoring

The Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (CFHSS), (2004) document, *The Academy as Community: A Manual of Best Practices for Meeting the Needs of New Scholars*, strongly recommends mentoring as a means of overcoming faculty member isolation. Mentoring can be a positive force to support new faculty development; however, it often tends to focus on acclimatization to the department
research culture rather than necessarily having a particular focus on teaching in the
discipline. For example, the authors suggest that mentoring helps new faculty overcome
the challenges that result from the pressures of time constraints in the first few years of
academic appointments. At the same time, while the document suggests requesting
release time from teaching in order to pursue research, at no time does it discuss
mentoring for socialization into the teaching role.

In addition, although a number of mentoring models are listed, all represent the
traditional apprenticeship framework of a more senior and experienced faculty member
showing a junior colleague "the ropes." "New faculty, by virtue of their inexperience,
need...the guidance, advice, and support of specific middle-ranked and senior faculty"
(CFHSS, 2004, p. 3). This traditional model seeks a very specific social reproduction
outcome, in which "the mentee is...molded by someone of greater age, wisdom, or
position...when the mentee is 'filled', he or she becomes mentor to another, and the
cycle continues" (Kochan & Trimble, 2000, p. 21).

Successful teacher mentoring would thus depend on senior faculty members with
teaching skill and a desire to mentor new colleagues in this area. Boice (1992) points out
a challenge in this regard. "Advice comes almost exclusively from the experience of a
few already successful professors who pay little attention to what caused their less
successful counterparts to fail" (p. 9). Traditional models not only make assumptions that
the status quo is to be upheld, they may also provide little support that is of use to the
struggling new professor. Updated models see mentoring as collaborative relationships
rather than hierarchical ones (Kochan & Trimble, 2000).
Communities of Practice

An extension of collaborative mentoring can be found in communities of practice (faculty learning communities), which can provide opportunities for group mentoring. They usually function as informal groups of faculty members who come together to provide support for each other’s teaching and research, supporting professional development in the academy (Chism et al., 2002). As Chism et al. report, their purpose is to “promote the value of common dialogue and activity as a route to innovation and good practice” (p. 38).

Faculty communities provide opportunities for the social construction of knowledge. While constructivist learning can be individual, within a group the opportunities for interactions strengthen that learning. According to Johnson (2001), “constructivist principles apply to learning processes…with respect to constructing meaning with problem-based learning, structuring meaning via social activities, negotiating meaning through schemata and expectations, as well as building knowledge through interactions” (p. 48). The communities depend on the co-construction of knowledge, which involves a process of working collaboratively to create shared understanding. Hathorn and Ingram (2002) define this collaboration as “the interdependence of the group participants as they share unique ideas and experiences. The result is better than any one of the individuals could have obtained by working alone” (p. 33).

This does not mean, however, that all new faculty will participate in such communities. Richards and Murray (2001) suggest that such communities are more likely to appeal to females, who may have stronger interest in professional and personal
networks, although Cox (2003) emphasizes advantages for all participants. In addition, such groups often encounter significant barriers to success, as participants may come with different objectives and participate in different ways, sometimes creating tensions in role and purpose negotiation (Schutz et al., 2001). In addition, while communities of practice can function as collaborative mentoring groups, and incorporate others in reflective practice, these groups provide ongoing support rather than advance preparation for new university teachers.

**Self-Directed Study**

University libraries abound with books on how to teach at the postsecondary level. For example, Davis (1993), Light and Cox (2001), and McKeachie (1999) present comprehensive manuals of strategies for postsecondary teaching; Brookfield (1990, 1991) writes about how to resolve teaching dilemmas; Boice (1992), Menges (1999), and Ramsden (1992) focus on tips for new faculty; Cranton (2000) provides advice on course planning. Schön (1983) talks about reflecting on one’s teaching practice as a means of professional development; Pratt (1998) outlines five perspectives on teaching; Palmer (1998) offers insight on becoming an authentic teacher. These few resources represent only the tip of the iceberg; new faculty members can arguably find literature to support any aspect of university teaching.

The availability of such materials, however, in no way guarantees their use. The use of print materials for learning purposes, unless assigned for a particular course, presupposes a degree of self-directedness in the learning process, something Brookfield (1991) asserts many adults do not model.
Self-study may also result in isolation of the teaching practitioner in what Huberman (1995) refers to as a craft model of independent artisans doing their own work. He found that acting alone in “trial and error” teaching was the most common path towards achieving teaching competence (39%), personal research on subject matter next (22%) followed distantly by interaction with colleagues (13%). Like artisans, teachers may at some point get together with other experts—it may well be that attendance at conferences is the equivalent postsecondary practice—but then return to their own “studios” to integrate new concepts into their craft. This reinforces the isolated nature of the educator’s learning and teaching.

Further, while many resources provide teaching strategies, there are few (notably, Brookfield, 2000 and Palmer, 1998) that support practitioners’ reflective process. Deel (2004), for example, notes the lack of support for reflective practice in teaching resources, saying “the articles I was reading didn’t seem to cover the less tangible aspects of teaching, like: What tone should I take with my teaching?” (p. 26). This may leave practitioners with a “bag of tricks” that do not necessarily address their particular contexts or personal perspectives on teaching.

Finally, faculty members face the challenge of seeking relevant literature in a discipline with which they are not familiar. Although faculty development centres can (and do) recommend seminal resources about teaching, faculty members in disciplines other than education may not have a point of entry for the existing body of literature. In addition, faculty members are likely to experience challenges in forming and naming conceptions of teaching and learning (Wulff, 2004), compounding the difficulty in developing these areas.
Summary

While various opportunities for learning about teaching may be available to graduate students and new faculty members, there is no guarantee that they are actually used. It is not clear to what extent experience as a student, or reading books and journals, or graduate education in teaching or mentoring, either individually or in faculty communities of practice contribute to a professor's identity and growth as teacher. What is missing is an understanding of the ways in which professors make use of these and other ways of learning to individually construct their professorial roles and how these role constructions prepare new faculty for realities of their professor roles.

Constructing Identity as Teachers: Conceptions of Teaching

In this section, I summarize several studies of teachers' conceptions of teaching as a starting point to considering how teachers construct a teaching identity and to identify where there is room to continue conversations about developing a role as a teacher. I also refer to parallel schoolteacher (K-12) studies, as a reminder that the developmental processes may not be unique to the postsecondary setting.

In their study on teachers' conceptions of teaching, Trigwell and Prosser (1996) used a 39-item "approaches to teaching inventory" (p. 77) to map out the relationship between teaching intention and strategy use and to add quantitative data to their original qualitative work on this topic (Prosser, Trigwell, & Taylor, 1994). The authors found positive correlations between the various subscales indicating intention and strategy, which were statistically significant \( p < .001; p < .05 \).
Trigwell and Prosser (1996) conclude that professional development initiatives should focus on intentions and motives and say that a focus purely on strategy is unlikely to result in substantive change. While they assert that improvements in teaching are likely to require conceptual change and suggest this is unlikely to happen during short training sessions, they do not provide specific recommendations for how to accomplish such change. I tend to agree with their claim that short-term programs have limited impact, but I would also suggest that improvements in teaching can be made in small increments when such improvements are tied to the teacher's intentions, or values and beliefs, about teaching (Lock & Munby, 2000). This was a factor in the success of one faculty member whose development I studied as she implemented a significant change in her large university science class by introducing an online component (Simmons, 2004).

I am curious as to whether they might think of revising their inventory to include items about development as opposed to statements such as "I structure my subject to help students pass the exam" (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996, p. 6), which include no suggestion of a change over time. I see this study therefore as part of ongoing research that might next explore academics' conceptual change.

The work of Trigwell and Prosser (1996) focuses on academics' intentions for teaching and maps relationships between intentions and strategy use. While they discuss the importance of academic development focusing on underlying conceptions and intentions, and thus leading to conceptual change, there is a need for studies in this area to support their suggestions.

Kember (1997) prepared a summary of research on university teachers' conceptions of teaching, reviewing 13 studies up to and including 1994. He makes no
claim to include all work done, but conducted a critical examination of some empirical studies, noting that they show a high degree of consensus on categories describing conceptions of teaching and support a direct link between university teachers’ beliefs and the resulting classroom practices. I agree that this area is well addressed, and “there seems to be little value, therefore, in further exploratory studies to classify academics’ conceptions of teaching” (p. 273). However, the studies focused on conceptions and beliefs vis-à-vis classroom practices; none examined the teachers’ conceptions of their role development.

Kember (1997) notes a lack of research on “attempts to promote conceptual change” (p. 272). Such studies as do exist follow an action research format and extend over a lengthy period of time. On the other hand, I see no reason why questions cannot be asked of participants that would allow them to reflect back on past experiences rather than track them during those experiences. Conceptual change could be explored by hearing from new academics’ conceptions and contrasting those from more experienced academics’ recollections of their beginning years.

In another summary of existing literature, Kane et al. (2002) reviewed a number of studies on new university teacher conceptions up to and including 2000. They found a unifying theme of the importance of teacher beliefs as a framework for their classroom practices. Again, the studies focused predominantly on the relationship between teachers’ belief claims and their corresponding classroom practice.

Kane et al. (2002) note that while teachers may have theories consistent with their image of what a teacher should be, those may not be the theories that actually guide their practice. This alludes also to Argyris and Schön’s (1974) distinction between espoused
theories and theories-in-use. In other words, practitioners may say their practice is guided by certain frameworks, but their actual practice may indicate other influences. As Kane et al. note, “these two theories may or may not be compatible, and the individual may or may not be aware of this” (p. 182). This has significant implications for research about educator role constructs, as it must be assumed that stated perspectives represent espoused theories rather than necessarily theories-in-use, unless that relationship is specifically investigated.

Based on their review of the elementary and secondary school literature, Kane et al. (2002) describe the ways in which preexisting teacher beliefs, which are strongly resistant to change, act as filters for new knowledge. The authors point out that it is difficult to know whether these principles apply equally in postsecondary settings. As they note, “it would be reasonable to expect that these findings may have relevance to teachers at tertiary levels … [but] it appears that tertiary researchers have not taken full advantage of these findings” (p. 180).

I turn therefore to a parallel study on schoolteacher conceptions of teaching. Boulton-Lewis, Smith, McCrindle, Burnett, and Campbell (2001) conducted a study of 16 secondary teachers’ conceptions of teaching approaches vis-à-vis their teaching strategies. This paper was of particular interest to me because the researchers drew extensively on postsecondary studies to inform their work. Teachers’ conceptions of teaching were found to range through four categories: transmission of content/skills, development of skills/understanding, facilitation of understanding students as learners, and transformation of students. These matched four conceptions of learning: acquisition
and reproduction of content/skills, development and application of skills/understanding, development of understanding in student as learner, and transformation of learners.

Boulton-Lewis et al. (2001) state they did not find evidence of any change in perception, but it is not clear that they were specifically looking for change but rather a match between conceptions of teaching and conceptions of learning. My primary concern with this study is the closeness of the match found between the two sets of conceptions. It is not clear from the methodology whether the data analysis was inductive or deductive and thus whether the authors considered other perspectives.

In each of these cases, the focus of the work was not specifically on teacher development but rather on the match between teacher conceptions of teaching versus their actual practice. I turn next to studies focusing on teacher development.

Development as Teachers

Åkerlind (1999) discusses the growth and development of academics, noting that earlier academic development literature focused primarily on developers' "activities and approaches" (p. 1) rather than perspectives of the academics being developed. Using semistructured interviews, he asked academics "what growth and development meant to them, how they went about it, what they are trying to achieve, why they did it that way" (p. 3). Åkerlind describes six categories of academic growth based on these interviews, representing increases in efficiency, effectiveness, breadth, depth, promotion, and reputation. Each of these is described as motivation for growth as an academic.

While this study addresses professor growth, Åkerlind's focus is on the overall academic role rather than specifically on teaching. It was interesting to see the
hierarchical presentation of results at the same time as the author acknowledges that individuals' experiences were different. I note, however, that the hierarchical results were not necessarily positioned as phases of personal development, and they were not linked in any way to years of experience. Thus, while Åkerlind suggests that “that there is no reason to expect an individual to be restricted to a particular way of viewing growth and development over time” (p. 11), nor is there discussion of how an individual might grow over time.

In another study, Åkerlind (2003) looks specifically at constructs of developing as a teacher and the relationship between “their understandings of teaching and of teaching development” (p. 378). The results were mapped along two dimensions of conceptions of teaching and conceptions of teaching development. Categories of development focused on increasing ease of teaching, confidence with teaching, teachers’ knowledge and skills, and students’ learning and development. These were plotted against four categories of conceptions of teaching focus: transmission, teacher-student relations, student engagement, and student learning. Not surprisingly, there was a strong match between the two dimensions, indicating either a teacher-focus in each or a student-focus in each.

The discussion is predominantly about the relationship of perceptions of development as they relate to perspectives about teaching, and I would have welcomed an elaboration of the teachers' perceptions of their own development and growth, which I think would merit its own paper. In addition, there is no focus on factors that have affected the teachers’ development, such as challenges they have faced and what has supported them in overcoming them. Predominantly, the discussion focuses on conceptions of teaching development vis-à-vis the teacher-student classroom interaction,
and what I find particularly notable is that there are no “looking back” questions asking the participants what they think may have influenced their role constructs.

The 28 participants ranged in experience from a few months to 35 years. I am unsure of how experience and other demographics (discipline, appointment type, gender, age range, and language background) related to the results, as the data interpretation and development of categories focused on “taking a collective view of the range of ways of experiencing teaching growth and development…. not on the richness of each individual experience” (Åkerlind, 2003, p. 379). I find it difficult thus to determine to what extent the patterns are significant.

In a similar study on secondary teachers’ conceptions of learning to teach, Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001) interviewed 30 teachers from four institutions to examine their perception of their development as teachers, focusing on a number of affective areas, including “ideal self as a teacher” (p. 133). Participants’ mental models of learning to teach included learning by doing, trial and error, prior experience as pupil, teacher education, and mentoring, which parallel ways university academics may learn to teach.

I find it difficult to ascertain whether Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001) view this as a qualitative or quantitative study. While interviews were used to collect qualitative data, quantitative analysis was used to determine the relationship of categories to each other. While I can appreciate that blended methods may enhance the interpretation and presentation of results, in this case, the quantitative piece, in my opinion, took away from the potential value of the qualitative findings.
Having said that, Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001) distinguish five orientations to learning to teach based on the interplay between mental models, cognitive processing activities, and affective perspectives. For example, survival is a combination of learning by doing, asking ad hoc for solutions, and avoidance of external attributions. At the other end of their spectrum of approaches, open meaning is a combination of active knowledge construction, deep approach [to learning], and self-regulated performance improvement. In particular, the authors note a movement from surface to deep learning approaches across the hierarchy. In addition, they note that deep learning “implies the ‘risk’ of reconceptualisation. This may be very daunting, because it may trigger a ‘domino-effect’”(p. 152), resulting in a reframing of a number of constructs. The reconstruing of a number of areas at once may result in cognitive and affective stress of change overload.

Somewhat buried in the discussion section is the assertion that the results show a hierarchy across the categories, suggesting a developmental perspective be applied to interpretation of the findings. At the same time, Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001) make no explicit comment regarding to what that development might be linked. I would have appreciated further explanation of this claim.

In another literature review, D.L. Robertson (1999) focuses on college and adult learning and examines transitions in professors’ conceptions of teaching. He proposes a developmental path that sees teachers’ perceptions on teaching moving from egocentric, or teacher-centred, to aliquocentric, or learner-centred, and finally to systemocentric, or interconnected. Along this path, teachers move from “disseminators of knowledge” to “facilitators of learning” (p. 280).
I was interested to see D.L. Robertson's (1999) reference to Maslow (1968). He positions an early career focus on content mastery as being equivalent to Maslow's level of basic needs. There was, however, no further description offered of a hierarchy of development based on Maslow; he does, however, relate teaching development to a process of endings, neutral zone, and new beginnings, which parallels Kegan's (1982) framework of emerging from embeddedness. Robertson notes in particular the challenges of transition: "With a familiar teaching routine that they have deemed inappropriate and with nothing to replace it, teaching becomes a struggle" (p. 279). It is only with the phase of new beginnings, he asserts, that a stable new role is developed, one in which the practitioner can handle the "ripple effects emanating from integrating this new perspective in the teachers themselves and in their relationships" (p. 279). Robertson, like Hunt (1988), sees teaching role development as beginning with self, moving to thinking about others, and finally to interaction between the two.

D.L. Robertson's (1999) work is based on a review of the literature rather than empirical study and thus provides a starting framework for further research that could allow extension of the developmental (hierarchical) model.

In my mind, these studies on teacher development leave room for further research exploring conceptions of teacher development at specific career stages, with attention given to challenges and supports to role development.

Teaching Development Over the Career Span

Some interesting work is currently being done in the United States examining the career span of university academics. Seldin (2004, 2006) examines the different
motivations and professional development needs associated with different career stages, and posits that faculty at different stages have different professional development needs. Early career stage (1-5 years) faculty, he asserts, need resources such as financial (for computer and lab purchases, conference attendance, books) and skill development and time management programs. Midcareer (10-20 years) faculty need career planning support, short-term administrative or other nonteaching positions, faculty exchanges, and opportunities to lead students on 2- or 3-week field trips. Senior faculty (30 or more years) need opportunities to mentor younger colleagues, opportunities to assist the institution with a major project, and preparation for retirement through discussions with others at a similar stage.

Seldin (2004, 2006) points out that knowing this, faculty development offices could offer targeted programs. I note, however, that work focusing on commonalities in career stages with no attention to individual variations in those stages may miss important insights to be gained from outliers and may result in a “one size fits all” development program. I also note that the first five years is a period during which much change occurs (Boice, 1992; Lang, 2005; Menges, 1999). Seeing it as a single stage may miss focusing on newcomers’ specific needs at different times in their pretenure years.

Interestingly, Seldin’s (2004, 2006) work parallels Huberman’s (1992) study of Swiss secondary school teachers’ impressions of mastery of various aspects of teaching skills, their identification of what would support further development, and at what life stages mastery occurred. Huberman’s resulting model for teacher career stages includes (a) survival and discovery (1 to 3 years), passing through (b) stabilization (4 to 6 years), and then on to either (c) experimentation/activism or (d) taking stock/self doubts (7 to 18
years), on to (e) serenity or (f) conservatism (19 to 30 years), and finally, (g) disengagement (31 to 40 years). The model suggests that the early stages may be ones of self-doubt and perhaps a time of anxiety as new teachers struggle to connect their learned theory to their new practice.

The stabilization stage includes a comfort level with teaching, or as Huberman (1992) puts it, a “more congenial style of instruction” and a sense of “pleasure and humour, even a touch of headiness, in the ability to seize the moment, instructionally speaking” (p. 124). This is interesting, as there is no suggestion that formal education has supported the teacher in reaching this stage, but rather that is has come through experience in teaching. This ability to seize the moment parallels Schön’s (1983) model of reflection-in-action, which is possible, Schön maintains, only after significant experience and is different from the more naïve reflection-on-action.

In the experimentation/activism stage, comfort with teaching and a desire to have more impact may lead to experiments with strategies (Huberman, 1992). I also wonder whether the taking stock: self-doubts stage is doubly true for those who are entering the academy at this career stage and who may be going from a professional position of significance into a setting of little recognition. Huberman’s work does not discuss whether participants had previous teaching or other professional experience and whether that was a factor in their progress through career stages.

Huberman (1992) states that many sociologists feel the disengagement phase may actually result from “a response to pressures from the environment to cede one’s place to younger colleagues and fresher ideas” (p. 126). I wonder whether this pressure is as
strong as another desire: that to leave a legacy through one’s students and younger colleagues, a desire to see a next generation of scholars take the lead.

Huberman (1992) points out, “this does not mean, of course, that these career sequences are invariant…nor that they are universal, that is, that all members of a given profession will pass through them” (p. 123). He also positions his model not as a series of discrete temporal elements but rather as “spirals that turn back on themselves” (p. 123), allowing familiar ground to be covered as constructs are tested and become more robust.

I note, for example, that my 85-year-old stepfather is far from disengagement as he prepares to teach a graduate course in theoretical physics. Speaking from my own experience and observation, it would also seem possible that events of any given day might prompt self-doubts, activism, serenity, or even disengagement, regardless of career stage. At the same time, Huberman’s results suggest patterns in teaching development.

Huberman (1992) concludes that the dominant model is a craft model, of independent artisans doing their own work. Like artisans, teachers may at some point get together with other craftpersons or experts but then return to their own “studios” to integrate new concepts into their craft. It may well be that attendance at conferences is the equivalent postsecondary practice. “Good” teaching, or “craft pride” translates to self-efficacy or personal teaching efficacy (pp. 136-137). Huberman suggests that the sense of efficacy drives the next cycle of experimentation: I wonder whether it does. I suspect many teachers stagnate simply because things are going well as they are and there is little impetus to change. Huberman does note that experimentation intensifies when things are not going well (p. 137). Burnout, or job dissatisfaction and disengagement, is evident
when teachers make no effort to change teaching practices they have found to be unhelpful.

In another study of schoolteacher career stages, Copeland, Birmingham, DeMeulle, D’Emidio-Caston, and Natal (1994) investigated the knowledge teachers use in understanding and interpreting their classroom teaching. Four career stages were represented by 28 teacher participants. Neophytes had enrolled in a preprofessional program but had no teaching experience, Apprentices were nearing completion of a one-year post-graduate course, Masters had extensive classroom experience, and Laics had no teaching experience but were experienced professionals in other fields.

The authors draw indirectly on personal construct theory, pointing out “the importance of understanding the antecedent conditions that influence teachers’ interactive decisions” (Copeland et al., 1994, p. 167). Antecedent conditions are defined here as the underlying assumptions, beliefs, theories, and knowledge that teachers use to make meaning in their classrooms. Their work focused on making explicit teachers’ underlying constructs and schemas about their teaching practice.

Copeland et al. (1994) used video recordings of teachers’ teaching to stimulate recall and specifically asked them to focus on the reviewed events, tying to Kelly’s (1955) assertion that “life has to be seen in the perspective of time if it is to make any sense at all” (p. 7). It means that recollections are stimulated by specific incidents; it also means that these recollections are narrowed to a particular set of incidents. The authors note that they cannot be certain that what teachers describe is what they actually experienced at the time of teaching; I’m not sure that matters. Schön (1983) suggests that only more experienced educators are capable of reflection-in-action, and regardless,
reflection on past events tells as important a story as would reflection-in-action or speculation on future events, and in some cases the restorying of events may be the more informative when studying cognitive development.

Copeland et al.'s (1994) primary finding is that as teachers gain classroom experience, the number and complexity of linkages increase amongst their ideas about teaching. More experienced groups made more connections between the specific content of their lessons and the generalized knowledge they held and were able to more easily provide examples of applications. The Masters were most likely of all groups to support their students’ engagement in explicit metacognitive reflective strategies. That is, they were more likely to facilitate students’ thinking about process rather than simply about content, as well as overall reflections on learning processes.

In addition, experienced teachers were able to view the teaching process in terms of student learning rather than the more egocentric view of the novice teacher which seemed to centre on covering content. “Discovery and creative thinking” (Copeland et al., 1994, p. 185), for example, were more frequent in the classes of Apprentices and Masters.

In a study on schoolteachers’ developing identity, Tardif (1985) follows 4 student teachers in order to investigate “how student teachers defined themselves in the process of becoming a teacher” (p. 139). She states an interest in understanding the process rather than the outcome and looking at how the participants made meaning of their experiences during the practicum and whether meanings transformed throughout the practicum. Tardif talks about “operating from the theoretical orientation of symbolic interaction” (p. 140) and examining meaning that student teachers attach to experiences. By symbolic
interaction, she refers to the process of constructing personal meanings as a process in conjunction with the specific social context and by taking others’ perspectives on the self.

It is only by taking the role of others that the individual can come to see himself [sic] as an object. The standpoint of others provides a platform for getting outside oneself and thus viewing oneself. The development of the self is concurrent with the development of the ability to take roles. (p. 141)

Tardif’s (1985) findings show a developmental path: Initially, teachers saw themselves only as they responded to feelings of adequacy and survival; subsequently they were able to view themselves as students might see them. The author says, “In the process of becoming a teacher, student teachers increasingly appropriate behaviours that they perceive as belonging to the ‘teacher identity’ and evolve a conception of self as teacher which they believe will be ratified by the reference group” (p. 142).

The participants also reported much anxiety in not being able to live up to their own expectations; adaptation, however, was fairly quick. It should be noted that expertness was defined in this study as being a content expert. Tardif (1985) reports that “being a teacher in the eyes of the student teacher means being an expert in the subject area taught” (p. 142). The focus of student teacher time was on creation and implementation of teacher-directed classroom tasks. Unit completion was stressed, and the author notes that “there was continual pressure on the student teachers to conform to the way things were generally done” (p. 144). I wonder whether in later years these beginning teachers will also move, as those in Copeland et al.’s (1994) study, away from a content focus and towards a learner-centred process focus.
In her quantitative Canadian study focusing on university academics' upper career stages, Kreber (2000a) used an application of Kelly's (1955) repertory grid analysis to look at professor role conceptions. Kreber looked at the ways in which award-winning university teachers conceptualize their work and in particular the relationship between teaching and research. She notes that relationships between the two are more likely to be "strongly perceived by experienced professors than by junior professors" (p. 65). Participants were thus chosen as those likely, in Kreber's view, to have the most experience and therefore understanding of the role of teaching professor.

Her rationale for the study is positioned in her claim that teaching is undervalued at many North American universities and that faculty may not be adequately rewarded for their work in this area. At the same time, she sees academic work as focusing too heavily on rewarding the products of scholarship rather than the process. While these two points underpin her study, discussion focuses on the intertwined nature of learning about teaching and learning about one's discipline. Kreber (2000a) points out hers was an exploratory study, and I would agree that further work would be needed to investigate this relationship, particularly across the career-span. Exploration of early career stage role integration could add to this work, particularly as the years of university experience of her participants ranged from 10 years to an unspecified upper limit. In addition, as her participants had all achieved full professor rank, she points out that they had already demonstrated research competence. I agree with her that "clearly, further research, preferably of a purely qualitative nature . . . is needed to enhance our confidence" (p. 76).

There are few such qualitative studies of teacher growth. In one autobiographical study of postsecondary teaching growth, Deel (2004) gives a personal account of her
teaching development path. She talks about sources for learning how to teach and how when she started teaching her only resource to call upon was her 16 years as a student. Deel’s words highlight the use of print materials for teaching preparation:

I ended up reading what I could find about teaching and collecting hints from anyone who would share them. I learned a lot about techniques and strategies for effective teaching. I used the ones that made sense to me and became a competent teacher. (p. 25)

There’s a dot-dot-dot connection, it seems to me, between the reading to collect strategies and using the ones that made sense to her. How did she know they made sense? What framework did she use to reject some and try others? How did she come to know in advance which ones would suit her teaching role?

In addition, Deel (2004) says that “the articles I was reading didn’t seem to cover the less tangible aspects of teaching, like: What tone should I take with my teaching?” (p. 26). She turned to her experiences as a student to guide her path, which caused her to question her self-identity and whether she could match her impression of the role of “good” professor. She reports, “For a long time I tried to emulate the popular professors, but was...forced to acknowledge that I am neither a comic nor laid-back” (p. 27).

In her own summary, Deel (2004) alludes to the constructive-developmental nature of her path:

As I grow and change, my teaching voice will change too. I will not spend my teaching life striving to be the one perfect teacher, I know that there are many ways to be a good teacher, and I will enjoy the freedom to explore them as I choose. (p. 31)
In another autobiographical work, Lang (2005) provides a narrative account of his first year as a university academic. Lang's approach is to recall his first year assigning a theme to each month; for example, October is writing, December is grading, July is affirming. His account moves beyond these descriptions of the concerns of each month stage of his development; his story is one of becoming in the academy. He reflects on his changing perceptions, saying, “I am becoming more and more aware that the undergraduate Jim Lang, whose idealism I still admire, did not have the knowledge or experience to be a good judge of pedagogical practices or student relations” (p. 127).

Lang's (2005) book is not a theory-linked account but does offer a picture of one professor's path into the academy, and other newcomers will likely find their own story reflected in his experiences. I include it here as a model of the usefulness of reading another's narrative of personal experience to inform one's own developmental path. While the links are implicit rather than articulated, Lang does present a developmental model that draws strongly on Kelly (1955). He notes, for example, “The most complex relationship I find myself having to negotiate in my continued development as a teacher, then, is the one between my past and present selves” (Lang, p. 128).

Summary

While each of these studies contributes background to an understanding of university teachers' development and role conceptions, there is very little in the postsecondary literature to suggest what has affected university teachers' developmental paths and in particular the challenges and supports along the way. In particular, there is room for more qualitative studies describing the experiences of new university teachers as they develop a teaching identity.
Chapter Summary

In summarizing the relevant literature, I have described possibilities of how new university teachers might construe their role development, but also indicated a significant lack in our understanding of this process. While there is some research on conceptions of university teaching, the focus is primarily on the relationship between these conceptions and the teachers' practice, rather than conceptions of role development (Kane et al., 2002; Kember, 1997; Prosser, et al., 1994). This is echoed in the schoolteacher research findings of Boulton-Lewis et al. (2001).

Trigwell and Prosser (1996) and Åkerlind (2003) discuss growth and the process of change, but neither distinguishes development as it might relate to career stages. Seldin (2004, 2006) focuses on stages of faculty development rather than variations at any one stage, Kreber's (2000b) study addresses only experienced faculty, and Nyquist et al.'s (1999) work on graduate students focuses only on development during graduate schooling. Although Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001) and Huberman (1992, 1995) outline teacher growth, and while Huberman elaborates on the early stage of teacher development, work is needed at the postsecondary level to ascertain whether these findings are relevant in that setting.

D.L. Robertson (1999) offers a developmental perspective, but it is based on a review of existing literature rather than empirical study. Deel (2004) and Lang (2005) do provide a developmental account, but offer an informative narrative rather than an explicit conceptualization of their development.

In summary, I turn to the words of Kane et al. (2002),
At research universities, academics are expected to produce and to disseminate knowledge. For academics trained as researchers, this means that they are often well prepared for the research role. In contrast, many academics have had little or no formal teacher education to prepare them for the teaching role.... We need to understand how adults and in particular university academics, learn to teach. (pp. 181-182)
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

One lives, looks backward and forward, and then lives again. It is this desire, more so than the desire to know, that, for Dewey, drove human experience and was the source of education. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995, p. 156)

This phenomenographic study (Marton, 1986, 1994; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996) investigated how new, untenured university teachers construe the development of their roles. Using semistructured interviews, I explored participants’ conceptions through their own words, such that diverse perspectives could be heard (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I analyzed these perspectives for themes and patterns of constructs about role development (Kelly, 1955) as well as for individual variations.

Rationale for Research Methodology

Phenomenography developed as a research methodology in the early 1970s as a result of the work of Marton (1994), who maintains “phenomenography is the empirical study of the differing ways in which people experience, perceive, apprehend, understand, and conceptualize various phenomena in and aspects of the world around us” (p. 4428). It allows the researcher to look at patterns and variations in meaning-making. As Trigwell describes it, phenomenography is ideal for “looking at variations in conceptions” (personal communication, April 24, 2005).

Phenomenography blends the methodological approaches of ethnography, or the study of a culture, with phenomenology, or the study of a phenomenon. As such,
phenomenography frames the study of a phenomenon within a culture. It allows the constructivist researcher to look at patterns and variations in meaning-making.

Researchers with a more constructivist orientation emphasize the holistic nature of people’s understandings. It is not a map, where given information elements are ordered and structured. Understanding is an intellectual relation to the world we experience. It is a way of thinking that makes us capable of grasping the essence of our experiences and giving them meaning. (Targama, n.d., p. 4)

A phenomenographical perspective allowed the study to be approached from a perspective of verstehen (Weber, 1968), or understanding of the situated phenomenon and all its guises. This allows a unique view of constructs about teaching, as application of Kelly’s (1955) repertory grid means that investigations of role constructs are usually quantitative studies.

There are several factors that distinguish phenomenography from other qualitative research methodologies. The list below is compiled from Trigwell (2000), Trigwell and Prosser (1996), Åkerlind (2005), Francis (1993), and Richardson (1999).

1. It is about conceptual thought (rather than lived experience, such as explored in a phenomenological study).
2. Accounts are collected of past experience rather than experience as it is lived.
3. It is nondualist. The participant (subject) is not seen as separate from the phenomenon (object). It espouses the constructivist perspective that reality exists in the relation between the participant and the phenomenon.
4. It uses second order data, letting participants’ voices be heard, rather than having them filtered through the researcher’s words.
5. It focuses on variations in experience rather than similarities, however, it “aims to describe the key aspects of the variation of experience of a phenomenon rather than the richness of individual experiences” (Trigwell, para. 13).

6. Various kinds of data can be used, but phenomenography predominantly uses conversational interviews.

7. It uses a grounded theory approach and inductive analysis of data. Data constructs are formed by researchers to explore the data and are examined until a minimum number of constructs (categories) explain all the data.

8. It “yields a limited number of internally related, hierarchical categories of description of the variation” (Trigwell, para. 2), or, as Åkerlind puts it, “a phenomenographic researcher aims to constitute not just a set of different meanings, but a logical structure relating the meanings” (p. 329).

The last point is one of some contention amongst phenomenographic researchers. As Kember (1997) reports, some researchers interpret hierarchical to mean that “characteristics present in lower order categories are present in all other categories. [But] it is not always clear that the other authors intended to use the term in this way” (p. 262). While Trigwell specifically emphasizes the hierarchical aspects of the categorical descriptions, not all phenomenographic researchers see such a need; Pratt (1998), for example, implies no hierarchy in his five perspectives of teaching. Åkerlind refers to the possibility that results “need not always take the form of a linear hierarchy of inclusiveness; branching structures or hierarchies are also a possibility” (p. 329). I personally struggle with the idea of searching for a hierarchy of themes when
phenomenography is grounded theory, using an inductive approach in which all categories are drawn from the data, as opposed to entering the research process with a preexisting framework for comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Leedy & Ormrod, 1985). As Kember points out, “if the researcher sets out to discover categories of description, it must come as no surprise that the results appear as categories of description” (p. 263). Thus, while the data did indeed suggest such a hierarchy, it was not my intent to specifically seek one but rather to allow the participants’ accounts to describe the phenomenon.

While phenomenography explores meaning through the perspectives of the participants, it also seeks to understand patterns as well as variations in those patterns, painting a picture of the landscape in which the phenomenon occurs for the specific population studied. From a metaperspective, phenomenography is the personal construct theory of qualitative research, in which “differing experiences, understandings . . . are characterized in terms of categories of description, logically related to each other, and forming hierarchies in relation to given criteria” (Trigwell, 2000, p. 75). In a sense, the phenomenographic researcher is using the participants’ accounts of their experience to create an understanding of constructs about the phenomenon, constructs that may assist others in their anticipation of similar circumstances.

As C.L. Russell (2003) points out, “phenomenography is particularly useful for research in previously understudied areas . . . where one needs to do work to ascertain the range of experiences” (p. 126). Phenomenography provides an ideal methodology for investigating the study problem: How do new university teachers construe their development as teachers? Specifically, on what do new university teachers draw to
develop their roles as university teachers? What challenges and supports have affected their role development? I turn next to the methods of data collection to address these questions.

Data Collection

Kelly (1955) points out that a person’s constructs are not always explicit understandings. Kane et al. (2002) echo that “asking teachers to articulate their implicit theories inevitably involves them in a process of discovery … finding appropriate and valid ways of making implicit theories explicit is therefore a major methodological challenge” (p. 183). The suggested methods to overcome this challenge included interviews, narrative, life history, and engagement in reflective practice (Kane et al.).

Trigwell (2000) notes that “although different kinds of data can be used, the dominating method for collecting data [in phenomenography] is the individual interview which is carried out in a dialogical manner” (para. 10). In this way, interviews can be both data collection and simultaneous support to participants’ reflective practice so implicit understandings can be made explicit. It also fit with my own approach to data collection: I was asked recently whether I hear interviews as story or data, and my instinctive response was that I hear them as conversations.

Although Kember (1997) identifies average interview lengths of 30 to 90 minutes, each of my initial interviews was approximately 90 to 120 minutes in length, which allowed for a more in-depth exploration of participant conceptions (see Appendix B for partial interview excerpt). During the initial interview, I collected basic demographic data, such as gender, age range, type of university appointment, department, and previous
university teaching experience. I attempted to set an informal tone for the interviews, and began with a statement such as,

The questions I have for the study are guiding questions, and if they suggest any tangents to you, feel free to take them. I may alter the order of the questions, depending on the path our conversation takes, and occasionally I may jot something down so I remember to come back to it. (Researcher, interview transcript)

I then used the following guide for the remainder of the interview, incorporating follow-up questions as appropriate.

1. What other formal or informal teaching experience do you have?
2. What does your job as university teacher encompass?
3. Thinking back to the first time you stepped into a university classroom as a teacher, how did you know how to be a university teacher?
4. What have you learned about teaching since then, and from what or whom did you learn it?
5. What significant factors contributed to your growth as a university teacher since then?
6. What significant factors hindered your growth as a university teacher since then?
7. Have you had any [other] critical incidents that served as moments of growth?
8. For what aspects of your teaching role were you prepared?
9. For what aspects of your teaching role were you not prepared?
10. In what way do you see university teaching differently now from when you began?

11. What other life experience or personal attributes have supported your teaching?

12. How do you think your experiences compare to those of your colleagues?

13. What is your image of your ideal self as teacher?

14. In what ways do you anticipate you will next develop as a university teacher, and how do you plan to facilitate that?

15. If you were in charge of providing supports for the development of new university teachers, what do you think would be most valuable?

These questions were prepared in consultation with my advisor and colleagues and were then given to additional colleagues to determine whether responses would be possible for all questions. In addition, two colleagues at early career stages offered to participate in mock interviews so I could ascertain whether the responses would address the study focus. The initial question list was modified as a result, and further edited after discussion with my committee.

The use of a series of guiding questions allowed all participants to have the opportunity to respond to the same discussion cues; the dialogic nature of the interviews (Trigwell, 2000) allowed me to explore and clarify particularly compelling areas, using questions such as “Could you elaborate on that?” and “In what sense?” and “Why do you think that is so?” The methodological challenge facing the researcher in phenomenography is being attentive to each participant’s words, such that follow-up questions will support the participant in making implicit understandings explicit. I used
follow-up questions and statements to both clarify and support participants’ meaning
construction. For example,

So let me tease out the edges of that, because I’m hearing you say that there
should be some education in teaching at the university level, but I’m also hearing
you say that maybe you’re not too worried, because maybe there’s also been some
kind of informal training. (Researcher statement, interview with Gail)

Interviews were taped and transcribed by me. While this represented a significant
workload (and need for large amounts of ibuprofen), Ashworth and Lucas (2000)
recommend that “transcription of the interview should be aimed at accurately reflecting
the emotions and emphases of the participant” (p. 300). While I could have read the
transcripts and listened to the tapes during analysis, I have found that in transcribing
interviews myself, I was able to enter the data and recapture the meaning intended by the
participant. For example, I have found that typing while listening moves me into a more
active listening mode and that I can recall nonverbal patterns of response more accurately
than when I am simply listening to the tape while reading someone else’s transcript. At
the same time, I find I am still ambivalent about the best use of my time in this regard and
that annotating previously prepared transcripts may have achieved the same goal.

Follow-up meetings allowed informants to review the data transcript and also to
clarify or expand on any aspects of the initial interview. They also provided me with an
opportunity to revisit questions for clarification, to follow threads suggested by other
participants, and to pose any questions missed during the initial interview.

The following list of questions served as an informal guide for these follow-up
meetings.
1. How are you finding this term compared to your first term teaching?
2. What would be the percentage breakdown of your ideal job in terms of teaching, research, and service?
3. What do others do to develop their teaching that you haven’t tried yet?
4. Would you change any of your answers from our first meeting?
5. Has anything changed for you since we last met?
6. Have you thought of anything new since we last met or as a result of our meeting?

In addition to these two sets of interviews, I collected a teaching philosophy statement from each participant and in some cases was provided with course outlines and conference presentations. I further kept a research journal in which I recorded my own observations during the interviews about nonverbal cues, questions I wanted to revisit, and any initial thoughts about participant responses (Berg, 1989; Schwandt, 1997).

Specifically, I made notes about my perceptions of the mood of my informants along with occasional comments about connections I was seeing. I used these notes while transcribing interviews to note any nonverbal cues, and also returned to them during the data analysis stages.

Data Analysis

Interview transcripts were analysed for themes and patterns of perspectives, or constructs, about role development. Initially, I read all transcripts through twice “without interruption and without coding” (C.L. Russell, 2003, p. 129) to get an overview of the data and to form some preliminary impressions. I then reread them while listening to the original tapes. At this stage I made notes on the transcript about nonverbal cues. For
example, I noted in several places that participants got up to close their door or lowered their voices when talking about their interactions with colleagues. I then used an inductive approach to analyze the data for themes and categories. By inductive, I mean that rather than approaching the data with predetermined parameters, I read and coded the data towards emergent patterns that generated a picture of participant constructs (Gay, 1996; Leedy & Ormrod, 1985; W.L. Neuman, 1997). Methods that assisted me in this analysis were variously: the use of coloured highlighters to indicate different themes on the hard copy transcripts; the use of charts with themes indicated in one column and data excerpts copied into another; and post-it notes to map categories under larger themes.

In keeping with the spirit of phenomenography (Boulton-Lewis et al., 2001), the data were reanalysed for entries that did not fit these themes. These individual variations were further reviewed for additional themes and categories. I continued to build themes and categories until there were no unassigned items. Remaining with the data and reevaluating them from a number of perspectives was important, as a danger in phenomenography is that “the researcher may move too quickly from the data to an attempt to structure the data” (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000, p. 298). Accordingly, this cycle of analysis was something I went through several times, sometimes with only minor variations in my understanding of the patterns. Themes and interpretations were checked against all data to uncover any contradictory evidence, and I discussed my preliminary interpretations with my advisor and other colleagues. This use of others to affirm early conclusions is common in phenomenography (Äkerlind, 2005; Trigwell, 2000). I subsequently reevaluated these themes through a deductive approach, checking that I had no unassigned items left.
Keeping in mind that this dissertation serves also as a teaching document, I wish to outline the specifics of some strategies that were of use to me during this analysis phase. Techniques that assisted me were:

1. Making notes during my transcription of the interviews. I noted tone of voice, pauses, and laughs right on the transcript.

2. I printed out the transcripts and coded them with different coloured highlighters. This gave me a quick visual as to which categories were most frequently mentioned.

3. I went back and listened and read through all the transcripts again.

4. I then recoded themes with highlighters, working towards overarching themes rather than separate categories.

5. One week later (and being away from them for a week gave me a much needed fresh perspective), I recoded them into a chart on my computer using cut and paste. I cross-checked this against my earlier highlighted versions. I found data duplications during this, suggesting my new themes were a better fit with the data.

6. During this coding period, I continued my conversations with my advisor and with colleagues to help clarify my thinking. It was in response to my advisor’s comment that I might not yet have “found the grain” (M. Kompf, personal communication, September 2006) that I walked away from them again for a week and then recoded them on the computer into what has become the final framework. Again, I found data duplications, which disappeared with the new thematic framework.
Quite by coincidence, the interview order closely matched with the increase in informants' experience. Those interviewed first happened to be the most junior participants; towards the end, the more senior informants were interviewed. This occurred completely by chance, as interviews were scheduled at the participants' convenience, but was also affected by the fact that in one university, I was able to send the call only to new participants, and accordingly, those persons were scheduled first. I was very aware as I began the data analysis that in order to view each interview as its own entity for analysis, I had to review the interviews in the order I did them. Not only did my participants' level of experience increase over the interview period, my own experience in conducting the interviews also increased. I became more aware of opportunities to ask probing questions and found fewer times when I had not (in my opinion on reviewing the transcripts) adequately pursued a participant's statement. I was particularly concerned that categories and themes should be mined from each individual interview and then the set reviewed as a whole. I made what efforts I could to approach each interview with a fresh start and did not review previous interviews before analyzing newer ones.

During the analysis time, I also continued with my reading of relevant literature. The idea of grounded theory began to take on new and personal meaning: At times when I agonized over whether I would unearth riches in the data, returning to reading of others did indeed ground me as well as provide a ground for my interpretations.

In addition, my interpretations of individual participants' experiences were retested against the participants' perspectives. Interpretations relevant to an individual participant's data were confirmed in consultation with that participant to ensure
apparence and verisimilitude (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). In this way, participants’ perspectives guided the process and resultant interpretations, rather than force-fitting to a preconceived scheme.

Ashworth and Lucas (2000) discuss the importance of the researcher bracketing his or her assumptions, implying that I should set aside my own interpretations. While I agree with the importance of letting the participants’ conceptions be heard rather than my own, and that it was important not to impose a preconceived scheme on the data, I acknowledge an inherent difficulty in bracketing and a disconnect with my understanding of socially constructed meanings. I negotiated this difficulty by asking participants for input on my compiled description of their individual conceptions (see Chapter Five).

Role of Researcher

Pratt (1992) writes that “the study and practice of teaching is grounded in our conceptions. There can be no neutral ground from which to understand another person’s teaching” (p. 204). I thus make no claim to be an impartial outsider but rather situate myself as collaborator in the social construction of knowledge and meaning. Phenomenography acknowledges that interview data reflect meanings co-constructed by the researcher and the participant (Dortins, 2002; Trigwell, 2000). In this way, it allows an explicit acknowledgement of a key principle of qualitative research: “The researcher’s subjectivity as a weakness or a strength is not the issue. It is seen simply as an inevitable feature of the research act” (Walford, 2001, p. 9).

I acknowledge my subjectivity and my bias: While I did not go into the study seeking a developmental model, development of others is both my work and my persona.
While my advisor encouraged me to “stifle” my urge to help (M. Kompf, personal communication, July 2006), the offering of affirming comments and, in some cases, suggestions in direct response to participants’ comments about faculty development helped build an environment of trust. I point out that Kompf (1993b) notes that “rapport and trust must be established through perceptions of task commonality and empathy” (p. 526). As Walford (2001) also suggests, the principle of engagement by the researcher contains two elements: human connection with participants, and an investment of time. There is an assumption that, as the researcher becomes a more familiar presence, participants are less likely to behave uncharacteristically....The idea is that participants “perform” less, and, as trust builds, reveal more details of their lives. (p. 9)

Rather than seeing trust build over time, I saw it develop in response to my interactions with the participants about their particular issues around teaching. I came to see this interaction as a strength of the methodology: that I, along with my perspectives, was an active instrument for data collection. “All research is researching yourself....All research involves the researcher in making decisions about the choice of topic and how the research is to proceed. These decisions always involve individual choices, and often evolve from previous personal experiences and commitments” (Walford, p. 98).

I also acknowledge my role as a critical friend. Critical friend is a term borrowed from action research that positions the researcher as a “trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person’s work as a friend” (Costa & Kallick, 1993, p. 50). This spirit of socially constructed meaning is reflected in Kompf’s (1993b) words, reiterated here for
emphasis, "Co-determination of processes and procedures emphasise the collaborative spirit between research and study participants. Imposition of meaning on research protocols becomes a shared responsibility between co-scientists" (p. 519). This positions the researcher and participants as sharing the research process and seeks to avoid power imbalance and possibilities of hegemony in the research relationship.

In addition, I was very aware of my responsibilities in maintaining the trust the participants placed in me. I was treated as a confidante, and participants often disclosed things that they had not told anyone else in the department, shared original student evaluations, or closed the door before talking about particular issues. For example, one participant asked before the interview about confidentiality and anonymity and spoke in a lowered tone when discussing colleagues. Another participant prefaced answering certain questions with checking that our conversation was confidential. In all cases I gave reassurances whenever asked and responded to concerns about confidentiality by reiterating statements such as, "When I do the transcript, I'll take out anything that I think will identify you.... You'll also have a chance to read it to see if there's anything that might identify you that I didn't take out" (Researcher, interview transcript).

Participants

For a sense of how many participants would make for a reasonable phenomenographic study, I turned to the work of other phenomenographists (see Appendix C), which suggested a range of 6-39 participants. (I have excluded the work of Pratt, who was able to involve a number of graduate students in his research interviews.) However, I needed to take into account the logistics of interviewing that number of
participants and transcribing and analyzing the data. I also wanted to conduct my interviews over one academic term, so as to remain immersed in the data during preliminary analysis and to limit the impact of significant events on possible variations.

Studies done by Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, and Prosser (2000) and Prosser et al. (1994) suggested that a group of 20-24 participants would be ideal; however, a smaller group would allow me to go into greater depth in each interview. In consultation with my committee, I therefore planned for a group of 6 to 10 participants, large enough to demonstrate a range of conceptions, but small enough to remain manageable. I ended up with 7 participants who were all early career university teachers (pretenure, 5 years or less) at two midsize universities in southern Ontario. My purpose in including two universities was to attempt to move results beyond the influences of a single institutional culture.

Faculty listservs through faculty development offices were used to circulate a request for participants. Participants were accepted on a first come, first serve basis. It was my intention that any who volunteered after the numbers sought would be asked if they would like to have their contact information kept on file for future follow-up studies. In the end, however, apart from two persons who volunteered and requested me to travel to their homes for the interview (a distance of over 50 kilometres from their institution) and who were not included in the study, only 7 participants came forward.

It is difficult to establish a response rate to the initial email invitation; in one university, all 226 faculty members who had joined within the previous 5 years received an email, out of which 5 responded that they were already tenured. In the other institution, all 85 who had started employment in the previous year were sent the email of
invitation, including limited term appointments who may no longer have been at the
institution. Two indicated they were already tenured. In the end, 7 participants were
included in the study (3%, including the two excluded for distance). I acknowledge that
several factors may have affected the response rate. First, the true response rate was 6%,
including those who were outside the study parameters. In addition, I was aware that a
number of people who did not respond were already tenured. Second, I made no
assumptions that most new faculty would necessarily have either the time or the interest
to participate in the study. Third, the email came from me personally and may have easily
been overlooked.

At the same time, the speed of response for those who did volunteer was a
surprise to me. When I sent the email of invitation to the list provided by one institution,
within the next hour I had 3 volunteers. By noon I had an offer from a senior faculty
member to meet with me to discuss my work (which I accepted), and the one response
indicating the person was past the 5-year period. At the second institution, the first
participant volunteered 2 minutes later; another within the next hour. One person
responded that they would like to participate but were feeling overburdened already.
Another indicated being too busy with work and vacation. All 7 participants volunteered
within two days of my email invitations. I saw the response speed as an interesting early
finding in and of itself. It suggested to me that there were certainly some new faculty who
very much wanted to talk about their perceptions of teaching in the university.
Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards set out by the Brock University Ethics Review Board, which reviewed and approved ethics documents pertaining to the study (see Appendix D). It was my intent as the researcher to be respectful and considerate of participants at all times, as befits research involving human subjects. The inconvenience to participants was of primary concern, and interviews were scheduled at the participants’ choice and convenience.

In order to maintain participant confidentiality, pseudonyms were used when referring to participants, and their universities, departments, and position within those departments are discussed only in general and anonymous terms. Only I know the identity of the participants, and no one else other than my advisor has access to the raw data.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and the participants were free to withdraw at any time or to refuse to participate in any research activities. Participants were fully informed as to the nature of the study and were provided with a copy of the ethical guidelines for the study. Participants were also given a chance to review full transcripts to make any changes needed to guarantee their confidentiality and were further invited to review the section of Chapter Five specific to their individual accounts.

Methodological Assumptions and Challenges

I made a number of methodological assumptions in this study. First, I assumed that participants would be able to make explicit meaning of their experiences and articulate that meaning to me in describing their conceptions. I noted that while Trigwell
(2000) points out that phenomenography is about conceptions rather than lived experience, the participants wanted to talk about their lived experience. Connelly and Clandinin (1995) found that teachers have three desires as educators and reflective practitioners: the desire to tell stories, the desire for relationship, and the desire to think again (engage in reflective practice). Wulff (2004) suggests that faculty members are likely to experience challenges in forming and naming conceptions of teaching and learning. Boulton-Lewis et al. (1996) observe that perceptions of learning increase with both age and teaching experience and that it may be difficult for new faculty to be explicit about their conceptions. My task as researcher was to probe their accounts in order to support them in making their conceptions explicit.

I further assumed that participating in the interviews and answering the research questions was not detrimental to the participants. The act of narrating one’s perspective can in itself lead to reconstruing of events. “The storyteller learns through the act of story-telling” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995, p. 155). In this way, it is possible that participation in this study met participants’ own needs and supported their role development.

I note that neither of my two latter stage participants (Fay and Gail) were currently in a traditional tenure-track position. While both experienced the pressures of conducting research, their sense of the timelines and expectations is likely different from that of those anticipating tenure. I mention this because their ability to see themselves as mentors of others may be a limitation of their role rather than necessarily an effect of time in their position. At the same time, based on their accounts, I am confident that their current perspectives do represent a shift in understanding and role integration over time.
In addition, the participant group is not representative of faculty demographics. I made no attempt to select participants with a view to constructing a representative sample based on department, age, gender, race, ethnicity, immigrant status, or any number of other demographic factors. It is interesting that the participant group (all but one) was female, and also that the age range (for new professors) seemed high; whether or not these factors are relevant to who volunteered and why would have to be explored in an additional study.

A challenge in qualitative data collection is knowing when to stop. Particularly in a study of teacher role conceptions, which resulted in some early findings of the developmental nature of the results, there is a temptation to continue the research conversations. I limited the study interviews to the two meetings per participant that had been approved under my ethics application, although I note that the second interview was in every case longer than I had anticipated: It was as if, having started the conversations, participants wanted to talk more. The study is therefore limited in the sense that more time would have yielded more data, and there can be no sense that participants' responses represent complete answers to my questions but are only moment-in-time conceptions.

**Authenticity of Results**

Credibility in qualitative studies is addressed through three areas, as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). *Transferability* is addressed through detailed (but confidential) description of the participants and context. *Dependability* of conclusions is checked through discussing them with others, in this case, the return of all data and interpretations to participants for verification, as well as discussion with my advisor and other
colleagues. Confirmability is established by providing evidence from the data to support any interpretations and conclusions.

However, a more pertinent approach draws on Åkerlind (2005), who describes two validity checks that are common in phenomenographic studies: communicative validity and pragmatic validity. Communicative validity describes peer acceptance of the interpretations, such as that obtained through “research seminars, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journals” (p. 330). In addition, it may be appropriate to seek feedback from “other members of the population represented by the interview sample, and the intended audience for the findings” (p. 330). Pragmatic validity refers to the “extent to which the research outcomes are seen as useful . . . and meaningful to the intended audience” (p. 331). Thus the validity in phenomenography depends on the perceived value of the results. “For researchers in higher education the test is . . . its value in producing useful insights into teaching and learning” (Entwistle, 1997, p. 129).

Tentative findings were presented to a group of peer faculty developers at a national conference and have been shared with graduate students, including Ph.D. graduates who have recently begun academic careers. In addition, I have been invited to present the findings to Deans and department Chairs at an Ontario institution. This positive response and interest in further findings speaks to the potential perceived value of the results.

Chapter Summary

I have outlined the use of a phenomenographical framework for this study and discussed the ways in which it supports the study purpose of determining both variations and patterns in new professors’ conceptions of their development as university teachers. I
have described the use of dialogic interviews for data collection and the inductive analysis of transcripts of these interviews for themes and categories. I highlighted my role as researcher and discussed the specifics of participant selection and the ethics approval process. Finally, I outlined the methodological assumptions and challenges as well as the rationale for accepting the results as authentic and useful. I turn next to presenting the study findings.
CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This study focused on how new, untenured university teachers construe their development as teachers. My intention was to describe the variations as well as similarities in new university teachers’ experiences of development of a teaching identity. Specifically, three questions formed the study focus:

1. How do new university teachers develop their teaching roles?
2. What are the central features of their roles?
3. What challenges and supports have affected their role development?

I used the interview questions outlined in Chapter Four as prompts to help uncover the individual experience of each participant and to highlight what they have come to understand of their developing identity as university teacher.

I use Kegan’s (1982, 1994) idea of differentiation and integration for the organization of the findings. In this chapter, I introduce the participants as differentiated individuals. I describe the experiences of each, beginning with demographic and background information. I relate their experiences of entry into teaching, in most cases equivalent to Kelly’s (1955) idea of being caught with their constructs down, and discuss their adjustment to the role, including the challenges and supports they have experienced. I then highlight their current identity as university teachers and finish with the recommendations they offer to support other newcomers. I will move to an overall view of the similarities and variations in their development in Chapter Six.
Seven new, untenured university teachers (within the first 5 years of their current position) took part in the study. They represent a range of disciplines and levels of experience, both in length of current position as well as past teaching (see Table 1). I will describe their paths towards developing a teaching self in order of time in their current positions and have assigned pseudonyms alphabetically in the same order. We thus begin with Alice, who is a brand new academic.

Alice

Alice is a female between 41 and 45 years old, who was about to start her new position as assistant professor in a Social Sciences department. Alice had previously taught six courses at the university. These included one taught while she was a doctoral student, three during her postdoctoral position, and two as a sessional instructor. She has no teaching experience outside the university.

Caught With One’s Constructs Down?

Alice encountered little preparation for teaching in her doctoral program. During it she taught one course, with minimal advance training. While she did take a postdoctoral position, she found it focused primarily on research; there was little opportunity to develop her teaching. Alice was aware that much of her understanding about teaching came from observation of other teachers while she was a Ph.D. student.

She said, “I call it negative learning. I learned what not to do…they were the most terrible teachers I had ever encountered” (Alice, p. 3). At the same time, she talks about her positive experience as a teaching assistant (TA) for one professor who “actually
### Table 1

**Participant Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Current position</th>
<th>Years in current position</th>
<th>Years in prior university position (not TA)</th>
<th>Number of university courses taught&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Other teaching experience</th>
<th>Ideal role % teaching</th>
<th>Ideal role % research</th>
<th>Ideal role % service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>&gt;10 years</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitlyn</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Professional Faculty</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>&gt;10 years</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Professional Faculty</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>As TA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fay</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Limited term</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gail</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Lecturer, Limited term</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
<td>&gt;10 years</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Pseudonyms have been used for all participants. <sup>b</sup>Includes courses taught as PhD student, sessional, postdoctoral student. <sup>c</sup>Gail notes that even her ideal job would total more than 100%. 

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communicated, and I felt like he treated me as a human being as opposed to free labour” (Alice, p. 4).

When she began teaching, Alice said she knew the content of her discipline well, and she had also done some reading on pedagogical theories. What she found unsettling was her inexperience applying those theories to her classroom practice. For example, she found it challenging to gauge how to chunk the material to students’ level of understanding. She lacked a sense of course organization and indicated that “nobody teaches you how to do it... I made tons and tons of mistakes in that first course” (Alice, pp. 3-4).

Making decisions about teaching took a great deal of time. She noted, “what I wanted to lecture about, what I want seminars to look like... that basically took me from one end of the week to the next” (Alice, p. 2). Her lack of experience was an additional challenge. She said when “you teach a new course... you have to design the whole course from scratch. First time... not everything is going to go well” (Alice, p. 2).

She also found her workload left her little time to focus on teaching improvement. “In terms of specific strategies, it’s just day to day trying to just get the list done.... all you can say is that it feels overwhelming” (Alice, follow-up, p. 6). Alice found the hidden nature of the work added to her sense of overload. “The talk about academics is that they’re all supposed to be brilliant and it’s supposed to come easily, and you’re not supposed to say how much hard work it is and how long it took you to do things” (Alice, follow-up, pp. 7-8).
*Construct Adjustment*

Alice soon found she could not accomplish all she had set out to achieve and began out of necessity to develop skills to cope with these initial challenges. She said, “you realize that you need to be able to make compromises” (Alice, follow-up, p. 6). She accomplished this by prioritizing how she balanced her various tasks.

Student feedback makes her think about her teaching, but she is sometimes frustrated by students’ narrow views and wants to tell them, “listen—I don’t care who you are, I have a lot more experience—just take my word for it” (Alice, p. 8).

While she has found reflecting on her teaching and some faculty development courses helpful, she characterizes her learning as informal, saying, “I think it’s basically just trial and error” (Alice, p. 6). She anticipates that more experience will be the key in learning “how better to manage TAs, students, and the time I devote to teaching” (Alice, follow-up email).

Lacking personal teaching experience, she made opportunities to observe others, including her professor spouse. She found specific feedback from colleagues very helpful. She said, “The first time I gave a lecture, [name] said, ‘You know, you can’t talk to an overhead’” (Alice, p. 7). She is grateful for the informal mentoring these colleagues gave her and has found her department conducive to a culture of collegiality.

At the same time, she notes that conversations about teaching are mostly with colleagues at similar career stages. Her sense is that senior colleagues do not share similar perspectives or experiences with junior colleagues, and she refers to the department as having a “bifurcation of seniority” (Alice, follow-up, p. 2). For example, she sees a difference between new and senior colleagues’ views of teaching evaluation.
Some of the [senior] people here feel that... if you show up, and nobody gets hurt... everybody should get a fantastic course evaluation. It’s got nothing to do with process, or how you teach... Most of us junior people have a different approach, and part of it is because we were recently students ourselves. (Alice, follow-up, p. 3)

Alice would like to see more peer and expert evaluation of teaching. In particular, she wishes that someone from faculty development, or at least with training in pedagogy, would conduct formal evaluations to help avoid what she sees as popularity contest ratings. “How many times people commented on my hair and clothing, in a [topic] course—it’s enough to make me cry” (Alice, follow-up, p. 10).

The student evaluation of teaching also points, in her mind, to the ways in which teaching is valued differently from research. “Teaching... we can see it’s not valued, because we don’t have any rigorous way of evaluating it... whereas with research... they can point to ways in which your research is rigorous and valued” (Alice, p. 11). She felt that this was reflective of the emphasis on research over teaching. She noted, “There’s this dichotomized perspective on teaching. It’s 40% of your job, which is as much as research, but not really taken very seriously. So, if you really put your energy into being a really good teacher, it’s a problem” (Alice, p. 10). She talked about challenges a colleague faced in writing about teaching in the discipline and noted that the Dean “doesn’t recognize these as scholarly contributions” (Alice, p. 10).

Alice also sees gender as one way in which faculty members in her department are segregated. She says, “If there is a culture where women are the majority, then men don’t step up to the plate unless they’re forced to” (Alice, p. 10). She notes that in her
department, where women are the majority, “there’s maternal, nurturing stuff, and the men see…their way through to success through publishing and other stuff” (Alice, p. 10).

Role Identity

When asked what comprises teaching, Alice focused primarily on classroom teaching and also on direct subject interaction with students. She notes, “students take up a lot of my time….. they usually come with a relevant question, and it’s things that lead into a whole bunch of other things, advice” (Alice, pp. 2-3). She sees supervision of graduate students as part of her teaching role, but adds only “other than that, I don’t know, other than teaching? Managing TAs–I guess that’s another thing that’s part of being a teacher” (Alice, p. 1).

Alice values her teaching, saying, “if 40% of my job is teaching, I don’t want to do a crappy job on 40% of my job. I want to try and do… the best that I can, in what I’m supposed to be doing” (Alice, p. 10). She feels that it is important to relate to students, “just caring, and being engaged” (Alice, p. 7). She finds significant intrinsic rewards in her teaching, noting that “you can make such an impact on students’ thinking, behaviour and everyday lives” (Alice, follow up email).

Alice described her ideal academic role as a 40:40:20 split. She said, “I think the contractual breakdown of 40, 40, 20 is the ideal for me. If I actually spent my time this way, I’d be a very happy camper” (Alice, follow-up email). Alice distinguishes various aspects of her academic role. In talking about a colleague’s work, she said, “His pedagogical and scholarly contributions overlap, because it’s education…whereas mine is more clearly delineated” (Alice, p. 10).
She finds, for example, that moving from teaching to work on research tasks (writing articles, making corrections for book contracts) is difficult, requiring a shifting of focus. She reports, “Your research isn’t like that. It takes me a good day, when I haven’t been with something, to reacquaint myself with what I’m writing” (Alice, follow-up, p. 10).

Some tension in her teaching identity was evident in her reaction to stopping a class as a result of inappropriate student comments. She realized, “I feel that I’m out of control when I don’t have a lecture-based course…. This is a good thing in one sense, to lose your stand over the knowledge production process, but there’s no guarantee that this is going to go smoothly” (Alice, follow-up, pp. 1-2). She characterized taking control as being at odds with her philosophy of student engagement but felt there was no other way to resolve the issue. At the same time, she finds her teaching philosophy has remained fairly constant, although she adapts to different contexts. Referring to the philosophy statement she wrote for her job application, she remarks, “I don’t think I’ve wavered from the philosophy, but how the philosophy plays out in the classroom will vary” (Alice, p. 11).

Recommendations

Alice’s recommendations for supporting new faculty address the challenges she has directly experienced and the supports she found. Reflecting on how her postdoctoral position helped her get a jumpstart on her academic career, she suggests that “everybody should get one” (Alice, p. 12). She also noted early teaching release, in combination with the opportunity to teach repeat courses, was supportive to her teaching development.
She would welcome more explicit instruction on what to expect during the early years, noting that this would have helped in preparing for what she encountered. She sees a benefit in making it “explicit that these things are often challenges for people...you’re going to be confronted with this...therefore, you have to think about the way you’re going to live your life” (Alice, follow-up, p. 9).

She also feels a mentor would be a support in navigating through the early challenges, and yet notes the learning she may have gained through having to negotiate her own way. She says, “Give me a good mentor, who shows me how to do stuff...but it might have even been a stronger learning experience by being totally frustrated by what people didn’t do” (Alice, p. 6).

Brenda

Brenda is a female assistant professor between 36 and 40 years old. She has been in this role in a Humanities department for one year. During that time, she taught four undergraduate courses. She had previously taught at the university level for about 10 years, first as a grad student, then on a limited term appointment (LTA), before starting this tenure track position. She also has experience outside the university teaching in other countries in various adult education settings, all from before she began her academic studies.

Caught With One's Constructs Down?

Brenda recalls beginning university teaching with significant previous teaching experience but noted there was little teaching preparation as part of her doctoral program other than some TA training she took. She noted, “I was really trained to be a researcher,
I think” (Brenda, p. 1). While she did get significant feedback as a TA, she reported that “after the first year, they left you alone” (Brenda, p. 9).

Brenda experienced a certain amount of culture shock in adjusting to the Canadian student culture. She remarked that students sometimes found her humour “a little more flippant. Sometimes students find that funny… sometimes they’re overly sensitive” (Brenda, p. 7). In this regard a colleague at the same career stage helped her acclimatize to the culture. Brenda found “she can help me with things that I just don’t know…[and] still remember what it is like to be somewhere new” (Brenda, p. 4).

To overcome a sense of isolation in teaching, she sought to observe others’ teaching but found her senior colleagues “very protective of their home territory” (Brenda, p. 7) and noted that tenured professors seemed to see her requests as “an invasion. It’s a sign of distrust” (Brenda, p. 8).

This contributed to challenges in determining the appropriate level for her teaching and assessment. In consulting with her colleagues about what to include in her syllabus, she was “rather surprised by the comments they would make. One individual, Mr. A., would say, ‘Oh, it’s much too much, much too difficult’; Miss B would say, ‘Oh, it’s much too easy, you have to do much more’”(Brenda, p. 4).

**Construct Adjustment**

Time constraints and workload have been challenging for Brenda. Time spent planning new courses was significant, and she expressed concern about time being wasted. She asserts, “If they’re going to say in January, you’re going to do this, then they should realize I work hard on developing courses” (Brenda, p. 2).
While she very much enjoys curriculum development, she does not wish to work on courses only to be told later that she will be teaching something different. She has also found that she has set limits on her course planning over time, noting that “in the beginning you’re much too ambitious. You overload your syllabi” (Brenda, p. 5).

Time constraints also had an impact on her ability to engage with colleagues. Although she very much enjoyed discussions with colleagues, she said, “I’m starting to sit here with the door closed—just to get things done” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 2). At the same time, Brenda particularly values input from colleagues and wishes for more.

Brenda also notes the ancillary aspects of teaching take significant time. Brenda bemoaned her time spent on “the bureaucracy…it takes a lot of time… markers that aren’t there, silly things like that. Requesting video and audio equipment that does not always arrive on time” (Brenda, p. 3).

In terms of improving her teaching, Brenda turned to evaluation as a way to obtain feedback, noting, “It’s very easy to have little annoying habits that you aren’t aware of!” (Brenda, p. 6). In her efforts to find opportunities for feedback, she also had her teaching videotaped but found it was not as helpful as she had anticipated, as it unnerved both her and the students. She summarized the experience by saying, “I know it’s often given as the answer to improving everybody’s teaching, but it was very disruptive” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 2).

She continued to be concerned about the lack of observation and feedback of her teaching and how it was evaluated. She explained, “No-one’s ever come to my class…how are they going to evaluate me when nobody has any idea what I’m doing?” (Brenda, p. 3).
She also notes that faculty development courses on specific aspects of teaching, such as interactive ways to present material and how to create course outlines, were useful. She says, "they’re things that now I do automatically" (Brenda, p. 3), but she found them helpful in the early days. Experience in the form of reflection on trial and error informed Brenda’s choice of particular teaching and assessment strategies. For example, she tried giving a take-home exam and found the results disappointing. Much of her learning has been experiential. There are things “that nobody ever told me, but I’ve figured things out” (Brenda, p. 8).

*Role Identity*

She sees teaching as encompassing more than subject content and processes. She includes discussion about homesickness in her courses, saying, “It’s building a connection, I think. That’s really what I’m looking for” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 3). She also talks about her role in developing students’ critical thinking skills and feels she is very good at challenging students to “use their brain and not believe everything” (Brenda, p. 7).

Brenda works to project a particular professional image, which she feels will contribute to her standing with both colleagues and students. Referring to her vulnerability when she first started, she says, “People think you’re a wimp and they can treat you whatever way they want….I hope to create an image of somebody who hopefully makes it clear you cannot mess around with her” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 3). She also says she is working to become more active in her role, asking herself questions such as “This is going to happen. How am I going to respond? How am I going to handle this?” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 4).
Brenda appreciates the balance of her role, noting that she has worked places that focused only on research, and for all her teaching experience, nor would she want a teaching-only position. She sees such roles as having the potential to feel like “a treadmill” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 2) and being a quick route to burnout.

Brenda’s ideal job would consist of 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service. She talks about her integrated teaching and research role, noting, “I like to think that in a way those two are connected. I don’t like to divide myself: This is only research, this is only teaching” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 2). At the same time, she notes that managing the balance is difficult, particularly at the beginning of term when teaching demands nearly all her time. “Starting this afternoon, that is going to change. I’m organized now” (Brenda, follow-up, pp. 2-3).

She also wishes her service component could be focused on teaching developing, such as developing curriculum, and student support, such as engaging students “more in academic life” (Brenda, follow-up, p. 3).

Recommendations

Brenda’s recommendations reflect what she wishes her own experience had been. For example, she says she would “set up a system for evaluations, and then attend classes of a more experienced colleague, and have a more experienced colleague observe new faculty” (Brenda, p. 7). She also would have new faculty submit their syllabi to give them a sense of whether the level is appropriate. She did recognize that this might constrain some newcomers, but that “academic freedom… can come later, once you know the rules” (Brenda, p. 7).
She also feels it would help new faculty members if they could teach courses in their own area of expertise. This, she feels, would make their course planning simpler and tie more closely with their research.

She found her department chair very supportive in helping her interpret her first set of teaching evaluations, noting that he took significant time to review them with her, “not in a negative way, but what do you think of this. And I really had the impression that he listened and took notes” (Brenda, p. 8). This support from a seasoned faculty member was something she found particularly helpful.

Caitlyn

Caitlyn is a female assistant professor between 36 and 40 years of age, who has been in her academic role for one year in a professional faculty. Prior to that, she was on contract for 4 years, during which time she taught 11 courses, including some half-year credits. In addition, she has taught for over 10 years in other settings.

Caitlyn recalls always knowing she would one day be an educator. In her childhood, play often revolved around pretend teaching. As an adult, this calling continued, and she reports “it never occurred to me to take on part-time work that was related to a service industry…. teaching was what I wanted to do” (Caitlyn, p. 3).

Caught With One's Constructs Down?

While she had many years of teaching experience in a variety of contexts, none of it directly helped her prepare for university teaching. She reports being prepared by her past tutoring experiences with examples for course content but much less prepared for the time involved in the administration of teaching, such as marking and grading. Turning for
help to those who had taught the same course before, she was told she was welcome to their teaching materials, and “come to us if you need anything, but you’re really on your own” (Caitlyn, p. 5).

She noted the difficulty in preparing for her first class. “No-one really told me how to do a lecture” (Caitlyn, p. 5). This led to a high level of stress, and she was “absolutely anxiety-ridden just before I started, because… I left it to the last minute… I was prepared, but I hadn’t actually sat down and thought, how would the first class go” (Caitlyn, p. 5). She still recalls the immense workload and now hears other newcomers saying, “It’s a ton of work, it just takes everything out of me” (Caitlyn, p. 2).

Construct Adjustment

Caitlyn has acquired specific strategies for classroom management and has also learned, through trial and error, what seems to work best for students. She reports learning primarily from experience, and while she is aware of books on teaching development, she has found it difficult to make time for such reading. She comments about a particular book she bought, saying, “I should have read it, because I suppose in that book, there would be all these things I should have known!” (Caitlyn, p. 6).

Rather than attending faculty development workshops, which she says is not part of her department culture, she confers with colleagues when particular issues such as plagiarism arise, albeit infrequently.

Caitlyn has also found that her perceptions about teaching have changed in that she no longer sees teaching as lecture. She advises, “You don’t just spew out information and walk out…. my group changes… I have to tweak it every year…. So I’ve learned it’s not this standard traditional Socratic way of teaching” (Caitlyn, p. 11). She has also come
to recognize the ever-changing context of teaching, noting, “It’s a dynamic situation you’re in, and you’re dealing with humans” (Caitlyn, p. 7).

Caitlyn contrasts her perspective on teaching with that of newer colleagues whom she sees as having less teaching experience prior to entering the university. Unlike them, she says, she has been able to reflect on the connection between her research and teaching.

I’m at the stage where I’m able to synthesize things, whereas [newcomers] are still at the point where they’re trying to find their identity….if they’re at the ground level, then I’m on the first step….I can look down on them, and see them struggling. (Caitlyn, p. 11)

Her ability to reflect on the experiences of newcomers has helped her consider her own teaching practices. Questions part-time instructors have asked about courses they teach with her has also led to self-questioning, such as “Why are those the topics that are chosen… it’s really made me think hard” (Caitlyn, p. 1).

Role Identity

Caitlyn sees teaching as being about, “organization…. a lot of meetings about the teaching….the text things, giving them the support they needed, the notes, my PowerPoint presentations, getting everything organized ahead of time…. knowing the population (Caitlyn, p. 3).

Her ideal academic role would consist of 60% teaching, 30% research, and 10% service. She recognizes that many colleagues would be “more research focused” (Caitlyn, p. 13). Although she estimates she currently spends about 30% of her time on teaching,
she says, “I would be happy to be given more teaching load if the expectations dropped for research and publishing” (Caitlyn, p. 13).

Caitlyn notes that her identity as an academic has developed since she began her position, and she feels more confident in supporting students’ growth, for example in pursuit of graduate studies. Caitlyn talked about how affirmation from others played a part in her developing sense of confidence. This included nonverbal feedback from students, such as “those little things when you’re up there teaching, the nods—those are definitely what affirms” (Caitlyn, p. 10).

She also recalls emails from students thanking her for a great course. In addition, a senior and respected colleague consulted her about teaching a specific course, making her feel that “maybe I did do a good job those 2 years that I taught it” (Caitlyn, p. 7).

She also talked about what had hindered her growth as a teacher. She elaborated, “the lack of value that’s placed on teaching. And the emphasis, almost the pressure, to do research…..the time I’m devoting to the courses…it’s not time that’s valued” (Caitlyn, p. 8). She saw this as coming from the push towards increasing funded research and graduate programs within the university.

She personally notices that she is more strongly integrating her research and teaching, including bringing her research directly into her classroom teaching and drawing from her graduate students’ work to inform her own research. She notes, “that’s only one connection between research and practice, but….I never did that before” (Caitlyn, follow-up, p. 2).
Recommendations

Caitlyn would emphasize discipline content knowledge for new faculty members, as she sees this as leading to teaching confidence. She says “confidence is the main thing. It’s how you present yourself and how you present your material that really matters” (p. 5). She also highlights the importance of knowing the audience. She exhorts, “know your students... where they’re coming from, what level of education they have, what experiences maybe they’ve had, so you know what prior knowledge you’re dealing with” (Caitlyn, p. 6).

She strongly recommends being strategic about the intersection of teaching, research, and service. She said she was able to benefit from the experience of more seasoned colleagues, who advised her to “take on complementary projects.... Don’t go off on in these areas that don’t inform your own work” (Caitlyn, p. 13).

Caitlyn also felt she would have benefited from mentoring, noting that a “one-on-one person who’s absolutely compatible in a teaching way” (Caitlyn, p. 15) would have been a big help to her. At the same time, she feels that not having that may not have been a significant hindrance to her. She says, “I’m not bitter about the fact that I didn’t have a lot of support...because I think it’s all part of growth” (Caitlyn, p. 16), but notes that it would be an aid when things are not going well. In this regard, she did find that participating in an informal support group for new faculty had been very helpful.

Donna

Donna is a female assistant professor between 26 and 30 years old who has been in her academic position in a professional faculty for 2 years. Since starting, she has
taught seven and one half courses, including three sections each of two courses. She taught one course while she was a doctoral student but has no other prior teaching experience. Donna did take one course on university teaching, noting that it was an option in her program but is now required.

**Caught With One’s Constructs Down?**

Donna’s background left her little prepared for undergraduate teaching. She related two problems with relying on her graduate student experience as a model for her teaching: “I was expecting them to behave more like grad students. And, to further compound that, when I was an undergraduate student, I didn’t typically attend a lot of classes” (Donna, p. 2).

Lack of confidence in her early days adversely affected her teaching esteem. She recalls a time when there was a scheduling mix-up, causing her to phone each student to apologize. Another example she gave was her reaction when students sent negative email. “I’d cry about it; my whole life would be wrapped up in it….Everybody goes through this at the beginning” (Donna, p. 6).

Donna did seek support by enrolling in faculty development workshops, but did not always find they were as helpful as she had anticipated. She found that while she wanted to know how to plan a 2- or 3-hour teaching segment, the focus was on teaching philosophy and student engagement. In her words, “it wasn’t as nuts and bolts as I would have hoped to have had” (Donna, p. 1).

In addition to not getting her particular needs addressed, she found that in some cases there was a negative impact. She describes one workshop she attended in which senior faculty members answered questions posed by newcomers. “At one point, I started
answering the questions, and the guy next to me said, ‘Who are you?’...like I had
overstepped my place. So, it was doing the opposite of...the stated intention...of feeling
more confident about your teaching” (Donna, pp. 4-5).

Donna encountered a critical incident early in her teaching career, co-teaching a
course with a more senior colleague. “Any time he disagreed with something that I
said...he would stand up and he would explain why I was wrong” (Donna, p. 7). Her path
to tenure framed how she felt able to respond “because...he votes on my tenure” (Donna,
p. 8). This incident has had broad implications for her. She says, “It would be nice if I
had people who I thought I could bounce things off of...but, because of that experience,
I’m very hesitant to offer any kind of weakness in anything” (Donna, p. 8).

Construct Adjustment

Donna has, over time, become less anxious about her teaching and more at ease
with both the students and the process. Simple things such as getting used to the
technology she uses have freed time at the beginning of class. Now, she says, “I can just
chit chat with the students.... It seems like a more collaborative environment...and
discussion and questions are better” (Donna, follow-up, p. 1).

She continues to be very connected to student feedback and responds by varying
her teaching methods. Her confidence has increased as a result of positive student
response to some activities she has tried. She comments, “I feel a little bit more
comfortable taking those risks...I think part of it is in terms of evaluations that I did....
it’s been enough to make me feel more confident about trying those different things”
(Donna, follow-up, pp. 3-4).
Donna still notes challenges around the evaluation of teaching and its impact on the tenure path. “I had one semester in which I knew I had to get good evaluations or I would not get a job the next year….I thought my whole life depended on…this one group of 50 people” (Donna, p. 6).

Over time she has found that providing structure and more content has helped, along with using interactive teaching strategies. She has also learned she has to “structure those spontaneous moments. That wasn’t something I was expecting at all” (Donna, p. 2). She has found that familiarity with course content and process means preparation takes significantly less time. She no longer spends “8 hours writing a lecture, for a one and a half hour lecture…[nor] 3 or 4 hours practicing that lecture” (Donna, p. 5).

Donna summarizes her growth by noting she is more confident as a result of having more experience for comparison. She says, “If one small thing doesn’t go quite the way I wanted it to, there will be many other moments that will be better, and worse, and it’s all just part of the experience” (Donna, follow up, pp. 2-3).

Role Identity

Donna self-identifies first and foremost as a researcher. She explains, “I know I’m a good researcher…people can argue around the edges about who I am, and should I be in front of the classroom, but they can’t argue around the good researcher” (Donna, p. 11). Her sense of teaching is that it comprises taking state-of-the-art in my field and providing that….helping students, giving them a framework or tools or things like that, and being able to evaluate….I’m hoping they have those critical thinking skills….it’s like a toolbox that they can use for the rest of their career. (Donna, p. 3)
Her ideal academic position would comprise 25% teaching and 75% research. She says she does not enjoy being on committees and feels “there’s lots I don’t know, so they should give that responsibility to someone else” (Donna, p. 12). She does, however, value the time she spends talking to media as a way of communicating research to the public.

At the same time, Donna is aware of her particular strengths as a teacher. “I’m really good at answering questions...I have a good knowledge of my field and a good analytic ability, and—well my students all say that I’m very approachable. I think it’s ‘cause I don’t wear shoes in my office” (Donna, p. 12). Donna contrasts this with her weaker skills in classroom management, especially when she started. “I don’t think I’m very good at dealing with classroom interruptions...People would come in late and leave early, and it just felt more chaotic than I wanted it to be” (Donna, p. 12).

One additional experience Donna feels affected her teaching was her own experience as a student. “I appreciated the small ways that the teacher tried to make us more comfortable with the material...I think that it has influenced my approach a bit now, in that I put a little less distance between myself and the students” (Donna, follow-up email).

Donna has noted a shift in her outlook on teaching and says that her teaching philosophy has changed more than she had anticipated. She describes the differences that highlight her growth,

It wasn’t concrete enough, and it didn’t seem to describe what I was doing....It just seemed too ephemeral...[now] I can think about it better, but I also have more things to think about. My process is different, but I also have more material with which to describe it. (Donna, follow-up, pp. 5-6)


**Recommendations**

Drawing on her own experience of teaching development courses, she made some suggestions of what such courses should include. When beginning teaching, she wished for specifics such as, "Here’s how you plan a lesson. Here’s how you know this exercise will take 20 minutes… this is what you should remember to include on your first day" (Donna, p. 2).

She also points out that student evaluations of teaching are not, in her opinion, seen as connected to their context. She has noted a difference in student ratings between large-scale undergraduate courses and small graduate courses “where the students self-selected into the course, and it’s an elective. I think you’d have to take the number of students into account” (Donna, follow-up, p. 6).

Donna has some words of advice for tenure-track faculty members who are concerned about passing their review. In response to a colleague who asked if she were worried about getting tenure, she replied,

No, I’m not worried….I figure, if you just do what you’re supposed to be doing, you may not get tenure at your school, but your field will give you tenure somewhere…. If I were working in a coal mine, I’d have other things to worry about. People worry too much about stuff like that. (Donna, p. 11)

**Eric**

Eric is a male assistant professor between 36 and 40 years old, who is beginning his fifth year in a Sciences department. He has taught ten and a half courses, both undergraduate and graduate, including some repeats. Eric was also a teaching assistant at
two other institutions during his graduate training and says he benefited from some required TA training during his graduate work. He found that while the specifics did not stay with him, it was helpful in his cultural acclimatization. Prior to his TAships, he had no previous teaching experience of any kind.

*Caught With One's Constructs Down?*

Although Eric had taken TA training, when asked for what aspects of his teaching role he felt well prepared, he replied, “I’m having a hard time thinking of any. Um, [pause]. That’s a tough one” (Eric, p. 13). He characterized his early teaching as a surprise, saying, “I didn’t have the foggiest idea” (Eric, p. 4). Nor was seeking advice from a more experienced colleague particularly helpful to him. One colleague, when asked about expectations in the department, said, “You set the expectations” (Eric, p. 1).

His first class did not proceed smoothly. He recalls spending hours preparing, writing it down, practicing in the actual room, only to find “that my notes are too small to read [laugh]” (Eric, p. 4). He was so nervous about standing in front of a group and presenting that in his first class he handed out the outline and let the students go after 15 minutes. He recalls, “I just postponed the worst” (Eric, p. 4). He felt the course unfolded more by chance than by plan. His recollection was that “they didn’t know what to expect of me and I didn’t know what to expect of them, and I think the class was...basically a truce. I didn’t do anything bad to them, they didn’t do anything bad to me” (Eric, p. 5).

Basing his expectations on his own student experience sometimes backfired. One of his professors gave out rewards for perfect marks, and he recalls telling students in his first class that any student attaining 100% on the exam would receive a prize. As he describes, “I was so worried that the class was going to get perfect, and I’d have to buy
[lots of prizes]...the highest score was 60%, and the average was in the 30s” (Eric, p. 13).

Construct Adjustment

Eric quickly found he could not continue the level of practice he put into preparing for his initial classes. He commented, “It’s not only that you can’t do anything else, you just can’t do it” (Eric, p. 4). Experience over time has taught him techniques for streamlining his work. He notes that simply teaching a course means he can anticipate its flow. Eric summarizes his sense of his learning: “As a professor you just learn on the job” (Eric, follow-up, p. 4).

While Eric did report some learning from discussions with colleagues, it was not a primary source of his teaching development. While he still wishes there were opportunities to sit in on colleagues’ courses, he notes that “it’s awkward—to the students it looks like this person is under observation” (Eric, p. 18). He finds he relies instead on his own problem-solving abilities, saying, “I’m still quite busy with my own ideas. I’m not walking around stuck for ideas yet” (Eric, p. 9).

While he has taken some faculty development courses, he talks instead about the importance of obtaining student feedback to guide his decisions about teaching. He notes that over time he has become “a little bit better at getting feedback out of them or figuring out where they are” (Eric, p. 8).

Eric has noted a shift in his perspective on teaching. He has found that teaching is not the lecturing he anticipated. He says, “It’s not a very dry and abstract and ideal transmission of knowledge or discussion of things. It’s a lot about how you present things. It’s a lot about almost the politics of how you sell it to the students” (Eric, p. 5).
Echoing this, he outlines how he has changed since beginning university teaching. In particular, he talks about his new cynicism. “I’ve lost some idealism about what I’d like to do, and it’s been replaced with, ‘forget about that, it’s not worth my effort’…. Realizing that you don’t get graded for effort, you get graded for effect. And that’s teaching” (Eric, follow-up, p. 8).

Eric expressed concern over how much time he can invest in teaching. “One thing I’m conscious of is that my tenure is coming up, and teaching actually doesn’t count much” (Eric, p. 9). He equates getting tenure as having new freedom and sees it as a time when he will be able to contribute to department changes. Regarding shifts he might suggest, he posits, “I think a lot of it requires that I have tenure first” (Eric, follow-up, pp. 9-10).

**Role Identity**

Eric’s ideal academic job would consist of 40% teaching and 60% research. While he identifies primarily as a researcher, he says that he consciously chose a university job for the teaching. At the same time, he would be happy to see the teaching load halved but enjoys teaching because of the interaction with people and the liveliness of a university campus. He also feels that teaching is a responsibility that supports the mission of the university. He points out, “You’re supposed to preserve, increase, and transmit knowledge” (Eric, p. 17).

Eric finds that for him research and teaching are closely linked and that “it was difficult to separate them. And I think that was why I had a hard time answering that question” (Eric, follow-up, p. 1). This symbiosis has led to “some research ideas…out of things that I’ve been trying to learn for the course” (Eric, p. 17).
He notes that graduate student supervision appears to be officially counted as
teaching but is closely tied to his own research, and that as his research is done by his
graduate students, “I’m teaching graduate courses, very much focused on the kind of
knowledge I want my graduate students to have” (Eric, p. 1). This means that while he
identifies his role as primarily research, “some of it is officially counted as teaching”
(Eric, follow-up, p. 2).

Eric’s image of the ideal university professor is based on many he has seen and
involves lecturing while writing on the board, without using any notes. He says, “That’s
what I think is the ideal lecture….clearly improvised, yet deeply coherent….you have
your thoughts organized…. it just flows….because it’s logical” (Eric, follow-up, p. 7).
While this is his ideal, he personally prefers individual discussions to large class settings.
He notes, “I’m not the show person. I’m not the person to get the whole class to jump up
and down and to clap their hands….I’m more the dry, shy scientist kind of guy” (Eric, pp.
11-12). At the same time, he does feel that he takes risks in his teaching, including asking
students to come up and solve problems on the board. He frames this as, “It’s not just
about you having fun and trying on new things in the classroom—it’s also about students
learning” (Eric, p. 15).

He differentiates his own role from that of others in the department. “You find out
that you’re very different from your colleagues. Even the sub-disciplines in this
department have developed different cultures about the same thing. On paper it looks
very uniform, but in reality, there’s people doing wildly different things” (Eric, p. 18). He
found these differences created administrative challenges, noting, “If you talk to 20
professors in the department, you’ll get 20 different opinions about how it should be handled” (Eric, follow-up, p. 7).

**Recommendations**

Eric would welcome clear communication and peer observation that would support consistency within the department. He recommends that professors sit in on others’ classes, to get, as he puts it, “an idea of basically what is being taught in the department” (Eric, p. 15). He would also like to see all incoming teachers become familiar with entry level courses and thus have a sense of the flow of the program.

He also feels that a handbook would be very helpful to new faculty members. He has found that the recently compiled graduate student department handbook, while it “is meant to help the graduate students” (Eric, p. 4), would have helped him a lot. In particular, it would have contributed to his understanding of the specific context. He says, “getting it directly from the department helps, because departmental cultures are different” (Eric, follow-up, p. 2).

**Fay**

Fay is a female assistant professor between 31 and 35 years old, who is on a limited-term appointment in a Sciences department. She is in her fifth year in her current position and has taught 22 undergraduate courses, representing five different courses, and repeats of each. Prior to that, she taught two courses on contract at another institution. She says she previously taught outside the university “a very minimal amount” (Fay, p. 1).
As a TA, Fay noted the lack of support or preparation for that role. She explains, “The instructor...handed the midterms to me and said, mark them....I was supposed to come up with the marking scheme” (Fay, p. 5).

Caught With One's Constructs Down?

The one thing that particularly shocked Fay was student plagiarism. “I wasn’t prepared for the academic dishonesty....I was just so stunned by the boldness of one of them that I ended up not doing anything....Their desperation really came through” (Fay, pp. 14-15).

Fay also recalls the strain of the initial workload when she began teaching. Her teaching-only position meant she did not have the benefit of teaching release. She found she set high expectations for her work and noted the stress this caused. She says, “I didn’t, you know, actually collapse, but...I’m lying on the floor with a migraine, and I can’t do any more work. I simply can’t” (Fay, p. 21).

What she regretted most about the heavy workload was that it interfered with her opportunity to think about her teaching. She recalls, “Particularly in the first 2 years...The workload was so impressive that I often found myself just flat out exhausted, or so just running from one thing to the next that I didn’t have my reflection time” (Fay, p. 12).

Construct Adjustment

Fay’s workload-related stress forced her to reevaluate how she organized and prioritized her work. She reveals, “That was one of those momentous growth opportunities that you talked about, because I then had to prepare the next morning for two classes that day. So it had to look different” (Fay, p. 21). She talks about becoming
"rigorous" (Fay, p. 21) about closing her office door, as, although she enjoys student interaction, she has had to "scale it back...dealing with large courses" (Fay, pp. 3-4).

Fay took advantage of faculty development workshops offered at her institution and found them "a very valuable thing" (Fay, p. 12). She also finds an education conference she attends annually supported her growth in teaching "issues, including some I've faced with teaching a large class" (Fay, p. 8). Fay also refers to the importance of "Talking to various colleagues around the institution....I find this tremendously useful" (Fay, p. 8).

Fay has honed her teaching, noting that she now has "an eye to course design" (Fay, p. 21). She has found she lets go of some of the content, worrying less about covering it all. She says, "we get as far as we get--it doesn't matter" (Fay, p. 21).

Fay found experience to be significant in her learning to teach. As she points out, "by the time I've taught a course, 13 sections of the same course, I know what the course content looks like....so I get to have fun with it" (Fay, p. 21). She has found that this increasing level of comfort with a course allows her to relax and "do things spontaneously with it...and tackle whatever needs to be tackled" (Fay, p. 2). Fay spends a significant amount of time reflecting on her teaching, focusing on "things that worked, things that didn't work" (Fay, p. 9) as a means to improving the classroom experience.

Role Identity

Fay talks about modeling her teaching after what she experienced as a student. She thinks about the instructors and TAs she had and "what I thought was positive, and could use improvement" (Fay, p. 4). She found she incorporated many of these experiences into her teaching. She also talked about the impact of her professor father on
her own path into teaching, recalling that he ran graduate courses as interactive
discussions. She notes that even though she teaches undergraduate courses, her approach
has shifted to include as much interaction as possible. She used to lecture with large
numbers of prepared slides but said she then “started walking in with unprepared
slides...[and] more and more activities” (p. 10). She says that while this is a change, it
has grown from her inherent personality. “Here’s the piece of me that’s existed from the
start: I’m open to new ideas....it’s very vulnerable” (p. 10).

This is reflective of her personal quality of not being overly concerned when
things did not go according to plan in the classroom. For example, she describes,

I have this great cartoon that a friend sent me that ties together...my discipline
and an extracurricular activity. And it just happens to fit with the unit that we’re
talking about....[the students] didn’t respond at all....They just kind of stared at it.
So I had to just say, well, I guess that didn’t work out then. Which then got the
laughs....In a sense it was ok, not everything is going to go the way you think it
is.....We went on to the next thing. No-one died. (Fay, pp. 10-11)

Fay has found her perspective on teaching has evolved over time. She now
defines teaching more broadly, including, for example, connecting students to counseling
services as needed. She lists a number of tasks in defining teaching,

Creating questions....Creating written assignments with certain objectives in
mind. Creating online multiple choice assignments. The classroom
time...lecture...interactive engagement activities.... It’s demonstrations.... skits
involving people from the class and myself.... it involves going through the
labs...[to] see the students, and lend a hand, and give encouragement.... weekly
meetings with TAs...get a heads up on what’s coming back from the instruction. Preparing lectures, preparing handouts on certain topics. Creating practice questions and solutions, getting them posted online. Working on websites.... Answering WebCT emails, or monitoring discussions....Personal emails and phone calls....Reflecting on things that have happened in order to improve or change for next time....office hours where students can come in and ask questions....counseling... around everything under the sky. Time management, stress management, study skills, discipline questions...how do I study for a “this discipline” type of test. (Fay, pp. 2-3)

She describes her current view of teaching,

I see it as a responsibility, and a challenge, and an opportunity. I don’t know that I could have articulated that at the start....[it is] a calling in my life. Yes, I see it differently. Now I see myself as an accompanier on a journey rather than a leader who takes people from point A to point B.... I’m more open to the individual’s journey, and I think more now about what I can do to support it, beyond the classroom time. (Fay, pp. 15-16)

Fay’s research is about learning in her discipline and thus ties tightly to her teaching. While she identifies primarily as teacher, she would prefer to teach a little less and finds research feeds another part of her self. She says, “The research part is where I get to exercise some creativity that I haven’t been able to exercise in a while” (Fay, p. 17). She also finds she enjoys the service component. Her ideal position would be a 40:40:20 split of teaching, research, and service, but she acknowledges that she views her role as integrated rather than segregated.
Recommendations

Fay believes observing others teach is a helpful development strategy and finds she is now acting as support for others in that way. New colleagues come to watch her to find out how to deal with multi-section courses and how she teaches particular components. In terms of collegial sharing, although Fay said it was helpful to have a colleague’s assignments as a template, she did not end up drawing on them in any detail. She did note that it was helpful to have a colleague’s examples when the course was in an unfamiliar area, and that if she had not, “I would have been a good deal more lost” (Fay, p. 12).

She says in general she would have valued the opportunity to talk with seasoned colleagues who could have addressed “what’s a reasonable number of assignments…. [but] I don’t know if it would have made me do it any differently” (Fay, p. 13). Instead, she would have new university teachers focus on beginning their own process of reflection on their teaching. This would begin with connecting them with those “who are recognized as ‘good’ instructors” (Fay, p. 20).

She also points to the importance of reflection in developing her own teaching, and has found it to be an important support. Further to that, she would encourage newcomers to work with an expert on creating a teaching dossier, seeing it as a “vehicle for reflection, and improvement, and growth” (Fay, p. 20).

Gail

Gail is a female between 36 and 40 years, who is on a limited-term appointment in a Social Sciences department. She is in her fifth year in her current position, but
previously taught for 9 years in the university as a contract teacher. She estimates she has taught in excess of 30 courses and also has significant teaching experience in other settings, including supervising trainers.

Gail’s family valued teaching; her father was a schoolteacher. She says teaching was “the only job I ever considered” (Gail, p. 2). She made margin notes in her undergraduate lectures about professors’ strategies and copied behaviour of exemplary TAs from her undergraduate days. She found, however, that apart from one course she took on course design, there was no formal preparation for university teaching. She says, “there was a job ad, you applied, you put a course outline together, and if you were successful, you got the position” (p. 3).

Caught With One’s Constructs Down?

Gail found her personal attribute of organization supported her initial teaching. She noted that her “courses came across as highly organized….they weren’t too exciting,… [but] the objectives were clear, and the assessments were clear” (Gail, p. 12). She also felt that she, like others, had significant teaching experience upon which to draw, noting that students develop strong opinions about teaching during their K-12 and subsequent postsecondary experience. She asserts, “you’ve engaged in that teaching; you have helped peers with things, and so on. You have had teaching experience” (p. 5).

At the same time, in hindsight she realizes there were a number of things she was not prepared for, such as pedagogical theories. She says, “I didn’t know what Bloom’s taxonomy was, I didn’t know what learning styles were…I didn’t know any of this pedagogy of teaching….Did that worry me at first? No….because I didn’t know that I needed to know it” (Gail, p. 13).
Construct Adjustment

Gail frames her biggest learning as her change in understanding her students and their perspectives. She points to her realization that her own recollected student perspective did not necessarily represent theirs.

You always assume the students are like you were at the beginning. And that’s a huge mistake. You have to come to the realization…that you’re the person who did the undergraduate degree, the graduate degree…. There’s a huge other portion of the class that you have to connect to. (Gail, p. 14)

She notes her increased empathy towards the students’ lives outside the classroom, including their personal challenges and their needs. Her awareness has increased that “we have people who are raising young children, who are maintaining full-time jobs” (Gail, p. 14).

Workload is still a concern for Gail, and she sees her job as more than full time. She says, “In the previous academic term, I taught five undergraduate courses and one graduate course over a 4-month time period…. One class went from 400 to 700 within a period of about 3 weeks (Gail, p. 10). At the same time, workload concerns seem to have been surpassed by her frustration at the overall teaching evaluation process. Although Gail created many informal opportunities to get feedback on her teaching, she noted a lack of formal evaluation, saying the only time the chair was in her class was to deal with a specific student behaviour problem. She expresses concern that teaching may not be seen as equal to other areas of responsibility.

I think it’s creating a very interesting dichotomy because…the people who are midcareer….some of them don’t choose to be interested in education…and those
are the people who are making tenure and promotion decisions now. People who have a fair bit of clout within departments now. (Gail, follow-up, pp. 1-2)

Gail has instead focused on getting feedback from students. She actively encourages them to fill out evaluations, noting that she gets “decent comments. And it’s not all gorgeous….I see that as such a valuable mechanism” (Gail, p. 21). She finds the affirmation from students is a significant piece of her personal support and notes there are “lots of intrinsic rewards in working with a group of students….that get you over the hurdles” (Gail, p. 9). She finds it easy to connect to students who come to her office and notes the positive impact on the larger class. “That one in the office translates to 10 in the classroom, because they have friends” (Gail, p. 12).

She also talked about the impact experience has had on her learning, noting that if new professors have not yet experienced an academic cycle, “they probably can’t guess what the cycle is” (Gail, follow-up, p. 3). She also has found that “a huge amount of observation” (p. 7), as well as working closely with a colleague on curriculum design, has provided her with opportunities to think about and improve her teaching.

Role Identity

Gail described a long list of the tasks she undertakes as a university teacher, many of which are not directly related to classroom activities.

A whole number of administrative tasks go under that label, so, ordering of textbooks, co-ordination of TAs, of materials for that course….a whole flurry of activities related to professional development as a teacher….attending of workshops…mentoring of junior teachers, or people that are struggling….The things that take place in the classroom, and there’s the preparation for those
activities.... All of the things to do with assessment. And the reflection on that assessment, and gathering the feedback on that assessment.... Evaluation of that teaching, and the administrative evaluation of that teaching.... A series of formative evaluations... you also need student availability, so when you think about teaching, it’s availability for office hours, and appointments.... Knowing what resources we have at the university in things like English as a second language, addiction services, not because I can be those things to people, but because I need to know how, when the student’s in crisis, how to get them to that. (Gail, p. 3)

She saw her role extending beyond subject teaching and administration of that teaching to include providing additional supports for her students outside the subject area. She noted that this was a recent understanding of being a university teacher and said, “If you’d asked me to give you that list... when I started it would have been much more about what happens in the classroom, the preparation and how you deliver that material” (Gail, p. 4).

Gail sees herself as someone to whom “teaching comes fairly naturally and... easily” (Gail, follow-up, p. 2). She reports being strongly connected to teaching. In the middle of a non-teaching term she says, “I’ve been a lost soul since September without teaching” (Gail, p. 1).

Although Gail initially said her ideal job would be primarily teaching followed by service, she also acknowledges she would miss the research component. She finds, for example, that interacting with graduate students helps her avoid teaching burnout. She notes, “if you’re a... person who likes to multitask and do lots of things, then it’s very
important to have all three components” (Gail, p. 17). In terms of her ideal role, Gail points out that in order to fit in all she would like to do, the role would have to be 75% teaching, 25% research, and 25% service.

Gail finds strong connections amongst the three aspects of her role. She has prepared research slides that she uses in class, and she notes this incorporation of her work has been positive for students. Some of her service work involves making presentations on her discipline to public groups. She notes that “questions I get asked change how I teach it to the students” (Gail, p. 16). Often there is overlap amongst the three areas, and she notes, “I have a hard time identifying—if I’m giving a research talk about undergraduate education—is that research, or is that teaching? Or, professional development of teaching?” (Gail, p. 16).

Gail is aware her path is different from most other faculty members in that she will not be going through the tenure process. She says this means she has “been able to devote a lot more time to teaching than somebody else who would have started at the same time as me” (Gail, p. 15). She does, however, have a heavy administrative workload, including “timetable, in conjunction with the director, hiring of lecturers in conjunction with the director….Graduate awards in conjunction with the [academic manager], all the academic advising loads, in conjunction with the director” (Gail, p. 10). She is also aware that despite her current mentoring and program administration duties, she is unlikely to move up without a stronger focus on research. “I don’t think I would ever get a position as a chair because I don’t have a strong research career” (Gail, p. 10).

Gail has, over time, seen a shift in what she values. She sees a new role in mentoring faculty as having more impact than her own teaching. “If I spend time with
seven people that are going to teach, and we’re reflective on teaching…then maybe I’m accomplishing more than if I’m teaching 700 students” (Gail, pp. 11-12).

**Recommendations**

While Gail believes strongly in teaching, she also believes teaching release supports a positive start. She outlined a plan to have new faculty teach one course in the first year, freeing them to work on grant applications. She would give them a graduate assistant to help with preparation of course materials, and she would connect them with seasoned colleagues who have reputations as excellent teachers. She asserts this contributes to her own valuing of teaching, as “they’re not going to see teaching as something that got in the way of their getting their research going—they’re going to get a positive impression of what teaching actually is” (Gail, July 20).

Gail would also make sure there was a handbook for all new faculty members on the specifics of teaching, such as tips on AV, course outlines, and other start-up information. She would give them support from the best TAs rather than assigning junior TAs. Gail would make a point of meeting with them part way through their first course for “informal conversation, about how their teaching was going” (Gail, p. 19).

Reflecting on how valuable she found her mentor, she would also like to see mentoring groups. She would establish “a group that allowed them to have a mentor that was outside their academic area, that was going to have nothing to do with T&P, and have moderately regular but informal meetings” (Gail, p. 19).

Gail also talks about the types of topics that she includes in the teaching development session she offers for graduate students, including learning styles theory, the use of Bloom’s taxonomy to organize course content and processes, and the teaching of
difficult topics within the discipline. In her words, “we’re giving a lot of resource material and whetting the appetite” (Gail, p. 5). She points out the intent is to “give stuff that triggers to get some conversation going, so maybe they want to have a coffee another time and follow it up further” (Gail, p. 6).

She would also recommend that “Ph.D. students would teach one week within their supervisor’s graduate course” (Gail, p. 5). She hopes that teaching will be valued more in the future. “I’ve seen a huge change in the administration at the university, where we’ve now realised that undergraduate education foots the bill and we need to value undergraduate education more” (Gail, p. 13).

Summary

The participants represent different departments, different backgrounds, and varying amounts of prior teaching experience. I have outlined individual participants’ constructions of their paths to becoming university teachers. Each described unique aspects of that developmental path, such as how and what they learned along the way, what challenges they encountered and what supports helped them, what recommendations they would make for others, and the ratio of teaching, research, and service in their ideal job. Their accounts address the study questions,

How are university teacher roles developed?
What are the central features of these roles?
What challenges and supports affect role development?
In Chapter Six I move beyond these questions and focus on the similarities and patterns in their development as university teachers.
Although the participants described a diversity of experiences, certain commonalities were apparent in their accounts, including a lack of preparation for teaching, initial anxiety and overload, concern about evaluation of teaching, and concern about valuing of teaching. There were also patterns evident in their recommendations for supporting other newcomers.

In this chapter, I move to a metaperspective of the participants as an integrated whole. I comment on their patterns of growth and focus on similarities amongst them. I describe entry into the academy and construing a university teacher identity as a constructive-developmental path, and I highlight examples of the perspectives the participants share at various points along that process. I tie their development to the existing literature, laying the background for the implications to practice, theory, and further research that I will discuss in Chapter Seven.

Lack of Preparation for Teaching Role: Lack of Constructs

All participants talked about feeling underprepared for the teaching aspect of their professorial roles and unanimously expressed a lack of helpful graduate student experiences upon which to draw. Alice talked about the poor examples she had received; Brenda was clear that the priority in her graduate student days was on researcher preparation. Caitlyn noted the lack of preparation for a university lecturer role; Eric summarized that he had no idea how to teach in the university when he began. Gail pointed out how little she knew then compared to what she knows now.
These findings parallel those of Austin (2002a, 2002b), Bellows (2004), Chism et al. (2002), Dunne and Menzefricke (2006), Gaff (2002), Nyquist et al. (1999), and Wulff (2004), who point out that the focus of graduate programs continues to be on preparing students as researchers rather than as postsecondary teachers. Bellows notes that even when courses in teaching are available, few graduate students take them. In addition, few Canadian institutions offer mandatory graduate courses in university teaching (Christensen Hughes, 2006; see also Appendix A).

Regardless of department, institution, or length of time in current role, participants recall a lack of preparation for their role as teaching professor. This lack of constructs about teaching in the university contributed to significant feelings of stress.

Initial Anxiety and Overload: Caught With Their Constructs Down

All participants talked about their stress and heavy workload when beginning their teaching roles. They found early teaching preparation took significant time, as did administering the teaching (for example, arranging audiovisual equipment and marking student work). Much of this may have resulted from not knowing what approach to take. For example, Brenda comments that she did not know how much content to include in a course. A common theme was not just the workload but the emotional drain of that workload. Fay referred to her negative physical response to the stress.

While workload stress may continue to be high (particularly for the two later stage participants who have very large classes), the participants’ tone is different when discussing current stress levels as opposed to the high stress at the outset of their teaching. Regardless of whether the participant was new to the role or at the 5-year point,
discussion of early career teaching-related stress was emotionally charged, and participants clearly recall it as an onerous time.

These findings are in line with other research on new faculty members highlighting the levels of stress associated with adjusting to their myriad responsibilities, all within a new context (Allain, 2006; Gaff, 2002). A particular aspect of the stress is that the responsibilities are a surprise to these newcomers (Allain; Boice, 1992; Gaff). The sudden shift from graduate student to new faculty member seems to be a difficult one to navigate as newcomers attempt to discern the specifics of the culture in which they find themselves (Austin, 2002a, 2002b; Gaff; Whitt, 1991).

The stress of the heavy workload may also contribute to isolation, as noted by Brenda’s example of needing to isolate herself just to get work done. In other cases, participants experienced heightened stress when they were unable to connect with colleagues as a way of overcoming their challenges.

Participants noted that collegial peer relationships were easier with those at a similar career stage. When there are no other department newcomers, feelings of isolation are common. Donna, for example, bemoaned that no-one in the department would have coffee with her. There is a sense that no senior person will understand their particular concerns; that senior colleagues have either forgotten what it is like to be new or are focused on other (non-teaching) issues. On the other hand, junior colleagues, as noted particularly by Alice and Brenda, might still remember being newcomers and thus be better positioned to be supportive mentors. Additionally, when incidents occur between colleagues, concerns about the tenure process may train newcomers not to depend for support on their more experienced seniors.
Nyquist et al. (1999) described similar findings in their study of graduate student preparation for professorial roles. Austin (2002a) notes the lack of collegiality described by participants and how strongly that contributed to the stress of the early years. With neither existing constructs for their circumstances nor, in many cases, supportive others to assist newcomers in navigating their new responsibilities, new faculty members struggle to discern the requirements of their roles within the institution. Unfortunately, this isolation makes teaching development difficult (Deel, 2004), and newcomers miss out on the benefits that may have been found in communities of practice (Chism et al., 2002; Cox, 2003).

In later stages, however, concerns shift away from a sense of personal isolation. For example, Eric talks not about isolation but about his frustration at there not being an overall plan to avoid duplication in classes. Fay and Gail note that they now find rewards in their new roles as teaching mentors to incoming faculty. Thus, while isolation and a sense of little connection to colleagues are apparent in the early years, perceptions of collegiality may shift as new academics find their identity within the department.

Determining the New Context: Construct Adjustment

Participants noticed efficiencies over time. That is, each course they taught took less time to prepare the second time around, and the administration of teaching (such as grading, booking audiovisual equipment, managing the classroom) became easier over time. They also noted that figuring out the specific department culture was an ongoing process. Feedback seemed to help with creating new constructs, but in two areas in
particular they found difficulty in affirming or disconfirming their existing constructs: evaluation of teaching and valuing of teaching.

Participants expressed concerns about the way evaluation of teaching hindered their development of identity as teachers. In particular, they voiced a wish for expert (faculty developer) and peer feedback and, in some cases, felt this should replace student feedback on teaching. They felt that none of their peers (including department chairs) really knew anything about their teaching. This, they felt, did not bode well for tenure and promotion decisions. In addition, there was the hint of concern that student feedback from initial courses may have a significant (and negative) impact on the career path.

Alice saw student feedback as little more than a popularity contest. Where it was seen as valuable, it was generally by those who had more prior teaching experience, such as Brenda and Caitlyn, or later stage participants (Eric, Fay, and Gail). Donna commented that she was coming to appreciate student feedback as supporting her own development.

Participants also noted that there seem to be few opportunities possible for observing peers' teaching. While Alice benefited from peer input on her teaching, only newcomer colleagues provided feedback. Brenda found colleagues did not respond positively to her requests to observe them. Both she and Eric noted that both faculty and students perceive these observations are for remedial purposes for the observed professor.

Overall, there was consensus that teaching is poorly evaluated and that feedback from teaching mentors, expert teaching peers, and in fact any colleagues would more strongly support teaching development. Participants struggled with developing a role identity in the absence of external validation, particularly from those whose opinion they trust. Austin (2002b) draws attention to similar issues for graduate teaching assistants,
noting that they seldom, if ever, get constructive feedback about their teaching, or have opportunities to discuss teaching improvement with others.

Beyond the evaluation of teaching, another theme was concerns about whether or not teaching was seen in the institution as valuable work. Participants worried that time and effort spent on teaching would not be given weight come promotion and tenure time. It was also noted that senior colleagues did not necessarily share a sense of the importance of teaching.

For example, Alice notes a discrepancy in the relative value of teaching and research activities. Caitlyn commented that the lack of value placed on teaching is a major challenge to her teaching development. Undervaluing of teaching has resulted for Eric in an attitude of not doing some things he would like to do because they are not seen as valuable by the institution.

These concerns highlight those that have been expressed by other researchers over a period of some time (Barzun, 1991; Hattie & Marsh, 1996; S.L. Smith, 1991, and others). It seems clear that while teaching comprises 40% of the workload for most faculty members, it may be seen as an undervalued aspect of faculty work.

The two later stage participants described different perspectives. Fay does not mention any sense of the institution undervaluing teaching, although she notes it is not her colleagues’ central focus, and while Gail had concerns about the evaluation of teaching, her only reference to the valuing of teaching is her own positive perspective.
Role Identity

There is a discernible shift in identity during the first 5 years. Donna, Eric, Fay, and Gail specifically refer to a shift in their perspectives on teaching. For example, Fay notes she now thinks about course design, and Gail has noted a change in her understanding of students and their perspectives. Overall, participants seem to move away from the sense of isolation of their early years, and, in the case of Fay and Gail, move into roles of mentoring others. There is also a subtle shift from desire for external affirmation towards more internal validation of teaching. Alice, Brenda, Caitlyn, and Donna sought or found external validation in varying forms, including student feedback and emails, a desire for feedback on teaching, and a desire to connect with colleagues. Fay and Gail, on the other hand, talked about the positive impact their teaching had on them and mentioned the positive influences they felt they had on their students and other colleagues whom they mentor.

In addition, later stage professors see teaching as subsuming many tasks as compared to newcomers’ less complex view of the teacher role. This is not to say that newcomers are not aware of diverse responsibilities, simply that when asked, they responded more briefly. For example, Alice sees teaching as mostly about what happens in the classroom and anticipates supervising graduate students, while Fay and Gail name a long list of tasks as subsumed under teaching. In particular, their view includes providing various supports to students, including connection to other campus services such as counseling.

This is consistent with the idea of developmental changes over time found by Copeland et al. (1994), Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001), D.L. Robertson (1999), and
Seldin (2004). In addition, various authors particularly note the early years as a period of significant change (Boice, 1992; Deel, 2004; Lang, 2005; Menges, 1999; Tardif, 1985). It also matches Huberman’s (1995) portrayal of the first 5 years as a period of survival and discovery, suggesting unsettled times, but also a time of growth.

In addition, there is a trend in the data that participants more strongly integrate their roles over time. For example, Alice, who is beginning her position as assistant professor, discusses the struggles she faces switching from teaching to research. In the middle stage, which seems to begin after the participant has been through one academic cycle, there is more mention of overlap, and participants see greater synergy amongst their roles. Caitlyn notes this shift in her perspective and contrasts this against what she sees as the perspective of newcomers.

Later-stage participants talked about blending roles together and reframing their understandings of teaching/research/service to subsume a chosen area of focus. That is, research may become research about classroom teaching; service might become public presentations about the discipline or mentoring new teachers. For example, Eric, who is close to the 5-year point, sees teaching and research as so closely linked he has difficulty separating them. Fay and Gail, who are at the 5-year point in their current positions, strongly feel that their roles of teaching, research, and service strongly integrate and contribute to each other. Fay, for example, conducts research about teaching in her discipline. Gail notes the synergy between her teaching and research roles. Each finds public presentations (service) contribute to their teaching.

While there is a noticeable trend towards increased role integration as time and experience increase, the participants do not follow a linear path of development. For
example, Brenda, who is at an early career stage (1 year) but has extensive previous teaching experience, did see a connection amongst her roles. She also had experience of a research only position, perhaps thus giving her a greater degree of relevant experience.

Donna, who falls after Caitlyn in experience in her current position, is not perhaps as far along in her role integration. Whereas Caitlyn has significant prior teaching experience, Donna’s teaching experience is almost nil. Her perspective seems to reflect a separation of roles in that she has a strong sense of self-efficacy as a researcher, but is rather less confident as a teacher.

While Kreber (2000b) notes that “experienced faculty were found to integrate the various roles associated with professorial work more strongly than inexperienced faculty” (p. 102), her work is based on very experienced professors. Results from this study suggest there may very well be role integration during the early career stages as well.

**Recommendations to Support Others’ Growth**

The participants’ recommendations for supporting other newcomers’ teaching development serve as a summary for the individual variations in the challenges and supports each participant has encountered. Alice’s recommendations, for example, suggest a desire for a jump-start on some aspects of her role (a postdoctoral position) and interpersonal support once in the role.

Brenda, one year further along in her career, would focus on setting up for teaching observations and evaluations. She would also have faculty submit their syllabi so all department members can view them, and she advises that newcomers be allowed to teach courses in their area of expertise when possible. She also would recommend
mentoring. Brenda’s recommendations focus on determining the department culture, incorporating both interpersonal supports as well as sharing of the specifics of course content. She also is recommending that newcomers start teaching in their comfort zone.

Caitlyn has also been in her job for one year. She recommends that newcomers focus on knowing their content to enhance their confidence. She also advises getting to know the student audience and also connecting to a teaching mentor. She found the best advice she received was to seek projects that would integrate well with her own research.

Donna has been in her role for 2 years. She thinks new faculty members need specific strategies such as lesson planning and what to do on the first day of class. She recommends that teaching evaluations be seen in the context of class size and whether it is a mandatory credit. She also advises that new faculty not worry about whether or not they will get tenure. Donna’s primary focus for newcomers is on specific technical advice on teaching.

Eric has been in his job for 4 years and is anticipating tenure in the near future. He stresses the importance of the big picture of what occurs in teaching in the department and recommends that newcomers teach some entry courses and sit in on others’ classes. He would like to see an overall plan for department curriculum where everyone knows what is being taught in other courses. He also suggests that each department have a handbook for new faculty. Eric is talking about discerning the department culture.

Fay, who has been in her academic position for 5 years, would have newcomers observe peers who are known to be good teachers and would encourage discussion with colleagues with greater experience to find out what informal guidelines exist regarding number of assignments and other course planning specifics. She stresses the importance
of reflection on teaching practice and would recommend teaching dossiers for everyone as a support to reflection and teaching development. Fay is advocating reflection on practice and connection with colleagues.

Gail is also in her fifth year but has greater prior teaching experience. She would give teaching release so newcomers do not think of teaching as a challenge to getting a research program going. Her recommendations focus on specific supports to newcomers: a graduate assistant to help prepare course materials, assigning them experienced teaching assistants to help with classes. She would further provide a handbook on teaching in the department. Gail would also connect them with colleagues whose teaching is exemplary, assign a teaching mentor outside their discipline, and meet with them frequently to discuss how their teaching is going. She also recommends better preparation for graduate students, at least starting with teaching one week in a graduate course. Gail suggests specific technical supports, including information, support of colleagues, and overall mentoring, and also recommends advance preparation at the doctoral level.

Participants in my study reflected on their own experiences, both positive and negative, and provided a variety of recommendations for other newcomers’ support. I have shown these recommendations, balanced against the challenges they seek to remedy, in Figure 1. While not all participants mentioned all challenges, there were some definite patterns in the negative influences that newcomers can expect, such as,
Figure 1. University teacher role development: Challenges and supports.

1. Lack of preparation for teaching aspects of professional role;
2. Initial anxiety and work overload;
3. Isolation and lack of collegiality (especially with senior colleagues);
4. Methods of (or no) evaluation of teaching; and
5. Undervaluing of teaching.

These findings are very much in line with those of Austin (2002a), Bellows (2004), Bellows and Weissinger (2005), and Gaff (2002), although the concerns about
evaluation of teaching were highlighted more particularly by my tenure-track participants.

It was interesting to see, for example, that while the undervaluing of teaching was seen as having significant negative impact on teaching development, there were no recommendations to specifically overcome this challenge. Further, while support for reflective practice was a recommendation made by the two later stage participants, they construed it as having an overall benefit rather than addressing specific singular challenges.

While the individual participants’ recommendations are specific to their own circumstances, the suggestions tend to fall under the following themes:

1. Provide advance preparation (at the graduate student level);
2. Provide specific teaching tips early in career;
3. Provide specific information about department teaching culture;
4. Provide opportunities for connecting with colleagues;
5. Provide information about the students’ needs;
6. Provide mentoring (both for teaching and overall role);
7. Provide expert and/or peer feedback on teaching; and
8. Provide supports for reflection on practice.

Advance preparation, according to my participants, could take the form of doctoral level training in teaching, as advocated by Austin’s (2002a), Gaff’s (2002), and Wulff’s (2004) discussion of the Preparing Future Faculty initiatives. It could also include taking post-doctoral positions to advance their research work. Specific teaching tips could involve observing others teach, being assigned strong TAs, and getting firsthand information
from colleagues. Participants also recommended that newcomers be given explicit information in the form of a handbook about the department administration, role expectations, teaching culture, and an overview of the typical students and their needs. Many of these could be further supported through connections to other colleagues.

Mentoring could take the form of support from the department chair and could also include a teaching mentor, perhaps from outside the department, to avoid concerns regarding tenure and promotion biases. Peer and expert feedback could be set up from within the department or could involve faculty development experts. Encouragement to engage in reflection on practice could come from the mentor and might also include participating in faculty development workshops built around this theme. These recommendations were a close match with Austin’s (2002b) summary of what graduate students wanted in terms of advance preparation for academic roles.

1. More attention to regular mentoring, advising, and feedback;
2. Structured opportunities to observe, meet, and talk with peers;
3. Opportunities for diverse, developmentally oriented teaching;
4. Explicit information about the full range of faculty responsibilities;
5. Regular and guided reflection (pp. 111-112).

In addition, participants provided advice directed specifically to the newcomers.

1. Determine the department culture. Get explicit instructions on what to expect (through handbooks, mentoring). Learn who the students are as well.
2. Get specific tips for teaching.
3. Observe others, inviting their feedback. Get support from others such as junior colleagues, spouses, and department chairs.
4. Invite feedback from teaching experts and peers as well as students.

5. Develop an integrated role. Take on work that complements existing responsibilities.

6. Engage in reflection on teaching experiences; involve others in discussing interpretations.

While the participants provide several ideas for support of other newcomers, this does not imply that providing supports is as simple as following these recommendations. For example, opportunities to observe, meet, and talk with peers may sound simple to create, but as the participants noted, their requests to observe colleagues’ teaching often received a negative response. One participant noted that she could not even find a colleague who would agree to have coffee with her. There seems to be an ongoing challenge in creating networked communities of scholars in departments where there are few newcomers. This lack of connection to others may negatively impact newcomers’ abilities to discern department culture and in turn to develop their identity within the academy.

Summary

I have outlined the ways in which participants negotiated their path to developing a teaching identity, highlighting the challenges and supports to their role construction as well as the recommendations they make for other newcomers. Further, I have noted the shift over time in their perceptions and their understanding of their teaching role and the integration of their various academic roles.
I have shown that while there are shared experiences, they seem to be experienced at particular points in the first 5 years. That is, there are particular concerns for newcomers, while participants’ perceptions shift in the next few years and are substantially different by the 5-year point. In Chapter Seven, I turn to the implications these findings have for theory, practice, and further research.
CHAPTER SEVEN: IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

Growth takes place when the next step forward is subjectively more delightful, more joyous, more intrinsically satisfying than the previous gratification with which we have become familiar and even bored; that the only way we can ever know what is right for us is that it feels better subjectively than any alternative. (Maslow, 1968, p. 45)

This study has been about how new, untenured university teachers construe their teaching identity development. I have described the participants' developmental paths and explored their understandings of the features of their roles. Further, I have explored the challenges and supports to their role development and what recommendations they made for supporting the teaching development of other newcomers. I have shown that while there are individual variations in role development, there are similarities as well, regardless of discipline, department, or institution.

These variations and similarities reflect Kelly’s (1955) individuality and commonality corollaries. Kelly notes that “persons differ from each other in their construction of events” (p. 55), but also that “to the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his psychological processes are similar to those of the other person” (p. 90). Thus there are some common frames of reference amongst the participants as well as individual variations, depending, amongst other things, on their background experiences. Irrespective of discipline, the process of developing a university teaching role identity
may be similar. Further, the data suggest that a primary impact on the developmental process is previous experience.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will outline the implications the study findings have for theory, practice, and further research. I finish with a reflective account of my own developmental path as researcher in this study and the ways in which my own growth has provided an additional lens for considering the study results. I conclude with some thoughts about how the study findings shed light on what might be anticipated for the future.

Implications for Theory

The results indicated a developmental path towards developing a teaching identity. In this section I develop three models based on these results. Kelly (1955) emphasizes the importance of permeable constructs, as those that are flexible (without being loose) and open to revisions as new experiences occur.

The kind of construct which is permeable has more of the qualities of a theoretical formulation, as contrasted with a hypothetical formulation....A hypothesis is deliberately constructed so as to be relatively impermeable and brittle, so that there can be no question about what it embraces and no doubt about it being wholly shattered or left intact at the end of an experiment. A theory is not so inflexibly constructed. (p. 81)

It is in this spirit that I offer these models.
Role Integration

While there was a variety of ideal job ratios regarding teaching, research, and service, there was also a developmental shift in the ways in which most participants view the relationship amongst these three primary aspects of their roles as professors. Earlier stage participants see the academic role as having three distinct spheres of teaching, research, and service. Over time, there is an increasing amount of integration in the three roles, and later stage participants see the roles as fully integrated. I see this development as similar to Kegan’s (1982, 1994) discussion of differentiation and integration. That is, the differentiated roles of teaching, research, and service must be understood separately before they can be integrated into a single role of overlapping understandings.

In Figure 2, I model a simplified view of the increasing integration of the three academic roles over time. I conceptualize the centre of the three circles as the academic self. In the early career phase, the self is diffuse and not bounded, and there are some tensions as the individual negotiates which role to take. By the middle phase, the self is more bounded, and there is a stronger sense of integration of roles. By the later phase, the academic identity may be well integrated within the overlapping roles.

The model is not intended to imply that there is a clean linear progression, or that the integration occurs in such a neat and tidy fashion, but rather that there is an increasing integration of academic roles over time as indicated by the participants’ descriptions of their conceptions of their roles.
Model of Faculty Role Development

The development of the new academic follows a model of a shifting focus on situation, self, and society. By situation I mean the context for work—the specific department and colleagues, the students, and the constraints and supports within. One might think of these as the ground in Kegan’s (1982) ground:object relationship, and the self as the object. Self refers to an individuated understanding of personal career goals, professional identity, and job satisfaction. This is Kegan’s differentiated self. By society I mean the larger community of practice, including one’s department and colleagues within it, one’s discipline, and conferences one might attend. Giddens (1982) refers to society as “a cluster, or system, of institutionalised modes of conduct” (p. 10). In this way, society refers to the specific context of the work landscape in which the new professor finds himself or herself.

The newcomer must first understand the nature of the situation, or context. Department culture and guidelines, both explicit and implicit, need to be determined, as must specifics of teaching within that context. Once that is understood and a sense of connection to that context is established, the newcomer can refocus on individual
differentiation and the ways in which they have a unique self to contribute. It is only once these two have been understood that an integrated relationship of self within that context, or a sense of connection to society, can be established. At the same time, the relationship between and amongst these three continues to be negotiated and refined.

This can be seen in the participants' experiences. Participants identify challenges that act as barriers to determining the situation or setting in which they work. In turn, it becomes difficult to develop a strong sense of a differentiated self and, subsequently, one that is re-integrated into the academic society.

In addition, themes in the participants’ descriptions echoed the process of becoming an adult within a society. During one of my re-readings of the data, I was also reading Kegan’s (1994) *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life*, in which he talks about life development stages. The participants’ accounts of feeling isolated, of not being able to connect to those more experienced than themselves but only with others at their own career stage, and their confidence about some aspects of their work coupled with their sense of uncertainty in their new roles reminded me particularly of adolescents entering adult society. Thus, to follow Kegan’s (1982, 1994) model of development, developing an identity as an academic becomes about moving from embededness as a graduate student, through a period of transition, and into embededness as an (adult) academic. In the case of new professors, old identities as student and dissertation writer must be shed or reframed, and a new identity as teaching professor must be created. Simultaneously, this developing individual identity is subject to stresses as identities as member of the department, professional within the discipline, and educator of others are also formed.
Kegan (1982, 1994) uses his model of differentiation and integration to refer to individual processes. Certainly he, like Hunt (1988) and Schön (1983), acknowledges the importance of others in the growth process. However, his framework is of the individual developmental process of emerging from embeddedness to a new understanding of self. I extend that idea to a conceptual framework of social interaction in which differentiation is about developing an understanding of an individual self, and integration represents interaction with the larger society (see Figure 3).

![Figure 3. Situation, self, and society.](image)

Teaching Development Hierarchy

Development over time towards an integrated understanding of self within the department, institutional, and discipline society can be viewed as a hierarchy of teaching identity development. Building on Maslow’s (1968) model, I conceptualize teaching development as a hierarchy of resolution of needs.³

³ I am grateful to my daughter, Kat Simmons, for her assistance in conceptualizing this model.
Huberman (1995) positions his first stage of teacher development, survival and discovery, as occurring in the first 5 years. I initially considered this as parallel to Maslow’s (1968) lowest level of basic needs. However, there are clearly phases of development during this time. While the first 5 years are likely a period of higher construct development than any other time in the career cycle, there are discernible shifts during this time. I therefore offer this teaching hierarchy as a micro-view of the first 5 years as experienced by my participants (see Figure 4).

1. Survival: Teacher creates constructs for teaching. Concern is on specifics of teaching, such as booking AV, and setting syllabus and assessments. Focus is on instrumental aspects of teaching, including content mastery.

2. Safety: Teacher builds personal teaching safety through preparation, feels safe once constructs are established for teaching basics. Teaching begins to feel less threatening.

3. Love/belonging: Focus shifts from self towards students’ needs. Concerns other than discipline teaching come into play. Students are seen as having needs outside content and teaching process. Students may be seen as valuable process partners (in terms of providing feedback and affirmation).

4. Self-esteem: Teacher is aware of his or her influences on students and contributions to teaching. Begins to use influence, for example, to encourage students to pursue graduate work. Develops a positive teaching identity.

5. Fulfillment/self-actualizing: Teacher is engaged in a process of continual improvement. May have peak experiences in teaching. Continually seeks
enhancements to teaching process; able to reflect positively on what is going well.

Viewing the first 5 years in this way highlights the importance of scaffolding new faculty members up the teaching hierarchy, and considering what specific supports might be relevant to each phase of their personal development.
Implications for Practice

In this section I consider possible applications of the study findings and, in particular, what improvements in practice might best support newcomers’ development as teachers. I outline ways in which new academics could be scaffolded into their teaching roles, consider the implications of the semantics of “faculty development,” and discuss possibilities for transformative learning.

Preparation for Teaching Role

While advance preparation is one of the recommendations made by some of my participants, I want to be clear: I am not advocating that formal training is necessarily a desired solution. I would wish to be cautious about proposing teacher training for all new professors; many existing teacher preparation programs for K-12 teachers are inadequate preparation for the realities of the teaching profession (Laursen, 1996; Lortie, 1975; T. Russell, McPherson, & Martin, 2001). Teacher training is not as simple, as these authors note, as offering traditional transmission training, and new schoolteachers often report similar types of distress (Russell et al., 2001) as those experienced by my new professor participants. These authors recommend a need to move beyond what I would term technical teaching towards supporting meta-processes (see also Kompf & Bond, 1995; Schön, 1983). This recommendation could support the idea of scaffolding newcomers up a hierarchy of teaching development, with an aim towards supporting meta-reflective processes on the developmental path. One caution, of course, is that a push towards reflection may be the last thing new academics seek, when some are simply trying to keep their heads above the sea of tasks that confront them.
In addition, I thought about the difficulties inherent in truly preparing anyone in advance for a future role: A certain amount of role development is by its nature experiential learning. As Zorga (2003) remarks, “learning in adulthood is mostly based on life experiences and is not acquired through formal education” (p. 272). At the same time, Zorga shares a belief with Kelly (1955) and other constructivists that “experiences from everyday life can easily be assimilated into our mental structure because they are congruent with experiences from earlier on” (Zorga, p. 270).

I noted that previous teaching experience seemed to give participants a head start on their developmental path towards teaching role development. This raises a question: If there is developmental progress according to years in position, but previous teaching experience moves one up the teaching hierarchy “ladder,” then is providing support for teaching role development as simple as recommending that all graduate students get teaching experience?

Explicit Instruction

Participants clearly expressed their wish to receive information about department and teaching specifics through a handbook or other means. They sought explicit information about the administration of teaching, such as grading practices or where to get audio-visual equipment. In many ways, they were describing a desire for a template to get them through the basic needs stage, when their anxiety levels were highest.

I liken this to going through labour and delivery and getting to the moment of transition. Knowing that it is something that others have survived, that it will not last forever, and what to expect at the time seems to support women in getting through it. One can say, “Oh, I’m in this stage. I have no choice, but at least I know where I am, and I’m
on the normal curve.” I hope the results of this study, and in particular the participants’ own accounts of their experiences, will at least let other newcomers know their experiences are shared ones and that this may bring some measure of comfort.

Perhaps role construction is a bit like playing with Lego and building models. One can understand the pieces (differentiation) and build into a unified whole (integration), but the process can be a lot easier if you use the pictures in the instructions as a guide. This still allows room for each individual to construct their own unique model, to choose to accept or reject the offered template.

Two of my participants also spoke of the support of their department chair in acquainting them with department expectations. I see opportunity for the chair (or other senior person) to act as a host to welcome the newcomers. Just as one would host a party, this person would be sure to introduce newcomers to persons with whom they may have something in common and would check back with them from time to time to be sure things were going well.

**Support for Role Integration**

Early career participants express high levels of stress; these levels seem to come into greater control when there is less fractured focus of multiple roles. The easiest number of balls to juggle is one; perhaps it is also true that the easiest number of roles to juggle is one. By this I do not mean to suggest that new faculty divest themselves of all roles but one. While agreeing in principle with the merits of a participant’s recommendations that new faculty should take on tasks that are related to their research, I want to go beyond that. I want to recommend that new faculty (and graduate students in
training) be explicitly encouraged to consider reframing their understanding of their roles into an integrated whole.

Pratt (1998) distinguishes five perspectives on teaching adults:

1. Transmission, in which the focus is on content;
2. Apprenticeship, or acquiring skills from a role model;
3. Developmental, where the focus is on individual growth;
4. Nurturing, where the focus is on caring for the students’ emotional well-being; and
5. Social reform, or preparing students to be agents of social change.

The apprenticeship perspective may be a preferred model for much doctoral student preparation, as well as a number of faculty development models wherein new professors are asked to view experts’ teaching and try to model it. However, the apprenticeship model may not allow for differentiation and subsequent integration into a different context. That is, apprenticeship may focus on modeling the skills of the master without incorporating a meta-reflective component. Development might be better served by a developmental model, one that invites people to ask, “Who am I in all this?” and “How does who I am fit in to the whole context?”

Semantics of Faculty Development

I have not found a written reference for this, but I have been very much aware in my own work that the phrase “faculty development” has gone out of fashion. More recently, what once were faculty development offices in Canadian postsecondary institutions have become instructional design offices or centres for teaching and learning. Those who were previously referred to as faculty developers are now called instructional
designers or educational developers. This is seen as a way of moving away from a sense that faculty personally needed developing and that really the job is about developing their teaching. And yet, I believe this moves faculty developers away from a holistic perspective on the work in question: supporting faculty members’ growth as they seek to improve not only their teaching practice but their relationship to that practice.

*Transformative Learning?*

Participants saw the early years as a time of great stress. While work overload is still apparent in later years, particularly for those who teach very large classes or juggle many academic and personal roles, the initial period seems to be particularly overwhelming. I liken this initial period of stress or anxiety to a critical incident (Brookfield, 2000; Mezirow, 1991), which may provide an opportunity for transformation (Brookfield; Simmons, Drakeford, & Hosseinpour, in press). Participant comments suggest that the degree of overload may in itself have been a catalyst for a change in work habits and commented about how they had to streamline their practices out of necessity.

Thus, while clearly there are challenges, challenges may well be the opportunities where growth resides. It may be that the cognitive and emotional dissonance of the early days required that new university teachers adjust their work habits and their expectations in order to manage their time. Participants in this study have navigated the stress of early days with some success. Attempts to remove all stress should perhaps keep in mind Maslow’s (1968) advice that

not allowing people to go through their pain, and protecting them from it, may turn out to be a kind of overprotection, which in turn implies a certain lack of
respect for the integrity and the intrinsic nature and the future discipline of the individual. (p. 8)

In some ways, therefore, the stress of the early days may have resulted in work habit efficiencies; at the same time, it is clear that, as numerous researchers have reported (Austin, 2002a, 2002b; Gaff, 2000; and others), new faculty feel overwhelmed and report suffering from near burnout. This should be seen in context: the faculty volunteering for this study are likely to be those who have survived these early stages; others may not have been so fortunate.

Implications for Further Research

With a small exploratory study such as this, I acknowledge that any of my suggested implications for revisions to theory or practice should be subject to further study. That is, while I offer a hierarchy of teaching and role differentiation and integration with a focus on situation, self, and society as models for role development, I see a need to research them further. For example, a longitudinal study with a group of new faculty members might bring into focus the different ways individuals navigate the growth path at different stages and may highlight other personal factors that scaffold newcomers more quickly into their roles. Also, as previously noted, a limitation of the study was that the volunteer participants were likely those with an interest not only in teaching but also in talking about it. An ongoing research challenge would be to access those who may be less positive about teaching. In addition, the study has caused me to ask several additional questions for further research, as I outline below.
Further Research on Role Integration

Neuman, LaPointe Terosky, and Schell (2006) found that not all faculty members necessarily exhibit role integration. This was also true of a study of experienced professors’ role integration by Colbeck (1998), although neither study used a developmental framework. At the same time, Kreber (2000a) found that experienced professors do demonstrate integration of their academic roles. The work of these authors does suggest that further research is needed to determine what factors affect role integration and, in particular, if it is desirable, then what prevents it from occurring.

It may be that differentiation (and subsequent integration) occurs only when a precedent condition of being in a relatively stable (embedded) state already exists. That is, if connection to a group (existing embeddedness) is a prerequisite for differentiation (one must have a model from which to differentiate self), then a lack of connection to any group may in fact impair differentiation. I also suggest that challenges to the self may adversely affect role differentiation and thus integration. For example, if there is a perception that teaching is less valued by the institution overall than research, that part of self that values teaching is perhaps seen as undervalued by the institution. Further research could study the importance of precedent conditions for differentiation and integration in the academy.

In addition, certain conditions may lead to regression. As noted, high levels of stress and anxiety are challenges to role development (Maslow, 1968). While development may be viewed as cycles that take the individual to increasingly higher levels of self-understanding and self-actualizing, events in the academic career may have the impact of pushing the individual back to a focus on basic needs, and a restart of the
role differentiation/integration process. It would be interesting to examine whether a role reevaluation also occurs once tenure has been granted.

**Further Research on Career Stages**

It would be interesting to ask the same type of questions to those at various career stages to determine whether perceptions shift over career span and to confirm whether, as has been suggested by Seldin’s (2004) American studies, there are different professional development needs at different career stages. This would create an interesting opportunity to compare results from Huberman’s (1993, 1995) study on schoolteacher career stages to those experienced within the academy and to explore what factors specific to the academy affect how those stages are experienced.

Further, there seems to be little research on late career entry professors. Huberman (1993) contends that “age is an empty variable, an indicator of chronological time …. Age itself does not determine social and psychological behaviour. It is not a causal factor” (p. 17). This suggests that while career stages may evolve along a developmental path, age may not be the guiding factor (and nor, I would suggest, is time in the academy the only other variable). It would be interesting to conduct parallel studies on those entering the academy in later life and with a diversity of other life experiences.

**Social Contexts**

The participants discussed their implicit understandings of department expectations and their recommendations that those expectations be made explicit through handbooks and mentoring. Huberman (1993) raises an important point for consideration when studying developing role constructs within the academy. Social determinisms, he says, may affect what is perceived and at what stages. It may be considered normal to
have achieved certain things by certain stages, for example, to have achieved tenure at around 5 years. At various career stages one could expect ongoing comparisons “between one’s achievements and one’s expectations relative to social norms” (p. 15). Thus there may well be a sociocultural dynamic to the images teaching professionals construct. Future work could examine the role these social constructions play in professors’ perceptions about their success in role development.

*Impact of Study*

I was very aware from explicit comments made by the majority of my participants that participating in the research had in itself provided an opportunity for role development and reflection on practice. A number spoke of the importance of dedicated reflection time, of feeling supported in their conceptions, and two mentioned that the process had helped them consolidate their perspectives. For example,

> It became much clearer. I remember there were things I was talking about that I’d thought about before, but by telling you about them— I thought, yes, that’s actually true! This is what I think. I don’t really have the time ever to think these things through and to really articulate them in the way I did. So that was very helpful for me as well…. It definitely raises self-awareness. (Brenda, pp. 4-5)

Follow-up research might focus on whether the research had a long-term impact; that is, to explore whether, having been asked to take a meta-reflective position on their development, participants are more likely to do so again on their own.

In thinking about the impact of the study, I am also acutely aware of the limitation of the self-selected participants, all of whom, despite their stresses, had positive
perspectives on teaching. Further research would be needed to explore the usefulness of the models presented with newcomers who may have different perspectives.

Impact of Promotion and Tenure

I did not focus on promotion and tenure as a significant factor in participants’ development. And yet, clearly some participants felt constrained by having to meet promotion and tenure guidelines. They indicated there were things they would be more likely to try after receiving tenure; in one case, a participant did not pursue resolution of a challenging situation because of her concerns that it might affect her tenure. The question that arises for me is how does the tenure and promotion process frame the experience of new academics? I see opportunity to compare results from this study with a similar participant group from community colleges in order to explore this question.

Ongoing Faculty Development

There are unanswered questions about the value of ongoing faculty development in the form of workshops. While many of my participants had taken faculty development workshops, these infrequently show up as recommendations for other new faculty. At the same time, the majority wished for opportunities to connect with peers, both in and out of their departments. What next questions can be asked as a result of this? First, there are questions about what format of workshops would be most helpful and how individual needs can be met within that format. While Austin (2002b) recommends faculty development give “explicit attention to the various roles and responsibilities that typically characterize the life and work of a faculty member” (p. 116), Saroyan and Amundsen (2004) have found success in making reflection on the context of teaching and teacher growth the focus of their work. It may also be true that the benefit of faculty development
workshops is as simple as the social connections they provide. Cross (1999) notes that "learning is about making connections" (p. 5) and that social connections such as faculty learning communities can support meta-reflective processes. Further research could look at which focus provides more useful support. An additional challenge for further study (and practice) is how to get faculty to connect to such supports as are available. I have also pondered whether the very isolation that participants saw as a challenge is an integral part of the differentiation process. While it is clearly an uncomfortable situation, and one that participants do not enjoy, I wondered whether it serves as a form of journey into the wilderness towards differentiating an individual self. This would be an interesting and challenging area for further study.

My Role Development as Researcher

Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) advocates paying attention to one’s own response to the research process. My work was about developing an identity for a particular role. During the study, I have spent significant time reflecting on my own role development as an academic, and I was very aware of my own multiple professional roles during this work. I was researcher, with responsibilities towards my participants and to the accuracy of both the data and my interpretations; developing academic, with responsibilities to my advisor, committee, and my discipline; and teacher and learner, with responsibilities to my students, my department, and myself.

Throughout the study I asked myself, in what ways has my path influenced my thinking/questions/insights? In what ways have they influenced my path? Initially, my thoughts were primarily about the instrumental details of the research process as
distinguished from teaching I was doing. I soon came to see how these roles overlapped and informed each other. I found that discussion of my findings crept into my teaching. In my course on reflective practice, for example, I was soon arguing for integration of roles as stress relief. Further, in offering tidbits of my research to my students, my own thoughts and conceptualizations were clarified.

Although the work was not ethnographic, and I was not truly immersed in the culture I was studying, I was vicariously immersed. I found, for example, “something in their stories resonated with my own...and evoked in me emotions ranging from sympathy to admiration” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004, p. 394). Through the participants’ stories, I came to reflect upon and reexamine my own development during the course of the study. In doing so, I found that my initially disparate roles overlapped. I felt less fragmented, as if in the process I had found a newly integrated academic self.

Lather (1991) offers the notion of catalytic validity, wherein the value of the research can be measured by its impact on participants. She refers to this as “the degree to which the research process re-orient, focuses, and energizes participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it” (p. 68). I was aware during the study of the impact to my participants; it is only more recently I have become aware of personally benefiting from the results.

I have come in particular to consider what factors have supported my growth. While development of the self is a personal journey, it does not happen in isolation from others. I have been lucky to have support in ways that scaffolded my development along the hierarchy of becoming researcher. Most of the time, my physiological needs were met, although I can only stress to others the importance of getting enough sleep. Access
to resources also counted as a basic need: I am grateful to my advisor and colleagues for lending materials and sending links to articles. At all times, I felt safe in my explorations. I knew I could call on my advisor for support at any time (his tolerance of my frequent intrusions has been exemplary). I could discuss both the content and process of my work with him and other close colleagues. I have been extraordinarily conscious of the care I have received from family, friends, colleagues, and my advisor, care that made me feel at all times that while work was important, people were imperative. Developing self-esteem as an academic is a strong focus in doctoral preparation: I was privileged to be treated by my advisor as an equal from the start. I felt at all times that he viewed me as a competent and successful person, and even when my sense of my own abilities was rock bottom, I still felt the strength of this external valuing.

Most important, I was encouraged towards self-actualizing. I was challenged to think more, to think deeper, to think more broadly, and I was especially challenged to think about what personal meaning I could make that would inform both my own personal path and that of my work. In short, I was encouraged not only towards the tip of the hierarchy, I was also encouraged to integrate my roles.

From where I stand now, having been given the gift of intellectual and emotional space to pursue my research and my own development, I reflect on the ways in which this experience has provided an additional lens for understanding my participants’ accounts. I have a more personal understanding of their journeys and where they are in those journeys. I too reflect on my past experiences and anticipate the future. Although unlike the majority of them I am not looking ahead to imminent promotion and tenure decisions, I have begun to wonder how I will ever manage to undertake the complex role required
from an advisor. I know that I will reflect back on my own experience as a model and that as a result of that experience my constructs are strong. I stand here in gratitude.

Anticipating What Comes Next

The study has grown from an understanding that Canadian universities, and those in Ontario in particular, can anticipate increased new faculty hires in the next decade. These new faculty, while well prepared for their researcher roles, are often unprepared for university teaching. Despite recommendations that doctoral students receive preparation for university teaching, there is currently no such requirement in Ontario or in Canada. Numerous print resources are available for teaching development, and workshops and mentoring exist to provide support to newcomers. At the same time, it has not been clear what supports are particularly useful to new faculty members or what challenges newcomers face to their role development. While some American work is being done on Preparing Future Faculty, there has been further room in the conversation for a Canadian perspective on professors’ development as university teachers.

Accordingly, this study explored how new, untenured university teachers construe their development as teachers with a particular view to understanding how new professors learn to be teachers, and what could best support them in their role development. I anticipate that participants’ accounts may help other newcomers develop constructs for experiences they may also encounter. In addition, they may assist faculty developers, chairs, and deans in considering how best to support faculty newcomers.

Having said that, what does come next? How does reflecting on the past frame an understanding of the future? The participants struggled to create a sense of identity as
teachers and to understand the contexts in which they found themselves. The suddenness of their immersion in these new experiences contributed profoundly to their stress: with few or no prior constructs, they underwent a rapid shift of construct adjustment.

Circumstances of rapid change may generate new issues and questions faster than they can be addressed. While advance preparation may give newcomers a jump-start, one thing that can be anticipated for certain is that the rate of change in the academy will only increase (Jones, 2007). Present and future faculty development supports will need to focus at least as much on preparing people in advance to navigate stages of change as on assuming professional roles. Previously, the focus in faculty development has been on reflective practice. I would argue that typically reflective practice concerns itself with observing what is happening, reflecting on how it could be better, making a plan for improvement, and carrying out that plan (Schön, 1983). I suggest that a piece needs to be added: the idea of reflective anticipation, or considering what might arise in the future and how one might like to develop towards being able to deal with those circumstances.

In reflecting on the participants’ stories and considering the future, it occurs to me that the strength of the particular accounts of these participants is that they are success stories. Each participant experienced what felt like overwhelming stress as a result of challenges as they created new identities as university teachers, and yet each talks about how they navigated the challenges, in some cases with external supports, in some cases by virtue of experience over time. Clearly, transition into the academy is not easy, nor is it likely to become easier in the future. And yet, like growing from adolescent to adult, it is certainly achievable and, given the right supports, may be construed not as a time of overwhelming stress, but rather as an opportunity for growth and development.
Final Thoughts

I have come to conceptualize growing into one’s role as an academic as being about ground, gifts, and grace. This conceptual framework has arisen in part from the study results, growing from the framework of situation, self, and society; in part from discussion with others, and in part from my reflection on my own experiences. By ground I mean determining the specifics of the context in which one finds oneself. Ground can be compared to Connelly and Clandinin’s (1995) idea of professional landscape. By gifts I mean discerning the personal gifts we have to offer within our context, or the ways in which we are unique individuals with something to contribute (Palmer, 1998). I liken this to Kegan’s (1982, 1994) idea of differentiation. By grace I mean Kegan’s integration in the social context: the positive interaction of ground and gifts, or the ways in which we can be engaged intellectually, emotionally, physically, spiritually, with mutual benefit to both ourselves and others.

I wish to particularly acknowledge Michael Kompf for his contributions to my thinking about discerning personal gifts.
References


Huberman, M. (1993). The model of the independent artisan in teachers’ professional relations. In J. Little & M. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Teachers’ work: Individuals, colleagues and contexts* (pp. 11-50). New York: Teachers College Press.


http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/documents/
A%20Response%20to%20Rae%20Post-Sec%20Review%20Nov%202004.pdf


### Appendix A

**Graduate Courses in University Teaching in Ontario**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Required?</th>
<th>Credit?</th>
<th>Offered to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guelph</td>
<td>UNIV 6800: University Teaching: Theory and Practice</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Graduate students and undergraduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurier</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Notation on transcript</td>
<td>Doctoral students primarily, also Masters and new faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurier, Social Work</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster, Centre for Leadership in Learning</td>
<td>Education 750: The Principles and Practice of University Teaching</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster Health Sciences</td>
<td>Nursing 719: Foundations of Education in the Health Sciences</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nursing students (some non-nursing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s, Centre for Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>SGS 901: Teaching and Learning in Higher Education</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Doctoral primarily, some Masters students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s, School of Business</td>
<td>MGMT 993: Teaching and Learning in Management and Business</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s, Faculty of Law</td>
<td>Legal Education and Pedagogy Seminar</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s, Medicine (?)</td>
<td>Teaching Anatomy (new course)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UofT,</td>
<td>THE 500: Teaching in Higher Education</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UofT, Rotman School of Management</td>
<td>Teaching Business in College and Universities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No, certificate</td>
<td>PhD students, maximum of 10 each offering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UofT, Psychology</td>
<td>PSY3002S Teaching Practicum</td>
<td>Yes –if teaching in summer program</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Senior graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Waterloo, Germanic &amp; Slavic Languages</td>
<td>UTAL 5000: University Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (dep’t)</td>
<td>Doctoral, some Masters if have teaching experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York, Centre for Support of Teaching</td>
<td>PSYC 6835A: Teaching Psychology</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This summary in no way should be taken as a complete list of all courses offered. No attempt has been made to validate the information, which was prepared as a summary of STLHE listserv responses to the question: What universities (particularly any in Ontario, but also elsewhere) are currently a) including a doctoral level course in “teaching at the university level” either as required or as optional? b) have approval to do so within the next year or so?
Appendix B

Sample Interview Excerpt

P I’ve learned that it’s important to be myself. And also I believe that it doesn’t actually matter to a large extent who that person is. It’s just important for the instructors to be themselves, and the students will spot what’s happening if they’re trying to be something else. That’s a more recent belief.

R And what was the genesis for that belief? Is it based on seeing someone that you thought was inauthentic, or?

P It’s – in part – it’s just been part of my personal journey. Maybe it’s that it’s most rewarding when I let myself be myself. And someone was sharing an anecdote about a colleague saying, when this person goes in to do this particular course, they don’t make jokes, they’re just there, and they talk about the content, and they’re serious. And my point was, well, that’s fine, that’s who they are. I think they were feeling perhaps that so-and-so, the jokes are [indecipherable]. I remember teaching a second half of a [course]. Going to the first class, in the first term, of this other person, in my first year, right after I was hired, and thinking, oh my god, they’re hilarious. I’ll never be that – how will I ever compete with that? And luckily, by the time four months had passed, and it was my turn, I’d realised, no, that’s not what it’s about. It’s about doing things that I need to do and doing them my way. I do use a bit of humour – inadvertently. I don’t – sometimes I plan it, sometimes I don’t – it comes out, because that’s who I am, and it’s beautiful. As I teach some of these courses more and more, I get more relaxed with what the content is, so more open to the interplay with the students as a large group.

R Is that confidence around the content the big factor in why you feel more that you can be more yourself, or is it more around where you’ve personally come?

P I feel – I think at this point it’s more around where I’ve personally come, because I don’t think I’d step into a brand new course, and start back at ground zero where I was eight years ago. So it’s something else that for me feeds into that, and it’s important to be prepared, and to have a plan for what’s happening in that day’s class, and if you feel confident around the material, and now, it’s important to feel flexible.

R And that’s new?

P Yes, that’s something that has evolved. I was really rigid the first course that I taught. It was three-hour sessions, I would usually go through 30-33 overhead per session. The students would be shaking their hands.

R [laugh]

P Like, ow! So I can’t believe it. And I was really intense and focused, like, are you getting this? And then I had one of them come in for an office hour, and they said, oh! Why aren’t you more like this in class? Because we were having a great time. I was relaxed, joking, laughing. We were getting stuff done, I was being myself there. Whereas I had this impression of how to be the other way. I was worried – I had to get through all this stuff. It’s important.

R So, let me ask you then, does the content feel less important to you now? What has allowed you to move away from that anxiety around the content?

P I’ve given up the illusion that if I don’t say it, they haven’t learned it. And that’s pretty major! (Fay, pp. 7-8).
## Appendix C

### Summary of a Few Relevant Phenomenographical Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Diversity?</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samuelowicz &amp; Bain</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
<td>Science &amp; Social Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trigwell &amp; Prosser</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td></td>
<td>Physics &amp; Chemistry, teaching year 1 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin &amp; Prosser</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 departments; some selected for ‘informed responses’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brew</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>30 (phase 1)</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
<td>Senior academics’ conceptions of research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Robertson &amp; Bond</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Academics’ constructs of the relationship between teaching and research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuelowicz &amp; Bain</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Beliefs about links between teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulton-Lewis, Smithy, McCrindle, Burnett, &amp; Campbell</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Secondary teachers</td>
<td>Conceptions of teaching approaches vis-à-vis strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akerlind</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
<td>Academics’ constructs of being university teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Smith</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Teaching conceptions vis-à-vis cross-cultural influences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Brock Ethics Approval

Office of Research Services
Research Ethics Office
St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2S 3A1
T: 905-688-5550, Ext. 5035/4876 F: 905-688-0748

DATE: May 30, 2006
FROM: Linda Rose-Krasnor, Chair
Research Ethics Board (REB)

TO: Michael Kompf, Education
Nicola Simmons

FILE: 05-298 SIMMONS

TITLE: What's Different Under the Gown? Variations in Conceptions of Becoming a University Teacher

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above research proposal.

DECISION: Accepted as clarified.

This project has received ethics clearance for the period of May 30, 2006 to January 15, 2007 subject to full REB ratification at the Research Ethics Board's next scheduled meeting. The clearance period may be extended upon request. The study may now proceed.

Please note that the Research Ethics Board (REB) requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and cleared by the REB. During the course of research no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol, recruitment, or consent form may be initiated without prior written clearance from the REB. The Board must provide clearance for any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to http://www.brocku.ca/researchservices/forms to complete the appropriate form Revision or Modification to an Ongoing Application.

Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored. A Final Report is required for all projects upon completion of the project. Researchers with projects lasting more than one year are required to submit a Continuing Review Report annually. The Office of Research Services will contact you when this form Continuing Review/Final Report is required.

Please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence.

LRK/bb