A Leadership Laboratory: Exploring the Use of Case-in-Point Pedagogy to Develop Complex Thinking in Leaders

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A LEADERSHIP LABORATORY:
EXPLORING THE USE OF CASE-IN-POINT PEDAGOGY
TO DEVELOP COMPLEX THINKING IN LEADERS

by

Erica Corley Jackson

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2023

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ABSTRACT

Leadership scholars have identified a growing gap between the complexity of 21\textsuperscript{st} century organizations and the capabilities of individuals in positions of leadership to adequately address these challenges. This gap has contributed to a so-called complexity crisis—a situation in which the demands placed on those in leadership positions increases “at a rate that significantly outstrips the rate at which” leaders are cognitively developing (Rich-Tolsma & Oliver, 2016, p. 1). One way to respond to this growing need for complex adult thinking is through metacognitive development initiatives. However, finding educational methods to promote metacognitive development has proven to be difficult.

The purpose of this study was to examine whether a course utilizing Case-in-Point (CIP) teaching methods at the University of San Diego (USD) could be a successful strategy for developing metacognitive knowledge in adult students. The study explored a) the experiences of students in a CIP course and whether the pedagogy supported or inhibited their learning and growth and b) the extent to which the constructs and theories of metacognitive development aligned with, or, possibly, contradicted, the data collected. A qualitative approach, using both inductive and abductive methods, was employed to analyze participant interviews, class observations, student assignments, course materials, and developmental assessments.

Findings suggest the course is distinctive in its experimental nature and format, and that specific elements of the pedagogy generated transformative participant experiences and produced growth through the leveraging of productive discomfort. Some other elements of the course, however, appeared not only to be uncomfortable but also unhelpful in promoting personal learning and growth. Consistent with these findings, most participants’ assessments often were paradoxical, meaning participants offered affirmation and critique, almost simultaneously, when
reflecting on the value of the pedagogy and course experience. Finally, the study found that there was alignment between the course goals and objectives and the constructs of metacognition, but metacognitive development varied depending on the level of student engagement and buy-in to the course pedagogy. This study offered recommendations and insight from the data regarding the course structure, assignments, and facilitation of case-in-point methods moving forward.
DEDICATION

Alex—Thank you for ensuring that I never lost sight of the goal to finish this dissertation. It would not have been possible without you and I am so grateful. I love you.

Oliver and Miles—It is such a gift being your Mommy. I love you more than I can express.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A highly skilled, capable, and competent workforce represents a company’s most valuable resource and its main competitive advantage in this new era of technology and immediate-information access. (Hamlin, 2001, p. 2)

As the modern workforce tackles the emerging complexities and realities of today’s technological advances and globalization, the need for leaders in the workforce with the capacity to act as complex thinkers continues to grow in both the private and public sector. Unfortunately, scholars and practitioners from multiple disciplines have argued that the process of developing a workforce, and more specifically workforce leaders capable of the complex thinking skills necessary to tackle today’s challenges, has become progressively more difficult using old methods and paradigms of leadership education. In fact, over the last twenty years, scholars and practitioners have identified that there is a growing gap between the complexity of 21st century life and work and the capabilities of individuals to adequately address these challenges (Lectica, n.d.; Rich-Tolsma & Oliver, 2016).

The Complexity Crisis

This gap has contributed to what some writers refer to as a complexity crisis—a crisis in which the demands placed on those in leadership increases “at a rate that significantly outstrips the rate at which [the] individual” is cognitively developing (Rich-Tolsma & Oliver, 2016, p. 1). In a complexity crisis, individuals are often unprepared to exercise leadership in the face of uncertainty or ambiguity, often relying on old solutions to approach new problems, leaving them perpetually “in over their heads” when it comes to addressing the demands of their tasks and roles (Kegan, 1994). Thus, leaders are increasingly being forced to make many of their decisions without an adequate understanding of their ramifications or by simply defaulting to what
authority figures tell them to do (Argyris, 2000; Lectica, n.d.). Between 2002 and 2006 researchers at Lectica, Inc. (a private research and developmental testing service) conducted several studies within the federal government’s intelligence community, empirically examining this complexity crisis phenomenon among employees.

Lectica’s studies measured the relationship between the task demands of four varying levels of managerial positions in the intelligence community, and the average performance on a leadership decision-making assessment for individuals in those positions. This assessment included measurements of “epistemological reasoning, problem solving, emotional conceptions, [and] their self-understanding (self-as-leader)” (Dawson & Stein, 2004, p. 1; Dawson & Stein, 2006). Average scores on the leadership decision-making assessment showed that in each of the four managerial levels there was a “growing gap” between the capabilities of the individuals and the task demands of their managerial positions (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Lectical Scores by Management Level*

![Lectical Scores by Management Level](image)

*Note. From (Lectica, 2016, Complexity Crisis).*
Some argue that the struggle to meet these task demands, as demonstrated by managers in the Lectica study, is due to the fact that the occupational demands now placed on adults often yield challenges with no standard answers or protocols to address them (Monroe, 2006). These challenges are complex and “force organizations (and the people that work within them) to re-examine deeply held values, beliefs, habits, ways of working, or ways of life—producing a degree of distress…to give up certain perspectives and behaviors that [may] no longer [be] helpful” (Monroe, 2006, p.156).

The rapid technological advances seen in most industries, the flattening of hierarchical organizations, and the expanding global marketplace have combined to present dynamic new challenges for adult educators attempting to properly equip and prepare individuals to confront these complex organizational challenges (Hamlin, 2001). Increasingly, the one size fits all training and leadership education learning models that focus on the rote memorization of information for universal application, may no longer be helpful in work environments. Instead, a greater need has presented itself: prepare individuals for jobs and environments that are dynamic and present complex challenges for individuals in positions of leadership.

In response to this some argue that adult education and training should be reevaluated with the hope of better understanding adults, not just as employees, but also as individual learners who need self-management and complex thinking skills to function both within and outside of the workplace (Boud & Griffin, 1987). Developing such skills requires less emphasis on traditional forms of training and more emphasis on “learning-how-to-learn” and developing the “ability to learn from experience, to learn alone or with peers, and to use a variety of learning strategies” (Argyris, 2000; Hackman & Wageman, 2007; Hamlin, 2001, p. 37).
Some like Senge, Smith, Kruschwitz, Laur and Schley (2010) argue that we are in need of an adult learning revolution that requires organizations to shift from an industrial age mindset to a mindset more fitting of the current “age of dynamic, complex, non-linear, [and] interdependent environments [that often involve] disequilibrium and turbulence” (Yawson, 2014, p. 72). Senge et al. (2010) contend that individuals must now learn to become non-reactive problem solvers, appreciate a diversity of voices and perspectives, maintain intellectual flexibility, and learn to develop a systems-thinking perspective in their roles at work. Thus, the work of “identifying appropriate strategies to assist employees in the learning process has become a vital task” for adult educators in both organization and university settings (Hamlin, 2001, p. 1).

**Metacognitive Development**

One way to examine and better understand complex adult thinking is through the study of metacognitive development. Metacognition “often refers to higher order thinking and the capacity to have active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning” (Livingston, 1997). More simply, metacognition can be defined as “thinking about thinking” (Flavell, 1978). The development of an individual’s metacognitive skills often promotes the individual’s capacity for active learning, critical thinking, reflective judgment, problem solving, and decision-making (Dawson, 2008).

In moments of uncertainty, conflict, and disagreement, adults who have begun to develop their metacognitive capacities are more capable of addressing tough issues, making independent decisions, and even regulating their emotions and thoughts in situations of great complexity or stress (Dawson, 2008). While not exhaustive in its ability to assess and describe all facets of
emerging adult leadership and learning modalities, metacognition does have the potential to offer insights into several factors of complex thinking development in adults.

**Statement of the Problem**

However, the task of facilitating this metacognitive development for adults has proven to be quite difficult. Perhaps one reason for the failure to produce the desired learning results is that some in leadership and educational positions still misunderstand “what complex learning is and how to bring it about” in their companies, organizations, or classrooms. Furthermore, not only do most “have a tremendous difficulty [in] addressing this [type of] learning dilemma—they aren’t even aware that it exists” within their organizations (Argyris, 2000, p.1).

This lack of awareness to the mismatch between traditional teaching methods, on the one hand, and the contemporary need to address complex problems, on the other, is evident in the struggle of adult educators to offer meaningful and effective strategies to address the increasing number of complex leadership challenges faced in the workplace. There is a need, therefore, to find leadership education methods that can successfully develop complex metacognitive capacities in adults to better prepare them to fulfill contemporary work and life demands.

One strategy that conceivably could be effective in doing this is case-in-point pedagogy (CIP). Case-in-point pedagogy is an emergent model for teaching leadership originally developed at Harvard University by Ronald Heifetz and his teaching associates in the Kennedy School of Government¹. The CIP method focuses on transforming the classroom into an experiential practice field or laboratory for leadership; intentionally offering students the opportunity to engage with, analyze, and address the immediate experiences, group dynamics,

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¹ Case-in-point’s large group method is closely aligned with the tenants of Tavistock Institute’s Group Relations Conferences and incorporates elements drawn from group relations work and the disciplines of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy.
and leadership challenges as they occur within the classroom (Parks, 2005). In order to develop this environment in classrooms Yawson (2014) stated that CIP facilitators must attempt to “create an ambience…analogous to the real world setting that the students will be working in, ones [sic] that are chaotic, where the primary lesson is to facilitate the understanding of how adaptive leadership works by actually experiencing it ‘in the moment’” (p. 73).

While the more traditional “case-study” teaching model also aims to present real-world challenges for analysis, the retrospective nature of a hypothetical case and the distance that exists between the individual learner and the case itself, limits the connection that individuals can potentially make between the content and their personal application (Yawson, 2014). Case-in-point pedagogy attempts to bridge this gap by bringing the work of individual reflection and action into the classroom. It does so by illuminating the pertinent leadership “cases” that occur in and amongst students and student factions in the classroom, directly involving students in the work to recognize their own role, patterns of behavior, and leadership choices in the face of these immediate challenges. In effect, case-in-point teaching methods aim to prepare “people to exercise the judgment and skill needed to bring the knowledge [acquired in the CIP classroom] into the intricate systems of relationships that constitute their [own] dynamic world of practice;” the expectation being that this first-hand practice with complex thinking in class will better prepare individuals for the growingly difficult leadership roles and environments that they will face outside of the classroom (Parks, 2005, p. 5).

However, with the exception of descriptive writings, there is still “little empirical evidence demonstrating the benefit, effectiveness, or impact of CIP pedagogy [on] leadership development” and education (Hubbard & Weng, 2022, p. 53; Green & McBride, 2015). Several studies have attempted to fill this gap, including: Wildermuth et al.’s (2015) assessment of the
“varied risks and rewards that student’s experienced,” with CIP, Haber-Curran & Tillapaugh’s (2013) research on the development of self-awareness for undergraduate students in a course utilizing CIP, O’Brien’s (2016) dissertation findings that CIP “allowed for new ways of seeing,” and Burns (2016) dissertation describing “the impact of this pedagogy on leaders’ ways of understanding leadership” (Hubbard & Weng, 2022, p. 53). Despite this recent research work, “empirical studies on the use of case-in-point have not explicitly examined CIP as a pedagogical practice,” indicating that a “broader exploration of the impact of CIP pedagogy, particularly in the context of graduate education” is still needed (Hubbard & Weng, 2022, p. 53).

At the University of San Diego, this pedagogical method has been employed for almost twenty years to teach the graduate level course Integral Leadership and Practice (previously named Leadership Theory and Practice), a core curriculum and required course (until Fall 2018) for students in the Ph.D. and M.A. Leadership Studies programs at the School of Leadership and Education Sciences. Unfortunately, there has been little systematic study focused on directly connecting the use of case-in-point teaching to the successful development of metacognitive knowledge or complex thinking in adult students. More specifically, we do not know if USD’s specific use of CIP in the course Integral Leadership and Practice is a successful strategy for student metacognitive development. Searches in a number of databases including Sage Premier, ERIC, Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar, and the Dissertations and Theses database netted no literature about the use and impact of case-in-point methods on adult metacognitive development. In short, while it seems that case-in-point teaching methods would seem to be a potentially effective way to develop metacognitive skill, to date, no systematic research has tackled the task of documenting whether or not this is the case. In light of this, the need for a systematic study of this topic was clear.
Purpose of the Study

This study took a modest first step in researching whether or not case-in-point pedagogy is a potentially successful strategy for developing metacognitive knowledge in adult students. The study’s focus was on one specific course, *Integral Leadership and Practice*, a previously required course in the Doctoral and Masters in Leadership Studies programs at the University of San Diego. Despite the course goal’s alignment with many metacognitive learning factors, including the intent for students to develop “more adequate ways of understanding, perceiving and sensing…[to] surface unexamined assumptions, [to] become more aware of habitual patterns of action/reaction…[and to] assess what actions serve the deep purpose in various situations,” no previous study of the class has examined whether the course is successful in reaching these metacognitive outcomes for adult learners (ILP Syllabi, 2016, p. 1).

Research Questions

Thus, this study explored the experience of adult students in *Integral Leadership and Practice* during the fall of 2016 to assess whether or not case-in-point pedagogy and the personal experience of students actually supported the students’ metacognitive development. The following research questions will guide the study’s inquiry:

1. How do adult students in the USD course *Integral Leadership and Practice* (ILP) describe their experience with Case-in-Point pedagogy (CIP)?
   a. Given students’ descriptions, what aspects of the course and CIP, if any, support or inhibit their complex learning and growth?

2. To what extent, if at all, do the constructs and theories of metacognitive development comfortably align with, or contradict, the data collected?
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The growing complexity of today’s real-world challenges, changes in the structures of hierarchical organizations, rapid advances in technology, and the increasing globalization of the 21st century has presented adult educators with a multitude of new obstacles when attempting to properly equip and prepare individuals to meet contemporary leadership dilemmas in the workplace. There is no longer a need for the simple transfer of basic cognitive knowledge in adult education and training; nor is there the ability for educators to make an impact utilizing one size fits all training regimens for adult learners. Instead, a greater requirement has presented itself: to prepare individuals for jobs and environments that are dynamic and complex in nature (Botkin, Elmandjra, & Malitza, 1979; Hamlin, 2001).

In response to this, some adult education and training has been reevaluated with the hope of better understanding adults, not just as employees, but also as individual learners, in need of the capacity for self-regulated and complex thinking. However, this type of learning requires that there be a greater development of “learning-how-to-learn skills,” as well as the “ability to learn from experience, to learn alone or with peers, and to use a variety of learning strategies” (Hamlin, 2001, p. 37). However, this task has proven to be quite difficult. For most, the adult learning dilemma persists largely because the majority of adult learners, lacking in complex capacities, continue to have their existing educational paradigms reinforced by the implementation of old methods of linear cognitive learning at school and at work (Argyris, 2000; O’Brien, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to determine what conceptual or theoretical framework for complex adult learning might best address the aforementioned needs before reform in
workplace training methods and university organizational leadership curriculum continues to be pursued.

**Metacognitive Development in Adult Learning**

One way to examine and better understand complex adult learning is through the study of metacognition and potential strategies for metacognitive development as a desired learning outcome (Brown, 1987). Brown offered that the learning “processes that have recently earned the title metacognition are…critical for proficient, self-directed, long-term learning” in adults (Brown, 1987, p. 65). Indeed, the development of metacognitive skills for adults has been shown to promote an individual’s capacity for active learning, critical thinking, reflective judgment, problem solving, and decision-making (Dawson, 2008). In real moments of uncertainty, conflict, and disagreement, adults that have begun to develop these metacognitive capacities are more capable of addressing tough issues, making independent decisions, and regulating their own emotions and thoughts (Dawson, 2008).

In addition, metacognitive growth can also increase an individual’s capacity to experience self-regulated learning. According to Senge (1990) and Marsick (1987), self-regulated learning keeps in step with a “post-modern society, in which rapid change, organizational fluidity and unknown futures require” an individual to learn from their experiences (Hamlin, 2001, p.42). Furthermore, self-regulated learning promotes the development of learning how to learn, both from instruction and from experience for adults (Cheren, 1990). Metacognitive self-regulated learning also accounts for the fact that adults learn in different ways and at different speeds; it is then the recognition of these differences that permits adult learners to be cognizant of their personal tendencies and complete their work within a system that is most productive for them (Piskurich, 1993). Finally, self-regulated
learning creates flexible and adaptive work environments that have great benefits for the future well-being, efficacy, and success of organizations (Pelar, Burgoyne, Boydell, & Welshman, 1990).

Therefore, for the purposes of this literature review, metacognitive development will be explored as a potential conceptual framework for educating adults to think with more complexity. To obtain relative literature on the topic of metacognition in adult learning I conducted searches for theoretical and empirical studies from the following databases: Sage Premier, ERIC, Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar, and the Dissertations and Theses database. I also utilized the reference lists from these accumulated sources to continue the search into this topic. The key search terms for this literature review included: metacognition, metacognitive development, metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive skills, adult learning, and adult education.

Conceptually, metacognition “often refers to higher order thinking and the capacity to have active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning” (Livingston, 1997, Metacognition: An Overview section). Flavell (1977), the first to study metacognition, explained the concept as thinking about thinking. However, amongst theorists in different domains there is a continuous struggle to find one comprehensive or unified definition for metacognition. This is in large part because metacognitive skills are often comprised of several different, but interrelated, proficiencies in thinking and learning; each that manifest with slight variations within different domains.

However, what every domain examining metacognition has in common is that the presence of meta-capacities denotes the development of a “second order form of thinking about thinking,” or a more developed sense of consciousness regarding cognitive processes (Schrader,
1988, p. 7). Therefore, to better understand the importance of metacognition in adult learning, this literature review will examine the foundations and assumptions of cognitive development theories, the differing models of metacognition presented by researchers, as well as the important studies and limitations in this field of study.

**Theoretical Foundations of Cognitive Development Theory**

**Dewey**

While the study of metacognition is a more recent endeavor, the tradition of inquiring as to how people generally evaluate, or think about their own thinking, is not entirely new (Schrader, 1988). The foundational elements of metacognition can be found in the earliest work of theorists such as Dewey, Piaget, Perry, and King & Kitchener. In 1933, Dewey asserted that reflective thinking was an important tool for learning to occur; his work, linking the interactions of thought and action, was a significant precursor to the study of metacognition. In fact, Dewey (1933) described “thinking” as the capacity to “direct our activities with foresight and to plan according to ends-in-view…[it] enables us to know what we are about when we act…[and] it converts action that is merely appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action” (p. 17).

This definition of reflective thinking supported the idea that an individual must be persistent and active in monitoring the knowledge they both receive and use in action; however, in Dewey’s (1933) findings much of this monitoring simply provided an explanation of our thinking about what we do. However, the concept of metacognition demands that further reflective abstraction take place beyond what Dewey described. Metacognition cannot be defined simply as reflection, but as the “conscious awareness of and control over [those] reflections” (Schrader, 1988, p. 10). Metacognitive awareness necessitates that you are capable
of changing or adjusting your thinking process in the midst of the reflection process; in a sense, metacognition is actually the work of reflection on reflective thought itself (Schrader, 1988).

**Piaget**

After the work of Dewey, Piaget’s theory of constructivist epistemology suggested that there was a “framework for determining the genesis and transformation of cognitive structures” (Fowler, 2004, p. 11). According to Piaget’s theory of cognitive development, a child first constructs an understanding of their environment then notices a discrepancy between what “they know” and what they are experiencing; in the attempt to reconcile the discrepancy they undergo a “progressive reorganization of mental processes” (McLeod, 2012). Piaget established the understanding of a basic system of cognitive structuralism that emphasized the process of transformation that occurs as an individual recalibrates their understanding of the world and their place in it (Piaget, 1972). Piaget posited that this cognitive transformation occurs as the result of both the biological maturation and environmental experience of the child (McLeod, 2012; Piaget, 1972).

Piaget (1972) also discussed the development of a “conscious awareness” for children in regards to their thinking processes in new learning experiences and tasks. In his later work Piaget determined that there are actually three distinct levels in the development of conscious awareness for children. These three levels of consciousness “are hierarchically ordered such that the processes of the next level act upon the previous levels,” gradually moving from unconscious to conscious awareness in the completion of new tasks and experiences (Schrader, 1988, p.11). In the first stage of consciousness a child’s awareness is developed based on their observations and the result of their successes or failures in completing tasks. At this stage children do not consciously recollect their processes of ordering and organizing thought; the capacity for
reflexive abstraction only begins to emerge as they move into the next level of consciousness (Piaget, 1976; Schrader, 1988).

At the second level of conscious awareness a child begins to organize, direct, and manage their cognitive processes consciously; in addition, they are also able to adequately communicate these processes after completing a task. However, children are not necessarily aware of why or how they are able to access this information; these “reorganizations [still] remain outside the realm of conscious awareness, but they create new actions to act upon;” those new actions then become “the source of reflection for the third level” (Schrader, 1988, p. 11).

In the third level of conscious awareness there is the development of an abstract view, the use of cause-and-effect reasoning, and the development of a child’s own ideas and theories about the world. It is at this point in the developmental progression that the capacities for metacognition begin to take shape. At this level children (often at 11-12 years old) are able to consciously reflect on thought itself (Piaget, 1976). This third level manifests reflective abstractions resulting from earlier thought processes. Now children consider the abstract work of developing effective strategies when they complete a task or move towards a goal. This level of consciousness is where the discussion of metacognitive thought and metacognitive development can begin (Piaget, 1976).

Piaget’s (1976) most poignant contribution to metacognitive theory emerged from his findings that the reconstruction of thought processes for a child is what develops the capacity for higher levels of consciousness. Developing consciousness cannot be simplified into the capacity for awareness, but rather that the child is a participant in the “reorganizing [of] action or action schemes” (Schrader, 1988, p. 12). Piaget (1976) saw the development of consciousness as the continued analysis and evaluation of what actions either succeeded or failed in the completion of
a new task. Piaget’s (1976) findings on consciousness examine the very same processes that individuals encounter when they are developing cognitive capacities. In both cognitive development and the development of consciousness there is a reflexive and co-constructivist relationship between what is subject and object, or between an individual and an experience. This was essential to the theoretical foundations of metacognition as the “mechanisms of development” between consciousness and cognition and provided fruitful parallels when examining the processes of thoughts for individuals (Piaget, 1972; Piaget, 1976; Schrader, 1988).

Perry

The expansion of intellectual developmental theory beyond adolescence began with William Perry’s innovative work in the 1950s and 1960s; Perry’s work is foundational in understanding the larger cognitive development context from which the concepts of metacognition have emerged. Perry’s work is seen as a theoretical outgrowth of Piaget, blending in elements that incorporated the importance of self-awareness, the impact of the environment on the self, and the complex interaction between this self-understanding and the influence of the environment for young adults (Love & Guthrie, 1999). Perry found that intellectual development could be measured along a positional spectrum. This spectrum was expressed in his “Intellectual and Ethical Development Scheme,” a progression of epistemological understanding that described a typical undergraduate student’s movement from a dualist to relativistic perspective (Love & Guthrie, 1999). The scheme described the cognitive accommodations that students used to reconcile their own sense of self within a changing environment (Baxter Magolda, 2004; West, 2004).

Using the developmental theories of Piaget and Vygotsky as a foundation, Perry proposed that developmental changes and growth extended beyond an individual’s childhood
and early adolescence (Baxter Magolda, 2004; Love & Guthrie, 1999). According to Perry (1970), individuals typically begin higher education (around the age of 18) with a right and wrong positionality toward learning, a dualist way of knowing. A multiplistic perspective then follows, in which knowledge is understood to sometimes be ambiguous and uncertain. Finally, individuals progress to a relativistic perspective in which contextual evidence is examined to support their own conclusions (Baxter Magolda, 2004). Perry’s spectrum is finely categorized into nine positions or “coherent forms of thought” that are both sequential and hierarchical (Gordon & Brooks, 1998, p. 5). Initially Perry (1970) defined the movement through a hierarchal set of positions as development for an individual; however, he amended this stage-oriented assertion in 1981 to suggest that “perhaps development is all transition and ‘stages’ are only resting points along the way” (p. 78).

This shift was significant because it adjusted Perry’s (1981) conceptual developmental progression from a linear model to that of a “helix with an expanding radius,” meaning that “when [individuals] face the same old issues we do so from a different and broader perspective” (p. 97). This indicated that individuals can utilize or access a variety of forms, or positional patterns, for interpreting the world in a single moment; despite this non-linear functioning, Perry (1981) and his colleagues still asserted that it was possible to determine the “dominant form” that individuals more widely utilized to interpret their experiences (Perry, 1981).

Like Piaget’s theory, Perry’s scheme introduced the idea of a continuum of development, where transformational movement is a result of “cognitive disequilibrium” through nine positions (Brooks, 1998, p. 5). Perry’s positions 1-3 fall into the grouping of dualism in which authoritative figures and structures dictate a student’s individual development. Dualism represents a dichotomous way of learning and is reinforced by rote learning and the use of
multiple-choice tests. In the dualistic position students lack the desire and/or capacity to interpret knowledge and believe that regurgitation is sufficient (Brooks, 1998). However, as students move from position 1 to 3 they develop an increasing capacity to integrate their understanding with that of other multiple points of view (Brooks, 1998; Perry, 1970; West, 2004). The tolerance towards multiplicity is only temporarily accepted until the ultimate “right answer” is provided (Love & Guthrie, 1999).

At position 3 a definitive answer is still expected, but students rely on the style and expression in which it is delivered to satisfy their notion of multiplicity (Brooks, 1998; Love & Guthrie, 1999). Here at position 3 there is an increasing awareness to certain “unresolvable problems and unknowable truths,” while still clinging to the belief that an absolute truth exists (Brooks, 1998, p. 6). Therefore, the transition into position 4 for students is significant because it indicates the movement into the “realizing of relativism” position along Perry’s intellectual developmental continuum (Brooks, 1998; West, 2004).

It is here, in the realizing of relativism, that the sense of the unknown is allowed to expand, and the individual completes the transition into the next grouping: multiplicity. There is no longer a belief that answers will come quickly or certainly. In addition, the power that authorities have over knowledge is significantly loosened. In Perry’s original study, position 4 was often the “modal starting point” for freshman at the end of their first year (Love & Guthrie, 1999, p. 10). At position 4 the concept of authority in relationship to the pursuit of knowledge becomes important because students become divided into two distinctly different groups based on the relationship they have with authority (Brooks, 1998). These two groupings include 4a the “multiplicity correlate” and 4b the “relativism subordinate.”
In 1970 Perry originally posited that students moved into one grouping or another (4a or 4b) at position 4 and then reunited at position 5. However, in his 1981 revision to the scheme Perry introduced the possibility that individuals could actually progress through both 4a and 4b on their journey towards position 5. As mentioned before, authority is incredibly significant in understanding what position a student will enter at this stage of the spectrum; the position 4 path taken by the student often correlates to whether or not there is an opposition to or adherence to the role of authority in their construction of knowledge (Marra & Palmer, 2004; Brooks, 1998, Love & Guthrie, 1999). In position 4a judgments are based on “personalistic” diversity, where opinions are not synthesized based on evidence or experience, but by the relationship to who holds that opinion or knowledge (Brooks, 1998). It is in position 4a that students continue to adhere to authority while still experimenting with multiplicity.

In position 4b, the relativism subordinate position, the student begins to differentiate between an “unconsidered opinion and a considered judgment” (Brooks, 1998, p. 6). Here the understanding of cognitive processes is used to come to a conclusion. Another way of looking at this position for students is that it indicates the beginning of “thinking about thinking” or metacognition (Brooks, 1988). Context begins to become essential in the formation of knowledge and in the acceptance of opinions. For college students there is a transition away from accepting information from authorities without personal consideration, reflection, and judgment. In a practical sense, a college student at position 4b would now be able to conceptualize that a professor might accept more than one “right” answer on a test as long as sufficient evidence was given to support the conclusion (Love & Guthrie, 1999).

It is in position 5 that the concept of evidentiary support and context in relationship to knowledge begins to fully develop for college students. If students at position 4b can be labeled
as holding a multiplistic approach to critical thinking, the movement to position 5 requires that the same student adopt a radically new way of analyzing and understanding knowledge (Love & Guthrie, 1999). At this point all knowledge and judgment is perceived as contextual and relativistic. The complexity of knowledge is assumed to be the “general condition” of things (Brooks, 1998). Position 5 represents the continued intellectual movement towards a deeper knowing for young adults. It is from this position or stage of Perry’s cognitive development schema that metacognition presents itself in a learner’s capacities; relativistic thinking becomes normalized and the development of a metacognition practice emerges (Kloss, 2010; Love & Guthrie, 1999).

**King & Kitchener**

Furthering the work of Perry and his predecessors, King and Kitchener (1987) introduced the reflective judgment model of intellectual development that evaluated the “assumptions about the nature of knowledge, how one comes to know, and how one justifies beliefs in light of these assumptions” (King and Kitchener, p. 82). Beyond just being a foundational theory of metacognition, Hofer (2004) and Dawson (2008) offer that the model of reflective judgment is directly interchangeable with the concept of metacognition.

King and Kitchener (1987) believed that students each enter learning environments with “markedly different assumptions about what and how something can be known and how to make judgments in light of these assumptions” (p. 174). Student’s perceptions are often directly related to concepts of authority, how they justify solutions or answers through evidence and interpretation, and the capacity at which they can hold multiple perspectives or abstractions of thought at once (King and Kitchener, 1987). This model suggest that higher level thinking does
not begin until the mid 20s offering an interesting opportunity for this study to examine several participants during this transitional time of development.

In addition, King and Kitchner posted that “assumptions about the nature of knowledge, how one comes to know, and how one justifies beliefs in light of these assumptions were connected in an interrelated network as subjects reasoned about ill-structured problems” (Kitchner and King, 1987, p. 82). Focusing on the use of ill-structured problems to better understand development led King and Kitchener to develop an assessment tool that asked participants to confront dilemmas from across the spectrum of subject areas: including physical, natural, and social sciences as well as history in their attempt to understand how their participants reasoned when confronted with growing levels of uncertainty and complexity.

**Models of Metacognitive Development**

Dewey, Piaget, Perry, and King & Kitchener’s significant inquiries into the human processes of thought organization laid the foundation for the emergence of metacognition as a cognitive theory. Educational literature now commonly refers to the concept, termed both as metacognition and/or metacognitive development in a wide variety of research settings (for further exploration see: Baker & Brown, 1984; Brown, 1978, 1987; Campione, 1987; Flavell, 1977; Gavalek & Raphael, 1985; Garofalo & Lester, 1985; Karmiloff-Smith, 1986; Schraw, Dunkle, Bendixen & DeBecker, 1995; Schoenfeld, 1987, 1992). As aforementioned, there is little cohesion in the conceptual definition of metacognition across the many academic disciplines that utilize the theory. Despite the lack of a universal framework, several models of metacognition have still emerged as the more dominant or pertinent conceptual explanations several of which will now be explored.

*Flavell*
Flavell, a foundational metacognitive theorist, asserted that metacognitive knowledge is “defined as a learners’ awareness of their own learning and thought processes” (Livingston, 1997, Metacognition). Flavell further broke down metacognitive knowledge into three categories. These included: person knowledge, task knowledge, and strategy knowledge. The category of persons knowledge is where “insights about themselves as learners and learners in general are gained” (Fetsco & Soby, 2014, p. 2). Flavell claimed that the metacognitive knowledge gained about people is largely rooted in the understanding of others as cognitive processors, and the differences that exist “both within and between people, as well as similarities among people” (Schrader, 1988, p. 30).

Next, the task category highlights the “understanding of the nature of learning and problem-solving tasks,” (Fetsco & Soby, 2014, p. 2). Flavell further delineates task knowledge into two subcategories, the nature of the task demands and the nature of the information received. Finally, the strategy knowledge category examines the “approaches or techniques to improve performance, and the conditions under which those approaches or techniques are likely to be most useful” (Fetsco & Soby, 2014, p. 2; Flavell, 1977). Flavell (1977) posited that these three components do not often exist in isolation from one another, but actually as two or three categories interacting or developing at the same time.

Flavell also distinguished the importance of “metacognitive experience” separate from that of metacognitive knowledge. These are experiences that demand an individual be capable not only of consciously monitoring, but also regulating one’s own cognitive process. For example, a difficult ethical issue at work or home, that demands consciousness in both thought and action, is a metacognitive experience. Flavell (1985) also offered that these metacognitive
experiences are often met with the benefit of pre-existing metacognitive knowledge that offers an individual more data to navigate through the new experience.

To offer further clarity Flavell (1985) proposed the example of a tennis game to help delineate the concepts of metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experience; he proposed that the *ideas and feelings* one experiences while playing tennis (the metacognitive experience) are separate from the knowledge of rules and technique that a player might also have (the metacognitive knowledge). However, each is equally as valuable to the development of your tennis game, and both interact and inform one another in the process of playing the game. Thus, the interaction between both metacognitive experience and knowledge can also offer more complexity and development for an individual (Flavell, 1985).

Flavell’s (1985) study of the metacognitive elements of memory also provided researchers with a model helpful when organizing “metacognitive strategies in other domains” (Schrader, 1988, p. 31). These components included organization, elaboration, and retrieval strategies (Flavell, 1985). Flavell (1985) explained *organization* as the conscious and intentional use of strategies used in order to group information. He defined *elaboration* as the capacity to identify and select the best or most effective strategy to address a problem at hand, as well as the capacity to then change or modify the selected strategy as the scenario changes.

Finally, Flavell (1985) described *retrieval strategies* as the capacity to access an exhaustive number of mental strategies in order to reach a desired outcome for a task. Each of these three meta-memory strategies outlined by Flavell are metacognitive in nature because they address ways in which an individual either remembers or is able to think, reflect, and access their own memories. In his work with metacognitive memory processes, Flavell acknowledged the elements of both knowledge and experience, as well as the three major categories of persons,
tasks, and strategy knowledge. While Flavell may have been a pioneer in metacognitive research, several other theorists have also continued to build upon or adjust the understanding of metacognition within different domains and contexts.

**Baker & Brown**

Baker & Brown (1984) have posited that metacognition actually has two main components. First, there is a cognizance about the skills, resources, or strategies necessary to perform or complete a task effectively; secondly, there is the ability to use self-regulated methods to affirm that a task will be completed successfully. The techniques of the second component of self-regulation are also known as cognitive monitoring; these methods can often be used by students to check their answers, test and revise strategies and methods for problem-solving, and to evaluate how effective or comfortable certain learning strategies will be in completing their work (Baker & Brown, 1984).

While metacognition largely focuses on the capacity to have both knowledge and control over ones’ thinking processes and learning, Baker and Brown (1984) have expanded their model of metacognition to include the second component of self-regulated learning, also known as comprehension monitoring. What comprehension monitoring adds to metacognitive development is the capacity for students to track their learning successes and the capacity to critique, evaluate, and change their current learning techniques and methods if necessary (Baker & Brown, 1984). In addition, Brown (1987) pursued her own independent research that indicated students are also “metacognitive to the degree to which they are engaged in thinking about themselves, the nature of learning tasks, and their social contexts” (Lin, 2001, p. 23). This viewpoint lends itself to focusing not only on the interior capacity for meta-reflection on
knowledge, tasks, and strategies, but also to the external impact that social contexts have on the
development of complex learning processes.

**Karmiloff-Smith**

In yet another model, Karmiloff-Smith (1986) outlined a four-tier structure that
described the underlying processes that develop metacognitive capacities. The four levels from
Karmiloff-Smith represent the growing ability of an individual to communicate or articulate the
way in which they receive, perceive, and organize knowledge. The four levels also represent the
process of change that occurs in metacognitive development. Karmiloff-Smith’s four levels are
reminiscent of Piaget’s levels of consciousness, as the levels each focus on describing an
individual’s process of ordering and organizing knowledge, both consciously and unconsciously.

The first level is that of *implicit knowledge* where an individual is not able to define
knowledge they possess representationally—the knowledge exists for them without an
understanding of how or why it does. Next, is the level of *primary explicitation* where
“representations of the inner state can be operated on internally, although these operations are
not accessible to conscious awareness” (Schrader, 1988, p. 29). Next in *secondary explicitation*
there is a development of conscious awareness and access to the thoughts of primary
explicitation; however, the implicit knowledge from first level still cannot be accessed.

The final level is *tertiary explicitation*, or the ability of an individual to break down their
acquired knowledge into codes, systems or strategies of thought; at this level they are also able to
integrate these different codes or strategies to accomplish tasks necessitating more complex
thinking and understanding (Karmiloff-Smith, 1986). While Karmiloff-Smith’s focus was
largely on the role of metacognition in language development, or the capacity of an individual to
verbalize their increasingly complex thinking processes, it also serves as a helpful tool in
examining the processes of change in metacognitive development, no matter the domain or discipline.

**Gavalek and Raphael**

Gavalek and Raphael (1985) described metacognition as “the process of transfer of control from teacher to learner [which then] leads to…[the] learners’ ability to self-regulate their learning” (Hamlin, 2001, p. 42). Self-regulated learning is considered central to metacognitive development and essential for any expert learners approaching new tasks of problem-solving or complex thinking (Ertmer & Newby, 1996). Metacognition as a conceptual framework for adult learning is largely validated by its relationship to promoting self-directed, self-managed learning, or self-regulated learning. Elements of self-regulated learning in metacognition, to be discussed in more detail in this chapter, have been found to hold great importance in addressing the need for complex thinking (Hamlin, 2001).

The self-regulated metacognition model includes a focus on: developing the capacity to learn from experience in an increasingly changing, complex, and fluid post-modern society (Marsick, 1987; Senge, 1990), the capability of an individual to consider their own learning-style and processes and independently manage their time, pace, resources, and tasks in their work (Piskurich, 1993), an understanding of learning that welcomes new paradigms of teaching and leverages the knowledge found in experience (Cheren, 1990), and an environment of adaptability, fluidity, and flexibility necessary for organizations to survive through this new complexity crisis (Pelar, Burgoyne, Boydell, & Welshman, 1990). Each of these factors of self-regulated learning offers great potential for benefitting adult learners, offering individuals the increased ability to acknowledge, address, and adapt to the growing challenges of complex thinking in our current societal workplace.
While several important metacognitive models were presented in this section, it is far from an exhaustive representation of all concepts in the field. The vast array of models, theoretical variations, and domain specific components found in the field has served as a formidable obstacle in moving towards a single comprehensive theory for metacognition. Many theorists such as Flavell and Karmiloff-Smith have remained largely domain specific in their work and research, studying development specific to subjects such as memory and language, thus limiting the generalizability of their findings and the breadth of their potential application. Thus, continued inquiry and study into how these models fit into the domains of adult learning will need to be pursued in order to properly understand what model is be best suited to address the challenges of complex adult learning.

Studies in Metacognitive Development

In the forty years since theorists began introducing the idea that a relationship might exist between consciousness and cognition, scholars across several disciplines have defined, studied, and further explored this new concept of metacognition in a variety of ways. Metacognitive studies first began by assessing the aptitude and performance of children in several learning dimensions; these included reading comprehension and writing (Brown, 1980; Baker & Brown, 1984; Flavell, 1976; Markman, 1979; Meiser, 1984), looking to solve both well-structured and ill-structured problems (Wood, 1983; Karmiloff-Smith, 1986; Johnson-Laird, 1971), and the development of memory skills (Flavell, 1985). These studies began by building on the importance of Piaget’s original work that supported that “self-awareness and conscious control of one's activities, including cognitive activities, [was of] primary concern in studying problem-solving abilities” (Schrader, 1988, p. 23).
Ann Brown then further validated the importance of self-awareness and conscious control of cognitive activities in her perspective on metacognition. Brown (1980), one of the first to research metacognition, asserted that, “self-interrogation concerning the current state of one's own knowledge during reading or any problem-solving task is an essential skill in a wide variety of situations, those of the laboratory, the school, or everyday life” (p. 454). However, defining metacognition simply as the process of self-interrogation or regulation does not address the concept fully. In fact, the capacity to self-regulate or monitor cognition is actually a capacity that even young children are able to accomplish after they move out of the egocentricity stage of development (Piaget, 1976). Thus, while the conceptual studies of metacognitive skills may have begun with the concept of self-interrogation, it must also include the capacity to “evaluate the thinking process itself, and the awareness to both alter and modify the process [of thinking] while one is engaged in it. It is reflection on reflective thought” (Schrader, 1988, p. 10).

Therefore, metacognition necessitates that an individual has developed beyond typical levels of childhood egocentricity. In the 1970s, Asher examined the impact of childhood egocentricity on the ability for an individual to develop metacognitive capacities; Asher’s (1978) study demonstrated that young children were not capable of clarifying, questioning, or detecting inadequacies when they were given information from others. Asher’s findings further supported Brown’s (1980) assertion that children are “less conscious of the workings of their own mind…[and] less able to exert conscious control” over their cognitive processes (p. 471).

A study by Markman (1979) found that if children were taught in reading comprehension to find “explicit inconsistencies” that they were able to then complete that task independently. However, children would not independently seek out identifying those same inconsistencies without instruction, despite their capability to do so (Schrader, 1988). Baker and Brown (1984)
also researched metacognition and reading comprehension. In their study, they looked for what strategies children accessed when attempting to comprehend a difficult reading. While it might be second nature for a student at the collegiate level to re-read difficult sections of text for more clarification, younger readers did not choose this strategy as quickly. It was found that seeking clarification either through re-reading or looking for clarifying information in later parts of the text did not develop until late childhood (Schrader, 1988). Therefore, these studies both found that the level of comprehension mattered to the process of comprehension monitoring. These findings led the researchers to assert that, “comprehension monitoring may be considered at least one primary form of metacognition in the domain of reading comprehension” (Schrader, 1988, p. 26).

Fischer and Mandl (1984) utilized Flavell’s person, task, and strategy knowledge model to conduct research with adult learners. In their study they inquired as to the differences in metacognitive capacities between good, average, or poor readers. Their findings demonstrated “good readers exhibited greater knowledge and awareness of the task itself and their own ability to perform the task (metacognitive task and person knowledge);” these good readers, “also demonstrated greater flexibility in approaching the task to compensate for their deficits” (Hamlin, 2001, p. 40). Those that were classified as poor readers were not able to access strategies or find the motivation to overcome their struggles. Instead, the poor readers believed that their difficulty in the reading comprehension activities were a result of their own expectations for failure due to the lack of belief or access to methods or tools for improvement (Fischer & Mandl, 1984).

A 1992 study from Cates examined how interactive technology and media could serve to encourage metacognitive development. Cates defined “metacognition as the set of skills and
strategies used to monitor and modify how learning occurred” (Hamlin, 2001, p. 41). Cates posited that this type of metacognitive monitoring could be facilitated through media driven “journals or progress logs…discussions, and learner-created materials” (Hamlin, 2001, p. 41). Through each of these mechanisms Cates measured to what depth, if any, the students were motivated, practicing, or growing in their metacognitive capacities.

However, Cates (1992) also found that adult learners were in need of training before they could successfully use these cognitive tools; simply offering a journal opportunity was not enough for a deeper understanding of cognition or personal learning for students. Rather, if they were to efficaciously self-regulate and direct their own continued learning, adults needed to comprehend both how to utilize these tools and why the tools would advance their cognitive development (Card, Moran, & Newell, 1983).

Dunn and Dunn (1999) continued Cates’ work by studying the impact that learner-created materials (or learning tools) would have. They found that the learner-created tools, that addressed individual learning processes, suggested both the “evidence and understanding of cognition” for students (Dunn and Dunn, 1999, p. 41). Each of the different methods that successfully assisted the individual in directed reflection was then considered to be an “operation of metacognition” or a tool for more complex learning outcomes (Hamlin, 2001, p. 41).

Further studies in metacognition also looked at the impact that social interaction has on the development of metacognitive skills. These researchers addressed the reality that learning does not often take place in a bubble, but rather within a group or social environment such as a classroom. In a study of group problem solving, Artz and Armour-Thomas’ (1992) investigation into metacognitive behaviors in groups identified that many behaviors could actually serve a dual purpose in the group problem-solving setting (Magiera, 2008). They deduced this dual purpose
by first categorizing eight general problem-solving behaviors, as seen in small group work, and then cataloging them as either cognitive or metacognitive behaviors. These behaviors were observed while watching a group of twenty-seven seventh grade students (in six groups) engage in a small group problem-solving task.

Artz and Armour-Thomas (1992) used the foundational theories of Flavell (1976), Garofalo & Lester (1985), and Schoenfeld (1987) to classify what behavior they believed was metacognitive and what was cognitive. The theorists had identified cognitive behaviors as those “focused on doing (e.g., reading, drawing, calculating) and metacognitive behaviors as focused on planning what to do, selecting what has to be done and in what order, predicting outcomes and monitoring performance” (Magiera, 2008, p. 29).

However, other researchers (such as Goos, Galbraith & Renshaw, 2002; Kramarski & Maverech, 2003; Tanner & Jones; 1994; Stillman & Galbraith, 1998) believed that the social interactions themselves were equally as helpful in the facilitation of metacognitive skills” (Magiera, 2008). In fact, these researchers found that not just learning behaviors, but group social interactions were actually useful tools in developing greater self-awareness and cognitive capacities for students. They also found that previous cognitive development research in small group work, such as that of Artz and Armour-Thomas (1992), had failed to properly identify the metacognitive behaviors and skills that developed as a result of these group interactions. Specifically, these researchers found that “the Artz and Armour-Thomas framework failed to make provisions for assessing whether the identified metacognitive behaviors were observed in relation to the individual student evaluating and reflecting on his or her own thinking or the thinking of another group member” (Magiera, 2008, p. 30).
Goos et al. (2002) wanted to better understand the impact that the aforementioned group interaction had on metacognition, so they spent three years monitoring a small-group focused math class. Over that time the researchers found that the individual student’s metacognitive actions could either be focused on the self, instigated by asking others to evaluate or critique their thinking, or by their inquiry into better understanding or even critiquing another person’s thinking (Goos et al., 2002; Magiera, 2008). What became clear in their observations were the multiple ways and means for which metacognitive action and learning could take place within a group, suggesting that metacognitive growth exists beyond the work of an individual, and can be encouraged in small group settings.

Continuing to affirm the impact of social context for adult metacognitive development, Bransford et al. (1999) posited that more recent research on metacognition is now focused on the balanced development of both cognitive and social competence for learners. This viewpoint concerns itself with the whole systems framework of personal development where “students' academic achievement and strategies for learning are taken seriously, but so is their ability to create a role for themselves in a community, where they build friendships, contribute to the values of the community, and involve themselves in its academic, social, and civic activities” (Lin, 2001, p. 24). In her article, “Designing Metacognitive Activities,” Lin (2001) defined metacognition as “the ability to understand and monitor one’s own thoughts and the assumptions and implications of one’s activities” (p. 23; Lin’s references: Brown, Bransford, Ferrara & Campione, 1983; Butterfield & Belmont, 1977; Flavell, 1977).

From this integrative framework, Lin (2001) states that there are two main approaches that those wanting to support metacognitive development should adhere to, that of (1) strategy training and (2) that of “creating a supportive social environment (or social supports) as [a] way
to foster metacognitive activities” (p. 23). Within those two design approaches Lin (2001) also found both specific domain knowledge (i.e.-subject matter such as math, reading comprehension, language, etc.) and knowledge of self-as-learner. This self-as-learner knowledge included “personal or self-knowledge developed from participating in both academic or community activities, including social skills for becoming a contributing member of a community” (Lin, 2001, p. 24; Bandura, 1998; Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). In addition, Lin (2001) discussed the importance of finding metacognitive development to be “not simply as domain skills, nor as ways to build knowledge about the self-as-learner, but rather as habits of mind for developing a balanced cognitively and socially competent learner” (p. 37).

Limitations Found in Studies

The study of metacognition as a theory is not without its limitations; current metacognitive models or studies often utilize generic characteristics such as understanding, analyzing, or planning when describing their frameworks or observations. Often these generic concepts are often unable to accurately communicate the real complexity of the metacognitive thinking processes or the study’s findings (Magiera, 2008). Additionally, it is rare for any existing model or framework of metacognition to clearly outline what exact points or events in the development of metacognitive knowledge or skill are the most important to an individual. While metacognitive development is seen as a process of change, there has largely been a lack of emphasis on studying what transitions (or transitional impacts) are most crucial or important to individual learning or growth.

Hacker and Dunlosky (2003) have stated that "not all metacognition is created equal" (p.73), suggesting that “the varying effects of distinct metacognitive strategies or behaviors on problem-solving processes” are not one-size fits all, and may not benefit learning in every single
situation (Magiera, 2008, 35). For example, the use of reflection, a tool for cognitive monitoring, can be used too generally and miss out on the need to narrow in on specific details of a learning task or problem-solving scenario (Magiera, 2008). However, this limitation does not disregard the importance of metacognitive development, but rather warns against the broad implementation of domain specific models and strategies in every learning scenario.

Despite the breadth of inquiry into metacognition across disciplines, the review of research and literature still revealed several poignant opportunities for further study of metacognition in adult leadership education. Brown, quite directly, offered that the learning “processes that have recently earned the title metacognition are…critical for proficient, self-directed, long-term learning” in adults (Brown, 1987, p. 65). Undeniably, many of the studies and models from this literature review offered valid examples of how independent, reflective, and complex thinking was generated using metacognitive strategies both in individual and small group learning settings. Most specifically, Gavalek and Raphael’s model (1985) spoke directly to a new paradigm of self-regulated metacognitive learning that develops a more complex adult thinker, a more competent workforce, and an organizational environment ready to support individuals capable of complex problem solving and work.

However, despite these connections, and the proven need, much of the empirical research into metacognitive knowledge, skills, behaviors, development, and teaching interventions have focused largely on children and adolescents. In fact, although it thoroughly examines the work of Piaget, Perry, and King & Kitchener, one of the most authoritative texts on adult learning from Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2007), *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*, names the concept of metacognition only once in over 438 pages of discussion on cognitive development and theories of adult learning.
In the brief mention of metacognition, Merriam et al. (2007) does note that adult educators “are well aware that most learning in adulthood goes far beyond the simple memorization of facts” (p. 402). The authors specifically note that adults must be able to accommodate new ideas and “ways of acting into [their] earlier patterns of thinking and doing” in order to develop more complex thinking (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 403). Without this capacity to reflect and then adjust on current schemas or thought patterns, Merriam et al. asserts that “our chances of being able to frame and act on problems from a different perspective are remote, if not impossible” (p. 403). While not explicitly speaking to metacognition, the recognition that “meta” reflection work and strategies are important capacities for complex learning in adults appears throughout Merriam et al.’s discussion of adult cognitive development and demands that adults be the subject of more focused study on metacognitive development.

Thus, a significant research gap exists in empirical studies regarding the greater impact that metacognitive development and strategies (such as self-regulated learning) might have on adult learning. This gap, and the apparent failures of many existing adult education paradigms to meet the demands of a growingly complex world, invites the potential for future inquiry into what metacognitive learning strategies are most useful for adults, how these strategies might be implemented, and what sort of personal impact or learning outcomes would result for individuals. Indeed, future research into metacognition and adult learning has the potential to provide valuable information to those committed to seeing the continued development of critical cognitive skills for contemporary adult learners.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research study focused on the relationship between case-in-point pedagogy and the metacognitive development of adult students in the graduate Leadership Studies course, *Integral Leadership and Practice* (ILP), at the University of San Diego. The purpose of this study was to better understand the experience of students in a course explicitly designed using case-in-point pedagogy (CIP), and to explore whether or not the design and implementation of case-in-point teaching effectively supports metacognitive development. This chapter will discuss the study’s general design and theoretical constructs, the population and teaching method being examined, the process of selecting participants and research sites, the means of data collection, and the methods of analysis that were employed for the study. Finally, this chapter will examine the positionality of the researcher, the significance of the study, the limitations to this study, and the subsequent efforts that will be made to mitigate bias.

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this qualitative study on the impact of case-in-point pedagogy on metacognitive development are as follows:

1. How do adult students in the USD course *Integral Leadership and Practice* (ILP) describe their experience with Case-in-Point pedagogy (CIP)?
   a. Given students’ descriptions, what aspects of the course and CIP, if any, support or inhibit their complex learning and growth?
2. To what extent, if at all, do the constructs and theories of metacognitive development comfortably align with, or contradict, the data collected?
General Research Design and Rationale

This qualitative research study explored the experiences of adult students in an experiential leadership studies course, *Integral Leadership and Practice* (ILP), designed using case-in-point pedagogy. Case-in-point is an experiential style of teaching utilized most often in departments of leadership studies, management, and education, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This specific study took place at the University of San Diego’s School of Leadership and Education Sciences in the graduate Department of Leadership Studies. Over the course of the fall 2016 semester, data was collected in five different ways: open-ended interviews, class observations, course materials, student assignments, and through a developmental assessment of study participants.

The rationale for developing much of this study’s design stemmed from several sources: the lessons learned during a fall 2015 pilot study, the feedback received from my peer research colleagues, and the knowledge gained from the design of Dr. Christine Harris’ (2002) dissertation on students’ developmental experiences with transformational learning courses. These sources influenced the study’s design to include elements such as: an increase in the modalities of data collection, the implementation of a developmental assessment, the development of a more engaging and productive interview guide, and the adjustment of analysis procedures to better communicate the data that emerged. Each of these design influences will now be discussed briefly.

The initial fall 2015 pilot study was a modest first inquiry into the experience of two masters’ students enrolled in the ILP course; however, this study’s outcomes and limitations served as the main rationale for increasing the number of ways in which data was collected for this subsequent study. During the pilot study, the sole means of data collection was that of
participant interviews. This original design, while rich in collecting and focusing on participant narratives, relied far too heavily on self-reporting and the capacity of the participants to recall their own previous experiences; because of this, all the data collected for the pilot study was sourced from a single perspective.

Based on the critiques and suggestions of my research colleagues, a more comprehensive design of data collection was implemented for this current study. In order to mitigate data coming from just a single perspective (as seen in the pilot study), data collection methods were expanded beyond interviews, to include document analysis, classroom observations, as well as an initial developmental assessment for each participant. The details of these design elements will be further explored in the data collection section.

Next, this study’s design experienced another revision upon examination of Dr. Christine Harris’ (2002) dissertation, “The Experience of Support of Transformational Learning.” In this dissertation Harris (2002) was also exploring student experiences in a non-traditional classroom—but did so through the lens of transformational learning. While my inquiry utilized a different theoretical lens, that of metacognitive development, the structure and methods used by Harris to investigate students’ experiences was extremely helpful. Specifically, Harris’ (2002) interview protocol introduced several new ways in which to inquire about students’ experiences and learning without utilizing content and domain specific jargon that had originally made my pilot interviews difficult to decipher for the participants. Thus, the interview and observation elements of the study’s design evolved to include more participatory methods of engagement and data collection. This interview protocol will be discussed in more detail in the data collection section of this chapter.
In addition, Harris’ (2002) study noted that because of her inability to gather participant assessments and observations at the beginning of the semester she faced a limitation in her ability to assess their growth over time. I also encountered this issue in my pilot study. In order to mitigate this temporal issue, Harris’ (2002) study included as many questions as possible in her interview protocol to prompt participants to recall experiences prior to the course and to note how their thinking about those experiences may or may not be different after the course. I too included questions within the interview guide to probe participants to recall their viewpoints prior to class and asked for their reflection on personal changes in thinking and engagement throughout the semester.

I sought to mitigate this limitation even further by conducting a developmental cognitive assessment of participants at the very beginning of the semester. The option of also adding a post-course assessment was explored so that there might be quantifiable data representing any potential growth over the semester. However, the task of recruiting participation for a pre-course assessment (especially for first semester graduate students) was more difficult than anticipated. The challenge arose largely because initial contact with the students could not begin until the second week of class, and subsequent technical issues with Lectica, the developmental assessment company, delayed the distribution of the testing until almost 6 weeks into the course.

Rather than attempting to utilize a post-course assessment that would lack validity due to the shortened time between the pre-and post-testing opportunities (8-9 weeks in the best-case scenario), I decided to use the original assessment only. This assessment allowed me to identify the participants’ cognitive developmental level from a quantitative, and thus comparable perspective, offering rich data in examining how each participant’s frame of mind, or cognitive lens, impacted their engagement with the course.
I also sought to monitor the participants’ potential changes over the semester through the collection of their weekly questionnaire work (amassed from the beginning to end of the semester), as well as through my own weekly class observations, note taking, and access to the class recordings. These collection methods were included with the hopes that they would add another layer of data in tracking participants’ journeys from start to finish in the course. The addition of these assignments, observation notes, and recordings proved to be most fruitful in offering substantial data to triangulate with the experiences reported by the participants in their interviews and questionnaires.

The general design of the study was also influenced in large part by the theoretical constructs and frameworks of metacognitive development. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), “a theoretical framework is the underlying structure, the scaffolding...or the lens by which we examine and study phenomena” (p. 85). In this study’s design the theoretical framework of metacognitive development was the primary lens with which I studied the phenomena of case-in-point teaching. The conceptual definitions of metacognition are quite vast and branch out into various disciplines and understandings (Dawson, 2008). Thus, I designed this study to take an inductive approach to data analysis, so that what would emerge from the findings would not be subject to one pre-constructed definition of metacognition, but open to the possibility that the data might comfortably associate with any number of metacognitive constructs.

Finally, the general design of this study recognized the significant role that I myself, as the researcher, played as both an asset and a limitation to the data collected and conclusions reached by the study. The limitations of my own researcher bias and positionality will be examined and a further discussion of the topic will be addressed in a forthcoming section.
Research Site and Participant Selection

Research Site Selection

University of San Diego: School of Leadership and Education Sciences. I conducted my research at the University of San Diego’s (USD) School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES). The University of San Diego, a Roman Catholic institution, was founded in 1949 and has a total enrollment of about 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students. SOLES itself has an enrollment of approximately 650 students and houses four separate departments including the Department of Leadership Studies, the Department of Learning and Teaching, the Department of Counseling and Marital and Family Therapy, and the Department of Naval ROTC. These four entities offer ten degrees, most with specializations, in addition to sixteen credential and four certificate programs.

For the purposes of this study I focused on the Department of Leadership Studies where case-in-point pedagogical design is utilized in the core curriculum course, Integral Leadership and Practice (ILP). Students enrolled in this CIP course are pursuing one of several different degrees offered by the department. These include a Masters in Leadership Studies (generalized), Masters in Higher Education Leadership, Masters in Nonprofit Leadership and Management, and a Doctorate in Leadership Studies (with emphases in Higher Education Leadership, Organizational Leadership and Consulting, Nonprofit and Philanthropic Leadership, and Teaching, Learning, and Leadership). The students that were interviewed for this study were selected from several of these departmental masters or doctoral programs and specializations. More details on these participants and the process of sampling will be discussed in the participant selection section.
The rationale for selecting the *Integral Leadership and Practice* course at USD for this study was based largely on the notability of USD as one of the first schools to adopt CIP in its core curriculum, as well as my access to both the participants and research site. As an emergent pedagogy, the number of courses designed using CIP pedagogy is limited but growing in both undergraduate and graduate programs across several disciplines; notable universities utilizing this teaching method include Harvard University, the University of Minnesota, Kansas State University, and the University of San Diego. At USD, the course, *Integral Leadership and Practice*, (previously *Leadership Theory and Practice*) has been offered for more than 15 years. Over this time the course has been taught primarily by Dr. Theresa Monroe, who was an integral part of developing CIP with Dr. Ron Heifetz at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, where she was a senior member of Heifetz’s teaching staff.

In part, I also selected this course based on its geographic location and my relationship to USD, SOLES, the ILP course, and the instructors. As a resident of San Diego, I was able to weekly attend ILP classes for observations, schedule interviews with participants more freely, and administer assessments if needed. While other similar courses were considered for analysis, largely Heifetz’s course at Harvard University, the opportunity to gather data consistently throughout an entire semester was infeasible at other locations. Therefore, the course at USD seemed the most appropriate place to begin this inquiry into the case-in-point student experience.

I also had greater access to USD and the ILP course due to my personal and professional relationships with the instructors and my previous involvement as both a student and teaching fellow for the course. In addition, as a fellow graduate student at USD, my role gave me more access and potentially more trust and rapport with my potential participants with whom I shared course experiences, friendships, and research interests. While this positionality needs to be
noted, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) also stated that it is important the “researcher establish rapport by fitting into the participants’ routines finding some common ground with them, helping out on occasion, being friendly, and showing interest in the activity” (p. 143). Due to my role at USD the posture suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2016) was largely pre-existing and was utilized as a foundation for building trust and communication with the study participants. The limitations posed by my “insider” researcher positionality were also considered and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

**The Course: Integral Leadership and Practice.** In the *Integral Leadership and Practice* course, CIP teaching focuses on transforming the classroom into an experiential practice field or laboratory; intentionally offering students the opportunity to engage with, analyze, and address the immediate experiences, group dynamics, and leadership challenges as they occur within the classroom (Parks, 2005). The ILP syllabi (2016) at USD encourages students to put aside notions of a traditional classroom in favor of a laboratory or practice field structure so that the classroom becomes a place where:

…Instruction, coaching, experimentation, feedback and practice intersect and overlap…[A place where] participants can build on their natural skills and previous experience, become familiar with theoretical frameworks critical for understanding the nuances of leadership…surface unexamined assumptions, become more aware of habitual patterns of action/reaction, take risks, discern imaginative responses to current realities, experiment with different behaviors, assess what actions serve the deep purpose in various situations, and provide effective leadership in real time. (p. 1)

This concept of **effective leadership in real time**, includes a student’s ability to recognize their role in a group, notice their own patterns of behavior and that of others, observe group dynamics
at work, acknowledge elements of authority and power, and to utilize integral and systemic analysis when addressing leadership challenges. However, the laboratory environment often is perceived “as lacking structure because [students] perceive that they receive little guidance (from the authority figures) …about how to negotiate the space and/or manage themselves without specific instructions delivered to them in traditional ways” (Getz, 2009, p. 450). Despite its unconventional nature, the ILP course also includes several traditional structural elements such as weekly assignments, papers, a midterm, and a final.

While Dr. Theresa Monroe was the original instructor for ILP in the fall of 2016, a few weeks before the course Dr. Monroe began a phased-retirement plan that meant she would no longer instruct the course. Instead, the ILP course was reformatted into three sections, each of which was then taught by another USD instructor with extensive previous experience as a CIP facilitator. The decision to change the format from one section to three sections was also a result of a large increase in the overall course enrollment, with 109 students enrolling in the fall of 2016. Due to these changes, it was necessary to recognize that in having three different CIP large group sections, students enrolled in the ILP course would, for the first time, experience three different approaches and deliveries of case-in-point depending on their assigned section and instructor.

During the fall 2016 semester, all three sections of the ILP course at USD were held concurrently, once a week, in a three-hour evening format. The first hour of the course, also referred to as the “large group,” included the attendance of the entire section, the instructor, and several teaching staff members. The “large group” was the time in which case-in-point was most significantly utilized. The ILP syllabi (2016) described the large group as, “the central lab or practice field…it serves as a dynamic nexus of relationships and interactions taking place in the
‘here-and-now’ that reproduces the kind of dynamics encountered in other organizations and social systems” (p. 2).

In addition, due to the division of the course into three separate sections, a new course element was introduced that brought significant change to the overall course design. This new element was named the “institutional group,” and consisted of one-hour sessions that brought all three sections together for a larger experience of case-in-point facilitation. The “institutional group” took place nine times throughout the semester, varying between replacing either the first or third hour, and representing what the syllabus called an opportunity to learn about the larger ILP system or group dynamics of all three sections (ILP Syllabi, 2016).

In order to create a smaller discussion-based environment for the course, the second hour of the class was devoted to the “consultation group” or “small group.” Students in ILP were each assigned to small groups of 6-10 individuals that met weekly to discuss “cases” or real-life workplace challenges. These small groups did not change their members from week to week; however, members rotated between taking the role of the designated authority (keeping time, directing questions), the role of case presenter (presenting a leadership failure or challenge to the small group), and the role of consultants to the case. According to the ILP syllabi (2016):

This exercise provides opportunities for participants to learn in a way that simulates actual working conditions as closely as possible…it requires them to confront an open-ended and frequently ill-defined problem, make a preliminary analysis, gather information or data, propose possible interpretations and then assess the quality of their interpretations (p. 3).
Students also turned in weekly assignments, or questionnaires, after the small group consultation had taken place; these questionnaires acted as a means of reflection for small group consultation process, and as an evaluation of students’ understanding of the class readings and concepts.

Finally, during the third hour of the course, there was a return to the large group format with all section students in attendance. The ILP syllabus (2016) describes the work of the third hour as an “Integral Systemic Case Analysis” (p. 3). In this hour, one consultation group volunteered to highlight their case in front of the class. The case presented then served “as an important point of departure for a process of an integral-systemic analysis led by the instructor;” it was an analysis process which sought to offer students “more adequate and systemic ways of seeing, acting and knowing” in the face of leadership dilemmas (ILP Syllabi, 2016, p. 3). In other words, this third hour (as intended in the syllabus) engaged students with the practice of systems thinking in relationship to a tangible and personal leadership case, with the hope that this opportunity for practice would increase their capacity to use this tool of analysis (systemic/integral) independently.

However, during the fall 2016 semester, this hour was often utilized for several other activities and assignments that were not discussed in the syllabus. These alternate activities included small group discussions, large group work, short lectures, and independent reflective practices. The most significantly utilized replacement activity was that of the institutional case-in-point group experience, which often occurred during the third hour. Thus, the usage of multiple activities led to the execution of only a few third hour systemic case analyses throughout the semester, this is relevant to the study’s analysis because prior courses taught by Dr. Monroe had previously relied predominately on this systemic analysis work for the third
hour of the course. The course elements, as they were utilized in the fall of 2016 ILP class, are displayed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

*Course Elements of Integral Leadership and Practice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Element</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Description of Course Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Section (1st or 3rd Hour)</td>
<td>Section 1: Professor A Section 2: Professor B Section 3: Dr. Smith</td>
<td>Between 34-40 people in each section</td>
<td>Case-in-point pedagogy used to guide the discussion. This hour was largely void of traditional lecture or a specific assignment, but rather relied on the “here-and-now” comments and interactions of the students, the teaching staff, and the professor. Additional activities such as the 3-2-1 Mirroring activity, Systems Analysis, and Singing also took place in the large group during the 3rd hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Group (2nd Hour)</td>
<td>The Designated Authority (DA) facilitated the hour small group. The role rotated among group members throughout the semester. An outline on how to conduct the small group facilitation was given to all members (see Appendix C).</td>
<td>Between 6-10 members per small group</td>
<td>Each week a “case” presentation on a personal leadership failure was offered by a group member. The remaining group members acted as consultants for the case, offering feedback and analysis to the presenter. Questionnaires were completed detailing the case consultation experience each week. The format for the questionnaire remained the same each week (Appendix D).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Group (1st or 3rd Hour)</td>
<td>All three professors shared the role of facilitator</td>
<td>The entire class, TA’s, and the 3 lead professors</td>
<td>Case-in-point pedagogy was also used to guide the institutional group discussions. The difference between institutional and large groups being that all three large groups came together as one entity for the institutional group sessions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the aforementioned course elements, the ILP course also included weekly readings, a midterm, and a final paper. These three elements represented the more traditional methods of classroom assessment, with the midterm including short answer questions and the paper prompting students to connect issues from a selected film to the course concepts. The intersection of the traditional and non-traditional course elements, large and small group settings, and the interpersonal and systemic processes of analysis all combined to produce a unique course. Thus, for the purposes of this study, all aspects of this class were observed (with the exception of private small group meetings) to better understand the experience of students and their potential for metacognitive growth.

**Participant Selection and Sampling**

Purposeful and convenience sampling methods were utilized to select the final participants for this study. During the first ILP class of the semester I introduced that I would be conducting an upcoming study of the course and its relationship to metacognitive development; however, I made it explicitly clear that this first contact was merely an announcement and further participation would be contingent upon the study’s pending IRB approval. I asked for students to indicate whether or not they would be interested in learning more about the study once approval had been acquired. From this initial inquiry 50 individuals suggested that they would like to hear more about the study and would consider participating once approval was received.

I received IRB approval during the second week of the semester, after which I returned to the course to remind students about the study, briefly describe their potential role, and offer the opportunity to officially indicate a willingness to participate by completing an IRB Consent form. From this official invitation 37 consent forms were signed and returned during an institutional group event where all three sections were present. One issue that I emphasized
when speaking to the class was in regards to the confidentiality of the data collected from both the class observations and interviews. I was clear to communicate that at no time would the observation notes, assessments, or interviews be made accessible to the teaching staff (or fellow students), that all transcripts would be open to member checking, and that aliases would be utilized to ensure participant anonymity. I also indicated that I would need only 10 students as participants for the study and would notify them with a final request for participation. By signing the consent form, students had agreed that they were willing to be involved in the inquiry process through participating in interviews, taking a developmental assessment, and through allowing me to access their course assignments throughout the semester.

The 37 students indicating interest were enrolled across each of the three different sections. This presented a dilemma for the purposeful phase in selecting participants. A decision needed to be made regarding whether or not to include participants from all three sections, or to focus specifically on participants enrolled in the same section. In order to make this decision, I consulted with Dr. Bob Donmoyer as to what benefits and constraints existed for each choice. From that consultation I drew several conclusions that aided in the final design decision.

First, the benefit to having participants from all three sections was the chance it offered to collect data about the differing experiences of students with separate instructors or CIP facilitators; however, studying all three different sections would have also significantly limited the frequency and depth of class observation opportunities. In fact, it would necessitate that I observe the participants’ classes only once every three weeks—equating to, at a maximum, only 4-5 total observations for each section over the 15-week semester.
The second option, purposively selecting participants from a single section meant that only one experience of CIP would be examined; however, it also meant that there could be a deep focus into that one context and experience. The strength of this design was in the opportunity to inquire more deeply and offer what Geertz (1973) termed *thick descriptions* of the data. In addition, it offered the opportunity to compare and contrast multiple participant perspectives, patterns, and examples from what might externally be considered one cohesive experience.

Upon weighing the benefits and shortcomings of each option, I decided to purposively select ten students enrolled in one particular section of the fall 2016 course. To determine what individuals and section should be included I systematically categorized the list of 37 interested individuals. First, I divided the participants by section to determine the numbers of participants available in each class. From this list, the largest numbers of participants, as well as the most potential diversity across that sections’ population was determined. From this categorization a clear distinction for one section emerged, both in quantity and diversity. The decision was made to select 10 participants from Dr. Smith’s section, also referred to as Section three.

While I was as purposeful as possible in selecting the most diverse participants from the interested volunteers (in age, gender, race, ethnicity, educational background, and career field), the reality was that convenience played a large role in the sampling process as well. This is due to the fact that I was reliant on the enrolled students’ desire and/or ability to commit to time outside of class for interviews and assessments, as well as their willingness to offer me access to their in-class assignments and writings. In fact, only 16 individuals volunteered to participate from the section, from which the 10 most diverse representatives were selected. Unfortunately, two of the participants that initially committed to full participation decided not to be interviewed.
at the end of the semester. I continued to follow-up and attempt to bridge communication with these two participants for over two months after the course ended with no success in scheduling an interview.

In addition, one participant did not complete the developmental assessment sent at the beginning of the course and (due to a technical error on my part) only provided three-quarters of a completed interview for analysis. For this reason, this participant’s data will not be included in the study’s findings. Consequently, seven individuals are considered to be full participants in the study, and it is their data that is presented in this study’s findings (Table 2).

Table 2

Demographics of Participant Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Race/ Ethnicity</th>
<th>Graduate Program</th>
<th>LRJA Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White (*Hispanic Heritage)</td>
<td>PhD in Leadership Studies</td>
<td>11.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Masters in Non-Profit Leadership</td>
<td>11.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Masters in Leadership Studies</td>
<td>11.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Asian (Japanese)</td>
<td>PhD in Leadership Studies</td>
<td>10.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Masters in Leadership Studies</td>
<td>10.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Masters in Leadership Studies</td>
<td>10.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Masters in Non-Profit Leadership</td>
<td>10.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite my best attempts to diversify the sample population, the lack of racial diversity is a notable limitation to this study; subsequently, this specific study did not have access to as significantly diverse a sample of voices, experiences, and insights as had been originally
planned. Future studies on this topic should pay special attention to diversifying the sample population (specifically focusing on diversity in both race and ethnicity) in order to further enrich the data collected on adult learning and metacognitive development. However, despite this limitation, the study’s population cannot be considered entirely homogenous either. This is due to the fact that those in the study still represent differing personal, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds, ages, genders, cultures, graduate programs, and dominant levels of cognitive development.

In addition, the instructor that introduced this study to the students on the first night of class was also the instructor from which the participant sample was collected. It cannot be overlooked that the initial impact of this authority’s approval and encouragement perhaps acted at some level as an affirmation for her student’s more vigorous interest in involvement. In addition, most of the participants also indicated that they held a pre-existing curiosity and interest in the leadership studies field and courses utilizing non-traditional pedagogical methods.

One limitation that was given sincere attempts to mitigate was that of the researchers influence on participants, and conversely the participants influence on the researcher, throughout the course of the study. While this could not be completely avoided, measures were taken to be as removed from a significant relationship with the participants as possible. This was achieved through the withholding of the developmental assessment scores from the researcher to mitigate their influence on the researcher’s class observations, as well as the limitation of personal contact with the participants until the end of the study’s interview.

**Data Collection**

For this study, data was collected in five different ways: (1) course materials (syllabi, assignment prompts, and course assessments); (2) course observations; (3) participant
interviews; (4) student assignments; and (5) students’ individual developmental assessment tests. A thorough examination of metacognitive literature was also used to support the study’s selected methods of data collection. According to Schraw and Moshman (1995), the use of verbal reports, such as transcripts from interviews or discussion groups, allowed the researcher to gain access into the thinking processes and internal change experiences of the participant otherwise unavailable through observation. On the other hand, Whitebread et al. (2009) argued that the observation of participants had vast benefits over that of interview or discussion group. Whitebread et al. (2009) argued that a researcher’s observations provided raw behavioral data (how a participant actually speaks or behaves in the moment), as well as the nonverbal behaviors and social processes of the participants, both of which are of critical importance in understanding their metacognitive development.

In addition, Brooks (1998) stated that research in cognitive development needed to pursue continuous observations of a student during the entirety of a class experience or keep records of students’ work over a significant amount of time to improve the strength and validity of assessments. Thus, in designing this study I decided to bring each of these means of data collection together (observations, interviews, and assignments) in an attempt to more holistically inquire as to the participants’ cognitive experience in the course. Each of the five data collection methods will now be described in more detail.

Course Materials

Due to the unique nature and format of the CIP classroom, the information provided in the course syllabi, readings, and other informative documents plays a large role in orienting individuals to the course structure, expectations, design, and purpose. Therefore, prior to engaging in any class observations or participant interviews I re-reviewed and noted important
terms, facts, and learning objectives that had the potential for importance in observations, student interviews, and data analysis. While I have previous experience as a student (one year) and teaching fellow (three years), the importance of a careful review of course materials allowed me to better observe, understand, and ultimately analyze the experience of participants.

**Class Observations**

To ensure that I was as familiar as possible with the pertinent in-class events of the fall’s course and the roles that the participants took in the classroom, I attended the class sessions and took observations during the first hour, which utilized case-in-point instruction, throughout the fall semester. The rationale for the use of observations in this study came from Patton’s (2015) view that observations can capture the “patterns and frequency of interactions, the direction of communication patterns;” and that “the changes in these patterns [are what] tell us things about the social environment” (p. 367).

I used a loosely established observation checklist to guide my time in class each week (See Appendix A). The checklist for this study was created using Harris’ (2002) observational protocol for experiential learning as a guide; however, the observation checklist was adjusted and extended to better suit the ILP course and this study. Categories for this study’s checklist grew to include sections that noted the topics of discussion in class, any class or participant engagement with conflict, the impact that the facilitator and teaching staff might have during that specific class period, readings discussed, participant participation in class (or lack thereof), and the greater group dynamics at play. Space for other note taking on specific emergent moments, events, and behaviors was also provided.

While I utilized the observation checklist as a guide to direct my field notes, I was also careful to limit the amount of time that I spent writing while observing in class. Instead, I
attempted to write down short phrases or key words on topics of concern, participant behaviors, and important events. I did this in an attempt to limit the distraction that my presence might have in the classroom; while Dr. Smith’s section of Integral Leadership and Practice was relatively large, the interactive nature of the class often meant that frequent note taking was not the norm for all students (with some exceptions). Thus, I attempted to not be a distraction to those around me by feverishly writing notes or typing on a computer throughout the class session. Instead, I composed a reflective observational memo immediately at the end of each class, elaborating on the key phrases and behaviors noted in my checklist, as well as other observations that I recalled during the memo-writing process.

Although case-in-point teaching in this course was facilitated according to several foundational and guiding conceptual tenants, it was also a fluid experience that can never be replicated or delivered in the exact same way. In fact, as noted in the section on participant selection, the manifestation of case-in-point teaching is always different from classroom to classroom, facilitator to facilitator, night to night due to its focus on the “here and now” learning of the immediate moment; thus, adequate observations of how the case-in-point classroom was experienced and what occurs each night in class was important for adequately describing and assessing the participants’ experiences for this study. In addition, the access to course recordings provided me with an opportunity to check my observations for accuracy through reviewing specific interactions and class session observations.

**Participant Interviews**

This study also administered individual interviews with all participants in the final weeks of the course. All of the interviews took approximately 1-2 hours and were scheduled at times and places of the participants’ choosing. The interview protocol that was used for the study was
completely revised from the original pilot study interview guide. These revisions were made because several peers offered feedback that the language in the original interview protocol presented a problem in the quality of answers that were received.

While pilot participants were familiar with terms such as “case-in-point pedagogy” or “metacognition,” the use of these terms also seemed to stunt the opportunity for a more open dialogue with participants and limited the ability of students to use their own language to discuss their course experience. It was suggested that instead of using course or domain specific language that I focus the interview more directly on questions that probed participants about their favorite and least favorite experiences, the emotions they experienced in class, their relevant memories, and the most notable events during the course.

To produce the revisions for this study’s interview protocol I returned to Harris’ (2002) study on graduate students’ experiences with a transformational learning course. Although transformational learning is also a nuanced and difficult topic, Harris’ interviews were able to engage participants in clear discussions about their important learning moments, the elements of the course that they loved, and the practical adjustments that they would make if they could re-design the course. Harris’ interview guide was direct, creative, and efficiently produced dialogue and rich descriptions from her participants about their experiences. Thus, the interview protocol for this study largely followed Harris’ (2002) open-ended interview guide\(^2\). This interview guide included topical questions about salient events and course experiences, as well as more creative means of inquiry including the opportunity for participants to restructure the course design using the re-ordering, removing, or adding of course elements to achieve a format that would best suit their desired learning outcomes.

\(^2\) Harris’ (2002) final interview guide was also a result of five iterations through feedback from colleagues and piloting.
While I attempted to complete the interview guide in its entirety with each participant, the interviews often remained conversational and other discussions helpful to the study arose outside the pre-established prompts of the guide. A copy of this interview guide can be found in Appendix B. In addition to their initial consent form, I also asked permission from students prior to making audio recordings of the interview, notified them that only an independent transcriber and myself would have access to their transcripts, that aliases would be used to conceal their identities, and that all transcripts would be available for their review at the end of the study. I followed this up by emailing all the participants their transcribed interviews and also attached the proposed analysis themes to the email for their review. While many of these themes evolved throughout the analysis process, the core tenants remained the same. In the course of conducting eight interviews, one error was made in the recording of a participant’s interview. Thus, while her interview was completed in person, only three-fourths of the data was recorded and then properly transcribed and analyzed.

**Student Assignments**

Throughout the semester, students also completed a number of assignments as part of the course requirements. I requested to have access to all assignments from the participants to better understand their experience and growth in the course. The rationale for using student assignments as data in this study was found in Merriam and Tisdell’s (2016) argument that documents can be useful tools, “to track change and development,” the very intent of this study’s design (p. 182). Several different assignments were incorporated into this study’s inquiry. These included: weekly questionnaires, reflection exercises, the midterm, and the final paper.

The most important assignment collected was that of the class questionnaire. Each week students turned in a questionnaire to the instructor and teaching staff with pertinent details and
reflections regarding the events of that week’s consultation group and case presentation. The students’ questionnaires were of the upmost importance because the assignment’s prompt did not change throughout the semester, however the students’ engagement, answers, and viewpoints on the assignments did evolve. In many ways, the questionnaires offered insight and reflection into the evolution of students’ views on their own (and others) learning or growth, and the impact that small group dynamics had on their own growth throughout the semester. An ILP questionnaire prompt with sample answers provided by the teaching staff can be found in Appendix D.

**Developmental Assessment**

The reason for conducting a developmental assessment was to establish some frame of reference for how the participants think, make meaning, and construct knowledge as they entered the course (O’Brien, 2016). Harris (2002) attempted to mitigate this through the use of interview questions, directing participants to reflect on their past experiences, ways of behaving and thinking, and the potential changes that may have occurred since beginning the course. While these types of retrospective questions were also included in this study’s interview protocol, the opportunity to produce a more detailed baseline analysis for students’ thinking at the beginning of the study was important to the study’s overall design.

After looking at several options, the assessment that seemed to be the best fit for the study was the Lectical Reflective Judgment Assessment (LRJA). The LRJA is an online, written assessment that measures the “way people think about knowledge, truth, and inquiry” (Lectica.org, n.d.). The LRJA test was made even more relevant by the assertion from Hofer (2004) that reflective judgment is metacognition; in other words, the LRJA utilizes the same theoretical lens that was used by this study, that of metacognition, to determine the ways in which an individual experiences and engages with their own learning process. In addition, it
offered data about the “general style of reasoning [that] an individual is likely to use when confronted with a specific type of problem” (King and Kitchener, 1987, p.86). This assessment offered valuable data used to better understand the baseline metacognitive capacities and frameworks held by individuals upon entering the ILP classroom for CIP facilitation. A breakdown of the Lectical scale used to score the LRJA and the differing developmental characteristics between scores can be found in Appendix E.

**Data Analysis**

**Preparing the Data**

This study utilized several different data sources; thus, the organization and preparation of the data for analysis was performed after the conclusion of the fall 2016 semester. First, the recordings available for each class session were downloaded and reviewed alongside my observations in order to check for any major discrepancies.

Second, all eight interviews were transcribed by an independent transcriptionist, and I checked the transcriptions for accuracy by listening to the recordings whilst following along and noting any incorrect or incomplete sections. Furthermore, the transcribed interviews were then sent to the participants for member-checking and to offer them an opportunity to clarify any of their statements if they felt the interview had misrepresented their views of the course.

Third, the participants’ questionnaires were downloaded from the course Blackboard site and organized by date. Finally, the interview transcripts, assembled questionnaires, and developmental assessments were compiled and sorted into files for each individual participant.

**Iterations in Coding**

The coding process for this study was conducted over a period of two years, during which time several approaches were employed and then revised upon further reflection. This included
the use of “a priori” coding, or specifically coding the data with concepts derived from the metacognitive literature discussed in Chapter 2. This manner of coding was selected with the aspiration to utilize the theoretical scaffold of metacognition to better frame and understand the participant’s descriptions of their experience. However, upon the completion of coding several interviews it became clear that this approach was far too limiting to adequately answer the entirety of the first research question: How do adult students in the USD course Integral Leadership and Practice (ILP) describe their experience with Case-in-Point pedagogy (CIP)? And given students’ descriptions, what aspects of the course and CIP, if any, support or inhibit their complex learning and growth?

While utilizing the “a priori” metacognitive theory codes appeared to be an adequate method of answering research question #2, the pre-organized codes did very little to examine the data for the more affective, nuanced, and illustrative examples of the participants’ broader experience in the course. In fact, the sole use of the “a priori” codes meant that the first analysis round missed most participant descriptions that were not correlated to cognition. Thus, the “a priori” coding process was determined to be (a) too prescriptive a system of analysis to address the entirety of research question number one, but (b) helpful when analysis of data was conducted for the second research question.

In the second iteration of analysis I attempted to analyze the data narratively (Polkinghorne, 1995) rather than through traditional social-science coding. My goal was to construct a singular narrative for the course experience using the multiple interviews and observations from each of the participants I had interviewed. In doing so, I attempted to create a cohesive, but multi-perspective account of the course, focusing on highlighting salient events or themes as they emerged from the data. However, I realized that it was difficult to construct a
meaningful meta-narrative from the vast amount of data. Furthermore, it was difficult to address
the disagreements and differing perspectives of salient events through this analysis process.
While this was not a successful analysis endeavor, I found that acquainting myself with each
individual’s data in such an immersive way and preparing a brief memo on their individual
narratives was helpful in further familiarizing myself with the large data set, as well as the
interviewed participants themselves.

In the third iteration of analysis I discovered that a systematic approach seemed to be the
most appropriate method to sufficiently sort through, make sense of, and categorize the large
amounts of data needed to answer research question #1. Below, I explain my final process of
analysis for this first research question in more detail.

**Analysis of Research Question #1**

**First Phase: Open and Descriptive Coding.** The first phase of analysis was inductive
and utilized open or descriptive coding of the interviews. In this phase, the analysis process was
careful to meet what Merriam and Tisdell (2016) listed as the essential criteria for open code
construction; these criteria included that all codes be: “exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitive,
and conceptually congruent” (p. 213). The rationale for using open coding in this first phase was
based on the argument by Glaser and Strauss (1967) that “emergent categories usually prove to
be the most relevant and best fitted to data” (p. 37). In this first phase of descriptive coding I
attempted to summarize with a word or phrase the basic topic or content of an interview’s
passage. More specifically, I attempted to code “the substance of the message” being
communicated during the interview (Tesch, 1990, p. 119; Saldana, 2013). This led to the
development of independent codes that described everything from student experience with
finding their voice, class conflict, experiences with authority, emotional discomfort, intellectual struggle or frustration, and more.

**Second Phase: Axial Coding.** Once the initial phase of open coding was completed, a second phase of systematic analysis utilized the processes of axial (or analytical) coding. Axial coding is a process by which the grouping of open codes “goes beyond descriptive coding,” as in the first phase, and progresses to “coding that comes from interpretation and reflection on meaning” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 206). The purpose of this coding phase was to initiate the process of interpretation (making connections between the various codes, categories, patterns, and findings) in order to address the study’s first research question.

The practice of open and axial coding not only provided initial insights into the individual and connecting experiences of the students, it also provided a categorized data set from which to answer research question #1’s sub-question: *And given students’ descriptions, what aspects of the course and CIP, if any, support or inhibit their complex learning and growth?*

From these categories of salient descriptive events and moments, I further analyzed the data looking for both the supportive and inhibitive aspects of how participants described their own complex learning. Personal learning from the perspective of the participant is presented in the thematic discussion of their experience, while the analysis of what supported and inhibited learning from my position as a researcher-observer is presented as the findings for sub-question #1. In analyzing the data, it was clear that the nuanced role between what a student perceived and reported as a challenge or frustration in the class learning experience could equally be considered by an observing adult educator to be the very catalyst needed for their cognitive development. Therefore, representation both of the researcher-observer and the participants
themselves seemed necessary for full transparency in answering the question both from the perspective of the individual and the perspective of the researcher and literature review.

**Analysis of Research Question #2**

**Abductive Coding.** Finally, the third phase of analysis utilized an abductive coding process. This phase of coding asked: Does metacognitive theory account for the categories that emerged from the data analysis process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016)? This abductive phase of coding was largely used to answer the second research question: To what extent, if at all, do the constructs and theories of metacognition comfortably align with, or contradict, the data collected? Both a strength and difficulty of this phase of coding was the study’s decision to open the analysis process up to multiple constructs and theories of metacognition and metacognitive development. Given this design choice, the elements of metacognition that were utilized for coding were varied, however, this allowed the study to remain in a more inquisitive and inductive posture, rather than seeking only to find (or not find) a singular definition of metacognitive development. However, the use of the earlier “a priori” codes became a significant asset in coding for the second research question.

**Limitations**

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore the experiences of adult students in an experiential course designed using case-in-point pedagogy; however, there were several limitations to this study. First, the number of participants was not representative of the entire class population and thus limited the development of a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of this pedagogical method for all those enrolled. In future research, there should be attention paid to selecting a larger participant group that will more adequately address the entire course population—and that can provide a richer diversity in participants studied.
In addition, this study was confined to a single section, school, and CIP facilitator. While this bounded system allowed for the rich exploration of this particular environment, it could not sufficiently produce results that are generalizable for all CIP courses or all ILP courses. Adding to the generalizability problem is the fact that the particular section studied were assigned new instructors after the very experienced instructor who normally taught the course opted for phased retirement a few weeks before the course began. Future studies should focus on multiple courses, research sites, and CIP facilitators for a more complete inquiry into the impact of CIP teaching. This would, however, necessitate the presence of multiple investigators and an extended period of time for the study to be conducted.

Additionally, due to the short length of the course (only a semester), the study faced a limitation that Bryant and Charmaz (2007) discussed as the swan effect for researchers. This effect is described by Bryant and Charmaz (2007) through a brief story centered on a researcher that diligently observed a river for two hours one afternoon; during this time the researcher noted seeing only large black swans come and go. She left the river with findings that claimed the environment was exclusively a habitat for black swans. However, just after the observer left, the black swans also left, and a great number of white swans, that also lived at the river, returned to their home. The researcher had then completely (but unintentionally) missed the data point that both black and white swans live in the same environment. The swan effect illustrates that when only a brief amount of time is spent in one place of observation and inquiry, the researcher may miss important populations, events, or details that are also important parts of that environment.

Likewise, in this study, the abbreviated amount of time, only one semester, made it difficult to make any extensive claims about metacognitive development during this short time span—as the development of cognition occurs at different speeds and through different
mechanisms for every individual. Often, the mechanisms (or causes) for metacognitive development can be found in many facets of life, for example: difficult life phases, changes in relationships, or other circumstances that demand the development of critical thinking. Therefore, it was difficult for this study to completely isolate the specific impact that CIP pedagogy has on a participant’s development, separate from the other contributing life events and experiences that also impacted the participants’ developmental processes.

Beyond just the limitation of time restraints, the impact of my own point of view also impacted the data that was collected, how it was collected, and what was considered to be important or relevant to the study. This was brought to light through feedback from one participant regarding the language I used while interviewing him. He sensed a similarity between my process of inquiry and the language used in the ILP course and his coaching course at USD. This comment illuminated the fact that I have developed a posture and vocabulary influenced and similar to the very pedagogy I am studying—an important finding for me to reflect on.

The phrase I used to prompt his feedback during the interview was, “what does this mean to you?” The transcripts show that I followed up with this question several times with most of the participants. While it is a simple follow-up question, I realized that it is also strongly associated with my work in the Leadership Studies department. If it were not for this participant’s recognition of my own style and tone, and its connection to the tone of the Integral Leadership course, I would not have been able to see this influence and the impact this had on the data collected and my own analysis. While this was not a formal part of member checking, it ended up offering important assistance in my attempt to acknowledge, address, and limit positionality in my data collection and analysis in this study.
Positionality

Finally, limitations existed due to my beliefs about the course pedagogy and my positionality as a previous member of the teaching staff for Integral Leadership and Practice. I also have current personal relationships with the school, where I have been employed as a graduate assistant and undergraduate instructor, and with the ILP section instructor Dr. Smith, who is my colleague. As such, I have an inclination to believe that there is a worthwhile impact from case-in-point pedagogy for graduate students. In order to mitigate this bias and positionality it was important for me to not only member check with participants on the impact of the course from their perspective, but to also utilize triangulation through multiple sources of data when representing findings.

In addition, it was important that I constantly produced my own brief reflections throughout the study. I completed these reflections, sometimes in writings and sometimes in the form of audio recordings, because it allowed me to constantly “check-in” with my own bias and positionality whenever possible. Despite my best attempts to recognize and regulate my positionality I was also aware that, as a researcher and human being, my bias would never be completely mitigated during the course of the study, nor would that be beneficial. Thus, I continued in my attempt to monitor, reflect, adapt and stay present to my own experiences as an important part of the study’s eventual findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It was my alignment with this reflective process that allowed me to recall the feedback given by a participant about my tone and technique in interviewing, a piece of information that provided invaluable information about my own unconscious influences on the research process, and allowed me to see new possibilities in the data I collected and interpreted.

Efforts to Mitigate Bias
**Member-checking.** After the interviews were transcribed, they were sent to the participants for member checking. Any errors in these transcripts were adjusted accordingly and were noted—only two participants requested minor adjustments to their transcript responses, while others noted that re-reading the transcript had been an enlightening experience. One participant noted that the month that had passed between his interview and reviewing the transcript made revisions more difficult. The one-month that passed between the actual interview and member-checking process was due to the especially high volume of transcription taking place for the study. While a short turn around did not occur for this specific study, it should be considered that a shorter time between the interview and member-checking would offer the participants more clarity and opportunity to properly amend or adjust their interview data.

In addition to their transcripts, members were also provided with the study’s first tentative thematic coding categories and sub-categories for their review (See the email in Appendix F). Due to the evolution in the analysis procedures, the codes provided to members for feedback were those used to determine what aspects of the course either supported or inhibited metacognitive growth. Participant Roger wrote the following feedback in an email, regarding the proposed thematic categories:

I'd only recommend that the sub-theme under (1) of "change and growth" and "self-awareness" be flexible enough to accept the negatives if the data supports. I think that in lead 600, among some of the students, there was no change or no growth. Essentially, for some, I believe case-in-point re-enforces misconceptions and stereotypes. I saw that in a group of students that always sat in the same section in the institutional group and I'm
pretty sure none of the conversations changed their minds. I'm not even sure they got a deeper meaning. Also, for some in the class, I don't think they gained in self-awareness. No other participant responded. Roger’s feedback was given great consideration, both in the creation of categories that addressed the course’s failures, but also as a continued reflection on any potential bias directed towards seeking positive learning outcome themes at the expense of missing the experience’s shortcomings.

**Triangulation.** The multiple modalities of data collection in this study allowed for there to be substantial opportunities for triangulation of the findings. Triangulation was available through the use of both my in-class observations, the class recordings, and the student’s reflections on these events in their interviews and weekly questionnaires. Furthermore, triangulation, solely through the lens of the participant was possible through the use of both their interview and questionnaires. Did what they expressed during their interview match with what they had shared and/or expressed in their weekly questionnaire? Due to the time lapse between when the questionnaires were completed and events experienced and the post-course assessment, this factor became important and helpful to the study.

**Significance of the Study**

Despite these limitations, I believe this study has significance in its empirical exploration of an experientially based course with intentions to produce adult metacognitive development. As was discussed earlier, the growing concerns with adults’ readiness for a growingly complex world has led to the call for, and the struggle to, successfully develop methods of advancing adult education and improving individuals’ metacognitive capacities (Lin, 2001). Despite this, only a few successful strategies are being utilized for adult metacognitive development at this point in time (Dawson, 2008).
This study questions if case-in-point can be a successful means towards promoting this metacognitive development and whether or not it has the potential to open a discussion into the importance and need for the use of more emergent pedagogies in the modern classroom. Thus, this study’s inquiry answers the call of many in educational research to seek and investigate “how” and in “what ways” learning strategies can meet the challenges of this growing complexity crisis. Thus, this study represents a significant step in the educational research effort to critically examine and foster new methods of developing complex adult thinkers.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Research Question One

In this first section of the findings chapter, I will explore how participants described their experience with case-in-point (CIP) pedagogy during the fall 2016 Integral Leadership and Practice course at the University of San Diego. I will offer a thematic analysis of the participants’ descriptions—including perspectives on the case-in-point course structure, their personal experience with the CIP teaching staff, and what they felt had positively or negatively impacted their complex learning and growth in the course. These findings will attempt to answer research question one and its related sub-question: How do adult students in the USD course Integral Leadership and Practice (ILP) describe their experience with case-in-point pedagogy (CIP)? And given students’ descriptions, what aspects of the course and CIP, if any, support or inhibit their complex learning and growth?

In research question one’s thematic analysis, I have focused largely on sharing the participants’ own recollections and experiences through direct quotations from their interviews. While other data collected in my observation notes, the participants’ written work, and other course documents were helpful in the process of triangulation, the main intention in answering the first research question (and its sub-question) was to, “invite the reader to glimpse the [sic] courses through the students’ eyes,” and perspectives (Harris, 2002, p.108). Thus, analysis focused predominately on the themes that emerged from the study’s interviews.

Refining Thematic Categories

During the early stages of analysis, it appeared that several salient classroom events, shared moments, or even assignments would become their own thematic categories, largely due
to the frequency with which the participants had referenced them. These salient moments included recollections of the same class conversations about racism in large and institutional group meetings, the students’ opinions of the 3-2-1 Shadow Exercise\(^3\), and the shared experiences during the 2016 presidential election night class. While Guba and Lincoln (1981) assert that the frequency with which something is mentioned can guide a researcher towards the most “comprehensive and illuminating” categories possible, I resolved that, despite this guideline, the frequency with which an event was mentioned was not always the best way, and certainly not the only way, to categorize data, especially in this study (Merriam & Tisdall, 2006, p. 214).

Indeed, it was not the frequency with which the participants’ spoke about an event that yielded categories most “responsive to the purpose of the research,” but rather the conceptual lens which the participants used to perceive, describe, and react to that event and its impact on their personal learning (Merriam & Tisdall, 2006, p. 214). Had the conversation on racism directed them towards frustration with authority? To greater personal awareness? To a greater or lesser appreciation for the CIP course structure? Those were the relevant questions in this study, not how often participants talked about the conversation about racism. Therefore, to be more “responsive to purpose” in my coding, descriptions of these frequently shared events were put into categories focused more directly on the participants’ internal perceptions and reactions to the event, rather than the event itself (Merriam & Tisdell, 2006).

**Thematic Analysis: Exploring Students’ Experiences of the Course**

The central theme that emerged during the analysis of data for research question one (regarding participants experience) was that of “CIP Pedagogy as Different Than Other

\(^3\) Explanation of 3-2-1 Shadow exercise can be found here: https://integrallife.com/the-3-2-1-shadow-process/ (See Appendix H)
Traditional Course Structures.” From there the analysis then expanded into three additional categories, and multiple sub-categories, that evaluated the more nuanced descriptions of the participants’ experiences with CIP, and the elements that supported or inhibited their learning and growth during the course. These categories and subcategories include:

1. CIP Pedagogy as Different in an *Uncomfortable* Way
   a. Impact of Identity
   b. Intense Emotional Experiences
   c. Difficult Subject Matter Discussions

2. CIP Pedagogy as Different in an *Impactful* Way to their Learning and Growth
   a. Course Readings and Concepts
   b. Large Group Case-in-Point Discussion Experience
   c. Third Hour Systems Analysis
   d. The Role Played by Authority/Facilitators

3. CIP Pedagogy as Different in an *Unhelpful* Way to their Learning and Growth
   a. Student Confusion
   b. Unhealthy Large Group Experience
   c. Negative Experiences with the Teaching Staff

**CIP Pedagogy as Different Than Other Traditional Course Structures**

The first theme that emerged from interviews concerned how different, and often how unfamiliar, each of the study’s participants was with case-in-point pedagogy at the start of the course and, consequently, their view of CIP as exceedingly different from the pedagogies employed in their previous school experiences. In fact, for six of the seven participants, this was
their very first experience with case-in-point pedagogy⁴ (or any instruction experientially similar). In addition, all seven participants were enrolled because the class was a mandatory requirement for their graduate degree.⁵

The assessment of CIP as considerably different from other learning experiences was a conclusion not solely gleaned from the participants’ interviews. Rather, the assertion that CIP (and the *Integral Leadership and Practice* course) would provide a “different classroom experience” was also explicitly stated in the course syllabus document (2016):

> This course design and classroom experience is more intelligible if you set aside expectations based on previous experiences of traditional classrooms and conceptualize this course more in terms of settings such as sports fields, science labs or design studios – spaces where theory, instruction, coaching, experimentation, feedback and practice intersect and overlap. (p. 2)

While this statement from the course syllabus was not directly referenced by the study’s participants during interviews, its message paralleled a great deal with how many attempted to describe the differences they felt between their experiences in the CIP classroom and other more traditional classrooms.

One participant, Sarah, noted that her other graduate level classes at USD were, “more comfortable because I’m more used to that style…the PowerPoints and talking,” while the experiences in the CIP course were “just completely night and day” in comparison, as well as “very uncomfortable and different from the classic learning style.” Participant Michelle also

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⁴ The ⁷th participant (Ross) had taken the Heifetz Adaptive Leadership course previously at Harvard University. However, this participant still spoke to the differences he noticed between the USD case-in-point experience and more traditional classrooms during his interview

⁵ A requirement that was removed in 2018 for the USD Leadership Studies programs
echoed this perspective, stating CIP was “unlike anything I’d ever done before,” largely due to “the fact that the teachers weren’t doing that standard teaching.”

This view of case-in-point as a profoundly different classroom experience was shared by all seven of the participants during their interviews, with each noting the specific ways in which they felt the pedagogy and course differed from any other they had taken previously. Furthermore, analysis revealed that when participants described their experience with case-in-point as different they did so largely from three distinct perspectives: (1) different in an uncomfortable way, (2) different in an impactful way, and (3) different in a confusing or unhelpful way for their learning and growth. Data from the participant interviews provided rich descriptions into each of these thematic categories that will now be discussed in more detail.

**CIP Pedagogy as Different in an Uncomfortable Way**

One way that participants articulated the differences they felt in the CIP classroom was to use the lens of discomfort to talk about their experience in the course. However, participants’ experiences of CIP as different in an uncomfortable way were varied because of the individual reasoning each gave for feeling uncomfortable in the classroom. Such reasoning included (but was not limited to) expressions of discomfort with how a participant’s (or others’) identities or personal characteristics impacted class engagement, the discomfort participants felt with the intensity and type of emotional engagement experienced throughout the semester, and the discomfort with how difficult “real world” subject matter was addressed in class. Several participants’ experiences of case-in-point as different in an uncomfortable way will now be discussed in more detail.

*The Impact of Identity*
Sarah, who earlier was quoted as stating that case-in-point was “very uncomfortable and different from the classic learning style” continued to say that “if you are someone who is more extroverted and talkative, you will probably like it because there’s a lot of verbal processing that goes on. But for someone introverted,” a term that she used to define herself during the interview, “you might not like it because there’s so many people that you don’t know, and the topics are so personal…I’m not really used to people getting emotional in my classes...academic stuff tends to [usually] be very like in your brain [sic].” Sarah also shared that she experienced generalized anxiety and discomfort whenever she came into the classroom because of “feeling the pressure to speak, but [also] being who I am [introverted] and not wanting to speak.” She believed that her introverted personality did not comfortably “fit” the demands of the classroom which led to a constant sense of discomfort for her.

Mary, a 24-year-old white woman and master’s student who had recently completed her undergraduate studies, similarly expressed discomfort with herself in the case-in-point classroom; however, Mary’s sense of discomfort radiated not from being an introvert (or extrovert), but from her own identification of herself and her experiences as “privileged” in comparison to the other students. Mary stated:

I felt like a lot of the conversations that we had were about really hard stuff, really deep stuff. I’m not saying that I’ve never had anything deep happen in my life but not in comparison to a lot of my peers in that class. People who have been targeted for their racial identity...[and] there is one woman, who has a transgender husband. And I don’t know what that’s like…I come from a very privileged life. It’s true and I know that. Maybe I could’ve spoken to that, but I don’t know if it would’ve done anything. I don’t know how it would’ve helped or impacted anyone.
Mary expressed that her perception of herself as “privileged” made her uncomfortable and uncertain about engaging with those whose stories revealed more hardship or discrimination, experiences she felt she had not similarly endured.

A third participant, fifty-two-year-old Roger, did not discuss personal discomfort with his own identity, but rather the discomfort with identity that he witnessed in others during course discussions. According to Roger, this classroom discomfort emanated from a larger preoccupation in the class with the relationship between a student’s identity and the validity they were given to speak up and be heard in the class discussions. Roger stated:

Unbelievable, incredible, desire and process across the students to bend people and identify them by their surface features. It’s very, very interesting to me. My last name is Gonzalez. I am Hispanic by origin or heritage; however, you want to categorize…There was this continuous trend that, based on your surface features, you [can or] can’t talk for a group. Blacks can talk for Blacks, Hispanics could talk for Hispanics, women for women, queer for queers And the words you want to use again, gets a whole separate language manner/political correctness issues that I won’t go into…Then, it even morphed to well, until I know more about you, I can’t process your words or I can’t take your words as – it’s like, if you couldn’t identify with it, if you didn’t have a life story that gave you credence to talk about it. And I saw that as a constant theme and that may exist across the university, of an inability of students and at least specifically LEAD 600 [students], to create an atmosphere where it’s people’s thoughts, words and ideas that we’re focusing into as a classroom—vice identity politics, quite frankly, and identity and issues of identity.
Throughout the interview Roger circled back several times to discuss how he felt the LEAD 600 class experienced discomfort around identity in the classroom, and from his perspective, how this discomfort impacted who could (or couldn’t) speak up in the classroom.

**Intense Emotional Experiences**

Beyond issues of identity, many participants also asserted that the case-in-point classroom experience was *different in an uncomfortable way* due to the larger role that emotion played in the classroom experience. Indeed, many participants felt that the course required a different type of emotional engagement than they were previously accustomed to experiencing in an academic setting. Participant Gwen discussed the impact of confronting emotions in the case-in-point classroom by noting, “We have so many defenses built up and so much numbness and so much projection… [so the class] it’s uncomfortable, it’s extremely uncomfortable.”

Roger also noted the heightened role of emotion and discomfort stating, “It was interesting, there were things that made people in our class cry,” in particular, when the first set of reflection papers was returned. During that class a large majority of students received less than a passing grade on their first graded assignment—producing a great deal of emotional discomfort. Roger continued:

That was one of the most emotional classes we had. One person walked out of class crying. Their funding is dependent on their GPA. I personally felt that in this age of, everybody gets a gold star, there are people who had never been graded that low in a paper. And they’ve never been forced to reflect on it in a classroom environment like

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6 A large majority of students do not receive a passing grade on the first questionnaire assignment in the ILP course. The questionnaire is an assignment uniquely given in its same format every week during the semester—with the hope that students capacity for systemic reflection (and in some ways metacognitive perspective) would develop and improve as they engaged with a new way of thinking, examining, and analyzing in the case-in-point classroom.
that. So, they really triggered into it. It was interesting what really got the juices going in that classroom.

According to Roger, the students’ heightened emotional discomfort was not solely the result of receiving a low grade, but by the course’s unique request to reflect on that grade and discuss in class the impact of that low grade on them personally. As Roger stated, “They’ve never been forced to reflect on it in a classroom environment like that. So [the students were] really triggered into it.” This noticeable difference in case-in-point structure, asking students to outwardly confront and reflect on their low grades during an open class discussion, represented a notable difference in the course style and structure.

Gwen also discussed the return of the first questionnaire grades as a deeply emotional and uncomfortable event. She shared that receiving the low grades and the subsequent class discussion, “brought up a lot of internal stuff for me. I mean, stuff that I hadn’t thought of since I had been in high school, like pressure from my parents and that whole thing came up [sic].” While Gwen believed there was a purpose behind examining the low grades, she also stated that it was difficult emotionally, not only for her, but for others in the course:

   It was like, I know this is some sort of process, I don’t know why they are doing this, I know there is some sort of process, there is some purpose to it but it’s really a bummer.
   And a lot of people were expressing a lot of upset emotions over that whole thing [sic].

The theme of intense emotional engagement and subsequent discomfort during the course was not limited to the return of questionnaires grades.

One participant, Michelle, felt that the emotional intensity was not necessarily related to a specific event, such as the discussion of low grades, but that discomfort and emotional intensity existed in the overall tone and posture that the course created during each large group session.
She commented on this emotionally intense atmosphere stating, “[In class] the terror that you feel like, oh my God, is somebody going to yell at each other, am I going to be yelled at, am I going to say something wrong?” And yet, while expressing her strong discomfort with the intense emotions produced during the case-in-point course, Michelle also conceded that in approaching “leadership things” in the real world, a stress-free and comfortable group consensus rarely, if ever, occurs (this data point will be further explored in the findings section on the course as *different but impactful*).

Michelle was not alone in grappling with the unique emotional requirements of the case-in-point experience. Sarah and Ross also offered descriptions of the course where they became emotional and uncomfortable, postures they had not often taken in an academic setting. Sarah stated, “I really wanted to [talk in class] but no one was making space for it. So I got really emotional and started telling it like it is and I definitely feel like that was a heart moment” or emotional experience. Similarly, Ross shared that during one class session he became, “…pretty much emotional [sic]. My purpose [as a student] was completely changed. To me it was much deeper. I’m not sure how I could express it.”

**Difficult Subject Matter Discussions**

While several expressions of discomfort in this study related to issues of personal identity and emotional intensity, analysis also revealed that a relationship existed between participants’ discomfort and the way the CIP course discussions tackled certain subject-matter or real-life topics. As Mary stated, “I felt like a lot of the times people were talking about very deep personal things…some of the topics were really hard.”

Thirty-year-old Michelle echoed Mary’s sentiments, stating that while other graduate classes at USD created spaces where she felt, “I can breathe [sic]” the course that used case-in-
point invoked quite a different reaction. “This [class] is very serious,” she stated, “You can feel it when you walk into the room.” Michelle connected this level of seriousness in the CIP classroom, and its ensuing discomfort, to the parallel tensions of the real current events and controversies occurring outside of the classroom. She stated, “Everything I feel like this class has gone through has been a huge parallel to what’s going on in the outside world right now. Incredibly so.” Others like Brett agreed that their discomfort was a direct result of the controversial current events being discussed in the class and the ensuing conflict or discomfort that often emerged when these topics were broached.

The findings from the study’s interviews, that discussions on current event topics were experienced differently in a CIP classroom, is supported by both the syllabus and the conceptual CIP literature from Heifetz & Linksy (2002) and Parks (2005). They write that while many traditional classrooms actively discuss volatile current events and societal challenges, students in a case-in-point classroom are asked to discuss these topics not from external or third-person perspectives, but from their own first-person experience with the real-world topic (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Parks, 2005). To better understand how CIP addresses difficult subject matter differently, and how this difference impacted my findings in this category, I will now offer a short discussion of CIP’s facilitation framework and concepts.

Parks (2005) outlines in her book on CIP facilitation, Leadership Can Be Taught, that the case-in-point classroom directs students not to speak about their previous leadership challenges or experiences in hindsight; but rather, asks them to identify and speak to the real-world dynamics and leadership challenges they see occurring within the classroom itself—issues that could potentially allow students to address the classroom expressions of larger societal issues such as racism, gender equality, LGBTQ rights, politics, and more.
For example, a woman who struggles to be heard by male colleagues in her everyday workplace might notice that she is feeling that same dynamic in the CIP classroom—women struggling to be heard in discussions. Instead of speaking about this leadership challenge with a comment such as, “sometimes women in my workplace go unnoticed or unheard,” CIP pedagogy encourages her to examine if this same dynamic, women being silenced during discussions, exists in the CIP classroom as well (Parks, 2005). Now this student has offered a real-world leadership issue, occurring in real-time in the classroom, for herself and the group, to examine, discuss, and potentially learn from.

This foundational CIP concept, known as noticing or speaking to the “here-and-now,” attempts to illustrate that the systemic dynamics and issues that exist in the “real world” can also occur in similar ways inside the classroom. Thus, according to Parks (2005) the real-world dynamics that are alive in the classroom would hypothetically offer more robust scenarios for students to study. Case-in-point constantly asks the students to check in with themselves about what they are thinking, feeling, and noticing internally and in the group dynamics of the classroom. Parks (2005) writes that, “student are encouraged to see the class itself as a social system of which they are a part and a studio-laboratory in which they can practice acts of leadership and learn from their experiments” (p. 49). Therefore, the real-world topics being discussed in the CIP classroom during the fall 2016 semester were not themselves different, but how the issues were engaged with and discussed (often with more emotion and personalization) was drastically different for participants.

Brett, a 33-year-old white male master’s student, expressed that his experience of discomfort in the CIP classroom often emanated from broaching difficult personal topics in this unique here-and-now way stating, “There’s been a lot of stuff happening socially and
politically...people don’t feel like their voices are being heard, on both sides. And I think that creates tension [in the classroom].” From my class observation notes, the “stuff happening socially and politically,” or the real-world issues most frequently addressed during the fall of 2016 included: (1) the current state of racism and racial dynamics in the United States, and more specifically the tensions between police officers and the black community and (2) the polarized views on the 2016 election outcome. Brett spoke specifically to one of these topics, the 2016 election, and the ensuing discomfort and frustration he felt during that discussion:

[The] class after the election where people were frustrated and wanted to hear a Trump supporter speak their mind. That was never going to be successful…I was in the back and I was starting to get really agitated and flustered…I didn’t vote for Trump, but in that moment I could’ve explained why people did, based on the way people were acting in that class.

Triangulating Brett’s statement with my observation notes and the class recordings from that evening, it is true that, during the election night class, a large group of students’ openly and angrily voiced their opposition to Trump’s victory and how upset they felt in class. My notes also suggested there were no Trump defenders that vocalized their opinions.

Furthermore, many students in the classroom vocally expressed their outward dislike and even disgust with Trump’s policies and/or any individuals who would support Trump’s views. Simultaneously, there was also a marked effort by some in the class to communicate a desire to hear from a Trump supporter to better understand their position (Researcher observation notes: 11/7/16). However, no student that supported Trump vocalized their viewpoints during that
night’s class—which supports Brett’s assessment that a heightened discomfort existed around sharing an “unpopular” viewpoint.

Participant Michelle noted that she experienced a similar sense of discomfort during the election night class but, differently than Brett, felt it produced a pivotal learning moment for her. She reflected on the election night discussions by stating, “I think the tension and the conflict is important and the differing ideas [are important].” She further examined her experience of discomfort during the election night class when she stated:

With the conflict and the anxiety and things left unsaid [that night] …what am I so afraid of? Like I sat in a semester with people I didn’t know, and we went through it…And difficult conversations are part of life, but I had never been given a safe place to deal with conflict…So, I kind of felt like that was also the point like, we’re trying things out and in a safe space that’s not exactly, completely safe.

Throughout the interview Michelle continually used the term, “safe” and “unsafe” to describe the classroom environment. In Michelle’s explanation of these “unsafe” scenarios, conflicting views often led to anxiety, anger, and discomfort for herself and others in the classroom. No lack of physical safety in the classroom should be implied from Michelle’s usage of this word. However, what Michelle attempted to discuss and better understand was: what are the appropriate boundaries, limitations, and amount of conflict and vulnerability appropriate in a classroom setting—a tenuous balance that many participants similarly grappled with when reflecting on the course experience and their own discomfort.

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7 “Unpopular” according to Brett’s assessment of this particular class population.
Michelle continued to examine and wrestle with the differences between safe and unsafe, comfort and discomfort, and the opportunities for learning in the CIP classroom by noting a specific incident of discomfort from that same election night:

I noticed that one girl, Bri, she said, “This [classroom] isn’t a safe space for me,” but then she went ahead and said, “Anyone who’s a Trump voter, I don’t want to hear from you right now” …I also do feel that way [about not liking Trump] but also [thought what Bri said] didn’t feel okay either. Because she’s essentially saying, this space should only be safe for me in the way that I feel that it should be. And we’ve got 40 people here so it can’t be safe for everybody…I think trying to make everything safe is too far.

In this reflection, Michelle gave voice to the difficult tension and discomfort that came with individuals passionately expressing different personal viewpoints with great variance of opinion—and the way case-in-point pedagogy facilitated this heightened discussion and conflict around difficult topics. However, the election night class was not the only subject that produced discomfort in the CIP classroom—or caused participants to grapple with the dynamics of emotional safety and vulnerability during the fall 2016 course.

Below is a table outlining additional examples of participants expressing their discomfort in class as it related to discussions regarding racism in America—a topic at the forefront of current events during the fall of 2016 with recent police shootings and the burgeoning Black Lives Matter movement (Table 3).

Table 3

Experiences of Discomfort with Discussions of Race and Racism in the CIP Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Experiences of Discomfort in the CIP Classroom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>I know it’s a hard subject [racism] to talk about especially for people who have traumas with it. For me, it’s hard for me to speak on it. I felt like, a lot</td>
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of the times, that's why I was silent was because how can someone speak on it that hasn’t lived it. Similarly, to a lot of the conversations, I just felt like I didn’t have enough experience to speak on it…It was really hard for me to have that conversation. I have a lot of Black friends and for me to have those conversations with them outside just one on one is so easy. I feel like when there are too many people [like in this class], things get misconstrued and taken out of context. For example, the first class, Dr. Smith said that an adaptive challenge is race and she got called out. Somebody was like, race isn’t a challenge, race isn’t a problem, racism is a problem. Things like that; just language, how you say something. And if you’re not educated enough to be able to speak on it then it causes problems [for you in the class]. (Mary)

Mary

There was an article about admitting your racism and that everything would be okay if people were just to admit their prejudice. So, it probed one of our classmates to stand up and say that he uses the N word amongst his friends. And he was doing it because the article kind of probed him to say that. And as you can imagine, it started this huge uproar of tension back and forth like, don’t say that word, da, da, da. I don’t believe in saying it either, but he was doing it because of a reading that he read earlier on. So, it was almost just like, why, what did they think was going to happen?… I think if the conversation arises and you are with people who you trust and you know and they know you at least and know that it’s not coming from – because I didn’t think that was coming from a hostile place when he said it. It wasn’t like he was yelling at someone saying the N word. He was trying to make it a learning experience. And I understood that, but I can also understand the Black student perspective where it’s like, that word’s very triggering and it’s not ok. I just remember being very overwhelmed in that class. And I’d never ever gotten like that in that class ever. (Mary)

Sarah

The most controversial [discussion] happened only a couple weeks in, it was when Ian said F the police and it just kind of spiraled into this big thing…When that happened, I was super nervous. My heart started racing. [But] It ended up being one of the things that taught me the most, in the class because I got to hear from a lot of voices that tended to be more marginalized and not really in my circle of people that I know. So I got to hear a lot of stories and perspectives about how it feels to be African American and that ended up being huge. (Sarah)

Brett

This might sound really terrible but working for the Y, we’re big on diversity and I can’t tell you how many diversity trainings I’ve been to about race and gender equality. I don’t want to hear it all the time and I felt like I was hearing it all the time in class…So, it’s just frustrating to
continuously hear the same stuff about transgender and you’re gay and your Black, you’re White, can we all get along. I’m just tired of it…[The conversations in the CIP class were done in] a drastically different way. When you’re at Y training, you don’t have people up there talking about their own personal life…I think if it was less in your face, it would’ve been more positive, but it was so in your face that it’s frustrating and like, okay, I get it, can we just move on.” (Brett)

The discussions about race and racism that occurred in the CIP classroom produced experiences of discomfort for several of the participants. However, experiences of discomfort with the topic were nuanced and varied based on the individual participant. For example, Mary (a white woman) felt that she lacked the perspective and personal experience to participate in discussions about race, Sarah and Mary both felt discomfort around the language that was used and the heated interactions that it produced between students, and Brett discussed being uncomfortable and frustrated with how often the topic was broached in the classroom.

Across the several different examples of discomfort that the study’s data produced, the overarching theme of the CIP classroom as different in an uncomfortable way was repeatedly reiterated by participants. For the purposes of triangulation, I then analyzed documents related to the facilitation of CIP to see if the students’ experiences were in line with how the pedagogical style is intended to be experienced in the classroom. In doing so I found that there was again alignment with the participants’ descriptions of discomfort and Sharon Parks’ assertion in her book *Leadership Can Be Taught*[^8] (2005) that case-in-point pedagogy intends to create a certain level of discomfort for students in the classroom; in fact, the type of discomfort Parks described was quite like what was being expressed by the data in this study.

[^8]: Parks’ *Leadership Can Be Taught* (2005) is the most notable research produced on the use of CIP pedagogy in the classroom and is utilized as a teaching guide for facilitator in the Integral Leadership and Practice course at USD
Parks’ explanations, describing the intent of the CIP classroom and its differences from a traditional classroom, seem to offer a scaffolding for the varied expressions of discomfort, frustration, and unease given by the participants as they outlined their uniquely “different” experiences with case-in-point. Parks (2005) wrote:

[Heifetz and his colleagues] have concluded that if the new global commons where those who offer leadership must now contend with a myriad of significant challenges is complex, diverse, and fraught with ambiguity, then the space devoted to learning effective leadership for such a world might be usefully similar—a bit of a swamp. This “swamp” like environment described by Parks (2005) is a metaphor supported by the findings of confusion and discomfort voiced by participants in this study.

However, when looking at the experiences of discomfort shared by the participants in this study, one significant data point was also quite clear to me—most of the participants offering these specific experiences with discomfort self-identified as white. Whether it was struggling with their identity in the context of the class, expressing frustration or discomfort with what they perceived to be “identity politics” in the classroom, or feeling uncomfortable with the fixation on sexual or racial identity and discrimination conversations—these descriptive experiences came from the perspectives of white study participants.

Unfortunately, the experiences of minority students in the fall 2016 classroom—and whether or not they had similar or different experiences of discomfort in the classroom—cannot be determined by this particular study because there was no significant representation of minority students within the participant group. Most of the participants in this study, apart from one Asian male student, self-identified as white during interviews. While the study did begin with two African American participants and one Latina participant, these three participants did
not complete all elements of the study (most notably the interview and/or assessment portions); thus, their perspectives could not be included in the data analysis process, a great limitation to the study.

However, through my observations and the data analysis process, I have formed a hypothesis that individuals from underrepresented or minority groups might also share experiences of discomfort in the CIP classroom, but perhaps for patently different reasons. This study found that the discomfort expressed by white participants emanated largely from the frustration or uneasiness when facing topics they either did not regularly confront, consider, or discuss—or participants shared that they felt too much time and energy was being allotted for these same topics—specifically the conversation around racism in the United States (see Table 3 above for examples).

Thus, while the experiences presented in this study should be considered reliable in their individualized context (giving voice to the individual experiences of this study’s participants), the findings presented do not offer a generalizable representation as to why all case-in-point students might experience discomfort. Rather, it seems logical that a more diverse population of students might describe their reasons for discomfort in the class much differently based on their varying backgrounds and personal viewpoints. However, despite the lack of diversity offered in this study, the data from both the participant interviews and researcher observations makes a strong case that discomfort—in its broadest sense—does resonate as part of the greater experience for most students in the case-in-point classroom.

Beyond the wide range of experiences that labeled CIP as different in an uncomfortable way—there was also a great deal of data that emerged regarding the ways in which the case-in-point experience was different in impactful ways to personal learning—or conversely, in
unhelpful ways for participants. Thus, the next two sections will attempt to address research question one and its sub-question by discussing the ways participants’ felt the case-in-point pedagogical experience fell into two inverse categories: (1) CIP pedagogy as different in an impactful way to learning and growth and (2) CIP pedagogy as different in an unhelpful or confusing way to learning and growth.

**CIP Pedagogy as Different in an Impactful Way**

Throughout the interviews each of the participants shared ways in which the case-in-point experience had been different in an impactful way to their learning and growth. Some participants were more gregarious in their praise than others, but all found something in the pedagogies uniqueness’ that resonated with them as impactful to their learning. In this study, elements of the case-in-point experience were considered impactful if they were mentioned by at least two participants during interviews. Utilizing that standard, the elements that participants’ felt made case-in-point different in impactful ways to learning and growth coalesced into four different categories. These categories included:

1. Course Readings and Concepts (Table 4)
2. Large Group CIP Discussion Experience (Table 5)
3. Third Hour Systems Analysis (Table 6)
4. The Role Played by Authority/Facilitators (Table 7)

Each of these categories have been formatted into individual tables displaying the supporting quotations from the participant interviews.

**Course Readings and Concepts**

Several participants shared that the readings from the course (and subsequent concepts) were extremely impactful to their overall learning and growth. The course readings (often
spoken about in a general sense) were mentioned by six out of seven participants as one of the most impactful aspects of their experience. The readings for the course were organized around specific topical themes for each week of the semester, yet according to my observational notes, they were rarely discussed during the course’s large group sessions (as might be done in a more typical classroom).

In fact, attempts by students to discuss the readings in a more familiar (or traditional) academic manner were discouraged by the teaching staff. Michelle discussed the course’s unique approach to utilizing readings during our interview:

I actually liked the readings. I thought the readings were very relevant…[but] we would read, and we wouldn’t talk about it and we would read and we wouldn’t talk about it. And I was like, why are we even doing the readings? And then around weeks three, four, five, all of a sudden, I was seeing things [happening] in class that I had read about and I was applying things back and forth.

This new and different application of readings became one of the most impactful elements of the course for Michelle who also stated during her interview that those who did not complete the readings could not fully reap the benefits of the course due to the importance they played in understanding the case-in-point experience. She offered that several other students would comment, “I don’t get this class, but they wouldn’t ever do the reading…[and] they are just not going to get it…And if they don’t think that they need to do the readings then it just stumbles from there.”

Below are additional quotations from participants, speaking to the unique nature of the course readings and the subsequent positive impact they had on their case-in-point course experience.
Table 4

*Elements of CIP that were Different in an Impactful Way to Learning and Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Readings and Concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I really like all of the readings because they were really helpful and interesting, for the most part…[The best reading was] probably Leadership on the Line because I learned so many new concepts.” (Sarah)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The readings were great…a lot of them were really helpful… I really liked that book [Leadership on the Line by Heifetz].” (Brett)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Most helpful aspect of the class was the readings…” (Mary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The readings were excellent. A lot of the readings gave me a different perspective on things and how to approach things. And I am saving them for future work. I was familiar with Heifetz previously, but this is a deep dive into Heifetz. So, I liked that a lot about Heifetz and his practitioner perspective of adaptive leadership that we went through in the classroom a little bit.” (Roger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel like [the course reading] has given me a way to think about [challenges]. It’s given me a map and I didn’t have that before, so I think it has been very helpful in that way…It just helps you take a step back for a little bit.” (Michelle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[The readings] were one of the best things about the course. The readings were amazing.” (Gwen)</td>
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</table>

Participant Roger also touted the positive role that the readings played in creating an impactful learning environment during the course—even when he didn’t feel in complete agreement with the concepts introduced:

> I think the material is excellent. I think the voyage of discovery in the class is excellent and important. You can’t lead if you don’t know self. These concepts, whether you’re a fan of Ken Wilber or not, or whether you’re a fan of Heifetz or not, these concepts are critically important to execution of leadership.” (Roger)

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9 In other points during his interview Roger discussed both the strengths and weaknesses he found in the theories from course readings—some of which he found helpful, and some that he disagreed with.
Roger was not the only one to specify the Heifetz readings and concepts when discussing the readings. The theory of Adaptive Leadership (and Heifetz) was also mentioned by four additional participants.

Adaptive Leadership was introduced to the master’s students through the assigned reading of Heifetz and Linsky’s 2002 book *Leadership on the Line* and to the doctoral students in their 1994 book *Leadership without Easy Answers*. One of the central tenants of Adaptive Leadership theory involves identifying the differences between the adaptive and technical challenges we face. According to Heifetz & Linsky (2002), the differentiation between adaptive and technical challenges exists not in the level of complexity or importance a challenge presents, but in whether or not a successful solution or process already exists to tackle the problem.

For example, open-heart surgery is a massively complex and serious task for physicians; however, this surgery would largely be considered a technical (not adaptive) challenge due to the fact that the processes, protocols, and a general understanding of how to successfully complete open-heart surgery is already established prior to surgery. Indeed, while difficult and extremely complicated, open-heart surgeries are successfully completed every day.

In contrast, an adaptive challenge is one where no existing understanding or protocol is available. For example, there is not an established step-by-step guide for trying to increase the number of young adults engaged in the voting process. Varying ideas, methods, beliefs, assumptions, and perspectives on this challenge exist. It is also an issue that does not necessarily have an agreed upon outcome for success—is success 100% voter participation, 25% participation? Furthermore, to some, the issue of young voter participation may not even be considered a problem or challenge at all—they are satisfied with the number of young people voting. Therefore, this issue could be considered an adaptive challenge.
According to Heifetz and Linsky (2002), it is the multitude of adaptive challenges emerging in our growingly complex society that demands individuals exercise leadership. This theory—and its basic differentiation between adaptive and technical challenges—was at the heart of how the case-in-point large group sessions were approached and facilitated. The emphasis always being in examining the adaptive rather than technical challenges that were present in the classroom.

Several of the participants spoke about the positive impact of reframing issues according to Adaptive Leadership theory, stating that seeing the theory in practice offered, “a different perspective on things and how to approach things” and illuminated the difficulty that “adaptive change” and “loss” present to contemporary leaders facing real-world challenges. Participant Sarah even suggested that the CIP course experience itself was innately an adaptive challenge, “The whole concept of adaptive change, the whole idea of it…That was really cool to learn about…[because] change is adaptive…[experiencing] the class itself was an adaptive challenge.”

Gwen also shared that the concept of Adaptive Leadership offered her a new language and framework to utilize when discussing leadership challenges with her colleagues and classmates. She stated that “[A classmate] and I are always talking about technical challenge, adaptive challenge and we’re talking about the elephants in the room… it’s like I have a new language now, which has been very cool.” Roger also saw Adaptive Leadership theory as an impactful to his learning and growth calling it “critically important to the execution of leadership” and stating:

That’s something you learn from this class. You learn from this class to break the mold, to break technical solutions. And you learn to embrace adaptive solutions… You’ve got to break those down, get through the scapegoating, get through the work avoidance, all
those things they talk about in the [Heifetz] book. [Adaptive Leadership] is an excellent tool to get there for good. To get there for this new global world.

In a more traditional fashion, the class also required the students to summarize their assigned readings in their weekly questionnaires, to evaluate whether they were completing the course readings. Gwen and others noted that the assignment to briefly summarize the readings, also had a positive impact on her experience, “The summaries were really good because I could extract the basic points from the readings which the readings, I loved. They were one of the best things about the course. The readings were amazing.” Four other participants also affirmed the impact that the course readings had on their experience, noting that the readings were “helpful and interesting,” “relevant,” “excellent,” and gave a “different perspective on things.”

**Large Group Case-in-Point Experience**

As was discussed in the methodology chapter, the execution of case-in-point pedagogy involved several different class elements that each contributed to the overall experience (i.e.-readings, questionnaires, small groups, large group, systems analysis, etc.). However, the large group discussions were where the unique “here-and-now” elements of CIP pedagogy and adaptive leadership were most directly facilitated. Thus, the large group experience brought out strong opinions from the participants, both as impactful and unhelpful to their learning and growth. I will first present findings on the positive impact of the large group experience on learning and growth (the negative perceptions of the large group experience will be thoroughly discussed in the next section of the findings chapter).

Gwen shared that the CIP large group “was like a big laboratory,” and that it allowed her “to be able to see how different people expressed [differing opinions] and reacted to and dealt with [differing opinions].” She described the large group experience as “going through a
process” with other students. Brett also spoke to how different and impactful he found the large group:

...this is like a real-life experience. This is why people are out there, Black Lives Matter, why they are fighting with people who are Blue Lives Matter, you know [sic]. Like these large groups not understanding each other. And if you’re put into a large group that is so diverse with so many different opinions, you’re going to argue. And it’s like, okay, they’re teaching you how to understand a different perspective. Yourself and what triggers you to think the way you do and I think that’s really important [sic]… It’s a different kind of learning that people aren’t used to. And I think the professors that have never sat through the class are just getting students’ perspectives on why they don’t like the class and that it’s frustrating for them. I feel like that’s what this class is trying to teach you that things are frustrating, it’s how you deal with it how you manage that change.

Brett’s description of the large group experience further highlighted that the CIP classroom was quite a different experience for many students. He described the CIP large group experience as one that forces students to “understand different perspectives” and “manage change” in the classroom. Brett also noted that the experience was “really great because [it’s] really challenging people…And to learn how to deal with that personally is important.” Mary also valued the way the large group helped to offer a different perspective on leadership:

I definitely would recommend this course to others because it gives you a different perspective than any other course I’ve ever taken. I valued the freedom that the course gives you. I know a lot of people have a hard time with [the large group] but for me, I felt
like it was cool that we got to make the experience what we wanted to make it rather than having the professors scaffold that.

When discussing the large group experience Michelle’s also indicated that she would recommend the course experience to others, “because it [was] unlike anything that I’d ever done before.” Michelle also found it impactful to her learning because she felt “it was good for me to sit in conflict with people because if I want to teach people to change and tell them why then they’re not going to like it and I’m going to have to deal with that.”

In the previous section of findings, Michelle had discussed her discomfort with the emotional intensity of the course and large group session—but it was also something that she found to be impactful:

All of that [the emotional intensity in large group] is hard but my big buy in was, if I want to do any sort of leadership thing and if I want to teach people to change, it’s never going to be, all right, this is what we’re going to do, it’s going to be great, let’s go ahead and do it...You know, like it’s going to be hell sometimes and if I want to do this then I am going to have to learn how to be a little bit more personally strong and put up those boundaries.

Six out of seven study participants offered examples of the positive impact that the CIP large group had on their learning and growth. Table 5 offers several additional quotes from participants discussing their experience as impactful.

Table 5

Elements of CIP that were Different in an Impactful Way to Learning and Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large Group Case-in-Point Experience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I think case in point instruction style, classroom style, classroom structure is what brought out that much deeper, personal awareness…it was the strength to case in point. So, it wasn’t just the</td>
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</table>
readings. It wasn’t just time to sit on it. And it wasn’t just talking to people. It was a case in point environment that drove people into those roles, to say things, to be in a classroom environment where they were unafraid to say certain things.” (Roger)

“Quite frankly, the case in point classroom is asking what we want in every classroom. And it’s not accepting boorishness but it’s, particularly in the case in point classroom, is to going with it, the boorishness, in that spirit to learn and educate people that there is more to it [sic].” (Roger)

“[Its] really challenging people to be uncomfortable. I think that’s good…People are uncomfortable every day in their environments. And to learn how to deal with that personally, is important.” (Brett)

“There was one [large group] towards the end where I did speak up and it was very powerful.” (Sarah)

“[CIP large group] definitely gives you a sense of, you have a say in your learning and you have a control over that. And that’s empowering to know that your experience is really up to you. I felt like that was so real in this class…and trying to get outside of your comfort zone and push yourself to make decisions and realizing how your decisions could impact people both positively and negatively. (Mary)

“It is unlike anything that I’d ever done before. And I don’t think a lot of people are experienced in the type of group conflict situations that it puts you in. That was my perspective on it. I know other people got different things out of it. But for me, I felt like it was good for me to sit in conflict with people because if I want to teach people to change and tell them why then they’re not going to like it and I’m going to have to deal with that. So for me, that was good.” (Michelle)

Third Hour Systems Analysis

Another element of the case-in-point course mentioned by participants was the third hour systems analysis activity. This activity invited the large group to discuss one of the real-life leadership challenges or cases that had been presented to the small groups during the second hour. This systems analysis activity included the participation of the professor Dr. Smith, the teaching assistants, and all students. In some ways, this activity was reminiscent of a more traditional classroom structure: the professor was at the front of the room, there was a more orderly group discussion, and explanations were both sought and offered in response to a specific case study question.
However, the concepts utilized to analyze the case were still unique—with the students and professors looking for systems dynamics, relationships, values, behaviors and trends that the case presented—often analyzing the cases as a micro-representation of greater societal or systemic issues. For three participants this activity offered clarity as to why the case-in-point method and adaptive leadership were valuable learning concepts. In Table 6 quotations from these three participants interviews offer insight into this activity’s impact on their experience.

Table 6

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of CIP that were Different in an Impactful Way to Learning and Growth</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Third Hour Systems Analysis</strong></td>
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<td>“I think the third hour was kind of more of a, let’s put it all together… I think it’s more where you’re actually like, kind of putting what you’ve read into a practical application, talking about it…You’re getting both sides…The first hour where, this is the theory, let’s now practice. You weren’t actually practicing the theory. We’ll go in the small groups and we will challenge people to be a DA or a case presenter and talk about something they might not otherwise share. Or challenge somebody to do something different in class. And the third hour was like, okay, what just happened, let’s talk about it…It’s almost like you are floating and debriefing at the same time.” (Brett)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“...they took a small group session and they dug into it and looked at it from stakeholder’s perspective and all these different perspectives. I felt that was actually proper, classic classroom learning. I really saw some bells go on for people as they saw – the very next class we had, that third hour session, our instructor laid out on the board a couple different ways you can look at things from different stakeholder’s perspective. Or you can use the four quadrants. Or you can use those quadrants to really start jumping into the mechanics of stakeholders and where do you find the pain, where do you find the adaptive work... [that] was very effective at that. And I never saw that again.” (Roger)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“[I learned] just what the hell went wrong [in my real-world case example]. Why? Or what could I have done better? And I definitely learned what I could’ve done…from the systems analysis” (Michelle)</td>
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</table>

For Brett, Roger, and Michelle the third hour systems analysis offered clarity and tied together concepts from the large group discussions and the work done in small group case presentations. However, during the fall of 2016 this third hour systems analysis activity only
occurred three times during the semester. This was a significant change between the 2016 ILP course format and the format utilized during previous years of the course. In previous years, the third hour systems analysis activity took place almost every week of the semester (with very few exceptions), this allowed the systems analysis to become a regular part of the course routine, rather than a “special activity” as it appeared to students during the fall of 2016.

The three participants quoted in Table 6 indicated that the systems analysis activity connected the course concepts to real-world integration and application—effectively tying together the large group CIP discussions and small group case presentations. These three participants described the systems analysis activity as a “very effective,” “practical application,” and a helpful “debriefing” process for the course experience.

Ross, the only student who had previously taken a CIP course, was the fourth participant to speak of the importance of this course element; he stated that more engagement with systems case analysis in the third hour would further cement key adaptive leadership concepts for the students. In specific, he felt it reinforced the concept of being on the balcony (or taking a systems analysis approach) to leadership challenges—an idea he deemed quite difficult to understand in real-world application. He stated:

Yes, more of [large group case analysis] …because even the concept of getting on the balcony, that image is very clear but doing it is quite challenging. So in the third class [hour], if we do a group consultation work [another name for the systems analysis activity] as a large group or institution, we can learn from others.

In Ross’ opinion, too much time was taken participating in the actual CIP large group discussions and small group work, while not enough time was spent on the systems analysis and reflection process. Ross even went so far as to suggest that there be a change in the course
format to facilitate more “balcony” oriented or systems-oriented analysis and reflection during the class. Interestingly, Ross’ suggestions for the format aligned more similarly with the course format found in previous years of the ILP class which may be due to his previous exposure to another CIP course. Ross suggested:

So maybe 30 minutes…of case in point where we discuss different topics where some people got angry and some people cried, and then 30 minutes we reflect from the balcony; what happened? What did you see? So that kind of encourages us to be on the balcony to observe what happened. That would help to analyze small case groups as well. And in the large group, maybe we would have more chance to analyze, to diagnose [a] small case. We are able to come on the balcony again about this exercise [sic].

Ross’ insights mirrored thoughts I had as an observer—and was echoed by the four participants—that the systems analysis element during the third hour seemed to be pivotal to the personal learning and impact of the case-in-point experience. Discussion on the potential positives that the large group system’s analysis may have on the case-in-point course experience will be offered in chapter five.

Role Played by Authorities/Facilitators

One of the most controversial aspects of the case-in-point pedagogy for the study’s participants was the unique role played by the course professor and teaching assistants throughout the semester, and more specifically, during the large group discussion sessions. During this time, Dr. Smith was intentional about not providing the familiar authoritative classroom guidance, such as lecturing, that might be offered in a more traditional classroom. Rather, the professors and teaching assistants attempted to take the role of discussion facilitators or sounding boards for the ideas and hypotheses formed directly by the students. Often, they left
the students to struggle with discovering the purpose of the discussion sessions on their own, withholding any affirmation that the students were proceeding “correctly” or “incorrectly.” This posture led to strong reactions, both positive and negative, about the role that the professor and teaching assistants played during the course experience.

Participant Sarah felt that she saw the most positive impact when the professor and teaching assistants inserted themselves actively in the course discussions and challenged students more directly to participate. She stated, “…the other helpful thing was when the instructors got involved…Just having the instructors actually participate in something with you felt like you were on the right track…And having [them] keep challenging me like, this is a good goal, do it.” Sarah valued when more direction and affirmation was provided by the authority figures.

For others it was the unique input and facilitation that Dr. Smith provided that was central to the positive impact in the course, they described her guidance as “powerful,” “amazing,” and “inspiring.” Table 7 offers interview quotes regarding this positive impact.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of CIP that were Different in an Impactful Way to Learning and Growth</th>
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<tr>
<td>Role Played by Authorities/Facilitators</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I loved the real moments that [Dr. Smith] had with us when she would share her personal life [during discussion]. I felt like that was really inspiring” (Mary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Dr. Smith did a great job about making personal suggestions. Whenever the student sang a song or read a poem, they changed every time because of her brief comments…she made suggestions based on each student’s background…problem or challenge…that was very powerful.” (Ross)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I liked the interactions with the teaching staff and the TA’s… Dr. Smith in particular…I loved her…” (Michelle)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| “…We had our own dynamic because of Dr. Smith being the leader and she was amazing. I totally loved her and I actually felt cheated that we didn’t get more interaction with her. It was too bad in the sense that the course was structured the way it was because she had so much to offer and I was really bummed because I am a nonprofit. I’m not in leadership and when am I
ever going to get to see her again? …[so] I actually made an appointment and spent an hour with her personally because I’m like, hey, I’m going to take advantage of this and use her office hours to speak with her” (Gwen)

These four participants, Mary, Ross, Michelle, and Gwen, each found Dr. Smith to be an impactful, likable, and positive influence during their case-in-point learning experience. Their interviews regarding Dr. Smith highlighted that her own personal sharing and reflections during the large group, as well as the one-on-one contact they received, made her a valuable part of their experience.

Less direct were the affirmations given to the teaching assistants who were often only spoken about in conjunction with the affirmations being given to Dr. Smith. The dynamic between the teaching assistants, professor, and the participants will be analyzed further in the discussion of case-in-point as different in an unhelpful way.

Interviews from the participants illuminated several different ways in which case-in-point pedagogy was different in an impactful way for the participants. These elements included (1) the course’s readings and unique approach to their application in class, (2) the large group discussion format, (3) the third hour systems analysis experience, and (4) the role played by the professor or authority figure, Dr. Smith. From these findings, this study suggests that CIP’s unique pedagogical style had a positive impact (in both minor and significant ways) on each of the participants, engaging them in a type of learning that they found beneficial within this experimental leadership course.

However, despite the findings that the course had a positive impact on each of the participants, these positive experiences were accompanied by each of the participants’ strong views on how the CIP class experience was also different in an unhelpful way to their learning
or growth. The ways in which CIP pedagogy was different in an unhelpful way for this study’s participants will now be discussed.

**CIP Pedagogy as Different in an Unhelpful Way**

While many participants shared the ways in which they found the course to be different in an impactful way, these same participants also described ways in which *CIP pedagogy was different in unhelpful ways* to their learning and growth. Utilizing data from interviews and class observations, this study found that most of the participants’ negative experiences with CIP coalesced into three different categories. These categories included: student confusion regarding the class (and expected learning outcomes), an unhealthy large group environment, and critiques of the teaching staff. Each of these three categories will now be discussed in further detail and individual tables will display supporting quotations from the participants’ interviews.

**Student Confusion**

Previous writings on case-in-point from Parks (2005) and others indicate that students and facilitators have struggled with clarity of purpose and task when engaging with the pedagogy because, as discussed previously, it is so conceptually different than other more traditional forms of teaching. In alignment with this, the theme of student confusion with CIP also emerged from this study. Data from interviews, student assignments, and observational notes all indicated that student confusion was prevalent for each of the seven participants. The reasons for the confusion were varied amongst the seven participants, but all expressed that they felt more guidance, direction, and explanation were needed within the fall 2016 ILP classroom.

The broad theme of student confusion will now be split into two different categories for discussion and analysis. The first category will include data from Ross, the one participant who had previously enrolled in a CIP course at Harvard University, and the second category will
include data from the six participants who had never previously taken a case-in-point course. The reason for separating the findings into two groups was that Ross’ previous experience with CIP (at Harvard) offered a different perspective on the theme of student confusion during his fall 2016 USD experience. Ross’ opinions involved a more reflective critique of the course, as well as his personal suggestions for how to better implement the course design.

In addition, confusion was the most dominant theme that emerged from Ross’ interview for this study; this made his perspective on student confusion unique in its depth and frequency comparative to the other participants. While the remaining six participants also delved into discussions regarding confusion they often did so much differently, reflecting their own unique assumptions, expectations, and understanding of experiencing CIP for the first time. These two different viewpoints will now be discussed in more detail.

**Ross.** During the interview with Ross, the most repeated thematic talking point was that of student confusion and the role it played during his course experience. Ross made statements such as, “many people were confused,” and used variations of the word confused, or the phrase “difficult to understand” twelve different times throughout his interview. Specifically, Ross highlighted the role confusion played in the case consultation and written questionnaire portion of the course, as well as the large group discussion experience.

I will first address Ross’ statements regarding confusion with the case consultations and written questionnaires. On this topic Ross pointed out that “additional help from the TA to try to be more precise or get correct reflection [was provided]. But still people were confused.” He continued, stating that “We didn’t have a direction. We received direction only from handouts with a message and that’s it…We didn’t have a chance to even talk about the direction so much. I think that, maybe we need to talk about it.” Ross proceeded to bring up this topic yet again at
two other points during the interview. First, he stated it was “difficult to understand what [was] required. So maybe [some] direction or feedback or discussion would be helpful for us to deepen the understanding of the true meaning of the questions,” and again, stating “the only instruction was from the TA. It was very limited considering we spent a lot of time [in our small group]. But the takeaway was kind of limited.” In each of these four statements, Ross indicated that he felt confusion was a significant issue in the case consultation and questionnaire assignments.

Ross’ comments on confusion were not limited to the case consultation and questionnaires aspect of the course. He also offered that confusion was present in the large group discussion experience, stating that “the here-and-now section\textsuperscript{10}, would be better if we had more direction.” Ross even gave practical solutions on how he would address the confusion with the large group aspect and what adjustments could have been made in the classroom:

…In the [large group], Dr. Smith gave the topic or hints or showed a movie or some kind of a trigger and then gave less time to the floor. So 45-55 minutes, that’s it. And \textbf{we were confused}…I think the importance of case in point is reflection. So I think the course should allocate at least 50% for reflection. So if we do case in point for 50 minutes, then we need 50 minutes reflection. But 50 minutes is too long, so maybe 30 minutes is enough. So maybe 30 minutes and then 30 minutes of reflection. 30 minutes of case in point where we discuss different topics where some people got angry and some people cried, and then 30 minutes we reflect from the balcony; what happened? What did you see? So that kind of encourages us to be on the balcony to observe what happened.

\textsuperscript{10} The “here and now” section is another name for the case-in-point large group exercise.
In the quote above, Ross not only addressed the confusion, but also offered practical suggestions to facilitate getting more students to “reflect from the balcony.” Ross suggested doing so by restructuring the time boundaries and discussion focuses within the different course elements—a major suggestion of change and restructuring for the course. In addition, Ross focused on the idea of more students “getting to the balcony,” an adaptive leadership and CIP concept that will now be discussed in more detail.

The image of “getting to the balcony,” is a metaphor utilized in case-in-point teaching and taken from Adaptive Leadership theory writings (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). The balcony is used to demonstrate an individual’s ability to examine a class discussion from a complex, meta, systems perspective, one that evaluates the patterns and dynamics at play within the group experience. The balcony metaphor is utilized in conjunction with a “dance floor” metaphor, with the “dance floor” representing the active real-time discussions occurring amongst students in the class (i.e.- conversations regarding the presidential elections, racism, and more).

CIP pedagogy utilizes these two metaphors to suggest that there are two separate modes of thinking that exist within a case-in-point classroom (or any classroom), and that students should attempt to inhabit and move between these two positions: the metaphorical dance floor and balcony, during the large group and small group discussions. This concept of moving between the balcony and dance floor is at the heart of case-in-point pedagogy; thus, Ross’ reflection and belief that some students in the course struggled to adequately reach the balcony perspective is a relevant and important data point.

Furthermore, the balcony and dance floor metaphors illustrate how case-in-point focuses on the process of building students’ capacities to simultaneously engage and reflect during difficult discussions. This capacity, to simultaneously engage and reflect, parallels the definition
of building an individual’s metacognitive or complex thinking capacities. Thus, the balcony and
dance floor concepts, and the study participants’ level of understanding of these concepts, are
essential to evaluating how CIP promotes, or doesn’t promote, critical thinking and
metacognition.

The primary task of the CIP classroom is to introduce these new concepts and to help
students grow in this capacity to move between dance floor and balcony. However, according to
Parks (2005), “people–and particularly adults–learn from their own experiences at the edge of
their own readiness to learn” especially when it comes to experiential, laboratory settings like
case-in-point (p. 49). The varying levels of student readiness for this type of learning in the CIP
classroom inherently makes the metacognitive growth edge difficult to standardize, measure, and
evaluate across an entire classroom. However, it also provides a helpful framework when
evaluating whether CIP can be a helpful tool in promoting complex thinking (at varying levels)
for students enrolled in this course utilizing CIP pedagogy.

Thus, the depth to which participants grasped this concept and developed higher level
complex thinking skills will be discussed in more detail when attempting to answer research
question two: to what extent, if at all, do the constructs and theories of metacognitive
development comfortably align with, or contradict, the data collected?

**Six Participants.** Beyond Ross’ descriptions, each of the other six participants also spoke
to their own experiences with confusion in the CIP classroom. The students’ articulation of
confusion aligns with the extensive writing regarding the need for CIP to have “swamp” like
conditions, or ambiguous classroom conditions, conditions that Parks (2005) asserts are needed
to help people confront their old patterns of thinking and develop capacities to move between the
“dance floor” and the “balcony.” Pedagogically CIP requires some confusion to maintain its
experimental laboratory environment, if only to prevent more traditional methods of teaching from taking hold, where authorities succumb to a default of espousing knowledge and direction from the front of the class.

However, each of the six participants expressed that the level of confusion that was experienced in the CIP course during the fall of 2016 rose to a point in which it became unhelpful to their overall learning experience. In the table below, the remaining six participants share their frustrations with their own, and others, confusion during the CIP course. While the sentiments are varied, each of the six participants shared concern over “what is being asked of us?” and essentially, “what are we doing here?” in this CIP course.

**Table 8**

*Elements of CIP that were Different in an Unhelpful Way to Learning and Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Confusion (Six Participants in their 1st CIP Course Experience)</th>
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<td>“Confused sometimes, for sure. Just not really understanding what was being asked of us sometimes. So like, not only with my situation at the end, naming my elephant with my TA, that was very confusing. Also, sometimes in the beginning the grading was kind of confusing. I was like, is this purposeful, everybody’s failing and everybody getting better grades, what’s the intention…So I found myself constantly questioning, what is the intention of this, why are we doing this.” (Mary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The class in general, I wasn’t sure what the teaching staff wanted out of us, I guess at times. So I felt like they wanted us to be open and wanted us to be vulnerable and wanted us to put ourselves out there and do the work and all of that. And then when I shared that I did do that and I tried my best to do that…I was just confused” (Mary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“What I think this class didn’t do enough of is to actually tell you how to get there…And again, that’s kind of that theme in this case in point classroom where how will we know at the end? How do these incredibly accomplished instructors that we had, know at the end, that by student they learned anything in this ability to do group relations, group work and manage voice in that group dynamic environment?” (Roger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Nobody understands what’s going on anyway, including me. I had some understanding of what was happening but I didn’t know what approach they were taking or anything like that. I just was familiar with the song beneath the words, basically, whereas from what I could tell, most people weren’t.” (Gwen)</td>
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</table>
“They said multiple times that the goal was not to have like a bow tied, happy box. But they’re like, can we not come together and have unifying conversation, why are we so different? Then I was like, there was never a goal stated. There was never any sort of, **what is our goal for the end of class?** Were we going to teach ourselves leadership studies by reading the things and then talking about it or are we teaching ourselves conflict? It wasn’t to be happy.” (Michelle)

“The feedback on the questionnaire was absolutely ridiculous. I honestly felt like I could not write a better paper based on their feedback. And it got to the point where I would just write the paper that night or the next morning and just say, I’m bored, this is ridiculous and I would get a better grade than before. So I don’t really know what the feedback was trying to tell me. They’d give you whatever grade they gave but then they’d say, this is great, try to elaborate. It’s like, I have five pages to write this. I can’t elaborate. **What do you actually want me to do?** So maybe if it was more clear on expectations or what the goal of trying to write the next one should be” (Brett)

“I don’t know if it’s just me because I'm used to the normal teaching style but it kind of feels like you are paddling a ship without a captain. **You don’t have any guidance.**” (Sarah)

Participants’ concerns seemed to prominently focus on what the intended learning outcomes for the course should have been, often questioning how and why the teaching staff remained so unclear in their requirements, explanations, and guidance. Participants wrote that the “class didn’t do enough…to actually tell you how to get there [to the learning];” others spoke to foundational confusion over what was “wanted out of us” or being “asked of us” as students.

In addition, each of the statements on confusion were made to the researcher at the end of the course, after the participants experience with the course had been fully completed. Despite finishing the CIP class, the participants continued to present concerns over their confusion with the pedagogy; thus, foundational levels of confusion regarding the experience itself persisted for these participants.

**Unhealthy Large Group Environment**

In a previous section of this chapter, the large group experience was described as a positive, helpful, and impactful tool for participants’ learning and growth. However, participants
expressed that there were unhelpful or negative aspects of the large group experience they also needed to highlight. Interestingly, all six of the participants that previously discussed the positive impact of the large group also reported (with equal resolve) that the large group had a negative impact on their learning and growth. The following table presents these six participants’ descriptions of the large group as unhelpful to their learning and growth.

**Table 9**

*Elements of CIP that were Different in an Unhelpful Way to Learning and Growth*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Unhealthy Large Group Environment</th>
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<tr>
<td>“<a href="Michelle">Understanding how to work with people of different racial backgrounds is really important…but I felt like it was too hostile of an environment to do that.”</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I think the institutional group is just too much…I think it’s just a zoo.” (Michelle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You say an unpopular idea [in large group] and <strong>people get very angry and don’t know how to control their emotions.</strong>” (Brett)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He got totally assassinated [during the large group]. …in that moment when it was just banter back and forth between certain people and yelling, I don’t like that loud yelling, tension…After Abe made that comment, I felt like he was dead, and people were just yelling back and forth. I don’t like that.” (Mary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I found that in our case in point [large group] classroom, I question the learning that was going on…<strong>If you said something incredibly boorish, just incredibly stupid in that classroom, let’s say even some other equally boorish comments reaffirmed it.</strong> That individual or group of individuals could leave that classroom thinking that [was correct].” (Roger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“…in the institutional group…I know that there were times where I felt like <strong>the conversation was so off course and just not productive.</strong>” (Sarah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There were other people in the class that, like Leo¹¹, he expressed his concern that he didn’t feel like [the large group] was an environment that was conducive to learning… I think he wanted a little more intellectual understanding whereas my concern, for myself and others, was that there was space where everybody could be heard, and everybody could express whatever. <strong>How can people get to understand how to interact with each other if their just allowed to annihilate other people?”</strong> (Gwen)</td>
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</table>

¹¹ In addition, to the six participants statements, Gwen also offered anecdotal evidence that another graduate student in the CIP course expressed sentiments that the large group environment was not “conducive to learning.”
“I just felt like there must be some way that [the large group] could be restructured, even a little bit to give people a little more understanding of the internal process. I’m getting emotional right now. **It was hard for people to deal with all that pain. Where’s the support?** That was a down-side for me (Gwen)

The quotes above describe large group discussions where participants felt the tension, conflict, and disagreement produced negative or unproductive experiences. These viewpoints, and the noted discussions, paralleled with my observation notes that during certain class sessions “higher than normal” points of tension and conflict did occur in the classroom. One specific large group event that was recorded in my observation notes was also discussed by three participants during their interviews (see the corresponding quotes above in Table 9 from Mary, Brett, and Michelle). This event involved Abe, a white male student, who openly used the “n-word” in class to discuss his own internal prejudices and past mistakes.

Mary spoke to the event as the “assassination” of Abe in class and Michelle spoke of the open “hostility” of the conversation. My observation notes show that Abe did speak during a large group CIP session about having used the n-word inappropriately in the past; however, he also actively **used** the n-word when discussing his feelings in the classroom. The usage of this word in the classroom environment provoked strong opinions and reactions from many students. The intensity of the conversation was palpable with lots of yelling and deeply emotional comments; students shared their pain and anger at his usage of the word in the classroom. Brett spoke about this specific moment in large group stating:

> It was a heated conversation about race…I was watching the three instructors. And they were looking at each other and you could tell their eyes were getting bigger like, what do

---

12 “I’m sorry for using the n-word.” Abe (Using the actual word in class as he spoke).
we do. I was like, say something, stop the conversation and guide it where it needs to go

because this isn’t helpful.

Brett, Mary, and Michelle felt that the level of tension and conflict in this class experience rose to a place that created too much tension and disruption and wasn’t helpful or beneficial to learning. Karen Dalton (2009), a leadership professor at Claremont School of Theology, discussed the potential for this type of “pressure cooker” environment in a case-in-point classroom, writing:

Heifetz uses the image of the pressure cooker: keep the heat turned up enough that things will cook, but not high enough to produce an explosion. This applies also to his case-in-point teaching method. The teacher needs to be attentive to signs of heat such as lack of participation, long speeches by one or several students, behavior that distracts from the topic at hand, body indicators of discomfort, blaming and judging statements, expressions of discomfort, and so forth. The teacher must make repeated assessments of how much intensity is enough but not too much. The teacher can turn down the heat by acknowledging it in a non-anxious way, thus normalizing some discomfort as part of the learning process. Asking the question, “What just happened?” invites people to step outside the situation into a reflective stance. (Dalton, 127).

According to six of seven participants there were moments in the fall of 2016 where the “pressure cooker” did explode and students’ learning was not served by the conflict occurring in the room. Michelle stated:

It kind of felt like the leadership Hunger Games like, are we supposed to battle each other to the death, and someone gets assassinated and the people who have the best leadership
strategies are ending up to be the leaders of the course? They win? Those are the ones with the A’s?

As was discussed previously, one challenge for CIP pedagogy is that it intentionally utilizes the internal conflicts and differences amongst students as material for learning (Parks, 2005). Yet, how to monitor that learning environment and keep it at a healthy level of tension and discord presents a definite challenge to the pedagogical method. In the article from Professor Dalton above, it is noted repeatedly that the maintenance of a healthy large group environment lies largely in the hands of the course’s teacher or facilitator.

This leads us into the next pertinent thematic discussion: the role teaching staff played as facilitators and monitors in the fall ILP class environment. CIP instructors were often attempting to walk a fine line between facilitating helpful conflict, the type that might promote growth or challenge for students, and unhealthy conflict, or conflict that created unnecessary stress, hostility, and disruption within the classroom environment. While the positive impacts of the professors and teaching staff were discussed in a previous section, the following section will detail how negative experiences with the teaching staff also created confusion, an unhelpful learning environment (pressure cooker metaphor), and ultimately may have impeded the complex learning and development of participants.

**Critique of the Teaching Staff**

In a previous section of this paper, the positive impacts of the teaching staff were noted by four participants in this study. However, five participants (including two individuals that also offered praise) critiqued the teaching staff and the role that they played in facilitating case-in-point. Discussion of the teaching staff critique will now be divided into two separate categories: Roger’s critique on execution and the other participants’ critiques on intervention and guidance.
Roger’s Critique. Roger, shared that he had independently investigated, studied, and read a great deal about the case-in-point pedagogical style from sources outside the ILP course’s assigned reading list. In doing so Roger gathered a great deal of conceptual knowledge about the pedagogy. In fact, at our interview Roger had brought with him at least two articles addressing how to successfully execute CIP in graduate level classrooms\(^\text{13}\). Thus, Roger’s critiques of the teaching staff zeroed in on areas where he felt they were not in alignment with what other CIP facilitators had outlined as classroom norms and expectations.

Generally, it was Roger’s viewpoint that the pedagogy itself was valuable, but that the teaching staff at USD during the fall of 2016 struggled to execute it with great success, even stating, “I guess my issue might be a bit of something in execution…Maybe that’s the challenge of the course.” Table 10 offers several other examples of Roger’s critique of the teaching staff focused largely on execution and his outside research of case-in-point teaching.

**Table 10**

*Elements of CIP that were Different in an Unhelpful Way to Learning and Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roger’s Critique of the Teaching Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“What I didn’t see was the tying it together… I really never felt the instructors, at any point, ever fell back on a facilitator role. I didn’t see it in the [large] group. I actually have to say, in the [large] group, I felt particularly one of the instructors, when they jumped in, it was in an attack mode but I didn’t see them bounce between those different roles. Like say, wow, this is exactly where the classroom wants to go, let me stir the pot, let me increase that level of anxiety. Because for example, I never saw that same instructor do some of the opposite things they may call for, lowering the heat, when I had a sense that was needed, and maybe it’s just me.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There are so many TAs embedded in the classroom and I generally felt the TAs talked too much. I had a large group session where Curt started it with his deep issue comment which is fine to get things going, and then he ended with a new one. And I was like, thanks Curt. That to me wasn’t the role of a TA or the senior teaching assistant, or even an instructor. Now getting the juices going, that’s a role. So here I want people to tie things together but not that way. He tied it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{13}\) Roger included direct references to these two articles: “The Theory and Practice of Case in Point Teaching and Organizational Leadership,” Yawson (2014) and “The Point of Case in Point, Six Anchors for Turning Classrooms into Leadership Labs” by Hufnagle (2015).
in a way in a classic classroom way. Teacher authority, this is the way it is. Or maybe that’s just how he came across that day.”

“This [article on CIP] talks about exposing misconceptions and authority fueled learning. So as these sentiments are voiced, they present an opportunity to examine the ways in which these mindsets will serve and secure individuals and systems. Ideally then, in the moment examination of these beliefs allows the participants to experience their own seeing and to expand their ways of thinking about and in turn interacting with authority. What I wrote next to that statement is that this didn’t happen. I get that that’s supposed to happen.” (Roger)

**Other Participants Critique.** In addition to Roger, four other participants, Brett, Gwen, Sarah, and Michelle, voiced critiques regarding the teaching staff. One participant, Michelle who had previously praised Professor Smith and the teaching staff by stating, “I liked the interactions with the teaching staff… Dr. Smith in particular…I loved her,” paradoxically felt that “the modeling of the case in point with the instructor and the TAs, was the least helpful [part of the class].”

Michelle’s comment echoes Roger’s theme of execution by the teaching staff, but also leads us into a more specific category of critique on how the teaching staff took up their role during the large group case-in-point section. In fact, most of the remaining critiques addressed the unhelpful large group environment and the role that the teaching staff, and their lack of interventions and guidance, played in that unhelpful learning dynamic. In the table below, students address their concerns with how the teaching staff managed the more difficult CIP large group moments.

**Table 11**

*Elements of CIP that were Different in an Unhelpful Way to Learning and Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Other Participants Critique of the Teaching Staff</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[During tense moments] “the instructors weren’t doing anything. I felt like they could’ve intervened.” (Sarah)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“I feel like there should be more influence from them on guiding where we need to go. And perhaps stopping conversations when they need to be stopped.” (Brett)

“…speak up more professors when things are getting a little out of control and emotions are running really high. I think it’s important to acknowledge that and try to bring it down a little bit.” (Brett)

“I know that the point is for them to be a little bit stepped back but I think just for this group in particular, that didn’t work. [The group] needed a bit more hand holding or some guidance.” (Michelle)

“…and then I also felt like the course was set up to have us interact the way that we did so we would do the case-in-point and someone would say something and then Dr. Smith or a TA would speak up. And it would usually be a critique. It would usually be a, when you say that, you this. So that in itself was a model of how this course was going to go.” (Michelle)

“I guess my biggest frustration looking back is a lot of the interventions that the professors or TAs gave were almost always negative like, this is what you’re doing wrong. Or like who’s voice are we taking away. There wasn’t a lot of modeling of how we can unify. It was modeling of how we are different. And then they are trying to get us to be more unified in our discussion and are seemingly confused as to why we can’t get there.” (Michelle)

“I would have liked to have seen her intervene a little more. It didn’t have to be a lot, just enough so that there could have been a little more understanding [for the group] …definitely in the [large] group.” (Gwen)

Each of these quotes offer the viewpoint that interventions should have occurred more frequently to better manage the “pressure cooker” nature of the classroom; in addition, participants expressed that when interventions were offered, they seemed to only heighten the tension rather than lower it. Over and over the sentiment from participants did remain the same, that not enough guidance was available to adequately guide the learning and reduce the tension to productive levels.

However, it is also relevant to note that case-in-point pedagogy actively intends for there to be disappointment and frustration with authority in the classroom. Even participant Roger hinted at this aspect of the course in his critique, noting that CIP intends on, “exposing misconceptions and authority fueled learning” in the class. Thus, frustration with authority,
disappointment with authority, and outrage with authority is to be expected in this pedagogy (Heifetz, 2002); indeed, if frustration with authority did not exist than the pedagogy itself would not be implemented correctly. However, according to Roger’s viewpoint the challenge to conventional ideas of authority in the classroom was not actually achieved during the ILP course.

Frustration expressed from the remaining participants does indicate that their desire was for the authority to retake control of the class in a more traditional manner. However, the participants critiques and requests also aligned with the CIP teaching directives that Dalton (2009) named as necessary for a productive experience, directives such as the CIP facilitator being “attentive to,” monitoring, and addressing “how much intensity is enough but not too much” (127). The participants’ requests for more intervention also seem to correlate with Dalton’s instructions that “the teacher can turn down the heat by acknowledging it in a non-anxious way, thus normalizing some discomfort as part of the learning process” (Dalton, 127).

Thus, the findings that CIP was different in unhelpful ways seems connected deeply to the image of the class as a pressure cooker. In fact, each of the three categories that were discussed: student confusion, unhelpful large group, and critique of the teaching staff seems to relate in some way back to this image and the break-down of its function during the fall of 2016.

**Conclusion**

As the findings for research question one demonstrate, the study participants’ reflections present a complex and richly descriptive view of a unique learning experience. The study’s data offered insight into the participants’ engagement with the complexity of the CIP course structure, their own reflective processes, and insight into their interactions with peers and facilitators. The nuanced details and perspectives offered by the participants spoke to a dynamic classroom, one of both success and failure, support and critique.
The findings offer evidence as to the difficulties and challenges that emerge when any inherently different teaching method breaks from the more traditional way of doing things. Ultimately, the descriptions, insights, and reflections provided by participants in this study offers opportunities to examine both the pedagogy’s potential for future positive impact, as well as the necessary changes and growth edges that should be addressed moving forward.
CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

Research Question Two

The next chapter will be dedicated to answering research question number two: to what extent, if at all, do the constructs and theories of metacognitive development comfortably align with, or contradict, the data collected? First, the Lectica Reflective Judgment Assessment (LRJA), a metacognitive evaluation utilized by this study, will be discussed in detail. While this study did not attempt to quantify the potential metacognitive development as a result of case-in-point, it did utilize the LRJA to provide a baseline measurement for the participants. Next, a brief discussion on the meaning of the LRJA scores and the Lectical scale will also be offered to provide context. Finally, this chapter will discuss to what extent the constructs and theories of metacognitive development aligned with both the course goals and the data collected.

LRJA: Lectica Reflective Judgement Assessment

The Lectica Reflective Judgment Assessment (LRJA), utilized by this study, is an online written assessment developed by Lectica developmental testing organization.\(^{14}\) The LRJA is used to measure reflective judgment or how “people think about knowledge, truth, and inquiry” (Lectica, 2022). Conceptually, reflective judgment is considered interchangeable with critical thinking and metacognition, making it a suitable assessment for this research (Dawson, 2008).

The LRJA prompts the test-taker to, “respond to an "ill-structured" dilemma—-one without a clear answer,” utilizing the modality of open-ended essays. More specifically, the assessment has participants respond to five questions, including: (1) How is it possible that

\(^{14}\) Lectica is a developmental testing organization founded by Theo Dawson. Lectica has consulted to the US Naval Academy, Government Intelligence Agencies, among other non-profits and educational institutions. All scoring on the LRJA was conducted by Lectical Analysts, independent of myself.
experts can come to very different conclusions? (2) What is it about complex problems that makes the truth difficult to determine? (3) How do you go about gathering the information needed to form an opinion? (4) How do you go about evaluating the quality of information obtained from sources? And (5) How certain can you be about your conclusions regarding complex issues? (Lectica, 2016, LRJA). The answers to these prompts are then evaluated across five different categories of reasoning, including: (1) complexity, (2) evidence, (3) inquiry, (4) perspectives, and (5) truth & certainty.

The Lectical Scale of Hierarchical Complexity and Metacognition

The final Lectical score, or level, was then determined based on the foundational construct of hierarchical complexity. According to Lectica, hierarchical complexity is demonstrated through two “aspects of performance” for an individual, “the hierarchical order of abstraction of concepts or skills and the logical organization of arguments” (Lectica, 2022, Hierarchical Complexity). Hierarchical complexity addresses that “new concepts are formed at each complexity order as the operations of the previous complexity order are ‘summarized’ into single constructs” (Lectica, 2022, Hierarchical Complexity; Fischer, 1980). The following example illustrates what it means to “summarize” a concept into a single construct:

The concept of honor, as understood in the abstract mappings level, "summarizes" an argument coordinating concepts of reputation, trustworthiness, and kindness constructed at the single abstractions level. Similarly, the concept of personal integrity, as understood in the abstract systems level, summarizes an argument coordinating concepts of honor, personal responsibility, and personal values constructed at the abstract mappings level." (Lectica, 2022, Hierarchical Complexity)
Each level or order builds upon the previous level, and the summarizing of information at each stage then allows individuals to engage with more and more complexity. The following figure provides a visual representation of what growing complexity looks like according to hierarchical complexity theory.

**Figure 2**

*Visual Representation of Hierarchical Complexity*

![Hierarchical Complexity Diagram](image)

*Note.* From (Lectica, 2022, Hierarchical Complexity)

The Lectical Scale utilized for scoring the LRJA is described as a “refinement” of Dr. Kurt Fischer’s Skill Scale (1980), “a developmental scale that goes from birth to the highest levels of development we know how to measure” (Lectica, 2022). Table 12 presents the Lectical LRJA scores for each participant in this study.

**Table 12**

*Participants LRJA Lectical Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Roger</th>
<th>Gwen</th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Ross</th>
<th>Michelle</th>
<th>Mary</th>
<th>Brett</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectical Score</td>
<td>11.65</td>
<td>11.38</td>
<td>11.12</td>
<td>10.96</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>10.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of the study’s participants scored somewhere between level ten and twelve on the Lectical scale, scores that Lectica considers to be within the normal range for adults. Table 13 offers a more detailed description of each of the three average adult levels on the Lectical scale.

Table 13

Description of Lectical Levels 10-12 (Average Adult Levels)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lectical Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Score of 10:** Abstract Mapping | Concepts are 2nd order abstractions. These coordinate or modify abstractions. For example, the abstract mappings level concept basis can be employed to coordinate the elements essential to a good relationship. "To me, [trust and respect are] the basis of a relationship, and without them you really don't have one." Concepts like coming to an agreement, making a commitment, building trust, and compromise are also rare before this Lectical™ level. "I think [Joe and his father] could come to an agreement or compromise that they are both comfortable with."

The logical structure is linear.

The most complex logical structure of this Lectical™ level coordinates one aspect of two or more abstractions—as in, "Joe has a right to go to camp because his father said he could go if he saved up the money, and Joe lived up to his commitment." Here, Joe's fulfillment of his father's conditions determines whether Joe has a right or does not have a right to go to camp.

| Score of 11: Abstract Systems | Concepts are 3rd order abstractions. These coordinate elements of abstract systems. For example, the concept of personal integrity—which is rare before the abstract systems level—refers to the coordination of and adherence to notions of fairness, trustworthiness, honesty, preservation of the golden rule, etc., in one’s actions. "[You should keep your word] for your own integrity. For your own self-worth, really. Just to always be the kind of person that you would want to be dealing with." Concepts like verbal contract, moral commitment, functional, development, social structure, and foundation are also uncommon before the abstract systems level."

The logical structure is multivariate.

The most complex logical structure of this level coordinates multiple aspects of two or more abstractions. "Following through with his commitment and actually experiencing camp combine to promote Joe’s growth and development, not just physically but psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually." Here, multiple facets of Joe’s personal...
development are promoted when he both keeps his commitment and accomplishes his goal.

**Score of 12:** Concepts are 1st order axioms/principles. These coordinate abstract systems. A single principles notion of the social contract for example, would result from the coordination of human interests (where individual human beings are treated as systems in interaction with other individual and collective systems).

The logical structure is definitional. It identifies one aspect of a principle or axiom coordinating systems—as in, “Contracts are articulations of a unique human quality, mutual trust, which coordinates human relations.” Here, contracts are seen as the instantiation of a broader principle coordinating human interactions.

*Note.* From (Lectica, 2022, Lectical Levels)

Lectical levels are of importance to this study because of what they connotate regarding the participants’ cognitive capacities at the beginning of the course experience. As was stated in the literature review: the one concept that every domain, theorist, and researcher examining metacognition has in common is that the presence of meta-capacities denotes that an individual has developed a “second order form of thinking about thinking,” or a more developed sense of consciousness regarding cognitive processes (Schrader, 1988, p. 7). Therefore, individuals must demonstrate second order thinking in order to begin metacognitive work.

According to the Lectical scale, it is at level ten that individuals are able to engage with second order abstractions, or “second order form of thinking about thinking,” or the capacities necessary for metacognitive work (Schrader, 1988, p.7). Thus, the participants’ scores from the LRJA, ranging from 10.85 to 11.65, provided this study with the helpful understanding that each of the participants were cognitively able to engage with metacognitive practices and reflections according to their measured cognitive capacities.
Throughout the course of this study, Ross was the only participant to comment on any potential relationship between developmental levels and the CIP course experience. Ross, who had previously taken a CIP course at Harvard University, stated during his interview that the case-in-point course is itself, “about development.” Furthermore, Ross offered his opinion on the potential developmental impact of the course and the necessary developmental circumstances needed for that impact. He stated:

My objectives to taking this course is to observe the process of student development. I tried to be on the balcony as much as possible. I failed many times but I tried to do that. Some people kind of developed a lot, changed their behavior. Roger is one case. Even though he is the most senior student, he changed. So it’s not about age…My assumption is it depends on the development or stage. My understanding is this course is for the students especially in the socialized third order and to challenge to try to move on to the fourth order. This is the best course for those students.

Ross’ assertion aligns with the concept that in order for students to be successful at experiencing metacognitive development or growth in the CIP classroom, their baseline cognitive capacities or developmental levels were of importance.

The third and fourth order that Ross references are names of levels from Robert Keagan’s Orders of Consciousness (Love & Guthrie, 1999). Despite Ross utilizing a different theory to reference CIP’s potential developmental impact (Kegan), the Lectical scale is calibrated so that it can be compared to other theorists’ scales, including that of Kegan (See Figure 3). According to this level comparison, Robert Kegan’s third order of consciousness is equivalent to Lectical level 10, Lectical level 11 coincides with the 4th order, and level 12 with the 5th order of consciousness.
Ross’s assertion that the case-in-point course is best developmentally for those in the 3rd order (Lectical level 10) moving into the 4th order (Lectical level 11), suggests that, in his opinion, the presence of “second order thinking” must exist for the CIP course to be most impactful, a viewpoint that is also supported by developmental literature. Now that the participants’ baseline capacity for metacognitive work has been established, the next section of this chapter will begin to examine if there is alignment between the study’s data and differing theories of metacognitive development.

**Figure 3**

**Lectical Level Comparisons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lectical Level</th>
<th>Skill Levels (Fischer)</th>
<th>GMHC (Commons)</th>
<th>SISS (Kohlberg)</th>
<th>GLSS (Armon)</th>
<th>RJ (Kitchener &amp; King)</th>
<th>SOI (Kegan)</th>
<th>Strata (Jaques)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>cross-paradigmatic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>principled mappings</td>
<td>paradigmatic</td>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Stages 6 &amp; 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>single principles</td>
<td>metasystematic</td>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>5th order</td>
<td>5-7</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>consciousness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>abstract systems</td>
<td>systematic</td>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>4th order</td>
<td>3-5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>consciousness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>abstract mappings</td>
<td>formal</td>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>3rd order</td>
<td>1-2</td>
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<td>consciousness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>single abstractions</td>
<td>abstract</td>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>2nd order</td>
<td>1-2</td>
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<td>consciousness</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>representational systems</td>
<td>concrete</td>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>1st order</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>consciousness</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* From https://lecticalive.org/about/scoring-comparison#gsc.tab=0.

**Aligning the Data with Course Goals and Metacognitive Theories**

Initially, *a priori* codes, comprised of metacognitive theories and constructs, were utilized to analyze the data from participants’ interviews, observations, and assignments. In doing so alignment between the metacognitive theories and the participants’ experiences was found; however, the coding process lacked the ability to make any direct connections with the
course structure or pedagogical objectives. This left the first round of analysis for research question two incomplete and insufficient.

Therefore, a second round of coding and analysis was completed. The same *a priori* codes were utilized, however, in the second round the codes were first applied to the CIP course syllabus. Special attention was paid to the syllabus’ sections on course purpose, course design, and the learning objectives. This analysis process established that several CIP course objectives aligned with various metacognitive theories and constructs. The study then analyzed whether or not the espoused course goals and corresponding metacognitive constructs also aligned with the data regarding participants’ experiences. These connections will now be discussed in more detail.

**Categories Established for Course Learning Objectives**

Upon coding the ILP course syllabus it was clear that several learning goals and objectives overlapped, or were reiterated using differing language, throughout the document. Therefore, this study distilled these learning goals into three unique categories, comprised of similar and overlapping objectives. Table 14 introduces the three learning categories and cites the metacognitive theories that were found to be in alignment with these categories.

**Table 14**

*Course Learning Objectives and Related Metacognitive Theories*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective Category</th>
<th>Metacognitive Theories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness to Habitual Patterns</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To surface unexamined assumptions and to become more aware of habitual patterns of action/reaction</td>
<td>Flavell (1977); Dawson (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To generate personal insights into one’s own habitual patterns of response to events and social forces.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Ways of Thinking, Being, and Doing

- To develop more adequate ways of understanding, perceiving and sensing
- To sharpen the ability to identify, analyze, reflect upon, and work creatively with purpose, systems, contexts, boundaries, and roles

Karmiloff-Smith (1986); Schrader (1988)

Self-Regulated Learning and Action

- Enhance the capacity to exercise authority and leadership in the “here-and-now” with a sense of purpose, freedom, authenticity, and courage.
- To take risks, discern imaginative responses to current realities, experiment with different behaviors, and assess what actions serve the deep purpose in various situations.

Gavalek and Raphael (1985); Senge (1990); Marsick (1987); Cheren (1990); Pelar, Burgoyne, Boydell, & Welshman (1990).

Awareness to Habitual Patterns. I have classified the first CIP learning category as:

Awareness to Habitual Patterns. This category includes developing the ability (1) to surface unexamined assumptions and become more aware of habitual patterns of action/reaction, and (2) to generate personal insights into one’s own habitual patterns of response to events and social forces (ILP Syllabus, 2016). These two course objectives were combined into a single category because, while they utilized slightly different language, both discussed overlapping learning goals and intentions for the course. This category will also be referred to as the awareness category in future discussion for the purposes of brevity.

Upon analysis, the awareness category was found to be in alignment with Flavell’s (1977) foundational theory of metacognitive knowledge and Dawson’s (2008) contributions to that same conceptual framework. The connections that exist between this learning category and metacognitive knowledge theory will now be discussed.

Connection to Metacognitive Theory. Flavell defines metacognition as the development of “a learners’ awareness of their own learning and thought processes” (Livingston, 1997). His
definition aligns with the awareness category’s goal for students to develop the reflective capacity to “surface unexamined assumptions” or thought processes. Flavell furthers his definition of metacognition to include individuals seeking “insights about themselves as learners and learners in general.” This definition aligns with the awareness category’s learning objective to “generate personal insight into one’s own habitual patterns” of thought, action, and reaction.

Flavell also specified that metacognitive knowledge is rooted in developing an understanding of self and others as cognitive processors so that we may better understand the differences that exist “both within and between people, as well as the similarities among people” (Schrader, 1988, p. 30). Similarly, Dawson (2008) defined metacognitive knowledge as reflecting on the “beliefs about intra-individual differences, inter-individual differences, and [the] universals of cognition” (p. 4). These two definitions support the course learning objective that developing both intra-individual and inter-individual awareness is essential to gaining insights about our habitual patterns of response and reaction when interacting with others whose beliefs are different (or similar) to our own.

**Connection to Participants Experience.** Several participants’ experiences in the CIP course aligned with the awareness learning category and its related metacognitive concepts. Sarah spoke to her experience with “surfacing unexamined assumptions” during the CIP course, stating that the “f--k the police event” during one large group changed “how I approached the conversation [on race]” and her usual thought patterns on the topic.

Sarah spoke to how the “f—k the police” class experience forced her to confront the inter-individual thinking differences that emerged in the class, as well as the assumptions that she previously had held about racism (Dawson, 2008). She described this by stating:
It ended up being one of the things that taught me the most, in the class, because I got to hear from a lot of voices that tended to be more marginalized and not really in my circle of people that I know. So I got to hear a lot of stories and perspectives about how it feels to be African American and that ended up being huge. It just kind of put me on this trajectory for the rest of the class to be aware of these things and how I see the media and how I interact with people.

Sarah also stated, “I just feel a lot more comfortable talking about [racism]. It shouldn’t be something that’s tiptoed around. And it kind of gave me the confidence to be like, *this is what I learned*, and this is actually happening in the world.”

In this statement, Sarah demonstrated that she had gained a “personal insight into [her previous] habitual patterns of response,” or the posture of tiptoeing around the topic of racism; in arriving at this insight, Sarah had developed a new desire to move forward differently. She noted that breaking these old patterns even led to a meaningful conversation with her husband:

I'm married. Before that [the f—k the police moment], my husband and I never really talked about racial issues, in depth. We’re on the same page politically but we just never really got into it. So, through that, we just had a really long and good conversation about affirmative action and things like that. Whether or not it’s good, bad, whatever. And then his brother is also a sheriff. So, we got into a lot of conversations about the police and very objectively trying to see it from both sides.

In this example, Sarah’s awareness to her own learning made a significant impact on her development in several areas including that of surfacing her unexamined assumptions about racism (intra-individual), engaging with learning from others viewpoints (inter-individual), and even establishing new patterns of behavior in response to these insights.
Sarah was not the only participant to demonstrate a developing awareness to her habitual patterns of thought and behavior due to her experience in the case-in-point classroom. Mary, Brett, and Michelle also spoke about the large group experience, and its impact on building their capacity for insight and awareness to their habitual patterns, behaviors, and thinking processes.

Mary, the youngest participant at twenty-four, spoke about gaining insight into her habitual desire to stay surrounded by people she identified as comfortable during the case-in-point experience. She stated:

I learned a lot about myself, I guess you could say. Just how I interacted with different groups of people and who I feel comfortable with and how I rely on those people a lot…If you noticed in large group, I didn’t really move from my area. I very much stayed in the back with my friends and where I felt like I was comfortable…I knew that I find comfort in people who know me, people who appreciate me, people who love me and that I have a common understanding with… And I’m trying to keep an open mind to different people that have different perspectives and different backgrounds and people who we don’t probably have a lot of commonalities but maybe we can find something that we can share together. I’m still working on that. I’m typically hard to break into. Mary reflected that she “learned a lot” about herself through the classroom experience, especially regarding her strong desire to stay in her comfort zone: relationally, mentally and physically. By building awareness to her preferences for a safe social environment, achieved through the act of keeping friends she trusted close and distancing from those different then herself, Mary demonstrated a deepening capacity for personal insight and reflection as a result of the course experience.
Another participant, Brett, also felt that the case-in-point large group had facilitated the development of deeper insight regarding his thought patterns and behaviors at work:

I’m a very introverted person as far as my leadership style. I’m very aware that I’m that way and I don’t do well with handling other people’s emotions. So, I have to hire a leadership team under me that compliments that side. Over the last three and a half months [during this course], I’ve had more conversations with those folks who can handle emotions more, just to try to understand them. And when I deal with individual staff, I try to think about their emotions and look at them. In that regard, [the class is] really good.

While Brett was already aware of his introverted nature prior to the course, and aware to his aversion to “handling” others’ emotions, he expressed that this course moved him to inquire and engage with employees he previously would have avoided. In doing so he altered his habitual patterns of action and interaction in the workplace. Brett was also surfacing his own unexamined assumptions about employees different than himself. In doing so, he attempted to gain a better understanding of these employees’ perspectives and modeled Flavell’s charge to seek out a better understanding of the differences and similarities that exist between ourselves and others.

Finally, Michelle also expressed that her experience in the case-in-point course had successfully improved her awareness to personal and habitual patterns of action and reaction. In recognizing this awareness, she noted that it had direct impact on her relationships with family:

My in-laws are in town and I am able to see things. I’ve always been very understanding of them but even now, I’m able to kind of, okay, she seems to be like this, but I know she just wants to connect with her son or with me. On Thanksgiving, they wanted to help and
there were a few things they did that may have bothered other people and they did bother me for a second and then I was like, they are here helping us.

Michelle was able to utilize the insights she experienced through the case-in-point practices to generate greater awareness in her relationship and communication with her in-laws; or as she stated, “I am able to see things,” in a new way. In doing so Michelle gained a new capacity to make choices on how she reacted and engaged with her in-laws rather than defaulting to the unexamined and habitual patterns of behavior she had utilized prior to this development.

**New Ways of Thinking, Being, and Doing.** This second CIP learning objective has been categorized as: “*New Ways of Thinking, Being, and Doing.*” This category includes the course objectives (1) to develop more adequate ways of understanding, perceiving and sensing, as well as (2) to sharpen the ability to identify, analyze, reflect upon, and work creatively with purpose, systems, contexts, boundaries, and roles (ILP Syllabus, 2016). This study combined these two learning goals into a single category because of their shared intentions and focus on developing new ways of inquiring, understanding, analyzing, communicating, and utilizing information in the case-in-point classroom. This category will now be examined in relationship to both metacognitive theory and the study’s data.

**Connection to Metacognitive Theory.** Two metacognitive concepts were found to be in alignment with the *New Ways of Thinking* category: they are Karmiloff-Smith (1986) and Schrader’s (1988) explorations of the elements of second order thinking in metacognitive development. The connections that exist between this learning category and the metacognitive theories will now be discussed.

Schrader (1988) defines metacognition as the ability to “evaluate the thinking process itself, and the awareness to both alter and modify the process [of thinking] while one is engaged
in it. It is reflection on reflective thought” (p.10). In this definition, Schrader has highlighted the importance of developing second order thinking capacities in metacognition; likewise, in the New Ways of Thinking category, students are challenged to move towards second order thinking though the appeal to “sharpen [their] ability to identify, analyze and reflect,” and to develop “more adequate ways of understanding, perceiving, understanding, and sensing” during their case-in-point experience.

Karmiloff-Smith’s (1986) theory of metacognition furthers the CIP learning category’s objective to seek “more adequate ways” of understanding and analyzing. It does so by defining metacognition as the capacity of individuals “to break down their acquired knowledge into codes, systems or strategies of thought...[and to] integrate these different codes or strategies to accomplish tasks necessitating more complex thinking and understanding.”

If a student is able to develop “codes, systems, and strategies of thought” capable of being utilized for “tasks necessitating more complex thinking and understanding,” there is also a concurrent fulfillment of the course learning objectives: to sharpen the analytical, reflective, perceptive, and sensing functions of the student. Therefore, the New Ways of Thinking learning category and the metacognitive constructs presented by Karmiloff-Smith and Schrader complement one another and align in purpose and task.

Connection to Participants Experience. Several participants spoke to a new frame of reference, or way of thinking, that they now utilize because of the case-in-point course experience. For example, Brett shared that the CIP course gives him the language and understanding, or in Karmiloff-Smith terms—the codes and systems, that allow him to apply his knowledge of case-in-point to his everyday life. He stated,
A lot of the concepts that we’re learning about, I think are pretty prevalent in everyday life and everyday work environments. A lot of times people struggle to understand them because they can’t really put a word to the action or behavior, and I think these types of classes put words to those behaviors and actions. I think it really enables me and other people to think about what’s actually happening like, okay, we’re learning about that, this is why this is happening this way.

Brett’s statement highlights that real life scenarios, that he might have previously struggled to make sense of, are clarified and more easily understood due to the conceptual understanding and language that he developed through the case-in-point course.

Gwen also felt that the CIP course provided her with better ways of communicating previously uncommunicable thoughts and ideas. The concept of gaining a new language appeared in Gwen’s interview as well. She stated that she is “always talking about technical challenge, adaptive challenge…the elephants in the room. All of the theories…which for me just allowed everything to coalesce in terms of the academic learnings…it’s like I have a new language now.”

Somewhat different than developing a new language, Michelle instead spoke to the development of a new set of thought processes and analytical skills that she gained during the course experience. In developing this capacity, she stated:

I definitely can unpack some things more. I can see motivations. I’ve always known that people are complicated and that there are more things to them just from what they say but that’s [also] a really hard thing to take through your life.
In this statement Michelle speaks to her newfound ability to analyze life scenarios and challenges differently, however, she also communicated that embodying this reflective stance and utilizing this type of analysis could be somewhat difficult in day-to-day life.

In each scenario, Michelle, Gwen, and Brett speak to the growing knowledge and capacity to assess and inquire from a metacognitive stance that involves second order understandings and evaluations. It is in their simple assertions that a shift has occurred in their language and processes that provides evidence that *New Ways of Thinking, Being, and Doing* are beginning to develop in the case-in-point classroom.

**Self-Regulated Learning and Action.** The third CIP learning objective has been categorized as: “*Self-Regulated Learning and Action.*” This category includes the course objectives for students to (1) enhance the capacity to exercise authority and leadership in the “here-and-now” with a sense of purpose, freedom, authenticity, and courage, and to (2) take risks, discern imaginative responses to current realities, experiment with different behaviors, and to assess what actions serve the deep purpose in various situations (ILP Syllabus, 2016). This study combined these two learning goals into a single category because of their shared intentions and focus on developing self-regulated learning capacities, personal authority, and the courage to experiment with these new skills. This category will now be examined in relationship to its correlated metacognitive theories and the study’s data.

**Connection to Metacognitive Theory.** Gavalek and Raphael (1985) described metacognition as “the process of transfer of control from teacher to learner [which then] leads to…[the] learners’ ability to self-regulate their learning” (Hamlin, 2001, p. 42). It is this capacity to take up personal authority, and the ability and willingness to take responsibility for one’s own
learning and actions, that connects Gavalek & Raphael’s (1985) metacognitive theory to the CIP learning category of *Self-Regulated Learning and Action*.

In addition, Senge (1990) and Marsick (1987) emphasize that metacognitive development should involve, “developing the capacity to learn from experience in an increasingly changing, complex, and fluid post-modern society.” This statement aligns with the CIP learning objective that individuals should develop the capacity to “discern imaginative responses to current realities, experiment with different behaviors, and to assess what actions serve the deep purpose in various situations,” each of which represent critical skills in a growingly complex world.

The *Self-Regulated Learning* category also advances the importance of learning through experimentation, and with the posture of freedom, authenticity, and courage; this learning objective aligns with Cheren’s (1990) assertion that metacognitive development should involve “an understanding of learning that welcomes new paradigms of teaching and leverages the knowledge found in experience.” Pelar, Burgoyne, Boydell, & Welshman (1990) also call on an environment of “adaptability, fluidity, and flexibility” in metacognitive development similar to the CIP learning objective to lead from the “the here-and-now” in order to evaluate what “actions [might] serve the deep purpose” in situations of complexity.

**Connection to Participants Experience.** Several participants presented examples of developing the capacity for self-regulated learning in the CIP classroom and beyond. These examples varied in context: from a participant taking up authority in their small group, to a participant challenging herself to step outside her comfort zone at work, to another individual’s realization that a posture of courage could have deep and meaningful impact on their engagement in the case-in-point classroom. Each of these examples will now be explored in more detail.
Participant Brett gave evidence of his experience with self-regulated learning in an example from his case-in-point small group session:

I happened to be the last Designated Authority [student in charge] and I just couldn’t take it anymore, so I stopped probably 15 minutes into it and said, we’re going to not do this anymore. And I completely changed what we were talking about. And that was the first time we’d actually had a deep conversation that was meaningful. And the following week when we did our last wrap up, almost everybody in there thanked me for changing it and that they got a lot out of it. So I think that that was meaningful, that it’s okay to do things different than instructions state. And I know that’s more of a selfish, personal reason but I thought that was important, you know. I told them that I wanted to do something different, and I had a little push back, but it was to the point where like, I’m just going to do it anyway, I feel like I see a need to do it, I’m going to do it and people were all right with it.

In this example, Brett discusses a circumstance in the class where he took up the adaptability, fluidity, and flexibility necessary for new learning to occur (Pelar, et. al, 1990). He also demonstrated a number of Self-Regulated Learning objectives including the “capacity to exercise authority and leadership…with a sense of purpose, freedom, authenticity, and courage, and to take risks, discern imaginative responses to current realities, [and] experiment with different behaviors.”

Ironically, Brett demonstrated this self-regulated learning objective by acting in defiance of the norms and structure provided by the course for the small group. Instead of following the instructions and guidelines given for the small group, he chose to experiment with his role as the authority figure—effectively seeking out “what actions [he thought might best] serve the deep
purpose” of learning for his small group. In doing so Brett exercised “freedom, authenticity, and courage” in cultivating learning for his group outside the guidelines and norms provided by authority.

In another example of self-regulated learning, Sarah shared insights into her experimentation with taking up authority at her workplace. She stated, “I learned that sometimes you have to make your own space for you to present your ideas because not everyone is going to make that space for you. And it is okay to get emotional” in that process. However, Sarah also admitted that the reality of living out this experimentation with taking up authority was simultaneously helpful and “really scary” for her, “especially since [she] work[ed] in IT and [was] surrounded by men.” In sharing this opportunity for self-regulated growth, Sarah demonstrated the risk aspect that often accompanies experimenting with taking up your authority in new and different ways.

Finally, participant Roger spoke to his CIP experience and “enhancing his capacity to exercise authority and leadership in the ‘here-and-now’ with a sense of purpose, freedom, authenticity, and courage.” Roger stated that:

The biggest single thing I learned from [this CIP class] is you’ve got to put yourself out there regardless of the cost. And that when you do that, you can open up flourishes of insight that you would’ve never gained and wouldn’t have known. So, both in [the] comments and then in one other student’s reaction to it [in class], I had wow moments in any direction. That’s the beauty and strength of case in point.

Although Roger had more authority and experience than most of his fellow students, he still found merit in the role that “taking risks” in the CIP classroom had on his personal development.
as a leader, and its impact on “open[ing] up flourish[es] of insight that [he] would’ve never gained” otherwise.

In this section, all three case-in-point learning objectives were connected to appropriate metacognitive theories, and examples of successful development from participants were given; however, there are also indications from the study that the course did not always successfully execute these metacognitive learning outcomes for students. This disconnect between the course learning objectives, the student experience, and subsequent metacognitive development will now be discussed in more detail.

**Student Engagement and its Role in Metacognitive Development**

Despite making connections between the case-in-point course learning objectives, the student experiences, and their subsequent metacognitive growth in the previous section, one element was found to be essential, and sometimes lacking, in the process of cultivating successful development and learning—the element of student engagement.

When asked about whether or not the CIP course had furthered his learning and development participant Roger stated, yes but “it’s because I wanted to [engage]” with the class. Roger continued to say that student engagement:

Really becomes an issue with case in point. I would ask, where does accountability come in with [the class] …how do I really know that they have left this and can at least if not practice or articulate the tools of effective leadership… I don’t see [that] responsibility come out in this classroom.

Brett also affirmed that disengagement played a role in the lack of learning and development for some students, “I was really trying to do [the work] and the person in front of me is drawing a picture of a duck the whole time.” Expanding further Brett also shared that,
“there’s someone in my current 501 class that’s like, I took [this course] last year, I just sat in the back and worked on other homework during the class and I got an A. And you know, that’s really unhelpful.”

Michelle also agreed that disengagement stunted the course’s capacity to impact metacognitive development and student learning. She discussed her own journey with engagement during the course experience, highlighting both her overall desire to engage and the moments where that was a struggle even for her:

Last week we talked about how some people checked out. And that maybe that was because they weren’t willing to do the work…And I feel like [the course] worked for some people because they were willing to buy in. For me, I really wanted to learn it. It felt valuable but I don’t think a lot of people had that same sort of faith or thought that [the course] would be as worthwhile… Even I, towards half of it, I was like, I don’t get where this is going, I don’t get what the point is.

Aligning with Michelle’s view, Sarah also affirmed that even as a study participant, whose level of interest in the course was perhaps higher than other students, she struggled to stay engaged:

Around the time of the election just because so much was going on…I was super checked out. And then the following weeks I was like, I am so over this class, I just don’t even want to try. At that point, I didn’t even feel like I was part of the class. I just felt like I was just sitting there. I guess I sort of came back to it… probably because I turned in one of my reflections and I got a better grade…So that kind of solidified maybe I am learning, maybe this is valuable, so I will keep trying.
Despite Sarah’s interest in CIP pedagogy and her opinion that she was gaining valuable knowledge through the course, it still remained difficult for her to stay engaged throughout the entirety of the semester.

Roger provided another strong argument regarding the necessity of student engagement in the case-in-point classroom for successful metacognitive development. He did so by reiterating the role that student choice plays in that relationship dynamic. First, Roger read from an article on case-in-point pedagogy that stated, “If participants want to grow their leadership edge, they will have to grow their capacity for being uncomfortable.” From there he expounded upon this statement with a passionate reflection of his views:

IF you want. So, what if [students] don’t want to [be uncomfortable]? What if they don’t care? One of the problems is, what if they think they know it all?... I could be the most pig-headed person in that classroom. What if they already think they know, what if they don’t. This is where… students had a great ability to fall into that safe zone in the way that the classroom is set up. To engage in meaningful leadership development, you must learn and navigate disappointment. For participants to develop the thick skin necessary to engage in acts of leadership, they will both disappoint and be disappointed by authorities. [And] I didn’t see that come out in this classroom

Roger felt strongly that the case-in-point course at USD had, “no forcing function,” or accountability measures in place to guarantee student engagement; rather, he argued it facilitated a learning environment where no assurances could be made that metacognitive development and learning objectives were met by students.

While the evidence presented above demonstrated some disconnect between the course execution and student metacognitive development, it relied heavily on the observations
participants made regarding others’ engagement and experience with the course. While observational in nature, these reflections into their peers’ behavior still provided the study with useful findings regarding the course’s ability to produce complex thinking capacities.

Throughout this chapter, evidence for both the class’s successes in facilitating metacognitive development and examples of where it may have fell short were provided. The chapter began with making clear connections between the case-in-point espoused learning objectives from the syllabus and appropriate metacognitive theories and constructs. From there, alignment was found between these learning objectives, metacognitive theories, and the data from participant experiences.

However, insights from participants also revealed that the success of facilitating metacognitive development in the CIP course was largely dependent on the level of student engagement—a function that was not monitored to the satisfaction of some participants. This left some participants to feel that students could move through the CIP course without accomplishing any significant learning. Ultimately, in responding to research question two, this chapter provided both affirmation of areas where the CIP course can continue to build upon its capacity to facilitate metacognitive development, as well as examples of where the case-in-point structure, assessments, and facilitation can evolve to better facilitate the development of complex thinking for students.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Review of the Study

This study began by introducing the issue of a complexity crisis facing both the global workforce and adult educators. A complexity crisis, as defined by this study, is a scenario in which the demands placed on those in positions of leadership increases “at a rate that significantly outstrips” how quickly they cognitively develop (Rich-Tolsma & Oliver, 2016, p. 1). In this crisis, individuals are often unprepared to exercise leadership in the face of uncertainty or ambiguity, often relying on old solutions to approach new problems, leaving them perpetually “in over their heads” when it comes to addressing the demands of their roles (Kegan, 1994).

The importance I felt for addressing this topic of a complexity crisis in the fall of 2016, when this research study began, was substantial. However, the increase in the breadth and depth of global leadership challenges since that time cannot go unmentioned. In my opinion, this marked increase has only served to escalate the complexity crisis and heighten the importance of this study’s purpose. Since 2016, the global, political, environmental, and health challenges facing those in positions of leadership have skyrocketed in both their complexity and levels of consequence. This includes everything from the attempts to address the climate crisis, the paralyzing impact and human toll of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the existence of political unrest and division in the United States, the struggle for women’s (and human rights) in Afghanistan and Iran, and the conflict currently facing Ukraine.

In each of these circumstances, and the countless others not named, the escalation and pressing nature of the global complexity crisis is evident. Indeed, the scope of these leadership challenges validates Senge, Smith, Kruschwitz, Laur and Schley’s (2010) assertion that it is
essential we develop non-reactive problem solvers, cultivate an appreciation for a diversity of voices and perspectives, maintain intellectual flexibility, and assist adult learners in developing a systems-thinking perspective towards problem solving.

However, identifying the appropriate learning strategies and means necessary to produce these objectives has become progressively more difficult using old methods and paradigms of leadership and adult education. The mismatch between traditional teaching methods, on the one hand, and the contemporary need to address complex problems, on the other, is evident in the struggle of adult educators to offer meaningful and effective strategies to address the increasing number of complex leadership challenges.

Therefore, in an effort to contribute to the development of meaningful and effective adult learning strategies, this study pursued an inquiry into the experience of students in a course that utilized case-in-point pedagogy (CIP). More specifically, this study examined the experience of participants in the University of San Diego course Integral Leadership and Practice, to evaluate whether or not case-in-point was successful in facilitating their complex learning and development. In pursuit of this objective the study focused on two research questions:

1. How do adult students in the USD course Integral Leadership and Practice (ILP) describe their experience with Case-in-Point pedagogy (CIP)?
   a. Given students’ descriptions, what aspects of the course and CIP, if any, support or inhibit their complex learning and growth?

2. To what extent, if at all, do the constructs and theories of metacognitive development comfortably align with, or contradict, the data collected?

Ultimately, the findings regarding the case-in-point course experience were varied, including both positive affirmations and strong critiques of the experience, the content learned, and the
merit of such a course in the USD graduate program. A brief review of these findings, as well as an exploration of the study’s potential implications will now be discussed.

**Implications**

**Reviewing the Findings**

The data from the participant interviews, researcher observations, course materials, student assignments, and developmental assessments combined to generate findings that were both enlightening and surprising. The first theme that emerged from the data concerned how different, and often how unfamiliar, each of the study’s participants were with case-in-point pedagogy at the start of the course and, consequently, their view of CIP as exceedingly different from the pedagogies employed in their previous school experiences.

This overarching theme acted as a broad starting point, allowing other, more nuanced and complicated findings to be subsequently organized. Thus, beyond being described as foundationally different, the study also presented participants’ views of the course as *different in an uncomfortable way*, *different in an impactful way*, and *different in an unhelpful way to their learning and development*. In presenting these findings, chapter four explored both the positive and negative aspects of the course experience according to the participants. Each of these categories will be briefly reviewed in this chapter, with special attention paid to the ways in which the findings offer insights for improvement to the pedagogy.

**Different in an Uncomfortable Way**

The first subcategory addressed by this study was classified as: *CIP as different in an Uncomfortable Way*. The category included expressions of discomfort with how a participant’s (or others’) identities or personal characteristics impacted class engagement, the discomfort participants felt with the intensity and type of emotional engagement experienced throughout the
semester, and the discomfort with how difficult “real world” subject matter was addressed in class.

**Different in an Impactful Way**

The study’s next subcategory involved acknowledging the ways in which CIP positively impacted the participants. This category was organized utilizing the course elements and their subsequent influence on the course experience. While some participants were more gregarious in their praise than others, all found something in the pedagogies uniqueness’ that resonated with them as impactful to their learning.

The elements that participants’ felt made case-in-point different in impactful ways to learning and growth coalesced into four different categories. These categories included: (1) Course Readings and Concepts, (2) Large Group CIP Discussion Experience, (3) Third Hour Systems Analysis, and (4) The Role Played by Authority/Facilitators.

Before moving to review the third findings category, the ways in which case-in-point was unhelpful to learning—another finding will be briefly discussed. This finding, referenced more briefly in chapter four, speaks to the paradoxical nature with which participants often discussed the course and their opinions on the course. The topic will now be addressed in more detail.

**Paradoxical Findings**

This study found that most participants often expressed paradoxical views, or both positive and negative views, when speaking about their case-in-point experience. Individuals did not firmly camp in one viewpoint—positive or negative—regarding their learning experience; rather, their descriptions were quite fluid, and at times provided evidence for both the critique and affirmative viewpoints for the same event or course element. For example, *all six of the*
participants that discussed the positive impact of the large group also reported that the large group had a negative impact on their learning and growth.

At other times during interviews, participants would begin a statement with a critique only to finish it with an affirmation or discuss their dislike of a course element only to also share that it was helpful. For example, Brett stated, “The 3-2-1 assignment, I don’t wish that on anybody, ever. I had to take two days off of work because I was so upset…yeah, it’s helpful but I don’t ever want to do it again.” In his response Brett offered that the exercise was ultimately useful, but not something he felt positively about. Paradox was prevalent in the posture many participants held regarding their CIP experience; indeed, while many saw merit and learning as a result of case in point, they still remained uncertain or even critical of the processes the pedagogy utilized.

Nothing illustrated this better than the responses I received when asking the interview question: would you recommend the LEAD 550/600 course to others? Participants’ responses confirmed that they often concurrently experienced both learning and confusion, conflict and growth, challenge and frustration, and pride and disappointment during their course experience. The table below presents the participants’ responses to this question and the paradoxical nature of how they viewed the case-in-point course at USD.

Participant Roger expounded the most upon this question, continually circling back to answering it, even when discussing other topics during the interview. Thus, I have included several of Roger’s related responses. I felt the frequency with which Roger expressed his opinion on recommending the course, the ways in which he vacillated in his evaluations, and how he expressed the tension he felt between critique and appreciation of CIP was the best demonstration of the paradoxical viewpoints held by participants in this study.
Table 15

Participants Willingness to Recommend the Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Would you recommend the course?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>I want to say no but it would be up to them. I think I would tell them how it is and probably be honest with them and say <em>they might not like it but it's a good experience.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett</td>
<td><em>I think it’s beneficial but I also think that a lot of people will hate the class.</em> In that regard, I think I’d have to have quite a deep conversation with somebody in order to either recommend it, if it’s not required, to either recommend it or not recommend it… [But] <em>I think the whole class itself has a place [in the program].</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen</td>
<td><em>I would recommend the course with a little bit of hesitation</em> because I know when you go through this kind of process, that a lot of times there is such deep stuff that gets dragged up. And I didn’t see in the course that there was an opportunity for people to get any guidance on the process that was happening and how to deal with their internal chaos. And <em>that was a little bit of a concern</em> with me…But <em>the process of the course itself, I think was valuable.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>It was a very challenging and frustrating course and I think even in one of my questionnaires I put horrifying and contrived but I will walk away from it completely changed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td><em>I learned a lot. And that is a little debated [by some people] …[but] I am a strong believer of this pedagogy.</em> So, in order to maximize the effectiveness of this course is maybe to demonstrate or give some opportunity to explain with other pedagogies the relationship or connection with other classes or other pedagogies. <em>That is challenging; that’s not an easy job.</em></td>
</tr>
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</table>
| Roger       | I have to answer that on a couple of levels. I may have to answer and then go back. *No, I would not recommend this course to others.* Particularly at a PhD level. Primarily because it takes too long. I really feel they could’ve easily done this course in a third of the time. That would be my number one point. *I think the material is excellent. I think the voyage of discovery in the class is excellent and important. You can’t lead if you don’t know self.* These concepts, whether you’re a fan of Ken Wilber or not, or whether you’re a fan of Heifetz or not, *these concepts are critically important to execution of leadership…[But] I found the course laborious.* I found it boring, might be a better word. Rudimentary, repetition without a purpose and I truly feel it that it had the intent to achieve something, and I don’t think it achieved it.

…If you would *ask me to score the recommendation in which you have to say yes or no. I’m going to say no.* If you were to give me one of those Likert scales where
it had seven different decisions to make, it would be in that 5.5 out of 10, if you will. I know particularly, some PhD students who were all about this class. I’m not there. And hated the class, I’m not there either. You say, do I recommend this class as currently structured? No. Do I recommend the class? Yes. I think that’s important to say. LEAD 600, Integral Theory and Process, as conceived, fits well into the syllabus.

I learned a lot of things in this class, but it did reaffirm some stuff. So there are things that I saw in this class that I learned through hard knocks. I think that you could easily take this very class in case in point and structure it for a bunch of midgrade [naval] officers or junior officers and bring them in. It would actually be very helpful.

My problem is, I learned a lot from this class.

I would say [it was] challenging, surprising, and rewarding. I found the class was difficult, hard, challenging, stressed me, challenged me at operating comfort zones that a 52-year-old retired Navy Captain doesn’t operate in or is in situations where I don’t have to operate there. I found it challenging. I found it surprising both in a refreshing way and a PhD way and an, I’m learning a lot, and, wow, I had no idea I would take a course that would do that. I find I’m better off for having taken the course. That I gained a lot from the course. I’d have been a more effective leader ten years ago if I’d had the course ten years ago. And I’ll be a more effective leader the next course I take. I purposefully didn’t pick those negative words...Did I think it was too much group therapy? Yes.

The quotes above illustrate some of the paradoxical viewpoints held by participants regarding case-in-point’s value. Interestingly, the paradoxical nature of many of the viewpoints expressed did not muddy the study’s findings, but instead offered a richer view of how difficult, trying, and yet potentially transformative the pedagogy can be.

Different in an Unhelpful Way

The last findings category for research question one, CIP as different in an unhelpful way, will now be addressed. This study found that most of the participants’ negative experiences with CIP coalesced into three different categories. These categories included: student confusion regarding the class, an unhealthy large group environment, and critiques of the teaching staff.
With the hope of improving the course experience, these categories will now be discussed and suggestions for pedagogical improvements will also be given.

**Pedagogical Recommendations**

As I stated in the research methods chapter of this study, I have been involved with the case-in-point course at the University of San Diego for several years as both a student and a teaching assistant. I believe my background with the course does make me biased in thinking that case-in-point has a place in the Leadership Studies graduate program. However, despite my bias, this study has revealed a great deal to me regarding how the pedagogy and course experience could potentially be improved. I will now discuss suggestions to address the topics of student confusion, an unhealthy large group experience, and critiques of the CIP teaching staff.

**Student Confusion**

The presence of some student confusion is a foundational part of the pedagogical structure of case-in-point (Parks, 2005). By eliminating the control that authority has in the course and stepping back from what is typically the professor’s role to direct and explain, the individual student is left to struggle with taking up the tasks and functions of authority and learning for themselves. Therefore, some student confusion will, and should always be, a part of case-in-point pedagogy.

However, the data also revealed that participants felt that student confusion reached a level that was detrimental to the development of their complex thinking during the fall of 2016. Therefore, I will now discuss a few insights gleaned from the findings that have the potential to improve upon unhelpful student confusion, without completely abandoning confusion’s necessary role in the CIP pedagogical structure. These potential changes are narrowed into two
dispelling the student belief that the processes behind CIP are unknowable and protecting the 3rd hour system analysis process.

**Dispelling Student Belief that the Processes Behind CIP are Unknowable**

While I have done a great deal of studying regarding the case-in-point method and believe I have a good sense of the pedagogy, my following recommendation may produce disagreement or dissent from some proponents of the teaching style. I believe that the level of mystery and the students’ reports that they are unable to have any understanding of the pedagogy is detrimental to overall learning. I don’t know if this has always been the sentiment of students, if this has grown over the years at USD, or if it was unique to the fall of 2016, but students in this study consistently spoke to not feeling grounded to any “why” regarding what they were doing in class.

Statements such as, “nobody understands what’s going on anyway, including me,” or “I wasn’t sure what the teaching staff wanted out of us,” or “[I was] confused…just not really understanding what was being asked of us sometimes,” were prevalent during study interviews. Again, I must reiterate the fact that much of this confusion is essential to the success of case-in-point pedagogy. Students cannot just be told what to do for this type of learning to be successful or for true transformative development to occur. In fact, weekly questionnaires even ask students to grapple with their evolving understanding of the course task and purpose.

However, I do think that some middle ground is possible between the extremes of (1) avoiding the desire to impose authority-based directives and explanations and (2) the current culture in which students believe they are supposed to operate completely in the dark to the course principles. This middle ground, from my opinion as an observer, and then affirmed by a study participant, can be found in educating students on case-in-point pedagogy itself.
One student in the study, Roger, expressed his belief in the benefit of educating students more thoroughly about CIP during this study’s interview. He stated, “I spent some time reading about case in point before our conversation.” To which I inquired, “What did you read?” From there, the following conversation transpired—although it is a long interaction I included it in its entirety, because I believe his insights and opinion can be useful to the implementation of the pedagogy at USD moving forward:

Roger: I brought [the readings] with me. “The Theory and Practice of Case in Point Teaching and Organizational Leadership” by Quinnipiac University, a guy named Yawson. I read a simple paper on case in point, “Learning by Doing,” John Hopkins University in a blog post. I used it more because it also linked to another paper written by Johnson and Fern at Kansas Leadership Center. I read this guy’s paper, “The Point of Case in Point, Six Anchors for Turning Classrooms into Leadership Labs” by Hufnagle. So don’t get me started. I will dig into these readings if you want.

Erica: ...would you have found it helpful to have read those at the beginning of the semester?

Roger: Beyond a shadow of a doubt. And I read these about mid-semester. I started on this voyage of discovery to learn more about case-in-point the first day of class. Here I am in a classroom and they’re making a big, huge deal about case in point. [So, I think] Whoa, I better learn something about case in point by class two. So, to answer your question, yes, beyond a shadow of a doubt. They should’ve spent a full session on what case in point is. It’s funny, like week 12, at the beginning of our large group session, that came up from the rest of the members of the class. A couple people brought up this theme and even the instructor brought it up.
Erica: The theme of not having a grounded understanding of it?

Roger: Yes. So, I think very early on, and I actually say this, it comes out of some of these papers. These are best practices that some of this stuff talks about. But this simple Johns Hopkins paper talks a little bit about rules of engagement in a case in point classroom. It talks about best practice that somebody found useful… love his line in this paper where he talks about encourage listening and respect thought not too much politeness. That’s a theme that we could’ve used in this classroom: concepts of listening, concepts of tolerance.

Roger makes a strong case for the impact that a more developed understanding of case-in-point can have on student learning and development in this pedagogy. It is a viewpoint I agree with.

My personal work and understanding of case-in-point pedagogy drastically changed after I first read, *Leadership Can be Taught*, by Sharon Daloz Parks. However, I did not read this book until I became a teaching assistant for the course. From that insightful text I developed a better understanding of the concepts of the balcony and dance floor, as well as that of systemic thinking and problem solving. Having this new understanding freed me up to do the difficult work of actually moving from the “dance floor” to the “balcony” as it related to the “here and now” issues occurring in the course. Therefore, I would suggest moving forward that the syllabus for the case-in-point course include the text *Leadership Can Be Taught*, if not as a requirement, then perhaps as a suggestion for students to better prepare for the classroom work.

**Protecting the 3rd hour System Analysis Process**

As someone involved in this class over several years, I was also able to compare and contrast course experiences over time. The one major difference I recognized between the fall of 2016 and the previous course years involved the consistency of the 3rd hour systems analysis of a
small group case. I do believe that this difference was impactful to students’ experiences and learning and more specifically, the lack of its implementation added to student confusion.

Systemic thinking, and the process of systemic analysis was never consistently modeled during the semester, making the reflective nature and systems orientation of the “balcony” a difficult concept for students to grasp.

Interviews with several study participants confirmed that they too saw the merit in the systems analysis activity—and noticed that it did not occur as often as they had hoped throughout the semester. The quotes on this subject from participants can be found in table 16 below (and also in chapter 4’s Table 6).

Table 16

*Elements of CIP that were Different in an Impactful Way to Learning and Growth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third Hour Systems Analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I think the third hour was kind of more of a, let’s put it all together… I think it’s more where you’re actually like, kind of putting what you’ve read into a practical application, talking about it…You’re getting both sides…The first hour where, this is the theory, let’s now practice. You weren’t actually practicing the theory. We’ll go in the small groups and we will challenge people to be a DA or a case presenter and talk about something they might not otherwise share. Or challenge somebody to do something different in class. And the third hour was like, okay, what just happened, let’s talk about it…It’s almost like you are floating and debriefing at the same time.” (Brett)</td>
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<td>“…they took a small group session and they dug into it and looked at it from stakeholder’s perspective and all these different perspectives. I felt that was actually proper, classic classroom learning. I really saw some bells go on for people as they saw – the very next class we had, that third hour session, our instructor laid out on the board a couple different ways you can look at things from different stakeholder’s perspective. Or you can use the four quadrants. Or you can use those quadrants to really start jumping into the mechanics of stakeholders and where do you find the pain, where do you find the adaptive work... [that] was very effective at that. And I never saw that again.” (Roger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“[I learned] just what the hell went wrong [in my real-world case example]. Why? Or what could I have done better? And I definitely learned what I could’ve done…from the systems analysis” (Michelle)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The systems analysis acted like the glue connecting the course concepts for each of these three participants. It also offered both a connection point as well as motivation to better understand the small group consultation work and questionnaires. Most importantly, it models metacognitive thought and complex thinking skills for the students in class. It is my suggestion that this element of the course should be used more regularly in the future.

In offering both of these recommendations from the study’s findings, the underlying premise is to provide a stronger foundation from which students can engage with the work of case-in-point. With the modest adjustments of increasing students’ awareness to the pedagogy through reading supporting texts and articles and the consistent exposure to systems thinking analysis by modeling it during the class session, I believe that a large impact towards further student development can be made through case-in-point.

**Unhealthy Large Group and Critique of the Teaching Staff**

The next two topics for improvement were also taken from the “CIP as different in an unhelpful way” category. These topics include the viewpoints of the large group as unhealthy and the critiques of the teaching staff. These two topics will be combined for this discussion due to their interrelated nature.

**The Pressure Cooker Classroom.** In chapter four the metaphor of the case-in-point classroom as a *pressure cooker* was introduced through an article from a CIP facilitator, it stated:

Heifetz uses the image of the pressure cooker: keep the heat turned up enough that things will cook, but not high enough to produce an explosion. This applies also to his case-in-point teaching method. The teacher needs to be attentive to signs of heat such as lack of participation, long speeches by one or several students, behavior that distracts from the topic at hand, body indicators of discomfort, blaming and judging statements, expressions
of discomfort, and so forth. The teacher must make repeated assessments of how much intensity is enough but not too much. The teacher can turn down the heat by acknowledging it in a non-anxious way, thus normalizing some discomfort as part of the learning process. Asking the question, “What just happened?” invites people to step outside the situation into a reflective stance. (Dalton, 127).

This pressure cooker metaphor indicates that the large group can be a tenuous environment prone to becoming explosive, tense, or unhealthy as the study demonstrated. However, as the study also demonstrated, the large group can also be a tool or environment that has the capacity to produce great transformation when utilized properly.

The article also highlighted the pivotal role that the teaching staff plays in maintaining the health of the pressure cooker environment. Therefore, the health of the large group and the impact of the teaching staff are interdependent in this scenario. The teaching staff is tasked with somehow facilitating an environment that can apply enough pressure to produce transformative change, without allowing that pressure to produce an explosion.

This is an almost impossible task—therefore, the suggestions offered in the next section are merely insights gleaned from the study’s findings, not indictments of the teaching staff’s performance or a manual for corrective measures. Rather, I will simply acknowledge the ways in which the data highlighted the relationship between the teaching staff and the large group experience, and the ways in which being aware to what emerged from the data might serve the learning of the students and the pedagogy moving forward.

During the fall of 2016 I believe that the tension, heat, and conflict that occurred in the large group was, at times, too much for productive learning to occur for participants. However, the study also revealed that the moments in which my observation notes reported that the tension
and conflict levels were “too high,” were the very same moments that several participants referenced as evidence of their metacognitive development. Therefore, the level of nuance and the ability to discern how much tension or discord should be present in the CIP classroom for transformative work to take place, remains a question without a straightforward answer.

**The Task of Teaching Assistants.** Despite lacking a straightforward answer, one finding from this study does have the potential to offer insight into both the health of the large group experience and the impact of the teaching staff. It involves the role that the teaching assistants played in the execution of the large group. Several study participants commented that they felt the teaching assistants were not focused on the task of facilitating the large group or lacked the knowledge or awareness to do so.

For example, Roger stated, “I saw some of the TAs that were definitely in TA role the entire time [concerned with their authority]. I felt a couple of the TAs were more involved in their agenda for consulting with groups than the students [in the large group].” Another participant, Gwen, contributed that, “once in a while a comment would come out [from a TA] that I thought was valid. Most of the time, I just felt like they were there to take the load off Dr. Smith.” In my observational notes, I agreed with Gwen’s comment that only once in a while did a TA offer a systemic insight or “balcony” perspective to the discussion. My hypothesis is that many TA’s may have been somewhat inexperienced and were still attempting to understand the tenants of case-in-point themselves.

Gwen offered another related experience with the large group during her interview stating that, “[Someone] was speaking [in class] on an intellectual level and I was listening to the emotion that was going on underneath, that was going on beneath the words. And when I brought that to the attention of the class, the one Japanese man sitting next to me, I can’t remember his
name but a really sweet guy (Ross), he immediately turned to me and was like, yes! And then one of the TAs said something that was very, it was like, shut it down.”

While the quote above reflects Gwen’s opinion, the example of a TA “shutting it down,” resembled remarks from other participants. Another participant, Michelle, also echoed this concern, “I guess my biggest frustration looking back is a lot of the interventions that the professors or TAs gave were almost always negative like, this is what you’re doing wrong…There wasn’t a lot of modeling of” how to actually do it. She also continued to say, “I was starting to feel like it was contrived in a way that made me feel like the TAs were puppeting us. It made me feel a little like, are they trying to use conflict within the group?”

These opinions from the participants mirrored my observational notes. My notes stated that, often the TA’s seemed to be more interested in generating conflict or in “pushing back” on student comments in a way that was not always of service to the learning. I also wrote that the interventions from the conceptual “balcony,” or the act of raising the conversation to a systems level perspective, seemed to be lacking among the teaching assistants.

Therefore, I would suggest that in moving forward case-in-point put an increased focus on the role teaching assistants play in elevating the large group to balcony and systems thinking capacities—rather than focusing on producing conflict as fodder for study. Teaching assistants play a crucial role in the large group experience, and I think that this conceptual re-orientation for the TA’s, away from individual student analysis and conflict production and towards balcony reflections, can make a major impact on student learning.

**Metacognitive Development**

Finally, the study sought to answer research question two regarding whether or not the constructs and theories of metacognitive development aligned with the data collected. The study
provided several examples of connections between the CIP course objectives, pertinent metacognitive theories, and the student’s shared learning experience. The research also indicated, much like the findings from question one, that the execution of the pedagogy and the level of student engagement were both central to the successful development of complex thinking skills for students.

While strong connections were made between the student experience and metacognitive theories, the findings that were presented for research question two cannot be generalized. Rather, they offer helpful and unique insights into the individual experiences and case-in-point elements that helped to facilitate this growth. Despite lacking generalizability this study did demonstrate that the espoused objectives of case-in-point pedagogy conceptually align with the tenants of metacognitive development. Making this theoretical connection between the pedagogy and metacognition offers an exciting opportunity for more research to be conducted.

Indeed, effectively connecting the pedagogy with metacognitive development theory suggests that case-in-point does have the potential to act as an effective learning strategy; perhaps even one capable of addressing the increasingly complex challenges facing those in positions of leadership. Thus, the remaining challenge is also an opportunity for further study. Potential research can examine the implementation of CIP at other universities and with different student populations. It is in this pursuit of further research that a clearer and more definitive picture of case-in-point’s potential can begin to take form.

**Final Thoughts**

This study took a modest first step in inquiring as to the experience of students in a case-in-point classroom and to the connection of their experience to metacognitive development. This study’s findings demonstrated that, for the majority of participants, case-in-point was a
transformative learning experience. However, the findings also revealed that the experience also evoked strong critiques and dislike from the very same people who declared it transformative. This paradoxical viewpoint was evident throughout the collection of data and spoke to the complicated nature of the participants’ learning experiences.

Despite the complicated nature of their reflections, participants offered honest reviews of their learning experience producing data that was both insightful and instructive. The study also utilized participant’s reflections to make connections between the espoused course objectives and the constructs and theories of metacognition. Ultimately the study produced rich insights into the lived experience of the participants—a lived experience that was not always traditional, simple, or straightforward, but offered each participant the opportunity for challenge and growth.15

15 See Appendix H for a Post-Defense Reflection written by the researcher.
REFERENCES


Retrieved from Dissertation Abstracts International. 49 (7).


APPENDIX A

Class Observation Checklist

Conversation topics

Problems at work
Current Events
TA and Authority Roles
Course Factions
Case Consultation Issues
Course concepts and terms
Readings
Other topics unrelated to course

Group dynamics
Conflict
_____ engaged
_____ avoided
Notes:

Consultant interventions
Notes:

Participation issues
_____ talking a lot
_____ not participating
_____ relationships to other students
Notes:

Additional notes:
APPENDIX B

Participant Interview Guide

Thank you for being willing to take the time to help me in this project. I am trying to learn what helps or hinders people in learning from courses that try to support the transfer learning from the classroom to life experience. I want to talk with you about your experience, particular things that happened in the class, conversations that happened with the instructor or your fellow students, your experience in your groups, writing papers, reading, and whatever else comes up. I want to learn what about this class has been most or least helpful for your learning and why. Any questions you would like me to answer before we begin?

10) PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND
Name, age, profession, program, years at USD, what race, gender, and/or ethnicity do you identify with?

2) REASONS FOR TAKING THE CLASS
• Why did you take this class?

• What did you hope/expect to learn?
  
  o What are you focusing on
    - are you trying to learn something specific, achieving a goal?

• Would you recommend this course to others? Why/why not?

3) SALIENT EVENTS & EXPERIENCES
• What stands out for you about this class?
  
  o Experiences, memories, learning (a-ha moments)?
    - In what ways is it similar or different from other classes at USD?

Explore whether there are any significant changes in the way they make sense or behave as a result of the class.

4) LEARNING
• What do you feel you are learning in this class?
• Are you learning things that you feel are or will be important or useful to you in this class?
  
  IF, YES
  -If you had to pick one or two things you are learning that are important to you what would they be?
    - What are you learning?
    - How are you learning it?
    - Can you give me an example where your learning shows up?
    - Most significant learning – why, in what way
  
  IF, NO
- Is there something particular getting in the way of your learning in this course?

• Are there any problems or issues or relationships you find you understand or deal with differently as a result of your experience in this class?

• Have you set any new goals or objectives for yourself as a result of being in this class?

5) HYPOTHETICAL STORY:
If you were to describe your experience of this class as though you were telling a fairy tale that started with “Once upon a time...” how would the story go?

6) COURSE DESIGN (SEE ACTIVITIES LISTS)
Please go through these cards outlining some of the elements of the course design. Put them in order their importance for your learning from the strongest/ most helpful impact, to weakest/ least helpful.
(After cards are ordered)

- What are you learning from this experience?
- How are you using what you’re learning – give example
  o Why did you choose to use it then?
  o Where did you get the idea?
  o What happened?
  o How did you feel about the result?

- If you were in charge of designing this course so that it maximized everyone’s learning, which elements would you leave in, take out, add? Why?
  o What do you think would be the consequences for others if the course was changed in this way?
  o Would you suggest that these changes be made? Why/why not?

7) CASE CONSULTATION/SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE
Tell me a bit about your case presentation.
- What is it about?
- Why did you choose to do that case?
- What do you hope to learn or accomplish by doing it?
- What did you find most helpful in your consultation group session?
- What criteria will you use to judge your progress or growth in respect to this leadership dilemma?
- How will you know if you are successful?

8) AFFECTIVE EXPERIENCE (SEE AFFECT LIST)
Keeping in mind your experiences related to your learning in this class (things that occur in class or occur as you experiment with the concepts in your daily life) review the following list of reactions.
  - Pick 2 or 3 that best describe your experiences – if another word best expresses your experience, please add it.
- Please describe an example of a situation where you felt that way.
- Please two examples that you think have been significantly positive or negative in your learning experience, (explore further)

9) OTHER
Is there something else I should have asked you that would help me understand what has helped or hindered your learning in this class?

• What gets in the way of your learning what you’d like to learn?
• What do you think would make a difference
• What about this class has been least helpful for your learning? Why? What happened? How did it limit your learning?

10) PERMISSIONS
• Would you be willing to let me do another interview with you toward the end of the semester if necessary?

COURSE ACTIVITY LIST (WRITTEN ON CARDS)

• FIRST HOUR—“HERE AND NOW” SESSION
• 2nd HOUR SMALL GROUPS
• CASE PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT
• ASSIGNMENT TO DA POSITION
• WEEKLY QUESTIONNAIRES
• FEEDBACK ON YOUR QUESTIONNAIRES
• LECTURES
• INTERACTIONS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR
• INTERACTIONS WITH THE TEACHING STAFF OR YOUR TA
• 3RD HOUR—SYSTEMIC/INTEGRAL CASE ANALYSIS
• READINGS
• MIDTERM
• FINAL
• SINGING
• FILMS
• OTHER

AFFECTIVE EXPERIENCE LIST
Please select two or three that best describe your experience with the course.

• Challenging
• Frustrating
• Exciting
• Confusing
• OK
• Surprising
• Distressing
• Anxiety producing
• Embarrassing
• Interesting
• Irritating
• Puzzling
• Exhilarating
• Difficult
• Rewarding
• Other___________
APPENDIX C

Designated Authority Handout

Case Consultation Experience:
Guidelines for Designated Authority (DA)

I. Review the “Purpose, Tasks, and Key Concepts” and the “Timeline” handouts to guide your work as both Designated Authority and Clarifier.

II. Familiarize yourself with the working space, and with those who will be in your group, particularly if you are the first DA/C. How will you arrange the space? Are there enough chairs for everyone? Do you have a better idea for a working space?

III. Beginnings, or “initial events,” are important. Undoubtedly you will be looked to for direction on how to begin the first meeting. Think ahead of time about how you want to start. Some hints:

   (1) Don’t get paralyzed by your choices;
   (2) Consider experimenting with a mode of authority that perhaps doesn’t come naturally to you; and,
   (3) Keep your focus on the purpose and task of the group.

Arrangements for a consultation from a Teaching Assistant can be made in advance by the DA before the designated small group meeting. Your request should include (1) the reasons for your request; (2) the nature or type of the consultation that you feel the group needs; and (3) the member of the Teaching Staff you would like to have assist your group [this request cannot always be honored].

IV. Invite the Case Presenter to tell the story of his/her leadership dilemma. Then allow time for clarifying questions to verify facts or open up issues which have not already emerged.

   - Can you tell me more about the leadership dilemma you want to explore?
   - What are you feeling about what is happening?
   - Who else is involved in the situation and being affected by what is happening?
   - Can you tell us more about the community/constituencies that your organization is serving?
   - What issues is this raising for you about your leadership?
   - Where in this situation are your deepest values and those of your organization?
   - Is there anything else about the situation which you feel is important for us to know?

V. Invite the Case Presenter to turn his/her back to group and listen to input from the Consultation Analysts.

   - What are the systems and subsystems in which the leadership dilemma is taking place?

VI. Invite the Case Presenter to face the group and discuss the following:

   - What action are you now considering to benefit the system, in light of the forces and factors that have been identified? (Make sure the Case Presenter keeps to proposed action and does not begin to comment on the process.)
VII. Ask the Consultation Analysts:
- What is the likely response to any proposed action/inaction?
- What are the risks in any proposed action/inaction?

VIII. Lead the group in a review and debriefing of its own process that hour.

The time allotted for these case consultations is tight. You are responsible for how the time and task boundaries are managed. There will be 65 minutes allotted from the time the first large group portion of class ends and the time when members of the small groups are due back in class. This allows for a 50-minute small group session and 15 minutes of break time to be taken at the beginning and/or end (or divided between). Make sure that you keep track of the time when the group is due back in Room 102 and make sure that the meeting adjourns in time for people to get there on time.
APPENDIX D
Case Consultation Experience Study Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help you analyze the work process of the case consultation experience group sessions and to help you apply theoretical knowledge and insights from the lectures and readings to actual problems of practice.

It is suggested that you fill this out within one day of the session and that you spend no more than 2-3 hours completing it. The MAXIMUM acceptable length for a questionnaire is 5 pages in length (12 point font) and double-spaced. Submit the completed questionnaire to your TA via Blackboard by noon on Friday following your small group meeting. Because this is more of a reflective assignment, you will not need to follow the formal APA citation format. For readability, please include the question number and question title above each of your answers. A working template is available for your use on WebCT. The file name for your document should use your last name, first initial, and the questionnaire number. For example, SmithA_Q1.doc.

As you are answering these questions, consider connections to the week’s reading assignments (those readings due the class period of the case presentation). If there is a particularly strong connection, make a mention of that in your answer to the question. This will be good practice for your later work in writing the final paper.

1) **What was the overall purpose and what was the specific task of the case consultation group session?** (Hint: Purpose and task are not identical. You may want to re-read the Case Consultation Experience: Handout for Designated Authority to grasp the distinction between the two).

2) **What was your intention for this session?** Intentions are the aims that lie in our hearts that give us a sense of meaning. In themselves, they are not specific actions/goals; rather they exist as possibilities that call us to consider our behavior in a more fundamental way. Consider the difference, for example, between specific goals such as “I want to lose 20 lbs” or “I intend to remain silent during this session” vs. “my intention is to remain fit and healthy” or “my intention is to contribute to the work of the group in a way that is neither dominating nor withholding.” (The root of the word intention means “to stretch”). An example from a past questionnaire:

In addition to doing my best to contribute to the overall purpose and task, I wanted to make a special effort to make more thoughtful, succinct interventions so that I don’t take up more than my share of the group’s airspace. Despite going into the meeting with this intention, it soon slipped my mind, and I think that I pretty much dominated the conversation.

Part A. **What was the initial event of the group session?**

Part B. **Did the initial event provide any clue for identifying any of the dynamics of the**
case? What possible connection(s) can you make with issues that surfaced in this week’s case and/or the group’s dynamics?

3) What did you notice happening or what topic(s) was being discussed informally by the group in the period immediately prior to the group being called to order – or within the first few minutes of the meeting itself that may have influenced later discussion?

Most often the “initial event” does not coincide with the actual formal opening of the meeting. Therefore, avoid answering this question with a statement like: “The initial event took place when the Designated Authority called the meeting to order.” Note: There is no one “correct” answer to this question. Different members may perceive different “initial events.” Below are three examples from past questionnaires.

Example 1:
   a. “There is a TV in the corner of our small group meeting room and John only half-joking said ‘Let’s turn it on without sound and watch the game (Yankees/Red Sox American League pennant playoff game) while we do our case study. . . or better yet, let’s listen to it and forget about the case study for tonight’.”
   b. “The Case Presenter talked about how she didn’t feel respected by her boss and coworkers because she was so much younger than most of them. I know that Emily was nervous about presenting her case and had done a lot of work to prepare her presentation. The suggestion that we watch television instead of consulting to her case (even if it was a joke) mirrored this disrespect.”

Example 2:
   a. “Just before the meeting began, the Case Presenter passed out brownies that she had baked and quipped, ‘If you like them, maybe you’ll go easier on me tonight’.”
   b. “The Case Presenter talked about how there was a lot of conflict in her organization, and how others come to her to complain about their fellow workers. It seems as if she has (probably unconsciously) taken up the role of ‘mother’ or ‘nurturer’ in her organization which then shields her from having to deal with the conflicts directly?”

Example 3:
   a. “I noticed that all the females in the group were sitting on one side of the table and all the males on the other – almost as if we were facing off with one another”.
   b. “The similarities are amazing! The Case Presenter was promoted when his boss had to resign because of an accusation of sexual harassment by a female employee. His boss was well-liked by many of the employees, however, and a lot of them feel that some of the accusations made were false. Now, a number of them (all male) have said that they won’t work on an important team project because it is being chaired by the woman who brought the charges. Interestingly, the Designated Authority in our group this week was supposed to be a woman but she called one of the men in
the group right before class and asked him to switch weeks with her. She was too ill to come to class this week.”

4) Give a specific example from this week’s small group session that demonstrates a leadership strategy being exercised by a group member. What adaptive challenge did it attempt to address? (Hint: You may want to review the leadership strategies identified by Heifetz which include: getting on the balcony, thinking politically, orchestrating the conflict, giving the work back, holding steady, etc.).

Example: “One of our group members was not contributing in the group today, but no one had mentioned it. I asked what was going on and what it might represent for our group that one member was silent. This member hadn’t spoken much since she strongly disagreed with the group at the last session. Our group considered the possibility that members who disagreed were having a difficult time being heard.”

5) During this week’s small group session, identify one “hidden issue” or unnamed “elephant in the room”? (i.e. an issue that you sensed was present beneath the surface level of conversation, but did not get named or discussed).

For example, a hidden issue of a case might be: “I think that at least several members of the group felt that Dan’s boss was justified in reprimanding him, but we didn’t speak to this issue explicitly, perhaps because we sensed that Dan was pretty angry and defensive about the whole incident, and we didn’t want to provoke a conflict in our group.”

An issue of the group might be something like, “I think most of us felt the Designated Authority/Clarifier was over-controlling, but we didn’t challenge her because we knew that she was quite anxious about taking up the role of DA/C.”

6) Do you notice any similar themes, roles, or connections surfacing between the small and large group experiences and in the readings?

Example: “Last night’s topic on the syllabus was Assassination, but the large group conversation seemed to stay on a ‘polite’ level despite the fact that Professor Monroe kept pointing out that there was a ‘faction’ in the group who were quite resistant to the ideas she was presenting, but they weren’t disagreeing with her. Then, in our small group, several people attacked the Designated Authority/Clarifier, interrupting her and ignoring her instructions, and one member showed up almost 20 minutes late. I am wondering if the DA/C was used as a ‘stand-in’ for Dr. Monroe, because it wasn’t as threatening to attack her?”

7) Briefly summarize in a few sentences the main ideas contained in each of this week’s readings.

Example: “Heifetz & Linsky (pp. 1-75) define leadership in terms of doing adaptive work (i.e. ‘tackling tough problems’), a process that usually challenges deep-seated assumptions, requires significant adjustments in expectations, and/or entails some kind of
significant loss. This can generate a lot of fear and anxiety in individuals and groups, which often results in strong resistance to new ideas and those who are advocating change. This dynamic makes exercising leadership inherently ‘dangerous,’ and H&L suggest a number of important strategies leaders need to have in their repertoire in order to ‘stay alive’ (i.e. to avoid being “killed off” literally or metaphorically).”

8) **Formulate at least one question that arose for you as a result of the readings.**

Example: “I wonder what criteria I should use to assess whether a particular problem I am facing at work is a technical problem or an adaptive challenge?”

9) **Consider your learning of the key concepts of leadership and authority. Formulate at least one question that arose for you as a result of last week’s small or large group experience regarding the key concepts.**

(Hint: Review the key concepts including formal and informal authority, the functions of authority, adaptive and technical challenges, the tasks of leadership, and role in relation to the enactment of purpose).

Example: “I am wondering what ‘getting on the balcony’ really involves. Some people in last night’s large group discussion seemed to think it means remaining silent and just observing, but I sense that the process H & L are proposing is more complex and nuanced.”
## APPENDIX E

**Lectical Score 6-12 Breakdown**

**From Lectica.org**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 6</th>
<th>Concepts are 1st order representational sets</th>
<th>The logical structure is definitional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single representations</td>
<td>These coordinate symbolic systems. In responses to the Joe dilemma, for example, the concept of camping coordinates activities like swimming, sleeping in a tent, and painting, and the concept of a paper route coordinates activities like riding a bike, delivering papers, and receiving money.</td>
<td>It identifies one aspect of a single representation—as in &quot;Camping is fun,&quot; in which fun is an &quot;aspect&quot; of camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-40 mos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 7</th>
<th>Concepts are 2nd order representational sets</th>
<th>The logical structure is linear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representational mappings</td>
<td>These coordinate or modify representational sets (the concepts constructed at the single representations level). The very popular representational mappings Lectical™ level concept of having favorites, for example, can be employed to rank camping and fishing. &quot;Camping is my favorite, and fishing is my next favorite.&quot; Concepts like being mean, keeping a promise, changing one's mind, and sharing also become common at this Lectical™ level. &quot;[Joe's father] is just being mean; he is taking the money away from his kids.&quot;</td>
<td>It coordinates one aspect of two or more representations—as in, &quot;If you do not do what your father tells you to do, he will get really mad at you,&quot; in which doing what your father says and not doing what your father says are coordinated by his anticipated reaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 8</th>
<th>Concepts are 3rd order representational sets</th>
<th>The logical structure is multivariate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representational systems</td>
<td>These coordinate elements of representational systems. For example, the concept of trust, articulated for the first time at this Lectical™ level, can be used to describe the system of interactions between Joe and his father. &quot;Joe trusted [his Dad] that he could go to the camp if he saved enough money, and then his father just breaks it, and the promise is very important.&quot; Concepts like to turn against, to blame, to believe, and being fair are also infrequently observed before this level. &quot;[If you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>It coordinates multiple aspects of two or more representations—as in, &quot;If Joe's Dad says Joe can go to camp, then he says he can't go to camp, that's not fair because Joe worked hard and then his Dad changed his mind,&quot; in which two conflicting representations of Dad's authority are evaluated in terms of his changed mind and Joe's hard work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
break a promise] they will not like you
anymore, and your friends will turn against
you."

**Level 9**

**Concepts are 1st order abstractions**
These coordinate representational systems. For example, the concept of trustworthiness, articulated for the first time at this Lectical™ level, defines those qualities that make a person trustworthy rather than describing a particular situation in which trust is felt or not felt. It is composed of qualities that produce trust, such as **telling the truth, keeping secrets, and keeping promises**. "It's always nice...to be trustworthy. Because, then, if [someone has] a secret, they can come and talk to you." Concepts like **kindness, keeping your word, respect, and guilt** are also rare before this level. "If you don't do something you promise, you'll feel really guilty."

**The logical structure is definitional**
It identifies one aspect of a single abstraction—as in, "Making a promise is giving your word," in which giving one's word is an "aspect" of a promise.

**Level 10**

**Concepts are 2nd order abstractions**
These coordinate or modify abstractions. For example, the abstract mappings level concept basis can be employed to coordinate the elements essential to a good relationship. "To me, [trust and respect are] the basis of a relationship, and without them you really don't have one." Concepts like **coming to an agreement, making a commitment, building trust, and compromise** are also rare before this Lectical™ level. "I think [Joe and his father] could come to an agreement or compromise that they are both comfortable with."

**The logical structure is linear**
The most complex logical structure of this Lectical™ level coordinates one aspect of two or more abstractions—as in, "Joe has a right to go to camp because his father said he could go if he saved up the money, and Joe lived up to his commitment." Here, Joe's fulfillment of his father's conditions determines whether Joe has a right or does not have a right to go to camp.
Level 11

Abstract systems

Concepts are 3rd order abstractions
These coordinate elements of abstract systems. For example, the concept of personal integrity—which is rare before the abstract systems level—refers to the coordination of and adherence to notions of fairness, trustworthiness, honesty, preservation of the golden rule, etc., in one's actions. "[You should keep your word] for your own integrity. For your own self-worth, really. Just to always be the kind of person that you would want to be dealing with." Concepts like verbal contract, moral commitment, functional, development, social structure, and foundation are also uncommon before the abstract systems level. "A promise is the verbal contract, the moral commitment that the father made to his son. It is the only way for the child to...develop his moral thinking—from watching his parent's moral attitude."

The logical structure is multivariate
The most complex logical structure of this level coordinates multiple aspects of two or more abstractions. "Following through with his commitment and actually experiencing camp combine to promote Joe's growth and development, not just physically but psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually." Here, multiple facets of Joe's personal development are promoted when he both keeps his commitment and accomplishes his goal.

Level 12

Single axioms/principles

Concepts are 1st order axioms/principles
These coordinate abstract systems. The notion of the social contract, for example, results from the coordination of human interests (where individual human beings are treated as systems). "Everybody wants to be treated equally and have a sense of fair play. Because this is so, we have an obligation to one another to enter into a social contract that optimizes equality and fairness." Concepts like autonomy, fair play, heteronomy, higher order principle, and philosophical principle are rare before the single axioms/principles level. "The only time we're justified in breaking the social contract is when a higher principle, such as the right to life, intervenes."

The logical structure is definitional
It identifies one aspect of a principle or axiom coordinating systems—as in, "Contracts are articulations of a unique human quality, mutual trust, which coordinates human relations." Here, contracts are seen as the instantiation of a broader principle coordinating human interactions.
APPENDIX F

Email Exchange between Researcher and Participant Roger
Feedback Received on Initial Data Analysis

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March 22, 2017 at 9:43 PM

To: Erica Jackson

Erin,

Attached is my reviewed transcript. I only did a quick review. If you have questions or need clarification let me know.

I'd only recommend that the sub-theme under (1) of "change and growth" and "self-awareness" be flexible enough to accept the negatives if the data supports.

--- I think that in lead 600, among some of the students, there was no change or no growth. Essentially, for some, I believe case-in-point re-enforces misconceptions and stereotypes. I saw that in a group of students that always sat in the same section in the institutional group and I'm pretty sure none of the conversations changed their minds. I'm not even sure they got a deeper meaning.

--- Also, for some in the class, I don't think they gained in self-awareness.

Good luck! Thanks for selecting me as a participant. Let me know if you need anything.

All the best,
APPENDIX G

3-2-1 Shadow Exercise Description

Taken from: https://integrallife.com/the-3-2-1-shadow-process/

3-2-1 Process: Long Form
First choose a “difficult person” to whom you are attracted or repelled (e.g., romantic partner, boss, parent), or pick a dream image or a body sensation that creates a disturbance in your awareness. Keep in mind the disturbance may be a positive or negative one. Then follow the 3 steps of the process described below. For the short form, spend about 5 minutes on each perspective. For the long form, you can spend 10-15 minutes or longer. You can either talk through the process or use a journal to write it out. If talking, imagine the person or thing sitting across from you. If using a journal, simply write out each of the following steps.

3 — FACE IT
Describe the person, image, or sensation in vivid detail using 3rd-person pronouns (e.g., he, him, she, her, they, their, it, its). This is your opportunity to explore your experience fully, particularly what it is that bothers you. Don’t minimize the disturbance—take the opportunity to describe it as fully as possible.

2 — TALK TO IT
Enter into a dialogue with this object of awareness using 2nd-person pronouns (you and yours). This is your opportunity to enter into a relationship with the disturbance, so talk directly to the person, image, or sensation. You may ask questions such as “Who/what are you? Where do you come from? What do you want from me? What do you need to tell me? What gift are you bringing me?” Then allow the disturbance to respond back to you. Allow yourself to be surprised by what emerges in the dialogue.

1 — BE IT
Now, writing or speaking in first person, become the person, image or sensation you have been exploring. Use the first-person pronouns (I, me, mine). See the world, including yourself, entirely from the perspective of that disturbance, and allow yourself to discover not only your commonalities, but also how you really are one and the same. Finally, make a statement of identification: “I am _____” or “_____ is me.” Now integrate this perspective into a larger you, feeling it as an integral part of your being.
APPENDIX H
POST-DEFENSE REFLECTIONS

In my experience, case-in-point work is inherently personal by nature. No one can escape the role that they play in the overall dynamic of the classroom. This fact was illuminated during my dissertation defense, when several of my committee members invited me to question, stay curious, and examine the impact my role (and presence) had on the CIP classroom and subsequently the data I collected and analyzed for this study. Essentially, they asked me to reflect from a “balcony perspective” on my place, impact, and influence on the greater Integral Leadership and Practice system—and its influence on my collected data and findings. Thus, this is a brief reflection on my role in the case-in-point classroom during the fall of 2016 and the hypotheses I hold regarding the systemic dynamics both in the course and in my research process. These reflections are not taken from the analysis of collected data, but rather are an attempt to acknowledge and practice my own case-in-point work in the midst of my research process.

My first reflection revolves around the racial identity of my participants. The lack of racial diversity in the group of my final participants was acknowledged in the earlier chapters of this dissertation. However, during my defense the question of why all the people of color originally selected for the study did not complete the study was raised. The committee asked: Did I have a hypothesis on why this was the case? While several reasons could by equally plausible, such as, they were too busy to do the interview, no longer interested in the topic, or simply forgot to return my email, I instead quickly responded to the committee that I believed their racial identity had an impact on their decision not to participate. While no hard data can support this assertion—the participants did not express it to me directly, nor did they indicate it
during class—my sense was that their racial identity, and perhaps even my own racial identity as a white woman, presented obstacles to their completion of the study.

During the fall of 2016, discussions in the CIP classroom regarding racial injustice were emotional, heated, and seemed to be occurring frequently. The pressure and emotional toll from the intensity of these conversations on racism, both in the CIP classroom and in the world at large, was evident and is even more evident in retrospect. Thus, if I were to examine this dynamic from a balcony perspective—much like we would examine the classroom in case-in-point work—it would seem systemically plausible that perhaps there was a fatigue, an exhaustion, or quite honestly a need to invoke some sense of personal protection or space when it came to reflecting on the course experience for students of color.

Week after week the conversations in class revolved around their racial identity. Thus, the request I was making, to dive even more deeply into the experience, the challenges, and the memories from the course may have been considered a burdensome task. Furthermore, the dynamics within the class did create tense moments and sometimes disagreement between white students and black students surrounding the topic of racism. Thus, it is also possible that my identity as a white woman represented that conflict from the classroom and may have been an obstacle to their participation. In effect, I could have conceivably represented something larger in the class system, a dynamic and relationship that was more difficult, complicated, and nuanced than that of just a researcher and their participant. In offering these hypotheses I do so not to claim these reflections are true, but to perhaps offer the opportunity for further discussion and examination as to why all the students of color chose not to finish this research study.

In addition to the reflection on racial identity and its impact on participation, I was also encouraged by certain committee members to reflect on what both the participants and I judged
to be a “successful” learning experience for individuals in the course. Several participants had voiced their concern during interviews that people were “checked out,” “drawing ducks,” or “doing homework for other classes,” and that this behavior indicated that there was no learning occurring. I utilized some of this data to suggest in my findings that student engagement was essential for metacognitive development—and by engagement I was indeed conveying the more traditional classroom image of interaction, attentiveness, and interest on the part of the student.

However, some on the committee invited me to question these findings and/or assumptions. In fact, they offered examples from their roles as facilitators in courses where students might have seemed disengaged, perhaps “drawing ducks,” during the class, but in actuality they were absorbing a good amount of information and processing it in their own way. This caused me to reflect on whether or not the dissertation had given too much credence to the assumption that there was a direct correlation between engagement and development—or that any one person could externally evaluate the depth of learning for another individual, especially when metacognitive development encapsulates such a deeply internal and reflective process of growth.

In fact, it’s worth suggesting that perhaps the students willing to sign up to participate in this research study were already more ready, interested, and able to actively engage with the CIP course. Indeed, other past CIP students have shared that their initial engagement was limited and that the understanding of the concepts and the course only coalesced much later in life; yet, despite this delay in comprehension, the concepts and learning were still deeply impactful. Thus, the judgments regarding other classmates’ potential learning do not offer a full and accurate evaluation of all students’ learning, but rather, serve to highlight that a broad diversity of processes and experiences occur in experiential settings such as CIP.
I was reminded in writing this very personal reflection that the case-in-point method does not abide by any traditional classroom rules, despite our desire to place it in the box and give it the necessary benchmarks. However, this does not lessen its potential, but does make it more difficult to express, evaluate, and duplicate throughout different environments. Yet, these same challenges and obstacles are what makes the pedagogy so potentially dynamic and useful for leadership education.

Finally, if CIP encourages individuals to engage in the practice of deep cognitive and personal development through systems thinking and “here-and-now” reflections, it is pertinent that CIP facilitators, and even researchers, continue to do that same work of reflection and questioning. It is that very task that I have attempted to tackle through this post-defense discussion—my very own case-in-point reflection.
Institutional Review Board
Project Action Summary

**Action Date:** September 16, 2016   **Note:** Approval expires one year after this date.

**Type:** ___New Full Review  _X__New Expedited Review  ___Continuation Review  ___Exempt Review  
___Modification

**Action:** ___X_Approved  ___Approved Pending Modification  ___Not Approved

**Project Number:** 2016-09-016
**Researcher(s):** Erica Corley Doc SOLES
                  Dr. Robert Donmoyer Fac SOLES

**Project Title:** A Leadership Laboratory: Exploring the Use of Case-in-Point Pedagogy to Develop Complex Thinking in Leaders

**Note:** We send IRB correspondence regarding student research to the faculty advisor, who bears the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the research. We request that the faculty advisor share this correspondence with the student researcher.

**Modifications Required or Reasons for Non-Approval**

None

The next deadline for submitting project proposals to the Provost’s Office for full review is N/A. You may submit a project proposal for expedited review at any time.

______________
Dr. Thomas R. Herrinton
Administrator, Institutional Review Board
University of San Diego
herrinton@sandiego.edu
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, California 92110-2492